

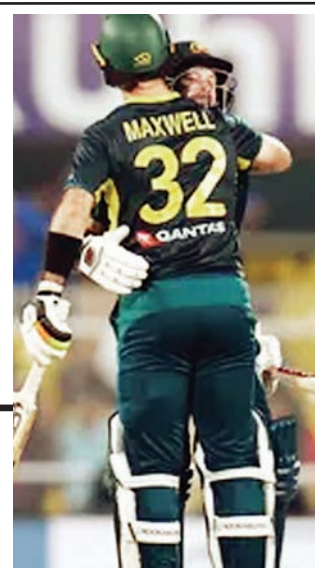
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## ALL 41 TRAPPED WORKERS EXTRICATED FROM UTTARAKHAND TUNNEL

Dehradun | Agencies

After 17 days of mega operation, all the 41 workers trapped inside the Silkyara tunnel in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi were safely extricated on Tuesday evening.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami was present at the site, where multiple ambulances and medical teams were kept ready for the trapped workers.

As soon the workers were pulled out of the under-construction tunnel, a part of which had collapsed on November 12, they were rushed to the hospital in ambulances.

Rat-hole mining was started on Monday evening as rescue efforts to reach the 41 workers trapped inside the Silkyara tunnel entered its 16th day.

The relief and rescue work is being carried out by international experts, NDRF, SDRF, Army and BRO, among others.



### 'YOUR COURAGE AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS,' SAYS MODI AFTER SUCCESSFUL TUNNEL RESCUE MISSION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the success of rescue operation to bring out 41 trapped workers from Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel is making everyone emotional and hailed the courage of the workers as an inspiration to others. The Prime Minister also congratulated the multiple people engaged in rescue operation for their bravery and determination to bring out all trapped workers safely. "The success of the rescue operation of our labor brothers in Uttarkashi is making everyone emotional. I want to say to the friends who were trapped in the tunnel that your courage and patience is inspiring everyone. I wish you all well and good health," Modi wrote on X. He said that it is a matter of great satisfaction that after a long wait these friends of ours will now meet their loved ones. He said that the patience and courage that all these families have shown in this challenging time cannot be appreciated enough.

"I also salute the spirit of all the people associated with this rescue operation. The bravery



and determination have given new life to our labor brothers. Everyone involved in this mission has set an amazing example of humanity and teamwork," Modi said. The remarks from the Prime Minister came after all the 41 trapped workers at the Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel in Uttarakashi area were pulled out safely on Tuesday evening after 17 days of mega multiple agency operation. The Prime Minister has been taking regular updates from Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on the rescue operation. Relief and rescue work which could enter the 16th day on Tuesday, was being carried out by scientists, international experts, NDRF, SDRF, BRO on a war footing."

### 'RELIEVED,' SAYS GADKARI AFTER 41 WORKERS RESCUED IN UTTARAKHAND

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday said that he was relieved as all the 41 trapped workers from the under-construction Silkyara tunnel in Uttarakhand were rescued safely. He said that it was a well coordinated effort by multiple agencies marking one of the most significant rescue operations in recent years.

"I am completely relieved and happy as 41 trapped laborers in the Silkyara Tunnel Collapse have been successfully rescued," he wrote on X.

"This was a well-coordinated effort by multiple agencies, marking one of the most significant rescue operations in recent years. The minister pointed out that various departments and agencies complemented each other despite facing numerous challenges. "Tireless and sincere efforts by everyone, coupled with prayers from all, have made this operation possible. The dedicated endeavors of the rescue teams have yielded favorable results. "I express gratitude to each agency and individual involved in this rescue operation. Deep appreciation for the international rescue experts, administrative officers, and the Uttarakhand government for their swift and effective response," Gadkari said. "I take this opportunity to thank Prime



M Narendra Modi, who has been constantly monitoring the entire operation and providing guidance and support whenever required. "CM Uttarakhand Pushkar Dhami and my colleague Gen VK Singh almost camped there during the operation. Last but not least, I thank the officers and engineers of MoRTH for their sincere efforts," Gadkari said.

### SC stays NGT order imposing Rs 1,200 crore fine on Maha govt

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed a decision passed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) requiring the state of Maharashtra to pay a compensation of Rs 1,200 crore for improper solid and liquid waste management.

A bench presided over by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and comprising Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, issued notice on an appeal filed by the Maharashtra government and stayed the operation of the impugned order issued by the NGT in the meantime.

In an order passed in September last year, a bench headed by Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel and comprising Justice Sudhir Agarwal and expert member Dr. A. Senthil Vel of the green tribunal determined a liability of Rs



12,000 crore to be deposited in a separate ring-fenced account within two months for restoration of environment.

The Tribunal also dismissed the review plea saying that the "review application does not put forward any tangible ground and is a mere expression of inability to pay compensation." "Continued pollution is a serious offense by the state and its authorities which cannot be taken lightly. Liability having already accrued, mere statement that the State is unable to arrange funds is not a tenable plea.

## IFFI 2023: Persian film 'Endless Borders' wins Golden Peacock; 'Kantara' bags Special Jury Award

Panaji | Agencies

Persian film 'Endless Borders' by Abbas Amini has bagged the Golden Peacock for Best Film at the 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) that concluded here on Tuesday.

An emotionally-charged narrative set against the backdrop of an Iranian teacher's odyssey amid the turmoil ignited by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the film intricately delves into the complexities of prejudice, moral dilemmas, and forbidden love.

The jury praised the film's ability to transcend physical and emotional borders, lauding director Abbas Amini's courageous storytelling.

In a citation, the jury said, "The film is about how complicated physical borders might be yet nothing can be more complicated than the emotional and moral borders that you impose upon yourself. Film festivals, after all, are about crossing borders and in the case of this film, the director has crossed political borders at the cost of his own freedom. "Bulgarian director Stephan Komandarev won the Silver Peacock for Best Director for 'Bhaga's Lessons', Pouria Rahimi Sam was honoured with Silver Peacock for



Best Actor (male) for his nuanced acting in 'Endless Borders', while Melanie Thierry was awarded Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female) for her seamless expression of a wide spectrum of emotions in 'Party of Fools'. Indian filmmaker Rishabh Shetty bagged the Special Jury Award for 'Kantara', while Reger Azad Kaya received Best Director Award for Debut Feature Film for 'When the Seedlings Grow'.

Acclaimed filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, the Jury Chairperson, said that every film was taken seriously while judging them for the coveted awards.

"It is so difficult to make a film. You have a script, nobody wants to listen to your script... then you get someone to listen to your script... then we say where the money is going to come from, then you find money and work for years trying to get a film made. So every film deserves all the attention," Kapur said, highlighting how important it is to take every film seriously.

"Why is the film festival important? In the context of what is happening in the world right now... It is very important to tell our stories, because our stories are who we are... and if you tell our stories to people and they listen to our stories across borders, then people will understand each other. Films ultimately tell you who you are, what your culture is," he said, adding that one needs to find human beings in every story and share the stories through platforms like IFFI.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said the response to IFFI has been overwhelming, with thousands of delegates participating in it. "With the lush green forests, rivers and waterfalls, Goa is a filmmaker's paradise. When it comes to film locations, we have got a streamline system for film shootings and hassle-free permits," he said.

### President, Shah, Priyanka hail successful tunnel rescue mission

Team Absolute | New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu, Home Minister Amit Shah and Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra hailed the rescue of 41 trapped workers from Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel and also congratulated the multiple teams engaged in the mega operation.

The President in a post on X said, "I feel relieved and happy to learn that all the workers trapped in a tunnel in Uttarakhand have been rescued. "She said, "Their travails over 17 days, as the rescue effort met with obstacles, have been a testament of human endurance. The nation salutes their resilience and remains grateful to them for building critical infrastructure, even at



great personal risk, far away from their homes.

"I congratulate the teams and all experts who have acted with incredible grit and determination to perform one of the most difficult rescue missions in history." Shah in a post on X, said, "It is great news for the nation that all our 41 Shramik brothers trapped in a tunnel in Uttarkashi have been rescued safe and sound. Nation salutes their grit in facing such a challenging situation in the tunnel for so long." "My heartfelt gratitude to all the people and the agencies that have made tire-

less efforts to save the lives of our fellow citizens," Shah added. Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in a post on X said, "All the workers who were trapped between life and death for the last 17 days in the Silkyara Tunnel of Uttarkashi have come out safely. Salute to each and every brave person engaged in the rescue operation. You have made the prayers of the entire country successful."

She also prayed for their speedy recovery congratulated their families.

### ISRAEL'S GROUND OPERATION TO MOVE SOUTH IN GAZA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) plans to extend its ground operation to southern Gaza, having nearly cleared overground Hamas military infrastructure in the enclave's north, an Israeli military official said on Tuesday.

On a day of the Israel-Hamas truce that halted fire and allowed the exchange of some Israeli citizens taken hostage by Hamas for Palestinian prisoners, and the passage of humanitarian aid into war-ravaged Gaza, the official said the IDF could launch the ground raids in the south any time after the fighting resumes. He did not give details.

"The north is more or less clear," Colonel Avichai Zafrani, the defence attaché at the Israeli Embassy in Delhi, told reporters of Hamas' military infrastructure on the ground in Gaza, adding that tunnels were being searched.

According to Zafrani, Hamas' two main operations in the coastal enclave were in or under the Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest



medical facility in the Gaza Strip, located in the north, and in Khan Younis, a city in the south.

He said caches of arms and ammunition, including anti-tank explosive devices and mines, were found in the hospital area, under which tunnels exist that had been used by Hamas; and that a tunnel shaft had been found near an amusement park and a rocket launcher near a mosque.

"The government had given the IDF two objectives - one was to eliminate Hamas, and, two, to get the hostages released," Zafrani said. The Palestinian militant group that attacked Israel on October 7 has been hit hard through Israeli airstrikes, ground raids and naval blockades.

"Hamas is under pressure" and wants to negotiate a ceasefire longer than the present pause, Zafrani said.

By the time of filing of this report, 51 Israeli hostages, including with dual citizenship, and 20 foreign hostages, mostly Thai farm workers in Israel, had been released by Hamas, as part of a swap deal for 150 Palestinian prisoners in Israel.

An estimated 168 hostages still remain in captivity, be it with Hamas or another Palestinian militant outfit that had entered Israel on October 7. When asked where the civilians of Gaza would seek shelter when the IDF carries out raids in the south, Zafrani said a related plan would be announced. Earlier in the war, which is now in its eighth week, tens of thousands fled their homes in the north to take refuge in camps, schools and other makeshift accommodation in the south. They, along with Gazans in the south, will likely have to relocate again soon. But it is not clear yet where the humanitarian shelters will be put up once Israel's southern ground offensive begins.



New Delhi: The US is ready to help India build its own space station, said NASA chief Bill Nelson, who is on his maiden visit to the country.

Nelson's visit will mark a series of strategic discussions aimed at strengthening the partnership between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). "Touchdown in India! Ready to embark on a week of engaging meetings and events to grow @NASA's partnership with @ISRO. India is a leader in space and we're looking forward to a productive visit," Nelson wrote in a post on X.





## Postal Ballots Be Kept In Same Room As EVMs, Demands Congress Candidate From Guna

Team Absolute | Guna

Pankaj Kaneria, the Congress candidate from the Guna assembly constituency in Madhya Pradesh, on Tuesday demanded that postal ballots be kept in the same strongroom where Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) have been kept.

A day earlier, the Congress had submitted a memorandum to the state's chief electoral officer seeking action against the Balaghat collector for allegedly taking postal ballots out of the strongroom. The state went to the polls



on November 17, while counting of votes will be held on December 3.

In a letter to Guna collector and returning officer

TarunRathi, Kaneria took exception to postal ballots being kept at the government treasury. Candidates of various par-

ties are keeping a watch on the strongroom where EVMs are kept, and the safety of postal ballots will be ensured if they too are kept there, he said. Collector Rathi said he would look into the application. As per the directives of the Election Commission of India, the strongroom where postal ballots are kept will be opened at 4 pm on December 2 after informing the candidates and political parties, he said.

The ballots will be then shifted to the strongroom where the EVMs are kept before they are opened on December 3.

## MP Chief Electoral Officer Suspends Postal Nodal Officer In Connection With Opening Of Postal Ballots In Balaghat

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer AnupamRajan on Tuesday said that a postal nodal officer was suspended in connection with opening postal ballots before counting of votes in Balaghat district.

The action was taken following the complaint of Congress party accusing the Balaghat District Election Officer of opening postal ballot votes before the counting day. The suspended official has been identified as Himmat Singh, who is posted as a tehsildar. "No postal ballot votes were counted in Balaghat. The postal ballot votes were sorted according to the assembly constituencies and it was done in the presence of representatives of all political parties. Though a procedural error occurred there about opening the ballot box before time. It was opened before the due date. In view of which, a postal nodal officer and Tehsildar has been suspended," Rajan said.

A Congress delegation led by party election-in charge JP Dhanopia on Monday lodged a complaint to the State Election Commission, accusing the Balaghat District Election Officer of opening postal ballot votes before the counting day.

Congress had demanded inquiry "There is a collusion between District Election Officer Girish Kumar Mishra and the local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA in Balaghat. Our candidate and supporters reached the spot and made this video. Earlier, our state presi-



dent Kamal Nath had feared such irregularities. We have complained today and have been assured of action after investigation," Madhya Pradesh Congress Election-in-charge JP Dhanopia said.

Meanwhile, reacting to the allegation of the political parties that the government employees and officials were not allowed to vote, Rajan said that about 3.23 lakhs government employees exercised their franchise in the state in this state assembly elections.

"In this state assembly polls, about 3.23 lakh government employees have casted their votes through postal ballot and EDC (Election Duty Certificate). Besides, the voting of police personnel in Khandwa district, which took place a day after the polling date in the state, has been invalidated by the Election Commission," he added.

'Concrete arrangements for counting day'

Talking about the preparation for the counting of votes in the state on December 3, the officer said that the counting would be held at all the dis-

trict headquarters and concrete arrangements were made for the same.

"Counting of votes will take place in all the district headquarters on December 3 and the concrete arrangements have been made for the same. Central forces and police will be there on the spot and there are no worries about security arrangements in the state," he added.

Earlier Congress State President Kamal Nath urged the electoral officers to work impartially during the critical counting on December 3.

"I would like to remind all the officers and employees involved in the election process that at present they are working under the Election Commission, which is an autonomous body separate from the Government of Madhya Pradesh. At present they are not working under any party or minister. Therefore, all officers and employees are requested not to follow any unconstitutional or illegal order and do only that work which is their administrative responsibility. The report of the functioning of every officer and employee is available to the public. I also urge Congress workers to be prepared for the toughest struggle for their constitutional rights. On December 3, the public will approve the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh. Therefore, they should engage in their work without any conflict" Kamal Nath said. Voting for the 230-member Madhya Pradesh assembly took place on November 17 with a 77.15 percent voter turnout and counting will be done on December 3.

## Only Schools With CCTV Cameras To Be Selected As Exam Centres for MP Board Exams

Team Absolute | Bhopal

This time board examinations of classes 10th and 12th will be held early across the country in view of Lok Sabha elections 2024. The preparations for the Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education (MPBSE) examinations to be held from February 5 have already begun. The list of examination centres has been handed over to the district education officers. Tightening the grip on people who use unfair means to pass the exams, the board has decided to conduct the exams only under the surveillance of CCTV cameras. Therefore, the authorities are preparing to make only those schools where CCTV cameras are operational as examination centres. CCTVs will be compulsorily installed, especially at sensitive and hypersensitive centres. In schools where cameras are not working, they will be made operational.

Examination centers can be changed If there is no arrangement for CCTV and videography at the

examination centres, the examination centres can be changed. It is noteworthy that during the board examination last year, about 16 question papers of both the classes went viral. For this reason, this year MPBSE is taking necessary precautions. This time CCTV will be installed at the examination centres of some districts as a pilot project. The districts will be decided after the examination committee meeting. This may include districts like Gwalior, Morena, Bhand, Shajapur etc.

Cameras were installed for polling Shedding light on the board's decision, DEO Anjani Kumar Tripathi said, "Since polling stations have been set up in most of the schools, CCTV cameras have been installed. Cameras are already installed in some schools. The board is also collecting information about the cameras of the examination centres. This time, examination centres will be set up only in those schools where CCTV cameras are installed. The schools which already have cameras installed will be inspected," said BalwantVerma, Controller of Examination, MPBSE.

## aMurders Kill Man And Cut Body In 100 Pieces Over Rs20,000; Main Accused Arrested 57 Days After The Crime



Team Absolute | Gwalior

In a horrifying incident of Gwalior, a smack smuggler along with his son killed a man, cut his body into 100 pieces and threw them in drains after wrapping them into plastic bags to hide their crime. The murder mystery finally got solved after 57 days of the crime when the accused murderers got arrested on Tuesday, revealed the Gwalior police.

In fact, on September 28, 8 pieces of human body were found at Gundavali road of JanakGanj police station in the SwarnRekha drain located on Ram Kuia. As soon as the deceased's family found the body parts they informed police that Raju had been murdered.

The police took cognizance of the incident and started



investigating. Finally, on Tuesday, the police revealed that the deceased has been identified as Raju Khan, a resident of BhodapurJhaduwalaMohalla of Gwalior city. Also, the murderers have been identified as Kallu Khan and his son Nazim, residents of JhaduwalaMohalla.

Police also said that Kallu Khan was absconding along with his wife and son Nazim ever since the murder. They kept fleeing from Ajmer to Agra and were keeping their eyes on the police's actions on the murder case.

Later, 5 days ago, Kallu Khan surrendered himself in the case of drug smuggling. He appeared in the court from where he was sent to jail. But his son Nizam was still hiding. Finally, the Janakganj police caught Nizam after 57 days of the incident and both the accused now have been arrested.

## Man Gets 20-Yr Imprisonment For Abducting Teen From Kota & Raping Her



Team Absolute | Rajgarh

APOCSO court here on Tuesday sentenced a 26-year-old man to 20 years of imprisonment for abducting and repeatedly raping a 15-year-old girl last year, a public prosecutor said.

The court also slapped fine of Rs 55,000 upon the convict, Raju Dangi, a resident of Rajgarh district in Madhya Pradesh, public prosecutor DharendraChoudhary said.

Dangi lured the minor victim, then a Class 10 student, while she was returning from school here on July 14, 2022 and

took her to his home in Rajgarh and repeatedly raped her for three days, Choudhary said.

Meanwhile, the teenager's father lodged a missing report here, hours after she did not return home from school, he added. The police rescued the minor from Rajgarh after three days and arrested Dangi under sections 363, 366 of the Indian Penal Code and the protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the public prosecutor said.

Statements of 19 witnesses were recorded during the trial and 30 documents were produced before the court after which it announced its judgement in the case, he added.

## 2 Killed, Several Injured as Passenger Bus Overtakes

Team Absolute | Panna

A passenger bus toppled, leaving two people dead and multiple others injured in Madhya Pradesh's Panna district on Tuesday according to a police officer.

Tuesday at around ten in the morning, the incident happened close to the Bichhua drain, which is under the authority of the Brijpur police station in the district. Locals gathered around the scene after the accident and reported the incident to the police.

As soon as the police received the information, they responded quickly,



contacted an ambulance, and transported the injured passengers to the district hospital.

"A passenger bus was moving towards Satna district from Brijpur in Panna district. On the way the driver lost control of the bus and it overturned near

Bichhua drain under Brijpur police station limits in the district. Two persons died and over a dozen passengers sustained injuries in the accident," said Arti Singh, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP, Panna).

As soon as the police learned about the tragedy, they responded quickly, evacuating the passengers from the bus and transporting the injured, assisted by 108 ambulance service, to the district hospital, according to the officer.

There were about fifty people riding the bus. She also mentioned that the district hospital was treating the injured passengers

## Electricity Company Employee's Body Found Near Railway Track, Kin Allege Murder

Team Absolute | Indore

A 27-year-old electricity company employee's body was found near the railway track in Banganga police station jurisdiction late on Monday. The family members alleged that he was murdered, and his body was thrown near the railway track.

The man was identified as Vinay Thakur, a resident of Shanti Nagar, Bangarda Road.

Vinay's father, Nimi Chand, alleged

that his son was murdered as his motorcycle was also missing from the spot.

He had spoken to Vinay around 12:30 am and asked him to return home as the weather was not good. Vinay told his father that he would come to the house soon.

After two hours, when his father called again, a policeman answered his cell phone and told him that the railroad workers had discovered his son's body close to the railway track. Vinay

had a sister and was his parents' sole son. He was supposed to get married in April of the following year.

At first, it was thought that he had died after being struck by a train. Still, the family members are being questioned by the authorities as they look into the situation.

The body has been submitted for an autopsy by the police, and the autopsy report will reveal the true cause of death. We're waiting on the autopsy results, and more research has started.

## Fire Breaks Out At Train Carrying Coal In Jabalpur

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

A fire broke out in a freight train near Bhitoni railway station of Jabalpur on Monday late night. The goods train, carrying coal, was going to GadawaraNarsinghpur from SingrauliDevra. Fortunately, no casualty was reported and timely action by the railway officials and fire station averted a major accident as the train carried flammable coal.

Seeing the flames, the goods train was stopped at Bhitoni railway station. There was a sudden chaos on the platform. Fire rangers were called and situation was brought under control. According to information, the incident happened at Bhitoni railway station located in Shahpura of Jabalpur on Monday night. The goods train was carrying coal for NTPC plant in Narsinghpur. The coal was loaded at SingrauliDevra of Madhya Pradesh. The train left for GadawaraNarsinghpur, however, as it reached Jabalpur, a few coaches caught fire. Seeing the rising smoke, the railway authorities gave a red signal and stopped the train at Bhitoni railway station on platform one.

The railway men informed the fire station and brigades rushed in. After much effort, the fire was extinguished. A detailed investigation so to check what sparked the fire in the freight train is underway.

## CBI arrests BSNL officials in Bhopal graft case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday said that it has arrested a Principal General Manager and an SDE, both working in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal in a bribery case.

A CBI official said that the accused have been identified as Mahendra Singh, posted as Principal General Manager of BSNL and Rakesh Yadav, SDE, BSNL, both posted in Bhopal.

The official said that a case was registered on complaint against Yadav and Singh, both working in BSNL, Bhopal on the allegations of demanding undue advantage from complainant.

The official said that it was alleged that a chargesheet for departmental disciplinary action was issued to the Complainant by PGM and the further proceedings in the matter were pending.

"It was further alleged that the SDE demanded undue advantage of Rs 40,000 from complainant and informed him that the PGM of BSNL had demanded the said bribe for amicable settlement of pending chargesheet in his



favour," the official said.

The official further said that it was also alleged that Yadav told the complainant that in case, he would not pay the demanded bribe, then PGM would take strict action against him.

Yadav also allegedly informed the Complainant that the PGM had asked to initially pay an amount of Rs 15,000 out of total bribe of Rs 40,000 and rest of the amount can be given subsequently, the official said. "CBI laid a trap and caught Singh while accepting bribe of Rs 15000

from Complainant," the official said.

Searches were conducted at the premises of PGM at Bhopal which led to recovery of cash Rs 8 lakh, 240.5 gm of Gold and 1915 gm Silver items, and incriminating documents.

Later, Yadav was also caught. During search at his premise incriminating documents and locker key were recovered, the official said. Both the accused were produced before the competent court at Bhopal and were remanded to police custody.



EDITOR'S SPECS

**Jatayu ready for installation in Ayodhya**

**S**culptors deployed at the under-construction Ram temple site in Ayodhya, are now giving final touches to the idol of Jatayu, the divine bird that played a crucial role in the Ramayana. The Jatayu idol will be set up at the temple of mythological vulture over KuberTeela and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to offer his tributes to Jatayu on January 22 before presiding over the consecration ceremony. "Paying respect to Jatayu is important since it will also symbolise commemorating the Ram Bhakts who laid down their lives during the struggle to ensure Ram temple is restored at the same site," said an office-bearer of the Mandir Trust. Vishwa Hindu Parishad's regional spokesperson Sharad Sharma said: "Senior office-bearers of the trust who invited the Prime Minister for the consecration ceremony have discussed the importance of Jatayu's role in the epic. Jatayu's temple and his idol are in final stages and would be ready before the ceremony takes place in January as Modi is expected to offer his tributes and prayers to the divine bird." Meanwhile, the Shri Ram JanmabhoomiTeerthKshetra said that the slab over the ground floor is being installed while work on readying the ground floor with intricate carvings is also on. Visitors will have to walk over the marble flooring to reach the sanctum sanctorum (garbh-griha) and artists and sculptures are giving final shapes to the details at present. Shri Ram JanmabhoomiTeerthKshetra on Monday released the latest pictures of the construction work being done at the site.

**Clap mitras of Andhra Pradesh serve 250 houses in four hours, but payments never come on time**

Paul Babu (Views expressed are personal)

**D**ressed in a lungi and shirt with a headscarf tied around his head, Gonduru Ondrapa Bhimlinga (60) starts pedalling the tricycle provided by the panchayat around 6 a.m. A dedicated Clean Andhra Pradesh Mitra (clap mitra), his aim is to collect waste -- dry, wet and hazardous -- from houses lining the four streets that he serves in Bommanahal block (mandal) of Anantapur district. He works only from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m., but his job is quite challenging if one considers the number of households he is supposed to cover within those few hours. Every clap mitra is responsible for door-to-door waste collection from 250 households, or 1,000 people, every single day. Bhimlinga has to stop at each house. Since most of the villagers go to their fields before dawn, they keep the waste bags outside. But those unwilling to comply just throw household waste on the road. He clears it, but does not hesitate to counsel people not to discard waste openly as he moves around with the tricycle. "I have been working as a clap mitra since 2019. I try to finish work in one street within an hour. A lot of waste accumulates during marriages and cultural events. I need to collect waste from primary school, high school, village secretariat, clinic, rythu bhārōsa (a state government scheme to financially assist farmers) call centre and shops," Bhimlinga said. By the time he finished his duty, he would have visited the dumpsite located on the village outskirts thrice to empty the tricycle. Despite his good work, he has not got his monthly payment of Rs 6,000 for the last 11 months. Even otherwise, regular payment is a luxury as clap mitras are paid in every three or six months only. According to Bhimlinga, two weeks ago, clap mitras submitted a memorandum to Anantapur District Collector M Gowthami seeking the immediate settlement of dues. Local YSRCP leader Padma Chandra Sekhar Reddy asserted that clap mitras in Sreedharaghatta panchayat were getting payments every month. "We collect Rs 2 per day from each house in the panchayat to make their payments before the fifth of every month." Unfortunately, this arrangement is present only in Sreedharaghatta. Bhimlinga said the authorities in the village where he worked had discontinued the services of two other clap mitras citing fund constraints. The lack of funds seems to have a lasting impact on waste management efforts. As a result, open dumping and burning of waste are prevalent in the villages of the block.

**All-in-one solution**  
Locals admit that they dump all sorts of waste -- be it domestic, agricultural or livestock -- separately in a nearby dumpsite. This very act forfeits proper waste management as chances of them getting mixed are quite high. On top of that, the locals burn all the accumulated waste once a month, upping air pollution to a great extent. No doubt, locals know nothing about IEC (information, education and communication) on waste management. It is compulsory to hold gramasabha (village assembly) at least four times a year to create awareness in the community on several fronts, including waste management. During the last gramasabha on October 2 (Gandhi Jayanti), panchayat president and Panchayati Raj officials addressed only the water and power supply issues of some villagers. A former clap mitra claimed the situation was similar during all gramasabhas. "The meeting is just for name-



sake purposes. No one says a word about waste management there," he said on condition of anonymity. Incidentally, the clap mitra system was launched on October 2, 2021. Some residents have not even attended the gramasabha once. "We neither attended nor received the respective blue, green and red bins for dry, wet and hazardous waste," they said. In short, waste collection is poor in many areas and no data could be accessed on whether the households take up waste disposal practices. According to the Panchayati Raj Department, Bommanahal block has 19 panchayats, 14,245 households, 72 clap mitras, 11 sheds, 59 NADEP composting pits and four incinerators. However, some areas such as a street near Kuruvalli Road, streets near steel factory and Devagiri Cross do not have a waste collection system in place. "We dump waste on the street corner and burn it once a month," said Chakali Naganna (45) and four others. Many households and small shops do not have access to waste collection services. So, they throw the wastewater onto the roads, wash their clothes and even bathe their children there. Waste from individual households, tea shops, chicken stalls, garages and general stores still leads to unsightly streets. "There are 1,152 households, seven clap mitras, 24 NADEP pits and one shed in our panchayat. Even if households do open dumping, clap mitras go and collect the waste. So, there is no open burning in our panchayat," Darga Honnur panchayat secretary Madamanchi Kullai Naidu said.

**Tied down by lack of funds**  
A solid waste process centre (SWPC) functions at every panchayat in Bommanahal block. It is actually a dumpsite where segregation of solid and wet waste takes place. A clap mitra functions as a 'shed man', who segregates solid, wet and dry waste. The compost generated is sold to third parties to maintain cleanliness within the panchayat. The revenue received is invested in community awareness programmes on waste disposal. "Almost all the residents are farmers. Most of them compost the wet waste generated in their households and use it in their fields. Hence, not even 150 gm of wet waste comes here from each house. So, there is not much work in the shed," Naidu said. "We use livestock waste as manure in our fields. If there is a surplus, we sell it for Rs 4,000 per tractor," Kattabasantha Hunumantappa (65), a resident of the block,

added. The sheds in Bandur, Bollanaguddam, Gonehal, Hareshamudram, Kolaganahalli, Nemakallu and Untakallu panchayats do not have power and water supply. The shed in Bommanahal panchayat became inoperative after it was gutted in a fire a year ago. There are no sheds in Elanji, Kuruvalli, Lingadahal, Siddaramapuram, Singanahalli and Upparahal panchayats. 101Reporters tried to contact the respective panchayat secretaries thrice over phone. One of them avoided saying the mobile battery was out of charge and the other sent an SMS saying he was attending a Google meet. According to the Panchayati Raj Department, lack of funds and other priorities are behind the poor condition of SWPCs. Each panchayat has its own priorities such as concrete roads, drainage construction, water connections and motor repairs. The panchayat president usually decides the priorities, while taking into account the opinion of the majority of gramasabha attendees. Moreover, SWPCs are not prioritised because they are more labour-intensive, but without much returns.

**Shadow of caste**  
"There is no separate allocation of funds/budget for waste management in panchayats. We utilise some amount either from the general fund or as per the guidelines laid down by the 15th Finance Commission to buy broomssticks, soaps, masks, gloves and safety jackets. Priorities are decided through gramasabhas and funds utilised accordingly," Sheik Shakila Begum, Mandal Parishad Development Officer, Bommanahal, told 101Reporters. However, clap mitras begged to differ. They said they have not been getting detergents, bath soaps, gloves and masks for months together. Safety jackets and uniforms are also not provided. "We have no weekly offs, holidays, social security and periodical health checkups." While acknowledging that clap mitras have remained unpaid for the last 11 months, Dulla Vijayamma, Extension Officer of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, told 101Reporters that they were issuing periodically whatever was required for waste collection. "Overdue salaries will be settled as soon as funds are available," she said. The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj's 2016 guide on solid waste management has clearly stated that sanitation workers should undergo periodical health checkups and get a weekly off-rotation basis. Along with their monthly wages, they should be supplied with two detergent and two bath soaps. A few Scheduled Caste clap mitras claimed they were being subjected to caste discrimination. "Though the caste system was abolished in 1948, the two tumbler system is still prevalent. For cutting hair, we have to go elsewhere. This is our reality. As recently as in 2020, the then district Collector, Gandham Chandrudu, directed the officials to rename their colonies after social reformers and freedom fighters. As many as 480 colonies in Anantapur district have been renamed," a former clap mitra, who is a graduate, said on condition of anonymity. "Clap mitras do the job that others cannot do, but they do not get social respect and opportunities. Others cannot do this cleaning work, but they get social respect and opportunities," a volunteer who is part of the Village Volunteers System of Andhra Pradesh summed up.

international

**Mossad Chief in Doha for fresh talks, will meet CIA Chief for release of more hostages**

**Tel Aviv** | Agencies  
**M**ossad Chief David Barnea reached Doha on Tuesday to hold fresh talks with Hamas, he will also meet Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Chief William Burns. The meeting assumes significance in wake of hostage release negotiations between Hamas and Israel. The CIA Chief William Burns has played a pivotal role in securing the release of the hostages and has also undertaken several discussions with the Qatar mediators for the release. Qatar senior officials were also hosted by Mossad Chief in Israel a few days earlier.



Sources said that Mossad Chief will ask Hamas for the release of all the women and children. They said that he will also hold talks with Qatar authorities and CIA Chief for the release of soldiers in Hamas captivity. Hamas has already released 51 Israeli citizens including women and children and 19 foreign nationals since the release of hostages commenced on November 24. Israel has agreed to the release of 30 Palestinian security prisoners. Sources said that Mossad Chief has communicated that it will increase the ceasefire for a further couple of days if more hostages are released from Hamas captivity.

**Indonesia's Anak Krakatau volcano erupts**

**Jakarta** | Agencies  
**I**ndonesia's Anak Krakatau volcano located in the waters of the Sunda Strait erupted on Tuesday, spewing an ash cloud of about 1 km high, an official said. The volcano's Observation Post Officer Anggi Nuryo Saputro said the eruption occurred at 6.29 a.m. for 130 seconds, with the wind heading north, reports Xinhua news agency. "The ash column was observed to be



gray to black in colour with thick intensity towards the north," he said in a statement. Since it first emerged in June 1927, Anak Krakatau's volcanic activity has been on the rise, making its body larger and taller, up to 157 m above the sea level. Its activity has increased significantly since April last year, which raised its dangerous status to the third highest level. In 2018, Anak Krakatau erupted and triggered a tsunami that killed over 400 people and left thousands homeless.

**573 migrants arrive on Italy's Lampedusa island**

**Rome** | Agencies  
**A**fishing vessel with 573 migrants aboard landed on southern Italy's Lampedusa island after being towed ashore by the Italian Coast Guard. It is the fourth major landing of migrants on the island this month, reports Xinhua news agency. Local media reported that the migrants had set off from Libya. They arrived at a migrant processing center on Lampedusa designed to house around 400 people. With the latest arrivals, the total number of migrants landing on Italy's shores this year topped 150,000, according to figures from the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). With only five weeks left to go this year, the figure is more than in any other complete year since 2016.



As of Monday, the UNHCR said that at least 2,659 people had died or gone missing crossing the Mediterranean route to European countries, around 220 more than in all of last year. More than 60 per cent of migrants using the Mediterranean route to arrive in the European Union this year have landed in Italy, and 85 per cent of those arriving in Italy landed on the island region of Sicily -- almost all of them on Lampedusa, a small island located between Sicily and Tunisia. On November 20, more than 800 people landed on Lampedusa in one day. The following day, a woman and a two-year-old girl died, and at least eight others went missing when two smaller vessels sank off the coast of Lampedusa. For years, the North African country of Libya was the most popular launching point for migrant boats. However, after the European Union began supporting Libya to enhance its coastal patrols to prevent vessels from setting off for Europe, Tunisia became the most common departure point for migrants on the deadly Mediterranean route. UNHCR figures show that through the end of October, 19 per cent of migrant arrivals in Italy were from Syria, slightly more than those from Bangladesh, Tunisia and Egypt, both accounting for over 13 per cent of the total, were the third and fourth most common countries of origin.

**N.Korea reports 1st opposing votes in local elections in decades**

**Seoul** | Agencies  
**N**orth Korea on Tuesday said there were votes against candidates for deputies to local assemblies in the latest local elections, marking the first time in decades that the repressive regime has reported opposing votes in its polls. A total of 27,858 workers, peasants, intellectuals and officials were elected new deputies for local assemblies of provinces, cities and counties in the local elections Sunday, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). The voter turnout was recorded at 99.63 per cent, reports Yonhap News Agency. Among voters who cast ballots, 99.91 per cent voted for the candidates for deputies to provincial people's assemblies and 0.09 per cent voted against them, the KCNA said. In terms of deputies to city and county people's assemblies, 99.87 per cent voted for selected candidates and 0.13 per cent voted against them. North Korea's state media carried a report of opposing votes in local elections for the first time since November 1956, when approval rates stayed below 100 per cent in two local elections. Elections in the North are widely viewed as a formality, as the candidates are hand-picked by the North's



ruling Workers' Party and rubber-stamped into office. In the elections to pick deputies to local assemblies in July 2019, the voter turnout was 99.98 per cent and 100 per cent voted for the candidates. In March of that year, North Korea reported 99.99 per cent voter turnout and 100 per cent approval in the elections to select deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly, the country's parliament. North Korea's rare revelation of opposing votes in the latest local elections may be intended to show that it democratically held the election following the revision of the election law. For Sunday's voting, Pyongyang allowed two candidates to be recommended in some constituencies and held a preliminary election to decide on a final single candidate. Seoul's Unification Ministry said the North's report of opposing votes does not mean that the country guarantees people's political rights.

**Severe snowstorm in Ukraine kills five, injures 19**

**Kiev** | Agencies  
**U**krainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has confirmed that at least five people have died and 19 injured as a result of a severe storm in the country's southern region of Odesa. The severe snowstorm hit Ukraine overnight on Monday, causing traffic disruptions and power outages in 17 regions, Xinhua news agency reported. At least 2,019 of villages and towns have been left without electricity as strong winds damaged power grids, the country's Energy Ministry said on social media. The southern Odesa and Mykolaiv regions, the central



Dnipropetrovsk region, and the northern Kiev region were affected the most by the blizzard, said the Ministry. The other affected regions are Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Crimea, with traffic currently blocked on 14 motorways. A state of emergency is now in place in several municipalities in Crimea. More than 1,500 rescuers have been deployed across Ukraine in a massive clean-up operation. In the capital Kiev, the country's largest flag - measuring 16x24m - had to be taken down from a 90m pole after it was damaged by fierce winds. City officials said the flag would be replaced and raised again. Meanwhile, the storm has also battered Russia, Moldova, Georgia and Bulgaria. According to Russia's Energy Ministry, the worst hit regions were Dagestan, Krasnodar and Rostov. While Russia's Black Sea port of Sochi witnessed big waves battering the city's seafront, authorities in Moscow had to deploy specialist machinery to clear the streets after heavy snowfall.



# CM Eknath Shinde has ordered an assessment of crop losses caused by unseasonal rain

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has ordered an assessment of crop losses caused by unseasonal rain in Maharashtra and payment of compensation to affected farmers.

"Authorities have been directed to conduct the panchama of the damaged crops and affected farmers should be paid adequate compensation," CM Shinde said.

"This is the government of farmers and workers. The government will always stand behind these classes," the chief minister said, reported the PTI.

Notably, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray had on Tuesday targeted CM Eknath Shinde for campaigning in poll-bound Telangana even though farmers in Maharashtra are suffering due to unseasonal rains.

He said preliminary information suggests that nearly 1 lakh hectares of land under cultivation in Marathwada, Vidarbha and north Maharashtra regions was affected due to unseasonal rains over the last three to four days.

Meanwhile, CM Eknath Shinde said that Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra and Naxal-hit areas in the region are transforming.



"Instead of giving jobs, we want to create job-givers. I am satisfied that Balasaheb Thackeray's dream of Maharashtra becoming a job-giver is

finally coming to fruition," he said.

The chief minister said Naxalism cannot be crushed only by the bullet and underlined the need to create development opportunities for the people living in the affected region.

Queried on recent incidents of Naxalite violence in Gadchiroli district, the chief minister said the C60 commando force has proved to be very effective.

"Naxalism menace in Gadchiroli is almost over. They are not getting new recruits, forcing the remaining cadres to shift their base to neighbouring Chhattisgarh," he added.

Meanwhile, Union minister Kapil Patil on Tuesday urged the chief minister to expedite the assessment of the damage caused to crops by rain and hailstorms in the Bhiwandi Lok Sabha constituency.

In a letter addressed to the chief minister, Patil said crops in Bhiwandi, Shahapur, Murbad and Wada talukas have suffered heavy losses and the paddy thrashing work was also affected.

He urged the CM to order relief for the affected farmers and due compensation.

# Uddhav Thackeray hit out at Chief Minister Eknath Shinde over his visit to Telangana for poll campaigning

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday hit out at Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde over his visit to neighbouring Telangana for poll campaigning amid losses faced by farmers in his home state due to unseasonal rains.

Addressing a news conference, Uddhav Thackeray demanded that a cabinet meeting be held immediately to discuss the issue and farmers be given assistance at the earliest.

He said six people have lost their lives due to unseasonal rains in the state, while 100 cattle have also perished.

Grape and onion cultivators in Maharashtra have also been affected by the unseasonal rains, the former chief minister said, reported PTI.

"When the MeT department had alerted about unseasonal rains in



advance, what did the state cabinet do?" he asked.

Thackeray said a preliminary information he has received suggests that nearly 1 lakh hectare of land under cultivation in Marathwada, Vidarbha and north Maharashtra was affected due to unseasonal rains since last three-four days.

"There is no government in Maharashtra as everyone is busy in campaigning. It is time to change the government," Thackeray said,

"A person who does not bother about his own house (state) and goes to another state to campaign for another party is not fit to run the government and he has no right to be in power," the Sena (UBT) leader claimed.

Shinde visited Telangana on Tuesday to campaign for the BJP. The assembly polls in Telangana are scheduled on November 30.

The Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the BJP are allies in Maharashtra.

"The chief minister who cannot handle his own house and is peeping into homes of others cannot give justice to the state," Thackeray said.

Deputy CMs Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar are also "missing in action," he claimed.

Thackeray also targeted the ruling BJP saying while it is busy distributing "revdis" (doles) in other states, what has it done for Maharashtra.

# Maha Shocker: Govt teacher hangs self after killing wife, minor son in Solapur

In a shocking incident, a government school teacher allegedly killed his wife and their minor son early on Tuesday before committing suicide at his home in Solapur, the police said.

**Team Absolute | Solapur (Maharashtra)**

In a shocking incident, a government school teacher allegedly killed his wife and their minor son early on Tuesday before committing suicide at his home in Solapur, the police said.

The incident came to light when a relative, Yuvraj M. Munde, went to visit the family on Tuesday morning only to find the three bodies in the bedroom of the second floor flat in Naikwadi area of the town.

According to Barshi City police station official Sindhu Deshmukh, the deceased have been identified as Atul S. Munde (40), his wife Trupti (36), also



a local schoolteacher, and their five-year-old son Om.

"Yuvraj Munde, the cousin brother of the deceased, informed the police following which a team was rushed to the spot. The bodies have been sent for autopsy to ascertain the exact cause of their deaths," Deshmukh said.

According to preliminary investigation, the body of Trupti Munde was found lying on the bed with

her throat slit, while her son had been smothered with a pillow. The minor also suffered injuries on the head and neck.

Both were allegedly killed by Atul Munde, who apparently committed suicide by hanging himself in the same room, Deshmukh told IANS.

The motive behind the double murder-cum-suicide is not clear yet. The police are questioning their neighbours, friends and relatives for more information as the incident has sparked a sensation in the town with many people rushing there.

The police suspect that the dual murder-cum-suicide may have occurred in the wee hours of Tuesday. They are probing all possible angles, including domestic dispute, professional issues or any other external factors.

While Atul Munde was a teacher in the Zilla Parishad School in Karmala, his wife Trupti taught at the Abhinav Primary School in Barshi.

# BMC to take action against shops, hotels without Marathi signboards

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will take action against shops, hotels and other commercial establishments in Mumbai that are not putting up Marathi signboards in Devanagari script, an official said on Tuesday.

BMC said that a drive has begun on Tuesday in this regard and a team has been formed to take action against such establishments that did not follow the directives.

BMC official Sanjay Sonar said, "It has been going on for a very long time that there should be a signboard in Marathi. So far, many people have acted upon our primary information to get a signboard in Marathi, some of them didn't do it and went to the Court.

BMC official further



informed that the maximum fine is up to Rs 1 lakh if such establishments fail to comply with the directions of the Corporation, "The Supreme Court's decision came and they were given an ultimatum of two months which also ended on November 25. These establishments will show their license. However, the maximum fine is Rs 1 lakh in for not following directions. But there is another provision of a fine which is the penalty of Rs 2,000 per employee. First, we will give them a notice, and then we will check their license once. After looking at their license,

we will get to know about the number of employees and then the Court will decide the fine accordingly," Sonar said.

Meanwhile, the BMC will start taking action from Tuesday against shops, hotels and other commercial establishments failing to put up signboards with names in Devanagari script, the civic body has said in a statement.

BMC administrator I S Chahal held a meeting and asked the officials to ensure implementation of the Supreme Court's directive that the names of shops, institutes and hotels must be in Devanagari script it said. The apex court had given time to put up Devanagari boards by November 25, but the civic body will initiate action from November 28, the statement said.

# VBA to hold peace rally in Mumbai in support of people of Palestine

The President of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), Prakash Ambedkar, said on Tuesday that the party will hold a peace rally in Mumbai on December 8 in support of the people of Palestine who are currently facing a war with Israel.

**Team Absolute | Pune (Maharashtra)**

The President of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), Prakash Ambedkar, said on Tuesday that the party will hold a peace rally in Mumbai on December 8 in support of the people of Palestine who are currently facing a war with Israel.

Ambedkar said that the peace meeting-cum-rally will be organised with the participation of several Muslim and non-Muslim organisations and eminent personalities.

"If the scope of the Israel-Hamas war escalates, it will affect India... Peace is imperative. Our country may have to bear the responsibility of ensuring the security of more than 5 crore Indians living and working in the Gulf region," Ambedkar said.

A senior party official said that the peace rally is likely to be held at the sprawling Aazad Maidan in which a large number of Dalits shall also join.

Lakhs of Dalits from all over India are expected to join the annual Mahaparinirvan Divas to mark the death anniversary of B.R. Ambedkar on December 6.

A significant number of these attendees are expected to stay back for a couple of days to attend the pro-Palestine peace rally planned by the VBA,



the official said.

On his part, Ambedkar has appealed to all political parties and organisations in the state, as well as

the common masses, to cast aside their religious differences and join the peace rally in support of the crisis-hit people of Palestine.

# Woman Agniveer trainee commits suicide in Mumbai; Navy orders probe

A woman Agniveer Logistics trainee from Kerala reportedly died by committing suicide at a women's hostel in Malvani area of Malad west, a police officer said here on Tuesday.

**Team Absolute | Mumbai**

A woman Agniveer Logistics trainee from Kerala reportedly died by committing suicide at a women's hostel in Malvani area of Malad west, a police officer said here on Tuesday.

The woman, identified as Aparna V Nair, 20, was undergoing her navy training at the INS Hamla in Malad, and she may have resorted to the ultimate step owing to personal reasons, said an Investigating Officer.

Taking strong cognisance of the incident, the Indian Navy has ordered an inquiry.



"Regret to inform the unfortunate incident of the unnatural death of Aparna V Nair, Agniveer Logistics (F&A), 20, at INS Hamla, Mumbai on Nov. 27. An enquiry has been ordered to investigate the incident. Indian Navy extends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family," said an official statement.

Senior Police Inspector, Malvani Police Station Chimaji Adhav said that the police have lodged an accidental death report, and fur-

ther investigations are on into the motive behind the incident.

According to her roommate who returned to the room around 10.30 am on Monday, Nair apparently failed to respond to repeated knocks at the door.

Suspecting that something was amiss, the room partner informed the other girls and the hostel staff, who broke open the door and found Nair's body there.

She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she was declared dead on admission and later the police were summoned for the probe.

Police said Nair had arrived in Mumbai around two weeks ago for training and was living in a nearby private women's hostel along with a couple of dozen other girls.

# Congress slams Maha CM for 'abandoning' farmers, demands immediate aid

The Congress on Tuesday demanded immediate aid for the lakhs of farmers reeling under the severe crop losses owing to the recent spell of unseasonal rains that lashed large parts of the state in the past few days.

**Team Absolute | Mumbai**

The Congress on Tuesday demanded immediate aid for the lakhs of farmers reeling under the severe crop losses owing to the recent spell of unseasonal rains that lashed large parts of the state in the past few days. State party President Nana Patole and Leader of Opposition Vijay Wadettiwar have called upon Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to disburse urgent assistance of Rs 25,000 per acre for non-irrigated crops and Rs 50,000/acre for irrigated crops as immediate relief to the farmers.

Wadettiwar told mediapersons that the standing crops



on over 100,000-hectares have been razed due to the heavy rains and hailstorms that pounded many regions in the state, raising big questions on the viability of the Rabi crop season.

Similarly, in a letter to the Chief Minister, Patole pointed out that this year, the farmers have been at the receiving end of nature's fury, battling one crisis after another.

While the Kharif (monsoon) season was wiped off due to a prolonged dry spell, while the Rabi (winter) season is practically written off owing to the unseasonal

interest of the farming community. "The government is misleading by claiming it has sought Rs 2,500 crore as aid from the Centre. Then who is the guardian of the state farmers? The situation has come to a stage when the tillers are offering to sell off their body organs to rid themselves of loans/debts," said Wadettiwar sharply.

Patole and Wadettiwar also said that the crop insurance companies should expedite disbursement of compensation to the farmers on priority.

"While Rs 7,000 crore was given to crop insurance companies, the Agriculture Minister is saying that these companies will provide Rs 1,800-crore, then where is the remaining money going?" asked Wadettiwar.

The Congress leaders said the government should not "abandon" the farmers who are the life-givers to the nation and this is the time to extend a helping hand to them when they are facing a crisis of survival.

# Maharashtra may begin screening arrivals at international airports

Officials from the state's public health department have said that if the need arises, Maharashtra may begin screening arrivals at international airports as a precautionary measure, in light of the rising cases of respiratory illness in China. A meeting of all state-level and central-level health officials, along with representatives from the World Health Organization and doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), was held in this regard on Sunday. One of the points of discussion was the possibility of increasing disease surveillance at airports.

"There is no written communication or guidelines regarding the same but checking for fever and keeping an eye out for unusual symptoms at airports was discussed in the meeting," said Dr Dilip Salunkhe, a medical officer with the state's public health department. According to Dr Salunkhe, the health department has issued an advisory to private hospitals in the state. "We have already asked them to update their infrastructure and alert us to any unusual cases. Apart from this, we have ready government-run infrastructure that was set

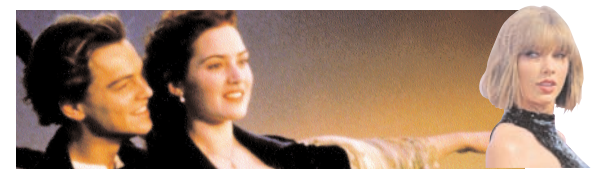


up when COVID-19 was on the rise," he said. It is noteworthy that the state has not reported any unusual cases so far. The meeting was held on the same day the Centre, in a letter, asked the states to review hospital preparedness in case a situation similar to that in China arises in India, while clarifying that there was no need to be alarmed.

Recently, northern parts of China reported a rise in respiratory illness predominantly attributed to usual causes like Influenza, Mycoplasma pneumonia, SARS-CoV-2, etc. This

surge has largely impacted children, leaving many hospitalised.

"All states and Union Territories have been advised to implement the 'Operational Guidelines for Revised Surveillance Strategy in the context of COVID-19,' shared earlier this year, which provides for integrated surveillance of respiratory pathogens presenting as cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory illness (SARI)," the Union Health Ministry said in a statement on Sunday.



## KEVIN BACON RECALLS LIVING IN 'FLOPHOUSE' APARTMENT ON \$150 MONTH BUDGET IN 1976

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Kevin Bacon's time in New York City began with a \$150-a-month apartment budget. "I don't know how I got the math on that, but that's what I had decided," Kevin, 65, said during a recent appearance on 'The Kelly Clarkson Show' of his experience moving to the Big Apple in 1976.

The actor said: "So I saw an ad on the back of the Village Voice, and it said 'Artists, actors, musicians residence,' and I thought, 'Well, that sounds good'," reports People maga-



zine. The Pennsylvania native said he sought out the apartment after sleeping on his sister's couch for four months while he got acquainted with the city.

"It was basically a flophouse," he continued. "I guess there were some artists there, but not a lot."

As per People, Kevin said he was forced to live with a roommate he met at the rental office after being told there were no single-room apartments.

"We lived together for four years," explained Kevin. "In fact, I just had lunch with him the other day."

The 'Leave the World Behind' star said his roommate was a classical pianist who worked nights at the Copacabana and that it was "really cool" to hear him play at home.

Kelly Clarkson shared her own experience of moving in with someone she didn't know, adding that everyone in the entertainment industry has had a "crazy" living experience at one point or another.

"You really got to want your dream," she added, to which Kevin agreed by replying that "you got to have the hunger."

The 'Footloose' actor recently opened up to People about his love of spending time at home in the kitchen with his wife, Kyra Sedgwick.

"We really switch off. We love to cook, and we love to eat. Cooking and eating together is something that we've always done as a family".

His and Kyra's passion has also been carried on to their daughter Sosie, 31, and son Travis, 34.

"We never gave them lessons," he explained.

"We never sat down and said, 'Okay, this is how you cook.' But just in the course of life, they've ended up making great, great dishes, and they both really enjoy it".

# JoJo Siwa

## PROPOSES DREAM REALITY SHOW WHERE NICK VIAL, TYLER CAMERON FIND HER LOVE

Los Angeles | Agencies

JoJo Siwa has made no secret of the fact that she leaned on her "older brothers" Nick Vial and Cameron Tyler to get her through the rigorous challenges of 'Special Forces: World's Toughest Test'. And, it seems she's also open to their dating advice, reports People magazine. She even jokingly pitched a reality show where the 'Bachelor Nation' stars might use their experience looking for love on camera to help her find a special lady to spend the rest of her life with.

When asked if the three, who formed a

close bond while filming season 2 of the boot camp-style reality series, might be teaming up on camera again in the future, Vial teased: "Yeah, it's going to be the fear-some threesome... we'll have our own show or something."

"Perfect," chimed in Siwa.

"Nick and Tyler find me a wife!"

"There we go," Nick said, even pitching a title, 'Nick and Tyler: Matchmaker'. Siwa then added, "We're going to get Tyler on Dancing with the Stars."

As per People, Siwa is coming off a grueling stint on the boot camp-style reality show, from which she self-eliminated dur-

ing Monday's season 2 finale.

"I've never quit anything," she said in a confessional interview while footage of her in the interrogation room showed her whispering to herself, "It's time to put my personal life first".

She told Directing Staff Mark "Billy" Billingham while opting out: "You know, I've had an incredible experience here. And I've learned a lot about myself. And I've learned that I've put my career in front, way more than I have a more personal life." She added, "Even though I didn't make it to the end, I made it well beyond what I thought I could."

## PARIS HILTON OPENS UP ABOUT NEWBORN DAUGHTER LONDON, BEING IN HER 'MOM ERA'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Paris Hilton is elated about life as a mom of two. Ahead of the premiere of the second season of her reality series, 'Paris In Love', the multi-hyphenate, shared that she is excited to be settling into her family of four after announcing on Thanksgiving that she and husband Carter Reum have welcomed their second baby, daughter London.

Paris said, "I'm just over the moon that our little princess is here. My life just feels so complete, having my little baby boy and now my little girl", reports People magazine. Paris said the couple, who welcomed son Phoenix Barron in January, "are just so grateful and so happy. It's exciting to be spending our first holidays as parents".

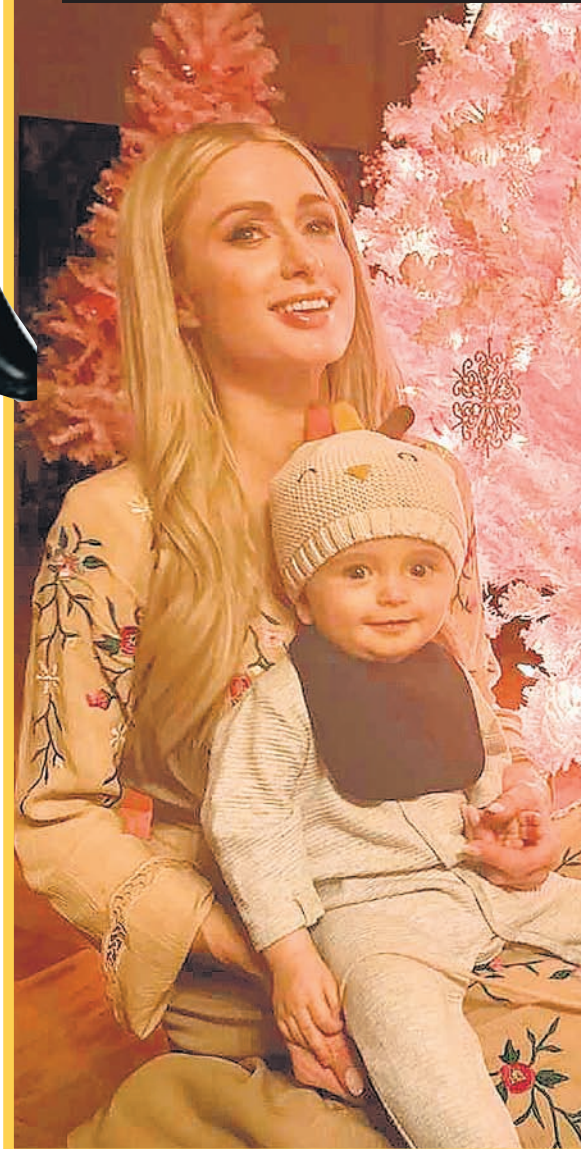
"I am so excited to have our first holidays together. Thanksgiving was so special, surprising everyone with London and getting to show Phoenix the Christmas tree for the first time. Seeing his eyes light up and seeing the wonder in his eyes, it's such a magical experience. I can't wait for our first Christmas together as a family".

As per People, from "having Santa come and bring all the gifts for the kids" to "just sitting around on Christmas morning in matching onesies," Hilton is looking forward to celebrating that "we can all be together, spending time as a family" this holiday season.

She's also excited about "having my sister, my brother and all their kids come over. It's the next generation of cousins, and it's just great to watch them all grow up together. I'm looking forward to those moments so much. The holidays have always been special to me, but now they're even more special now that I have a family to share it with".

Fans will get to watch Hilton tackle everything from mom guilt to diaper changes on the new season of 'Paris In Love', which she hopes will introduce the world to another side of her after growing up in the spotlight.

She shared, "I'm just excited for my fans to see this next stage of my life, being a wife and a mom. You get to experience a really in-depth look into my life and what a fun mom I am and how much love that I have to give and how I am very hardworking".



## Tiffany Haddish on DUI arrest: 'I'm going to get some help'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Comedienne Tiffany Haddish has talked about her arrest for falling asleep behind the wheel. The 'Girls Trip' star was cited by authorities for driving under the influence after dozing off in the middle of the street. In an interview, Haddish addressed the incident and said that she is going to seek help following the incident, reports deadline.com.

"I'm going to get some help so I can learn balance and boundaries," she told ET.

Haddish also assured that "this will never happen again".

According to the actress, before the incident, she was at The Laugh Factory helping feed the under-

privileged on Thanksgiving day and also performed a special



comedy routine.

Haddish addressed the arrest during a performance at The Laugh Factory in California.

"What happened last night?" Haddish said hours after the news broke she was cited with a DUI. "Ah, damn. You tell me. I don't know."

## Kylie Jenner recalls struggles of starting make-up line

Los Angeles | Agencies

Reality TV star and make-up mogul Kylie Jenner believes she's proved people "wrong" with the success of her make-up business.

The 26-year-old star has gained huge success with her Kylie Cosmetics brand but her mother Kris Jenner initially warned her that the venture could easily flop.

"Proving people wrong was a challenge, but so was building it from the ground up. It was me and my mom and we never made a make-up line. We didn't know where to start. We didn't have anyone helping us. And my mom thought I was going to be stuck with lip kits in my garage for the rest of my life," Kylie told Interview magazine, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"I think we ordered 5,000 of each colour; that was the minimum. And she was like, 'You better be ready, Kylie, because you might have a lot of lip kits in your garage for the rest of your life, so you better love these colours'."

Kylie initially found it "hard" to get her brand off the ground.

However, she's also relished the challenge of growing her company.

Kylie, who founded her business back in 2014, shared: "Then it broke in two seconds, and that's when we were like, 'Okay, how do we do this? How do we make these faster and better?'"

"We got in my mom's car and drove all over California and visited all these factories. Finding the best manufacturer was difficult. We were a new company, so growing in front of a lot of people was hard. You don't have room to make mistakes. But it wasn't a bad thing."

"It was so successful and it was the best time of my life."



## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Taylor Swift





IFFI 2023

# Michael Douglas conferred with Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Acclaimed Hollywood actor-producer Michael Douglas was conferred with the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award during the closing ceremony of 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), here on Tuesday.

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Michael Douglas's wife and award-winning actress Catherine Zeta Jones were present on the occasion, among others.

After receiving the award, Douglas termed Satyajit Ray as a world-class filmmaker.

"Cinema is one of the few mediums that have the power to unite and transform us. Today, the global language of cinema is more



meaningful than ever. IFFI is a reminder of magic of filmmaking and cross-cultural artistic expressions, transcending time, language and geographies," he said.

In his distinguished career spanning over six decades, Douglas has been nominated for two Oscars and won both of them -- as producer of the Best Picture winner 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest' (1975), and as Best Actor for 'Wall Street' (1988).

Douglas also expressed his admiration for Indian cinema, saying 'RRR', 'Om Shanti Om' and 'The Lunchbox' are among his favourite Indian films.

Highlighting the role of movies in uniting the world, Douglas said that films share the same language and bring us closer together.

"The audience from all around

the world can understand what is going on in movies. Movies create this international connection. This is the magic, beauty and joy of this industry and that's why I love this business very much," he said.

He also said that it is a tremendous honour to receive the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award in Goa.

In a recollection of his college days, he candidly shared that he had studied the works of Satyajit Ray like 'Pather Panchali' and 'Charulata' in his film course and getting an award named after him is truly special.

"Ray's pictures were so interesting... they portrayed reality. The greatness of Ray is that he was not only a director, but also a writer, film editor, musician, and all at the same time," he reminisced.



## KJo recollects how he attended Rani Mukerji, Aditya Chopra's wedding during release of '2 States'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Director-producer Karan Johar, who hosts the popular streaming show 'Koffee With Karan', recollected how he managed to attend actress Rani Mukerji and filmmaker-producer Aditya Chopra's destination wedding when KJo's own film was about to release in theatres.

Karan also revealed that Adi and Rani got hitched in Manchester.

The upcoming episode of the show will see Bollywood stars Rani Mukerji and Kajol gracing the controversial couch.

The two ladies, who are also cousins, shared the screen in KJo's directorial debut 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', and have a lot to discuss with the show host during the episode.

Talking to the ladies, Karan recollected how he attended Rani and Aditya's wedding when his own production '2 States' starring Alia Bhatt and Arjun Kapoor in the lead was about to release.

Destination weddings are in trend now, but Karan revealed the OG couple who were the first to do it in B-town.

Talking about this, Karan said: "Kajol, you actually knew Adi way before even Rani did. He is my best friend in the whole world. We have to talk about the fact when Rani and Adi got married. It was a destination wedding, actually they began the destination wedding of movie stars if nobody knows it. I don't even want to say where it was because I think he will still fire me like decades later.

He further mentioned, "He literally threatens me that if I ever put a photograph of his and mine that we take every Diwali. But like, he told me, 'Meri shaadi ho rahi hai, there are 18 people attending. If word gets out of this wedding, it will be you. The only person who will open his mouth is you, if I see there is a mention of this wedding in any publication at that time newspapers were still dominating'. I was so hyper and hysterical."

"I had to lie to my mother, we had a release, it was April 2014, I will never forget it, '2 States' was releasing. I had to abandon my movie release, tell everybody I have an event in Manchester, for some reason made it up. But everyone was like 'On release weekend, why are you going to Manchester?' I was like, 'I have to go, I have to go,' KJo added.

## When Kajol mistakenly believed Mani Ratnam call was a prank

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker Karan Johar, who is back with the new season of his chat show 'Koffee With Karan', recalled a funny incident of the narration of 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' with Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol, where the latter thought someone was pranking her when she got a call from Director Mani Ratnam.

Filmmaker Karan Johar, who is back with the new season of his chat show 'Koffee With Karan', recalled a funny incident of the narration of 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' with Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol, where the latter thought someone was pranking her when she got a call from Director Mani Ratnam.

In the upcoming episode, Kajol and Rani Mukerji will grace the controversial couch of the show.

During the conversation, Karan shared: "I still remember the day I narrated the film to SRK and Kajol. We were at SRK's old house at Amrit Apartments. We were sitting in his room which is right next to the terrace."

"You were crying, SRK was looking at you thinking you lost the plot. I was crying while narrating the film, you were crying while hearing and he was just thinking that both of us were mad," said Karan.

The filmmaker added: "And at that point of time, I remember you got a call, in the mid of this from Mani Ratnam to whom you said 'Who?' He said I am Mani Ratnam speaking and you were like 'Yeah, and I am Tom Cruise', and put the phone down."

"Mani Ratnam had called her for 'Dil Se'. She didn't believe it was Mani Ratnam and she thought someone was playing a prank," concluded Karan.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Film-maker and actor Rishab Shetty on Tuesday said that being nominated for the Golden Peacock Award is a proud moment for the 'Kantara' team.

He was interacting with the media on the sidelines of the 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa.

Representing the vibrant and dynamic Kannada film industry, his widely celebrated feature Kantara, of which he is the director, actor and writer, is one of the three Indian films to make it to this year's list of 15 exceptional films competing for the prestigious Golden Peacock award at IFFI 54.

"Kantara" is a 150 mins long Kannada masterpiece that has taken the audiences and critics by storm ever since its release last year. A spell-binding tribute to culture and folklore, Kantara weaves magic as it portrays the complex and dynamic conflict between man and nature, through the magical medium of dance and emotion. "The audience connected with Kantara because it is a story rooted in the culture of Bharat," said Shetty.

"The audience took the film to where it is today, truly making it their own," he further added.

"I belong to this tradition, I believe in this ritual and I worship this God. We took care that we do not hurt anybody's emotion and made sure that there was no damage to the culture or community," he elaborated.

Speaking about Kannada cinema, Rishab Shetty spoke about the OTT challenge where platforms are still apprehensive about Kannada audiences and are not open to Kannada films yet, causing critical losses in the industry.

"Cinema has given us so much, we must give back to Kannada cinema," asserted Shetty.

He firmly believes that content in Indian cinema today has truly gone global. "At present, there is a revolution underway-good content is widely accepted overcoming the language barriers," Shetty expressed.



## IFFI 2023: GOLDEN PEACOCK NOMINATION PROUD MOMENT FOR 'KANTARA' TEAM, SAYS RISHAB SHETTY

## Amitabh marvels at 13 yr old's business idea: 'India's future is bright'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who is the host of the quiz based reality show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15', was left amazed by a 13-year-old contestant, after hearing his business idea, and said India's future is becoming bright.

In the episode 76 of the knowledge based show, host Big B welcomed Namish Chopra, an eighth grade student, from Hyderabad, Telangana to the hot seat. Reading Namish's report card, Amitabh said: "Ambition - I want to be a successful businessman. You think this way at just 13 years of age. I couldn't even tie my shoelaces when I was 13 years old. How could you...? What business do you plan to do?"

The little boy went on to say, "Sir, my business idea is to have a shoe company. The name of the company would be 'Boot Ace'. For me, Ace stands for the three addressable markets for my company or my business."

"The first one is the armed forces. Many soldiers in the armed forces face the problem of unbearable leg, knee and back pain as they have to carry heavy boots. They keep walking wearing those boots and frequent different places which worsens their condition. So my company has thought of an idea. We should find a solution for them. We must make shoes for them which are durable, comfortable and long-lasting and it solves their problems," shared Namish.

The contestant further added: "Sir, I want to tell you something. All of us know your birthday is on October 11. My birthday is also on October 11."



The contestant further said: "The army protects the common people of their country. So my second addressable market is the common man. We may take the example of our farmers. They work in fields and they face similar problems. Their legs, knees and back pain. I have the same idea for them as well. We must make comforting shoes for them which are long-lasting and durable."

"The next market is the elite class. The elite class includes businessmen and Gen Z. They want to customise their shoes and make their shoes more comfortable. So my idea is in case they buy shoes from my company, they could change the colour of their shoes via an app or via AI," shared Namish.

The contestant said: "This was one of the reasons for coming to KBC. I want to use the winning amount for my education and to fund my business."

Listening to the business plan of the young boy, the 81-year-old actor was left speechless, and said: "We are proud of you. You are the upcoming generation of India. India's future is becoming bright."

The contestant further added: "Sir, I want to tell you something. All of us know your birthday is on October 11. My birthday is also on October 11."

## ALIA BHATT'S B'DAY WISH FOR SISTER SHAHEEN IS A 'LOVING' POEM



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Alia Bhatt showered birthday love on her elder sister Shaheen, by jotting down a sweet poem for her, calling her the 'sunshine' of her life.

Alia and Shaheen are daughters of filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt, and actress Soni Razdan. Taking to Instagram, Alia dropped a string of unseen pictures with her sister, which includes one childhood photo of the siblings. Along with the photos, the 'Raazi' actress wrote: "you are joy... you are light... may we every now and then have a fight... you are sunshine, you are breeze... please please always take care of your knees! I am not a writer. I am not a poet. I'm just your loving sister and I'm sure you know it happy birthday my sweetie."

Dia Mirza commented on the post and wrote: "Happy birthday Shaheen". Shaheen also took to Instagram and dropped pictures with Alia, her parents, Ranbir Kapoor, Pooja Bhatt etc. She also gave a glimpse of Alia's daughter Raha's cute little pink chair.

She captioned the post as: "Hash. Tag. Blesssssseddd". Meanwhile, on the work front, Alia has 'Jigra' in the pipeline.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Ruhi Singh