

VOL. 7, ISSUE 136, NEW DELHI | TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024 | ₹5 | PAGE 8

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Soluten



#### **SPORTS**

**Indian Wells: Alcaraz, Swiatek win** 



Make complete disclosure of all details on electoral bonds: SC to SBI

# DISCLOSE EVERYTHING

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Supreme Court on Monday ordered the State Bank of India (SBI) to make complete disclosure of all details in its possession relating to the electoral bonds, including the alphanumeric code.

"In the judgement, we had expressly asked the State Bank of India (SBI) to disclose all details. The language of the judgement was 'all details will have to be disclosed'. Therefore, that includes the bond number as well. Let SBI not be selective in disclosure of the details," said a Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud.

"Now, SBI will not only disclose bond number but it shall also file an affidavit again saying that it has not withhold any details," added the 5-judge



Bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B.R. Gavai, J.B. Padriwala and Manoj Misra. In response, senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for SBI, said: "We will give every bit of

information which we have." The SBI is required to file an affidavit by 5 p.m.

#### on Thursday indicating that it has disclosed all details of the electoral bonds which were in its possession and custody and no information has been withheld from disclosure.

On Friday, the top court had issued notice to SBI for non-disclosure of the unique alphanumeric code of electoral bonds.

#### **NITIN GADKARI CITES DRAWBACK ON ELECTORAL BONDS**

New Delhi: Union minister Nitin Gadkari said that the scrapping of Electoral Bonds scheme would open the gates for black money and all parties should think about developing a better system. In an exclusive interview with NDTV Editor-in-Chief Sanjay Pugalia, Gadkari supported the Electoral Bond Scheme that was developed when the late Arun Jaitley was the country's finance minister.

"It is a fact that money is needed to contest elections. Every party needs that."

"This scheme was made with the idea that parties would get money through bonds and it will help push the economy if you want to make it number one," Gadkari said, pointing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitions on the economic front. "What was wrong with that," he questioned. Declaring that he would not comment on a decision of the Supreme Court, Gadkari, however, pointed out another drawback of a ban. If electoral bonds are banned, money would still come in, only in the form of black money, he said. "It you do not allow (electoral) bonds, people will take money as number two. This will happen anyway," he said.

## "Always trying to change my words...": Rahul Gandhi on PM's 'Shakti' jab

Team Absolute New Delhi

ongress MP Rahul Gandhi on Monday responded to criticism by Prime Minister Narendra Modi about his use of the word 'shakti' - a reference to the feminine divine energy when describing the opposition's bid to defeat the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in the April/May Lok Sabha election.

The PM and the BJP had accused Mr Gandhi and the opposition, including the Congress-led INDIA bloc, of wanting to destroy 'shakti', and extended the comment to "...denying the existence of Lord Ram". "I accept their challenge. I will sacrifice my life," the PM said in Telangana's Jagtial.

Gandhi then counteraccused the PM of "always trying to change the meaning of my words by twisting them in some way or the other", and said he had spoken about a "power (or 'shakti') that has captured institutions, media, industry, and the entire constitutional structure of India. He (PM Modi) knows I have spoken a deep truth. The



the mask of that power is Modiji. This is such a power that has captured institutions... the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Enforcement Directorate, the Income Tax Department, the Election Commission, the media, and the entire constitutional structure of India," he declared."I recognise that power... Modiji also recognises that power. This is not religious power. It is the power of corruption and falsehood. And this is why, whenever I raise my voice against him,

Modiji gets upset and

enraged," Gandhi thundered at a 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' event in Mumbai.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that the Lok Sabha elections were a fight between those who want to destroy 'Shakti' and those who worship it.

Addressing a public meeting at Jagtial (Telangana), he alleged that INDIA bloc's manifesto released in Mumbai on Sunday talked of finishing 'Shakti.'

He said that every mother and every daughter is a form of 'Shakti' for him and that he

## EC removes West Bengal's acting DGP Rajeev Kumar

NO OUT-OF-TURN HEARING ON ASSOCHAM'S PLEA

industrial associations objecting to the disclosure of the alpha-numeric numbers of the Electoral Bonds.

Industry of India) and other industry associations, mentioned the intervention applications for an out-

At this, CJI Chandrachud said: "Your application is not numbered, it is not registered. What is sauce

for the goose is sauce for the gander! There is no application on board. Let it be circulated, we will deal

with it in the normal course. Just because you're appearing for a big client, we will not tolerate this. You

will have to follow the rules. The whole world knew that this matter was being heard. You come after the

judgment is delivered. You circulate an email. We will not hear you right now as we have a specific appli-

cation on board. You follow the procedure (for urgent hearing). If I do it for Mr Rohatgi, the senior coun-

sel, as Chief Justice, I will not have the face to tell all other juniors to whom I deny oral mentioning in the

The top court ordered the SBI to file an affidavit by 5 p.m. on Thursday indicating that it has disclosed

all details of the Electoral Bonds which were in its possession and custody and no information has been

In its application, ASSOCHAM said that disclosure of the alpha-numeric numbers of the Electoral

Bonds would reveal to which political party a contribution has been made by a particular company.

of-turn hearing before the CJI D.Y. Chandrachud-headed Constitution Bench.

morning. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!"

Senior advocate Mukul Rohtagi, appearing for ASSOCHAM (Associated Chambers of Commerce and

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to urgently hear the applications moved by

Kolkata Agencies

ndian Police Service (IPS) officer Vivek Sahay will be the new Director General of Police in West Bengal, succeeding acting ordered by the Election Commission of India earlier on Monday.

The Election Commission named Sahay, a 1988 batch officer, and currently the Director General and Commandant General of the Home Guards. He was removed as Director, Security, after a breach of security at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence in

When Rajeev Kumar, a 1989 batch officer, was appointed as the acting DGP last year, he superseded Sahay. Insiders from the office of the state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) said that the EC had sought the names of three senior IPS officers as replacements for Rajeev



Kumar, and the names, including of Sahay, were sent.

The other two names were Sanjoy Mukherjee (1989 batch) and Dr Rajesh Kumar (1990 batch)

However, the Commission chose Sahay as

#### **TAMILISAI SOUNDARARAJAN RESIGNS AS TELANGANA GUV AND PUDUCHERRY L-G**

Hyderabad: Telangana

Governor and Puducherry Lieutenant Soundararajan on

She is likely to contest forthcoming Lok Sabha elections from Tamil Nadu on the BJP ticket.

"The Hon'ble Governor of Telangana and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry Tamilisai Soundararajan has tendered her resignation with immediate effect. The resignation has been submitted to the Hon'ble President of India,' reads a communique from Rai Bhavan. Tamilisai, the former president of BJP's Tamil Nadu unit, had taken over as the first woman Governor of Telangana in 2019.

#### Seven dead, several injured after under-construction building collapse in Kolkata

Kolkata | Agencies

ith the death toll due to the collapse of a five-storey under-construction building in the Garden Reach area of the city reaching seven on Monday, the local people have accused the arrested promoter, Md Wasim, of indulging in rampant illegal constructions in the area adjacent to the Kolkata Port, reportedly aided by his connections in the ruling Trinamool Congress.

As per sources, a part of the fivestorey building collapsed on the adjacent slum at Hazari Mollah Bagan in Garden Reach at around midnight on Sunday.

As the death toll climbed on Monday, there were protests in the area by the local people who accused the administration of turn-



ing a blind eye to the mushrooming illegal constructions in the area, reportedly carried out under the patronage of Wasim by flouting all the sanctioned norms.

The local people also accused Wasim of playing the role of a middleman for any sale or purchase of property in the area, alleging that no deal was possible there without pay ing him a hefty commission.

Meanwhile, the police have registered an FIR against Wasim under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code, while the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) has suspended three engineers after issuing them a show-cause notice.

### MVA TUSSLES OVER SANGLI SEAT, CONGRESS SAYS WON'T CONCEDE TO SHIV SENA (UBT)

Team Absolute | Mumbai

gainst the backdrop of the Lok Sabha seatsharing formula being finalised, the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MHA) in Maharashtra is facing a fresh crisis of claims over the Sangli Parliamentary seat.

With the Shiv Sena (UBT) staking a claim to the Sangli seat instead of the Kolhapur constituency, the state Congress has voiced strong opposition to the plan, which could further delay the official announcement of the seat-sharing formula among the MVA constituents -- the Congress, Nationalist Congress Party (SP), and the Shiv Sena (UBT). During a campaign trail last week, SS (UBT) President and ex-Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had named Chandrahar Patil - a prominent wrestler and two-time 'Maharashtra Kesri' awardee - as its Lok Sabha candidate for



On Monday, SS (UBT) MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut said that in lieu of Sangli, the SS (UBT) has given up its claim to the Kolhapur constituency from where Shrimant Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj is likely to be fielded on a

Taking strong umbrage, senior Congress leader Vishwajeet P. Kadam said that this is not acceptable as Sangli is a party stronghold.

"We shall not compromise on the Sangli constituency. It's been traditionally ours and we have great prospects of winning it, so we can't hand it to anybody else," said Kadam, ex-minister and a two-time sitting MLA from Palus-Kadegaon.

Referring to the proposed candidate of SS (UBT), wrestler Patil, Kadam said he just joined the party a week ago and expressed doubts over his winning prospects.

#### Putin wins record landslide in Russian election, early results show

Team Absolute New Delhi

resident Vladimir Putin won a record post-Soviet landslide in Russia's election on Sunday, cementing his grip on power though thousands of opponents staged a noon protest at polling stations and the United States said the vote was neither free nor fair.

Putin's hold on power is not under threat in the election. Aged 71 and in office as president or prime minister since the last day of 1999, he



dominates Russia's political landscape. (AFP)

Putin's hold on power is not under threat in the election. Aged 71 and in office as president or prime minister since the last day of 1999, he dominates Russia's political landscape. (AFP)

lieutenant colonel who first rose to power in 1999, the result is intended to underscore to the West that its leaders will have to reckon with an emboldened Russia, whether in war or in peace, for many more years to

The early result means Putin, 71, will easily secure a new six-year term that would enable him to overtake Josef Stalin and become Russia's longest-serving leader for more than 200 years.

### BJP TO CONTEST 17 SEATS, JD(U) 16 IN BIHAR

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) on Monday finalised the seat-sharing deal between its constituents including Janata Dal (United), Lok Janshakti Party (LJP-Ramvilas), Hindustan Awam Morcha (HAM) and the Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP).

The BJP, in a 'big brother' role in Bihar, will contest on the highest number of seats, i.e., 17 while the other allies JD (U), LJP, HAM and RLSP will field candidates on 16, 5 and 1 seats respectively.

Announcing the NDA's seat-sharing deal in Bihar, Vinod Tawde, BJP General Secretary, said that the BJP-led coalition was confident of sweeping the state by winning 40 out of 40 seats. Bihar is among one of the three states, along with Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, that will



see polling in all seven phases of the elections. As per the Election Commission's schedule, the polling dates in Bihar are April 19, 26, May 7, 13, 20, 25 and June 1. BJP leader Bihar's Deputy CM Samrat Chowdhary, speaking to the press, asserted that the Narendra Modi government will return to power with a thumping mandate in the 2024 elections and Bihar will give all 40 seats to the NDA alliance.

## STUDY FINDS SKIN CONDITION

▶ The easily identified skin condition, called Acanthosis Nigricans, is usually found in individuals with insulin resistance and is typically observed at the nape of the neck. However, it can also manifest in other areas such as the axillae, elbows, knees, and groin, said the researchers in a statement.

▶ The findings are important because of the significantly large number of people living in India with insulin resistance and early onset of Type 2 diabetes.

Team Absolute New Delhi

skin condition characterised by thickening, dark pigmentation, and velvety appearance of the skin at the nape of the neck among people with Type 2 diabetes may indicate a higher risk of liver cell damage (fibrosis), said researchers from Fortis C-DOC hospital for Diabetes and Allied Sciences and AIIMS on Monday. The study, published in the journal Primary Care Diabetes showed that "Acanthosis Nigricans has the potential to be used as an easy-to-identify clinical marker for risk of hepatic fat and fibrosis in Asian Indians with type 2 diabetes, allowing



for early detection and management strategies". "In this case-control study involving patients with Type 2 diabetes, we made important observations indicating an independent association between the presence of Acanthosis Nigricans and hepatic steatosis and fibrosis (adverse markers of liver damage)," said Dr Anoop Misra, Padma Shri, co-author of the

study and Executive Chairman & Director, Diabetes and Endocrinology, Fortis C-Doc Hospital, in a statement. For the study, the team examined 300 people with Type 2 diabetes and with Acanthosis Nigricans, and those without the skin condition. They found that the skin issue is more common in women, overweight/obese individuals, and those with a family history of type 2 diabetes. The correlation with severity of neck Acanthosis Nigricans was found to be "strongest, with fasting insulin and glucose levels, and insulin resistance as compared to the disease at other sites, that is, axilla,

# DELHI EXCISE POLICY CASE: KAVITHA COLLUDED WITH KEJRIWAL, SISODIA; ASSETS WORTH OVER RS 128 CRORE ATTACHED, SAYS ED

Team Absolute New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which said its investigation into the Delhi excise policy scam case found BRS leader K. Kavitha conspired with the top AAP leaders, including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his then deputy Manish Sisodia, for getting favours, has also revealed that out of proceeds of crime generated, assets worth Rs 128.79 crore have been traced and attached so far.

The revelation comes after Kavitha, the daughter of BRS supremo and former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao was arrested on March 15 from Hyderabad in the case. A special court here had sent her to ED for custodial interrogation till March 23.

"A search was also conducted at the residence of Kavitha in Hyderabad on March 15. During the search proceedings, the ED officials were obstructed by the relatives and associates of Kavitha," an agency official said.

The ED investigation so far has also revealed that Kavitha, along with others, conspired with the top leaders of



the AAP including CM Kejriwal and then Deputy CM Manish Sisodia to get favours in the Delhi excise policy formulation and implementation.

"In exchange for these favours, she was involved in paying Rs 100 crore to the leaders of AAP. By the acts of corruption and conspiracy in the formu-

lation and implementation of Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22, a continuous stream of illegal funds, in the form of kickbacks from the wholesalers, was generated for the AAP," a senior ED official said.

The official said that Kavitha and her associates were to recover the proceeds of crime paid in advance to the AAP and to further generate profits/proceeds of crime from this entire conspiracy.

"Till date, the ED has conducted searches on 245 locations across the country including Delhi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai and other places. 15 persons including Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh and Vijay Nair from AAP have been arrested in the case so far," said the official.

The ED has filed one prosecution complaint and five supplementary complaints in the case so far.

"Further, out of proceeds of crime generated, assets worth Rs 128.79 crore have been traced so far and have been attached vide Provisional Attachment Orders dated January 24, 2023 and July 3, 2023. Both the attachment orders have been confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority, New Delhi," the official said.

## 'Send Modi's ambassadors to Delhi from all 28 seats', PM appeals to K'taka voters

Bengaluru | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday appealed to the people of Karnataka to ensure victory for all candidates of the BJP -- calling them "Modi's development ambassadors", in the state's 28 Lok Sabha constituencies in the upcoming general elections, and send them to Delhi.

Addressing a massive gathering in Shivamogga, PM Modi said: "You (referring to the people) must ensure victory of BJP-NDA candidates in all 28 Lok Sabha seats of Karnataka... 'June 4 ko 400 par' (On June 4, we will cross 400 seats). For this mission, results from Karnataka are important. Why are we talking about crossing 400 seats? It is for the developed Bharat, and Karnataka. It is to abolish poverty and terror."

PM Modi said that the people have seen the work of the BJP in the last 10 years.

"Our first priority was development, welfare of the poor and empowerment of Bharat. On the other hand, the Congress has no development agenda. To cover that up, the party is coming up with lies. The party is coming up with bigger lies and after that, many more lies. And, when they are caught, they will put them on others," PM Modi said.



Further criticising the grand old party, PM Modi: "The intention of Congress was not the welfare of the people. The objective was to loot people. When the Congress got an opportunity in Karnataka, it turned the state into an ATM. The loot is so much that they don't have money to run the government."

Criticising the Congress-led government in Karnataka, the Prime Minister, during his speech, said that in Karnataka, "there is one awaiting the position of CM, there is another future CM aspirant, there is a shadow CM and there are super CMs".

# Azam Khan gets seven-year jail term in 2016 demolition case

Rampur | Agencies

The Special MP-MLA court in Rampur, on Monday, handed a seven-year jail sentence to Samajwadi Party national general secretary Mohd Azam Khan, in a 2016 Dungarpur demolition case.

The court has also imposed a fine of Rs 5 lakh on Azam Khan.

The court had convicted four of the seven accused, including retired circle officer Ale Hasan, former municipal president Azhar Ahmed Khan and contractor Barkat Ali in the much talked about Dungarpur case on March 16. Azam Khan and three others were convicted under sections 425 (house trespass or assaulting a person), 427 (mischief causing damage to the amount of Rs 50 or more), 504 (intentional



insult) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC

intimidation) of the IPC.
There were seven accused in the case and the court acquitted Farhan Khan, Jibran and Omendra due to lack of evidence against them. It may be recalled that one Ehtesham Khan, a resident of Dungarpur, had lodged a report in Ganj Kotwali in 2019 in which he

accused Azam Khan, Ale Hasan, Azhar Khan, contractor Barkat Ali, Farhan Khan, Jibran and Omendra Chauhan of entering his house, beating and abusing him, threatening to kill him, looting Rs 25,000 and forcibly taking possession of his house. The hearing of the case was going on in the special MP-MLA court.

# India's auto industry will be number 1 in the world in next 5 years: Union Minister Gadkari

Team Absolute New Delhi

nion Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, on Sunday expressed confidence that the BJP-led NDA will get more seats than before in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

He claimed that the BJP's performance in the general elections would be on the basis of the works of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government, which, according to the Union Minister, are being appreciated by the people.

In an exclusive interview with NDTV Editorin-Chief, Sanjay Pugalia, the Union Minister said that India's auto industry will be number one in the world in the next five years.

"Currently, the size of the Indian automobile industry is Rs 12.5 lakh crore. The industry has so far created 4.5 crore jobs, and it pays maximum GST to the Centre and state governments," Nitin Gadkari said.

"When I became minister, India's auto industry was at 7th place in the world. I encouraged the companies with new technologies. Now the auto industry of India has become number 3,

surpassing Japan," he said. The Union Minister said that Maharashtra



currently has the triple-engine government.

"We will perform better in the Lok Sabha elections on the basis of our work," he said. On Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Maharashtra, the Union Minister said that he has every right to take his own party

He targeted the opposition bloc, saying that Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray would not get sympathy votes. Nitin Gadkari also said that he has good relations with all parties.

"There can be differences of opinion in politics, but there should not be personal differences," he remarked. "The NDA will get more seats than before in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections," the Union Minister asserted. Nitin

Gadkari said that the government has constructed roads worth Rs 5 lakh crore in Maharashtra. So, people are taking note of our work, he added. The Union Minister further said that scrapping the electoral bonds scheme would open the doors to black money. He underlined the need for all the parties to develop a better system

There is no denying the fact that money is required to contest elections and every single party needs that, the Union Minister said during the interview. "In fact, the basic idea behind this scheme was that the parties would get money through bonds, and it would help push the economy if you want to make it number one," Nitin Gadkari said, questioning: "What was wrong with that?" He declined to comment on the Supreme Court's verdict related to the issue of electoral bonds.

The Union Minister, however, explained another drawback in case the electoral bond scheme is banned. If electoral bonds are banned, money would still continue to come in, only in the form of black money, he said.

"If you do not allow (electoral) bonds, people will take money through some other unfair means. This will happen anyway," he said.

# India surpasses WHO guidelines with 1:900 doctor-to-population ratio: Bhubaneswar Kalita

Team Absolute New Delhi

The second edition of the Awareness Summit on 'Illness to Wellness' commenced in New Delhi on Monday under the banner of the ASSOCHAM National CSR Council, a division of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

In his address as the chief guest, Rajya Sabha MP Bhubaneswar Kalita, who's also the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare, said, "Today, India is undertaking a transformative journey, one that looks at 'illness to wellness' from a completely new prism.

"As we delve into the significance of health and hygiene, let us acknowledge India's remarkable evolution in this realm. While the WHO recommends a doctor-to-population ratio of 1:1000, we have achieved a



ratio of 1:900, which marks an improvement over the guidelines. Investing in health and hygiene is not just a moral imperative, it is an economic necessity." "Beyond being just

buzzwords, health and hygiene are the pillars upon which prosperous societies are built. The journey has been arduous yet inspiring. From embracing preventive healthcare, the nation has made significant strides. Over the past decade, we have witnessed a reduction in maternal mortality rate, infant mortality rate, and mortality rate among children under five years of age.

"These achievements underscore the effectiveness of the robust healthcare initiatives and the importance of prioritising hygiene practices. The various initiatives and programmes of the government have made our society health-conscious.

"As we strive for universal health coverage, it is imperative to empower communities with knowledge and resources to safeguard their wellbeing. The government has increased the number of medical colleges, and we will have one medical college in every district now. The shortage of doctors in the rural areas will soon be a thing of the past," Kalita added.

# ECI shakes up administrative posts ahead of LS polls

Team Absolute New Delhi

n a move aimed at ensuring a level playing field for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has undertaken a significant reshuffle of administrative officials in several states across the country.

The ECI on Monday ordered the transfer of Home Secretaries from six states, namely Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Bihar, and Uttarakhand, said the

In addition to these transfers, the ECI also took action against West Bengal's Director General of Police, Rajeev Kumar, signalling a proactive stance in maintaining electoral integrity.

This decision comes amidst preparations for the highly anticipated national polls.

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar removed the secretaries of the General Administrative Departments of Mizoram and Himachal Pradesh, as well as Brihanmumbai Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal, along with additional commissioners and



deputy commissioners.

The ECI's directive mandated the transfer of officers involved in election-related duties who had either completed three years in their current roles or were stationed in their home districts.

While most states complied with these instructions, Maharashtra's response fell short of expectations

#### FORMER DELHI MINISTER SATYENDAR JAIN RETURNS TO TIHAR JAIL AS SC REFUSES BAIL

New Delhi: AAP leader and former Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain was back in the Tihar Jail on Monday, hours after the Supreme Court rejected his regular bail plea in a money laundering case.

Jain departed his residence in Saraswati Vihar, in north Delhi, at around 6 p.m. to surrender at the

Confirming Jain's return to Tihar, a jail official said that he reached the jail in the grouping

the jail in the evening.

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed the regular bail petition filed by the Aam Aadmi Party leader. It also refused to entertain the request made by Jain's counsel seeking a week's time and ordered the AAP leader to surrender to jail authorities immediately.

# Seven killed, four injured in road accident in Bihar's Khagaria

Patna Agencie

Seven persons including three children were killed and four others have been injured after a speeding tractor laden with cement rammed into an SUV in Bihar's Khagaria district, on Monday morning.

ing.
The accident occurred at Vidya
Ratan fuel station located at NH 31
under Pasraha police station in the
district, at 6.30 a.m.

Sanjay Vishwas, SHO of Pasraha police station confirmed that seven persons died on the spot. The police team rescued the injured persons and admitted them to the hospital.

The victims were returning from a wedding in Chautham Thuddi village under Maraiya police station in the district on Sunday night. On their way back, they met with the accident. The impact of the accident was as such that the SUV was com-



pletely mangled from the front and was pushed away from the road.
The victims are relatives of a person

named Indradev Thakur of Besha village. The deceased are not yet identified.

#### 'CHADDI GANG' LOOTS RS 7.85 LAKH FROM SCHOOL IN HYDERABAD

**Hyderabad:** The notorious 'Chaddi Gang' struck in Hyderabad, looting Rs 7.85 lakh cash from a private school at Hafeezpet.

The theft was committed on Sunday night at the World One School under the limits of Miyapur Police Station of the Cyberabad Police Commissionerate.

The crime was recorded on CCTV cameras. The footage shows two masked offenders wearing underwear and gloves breaking into the school and searching a table for valuables.

The police took up the investigation after the school management lodged a complaint on Sunday.

Members of the 'Chaddi Gang' keep resurfacing in different areas, especially on the outskirts. In August last year, the gang was spotted at a gated community in Madhapur. The gang was also found active on the outskirts of Tirupati in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

Police believe that 'Chaddi Gang' members hail from other states. They often target locked houses and commercial buildings on the outskirts of towns

## CM Kejriwal not to appear before ED in Delhi Jal Board case, say sources

Team Absolute New Delhi

hief Minister Arvind
Kejriwal will not
appear before the
Enforcement Directorate
(ED) on Monday in the
alleged Delhi Jal Board (DJB)
case, said the AAP sources.

The party sources said that CM Kejriwal will skip the ED summons. The source said, "Why is ED repeatedly sending summons when bail has been granted by the court?"

"ED's summons are illegal. Why does BJP want to fight elections by hiding behind ED?," said the party sources.

ED?," said the party sources.
On Sunday, Delhi Minister
and AAP leader Atishi, had
said that two summons in the
two different cases have been

served to the Chief Minister. CM Kejriwal was asked to appear before the probe agency on Monday in the DJB case and on Thursday in



the excise policy case.

She further said that the timing of the summons suggested a deliberate attempt by the BJP to utilise agencies like the ED and the CBI to target their political adversaries.

"The essence of the statement is that there's a lack of clarity regarding the Delhi Jal Board case, which is seen as a tactic to hinder CM Kejriwal's campaign for the Lok Sabha elections by potentially arresting him," said Atishi.

## KAMAL NATH'S CLOSE AIDE **SYED JAFAR JOINS BJP IN MP**

Team Absolute Bhopal

n a jolt to the Congress in Madhya Pradesh, its state spokesperson and a trusted aide of former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, Syed Jafar on Monday quit the party and joined the

Syed Jafar arrived at the BJP headquarters here, where he was welcomed by state president V.D. Sharma. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, party's co-in-charge for Madhya Pradesh, Satish Upadhyay and senior leader Narottam Mishra, who is chairman of the party's joining committee, were also present on the occa-

Jafar, who had often been vocal against the BJP's governance at the Centre and state, gave an indication for his possible shift around two weeks ago after supporting the implementation of CAA.

Notably, during the Assembly election held in November last year, Jafar used to be present in the meetings chaired by Kamal Nath either at his residence or at the Congress headquarters in Bhopal, and in Chhindwara. The Congress witnessed a stunning defeat, and was reduced to



BJP won 163 out of the 230 Assembly seats.Considered to be a member of the close circle of Kamal Nath, Jafar is the second leader to switch to the BJP in the past year. Before Jafar,

cell head in MP Congress, joined the BJP ahead of the Assembly election last year. This comes at a time when Kamal Nath is trying to keep the party cadre united, especially in Chhindwara to ensure the repeated victory for his son Nakul Nath, who is

contesting his second Lok Sabha election from the family-bastion.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BIP had won 28 of the 29 seats in MP. Nakul Nath, who was elected from Chhindwara, was the lone win-

#### Rahul Gandhi's tours proved to be 'Break Congress, Leave Congress': Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Dharma. Why did they

invitation?

decide not to participate in

He further said that I

the program and eejected the

believe that Congress should

answer for this historical mis-

take. The medieval atrocities

and injustice and heinous

acts that took place against

the sisters and daughters in

Sandeshkhali, the sisters took

to the streets, but there was

Team Absolute Bhopal

Pormer Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chauhan has taken a dig at the travels of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He said that his travels have proved to be 'break Congress, leave Congress'.

Former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan said on Monday that Rahul Gandhi concluded yet another failed journey. Rahul Gandhi made two trips and those two trips proved to be 'break Congress, leave Congress' and wherever it passed, Congress itself passed by.

He further said that 'Nyaya Yatra' also did 'injustice' to the Congress, wherever it passed, the Congress either lost or the top leaders left the Congress. I am asking some questions to Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge today and want their answers. The country wants

to know, they should answer. He said that when the consecration took place in the divine and grand temple of Lord Shri Ram in Ayodhya, the entire country was filled

Arun Srivastava or GP Mali from Bhopal...? Congress

the Congress in their support. devotion, he too had received an invitation to participate in Is this not your appeasement the biggest festival of Sanatan policy?

He further said that I want to ask one thing, the country also wants to know. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most popular leader of the world, who lives in the hearts of the people. The country is his entire family. Rahul and his party leaders make objectionable statements against him. This is not the culture of India. Is this the character of Congress

#### Air Force plane lands at Bhopal's Raja Bhoj airport after engine failure

Team Absolute New Delhi

n Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft made a precautionary landing at Bhopal's Raja Bhoj International Airport on Monday after suffering an engine failure. An officer gave this information. It was a two-engine aircraft.

An IAF official said, "After indicating engine failure during flight, the IAF Avro aircraft made a precautionary landing at Bhopal civil airport. "After investigation, it was found that the engine of the aircraft needed to be replaced.'

According to the official, technicians from the Indian Air Force and Indian Army provided assistance.



## can contest 6 MLAs in the state for Lok Sabha

fter the announcement of Lok Sabha election dates, the Central Election Committee meeting of Congress will be held in Delhi on March 19. In the meeting, faces will be decided on the remaining 18 seats of the state. MP Congress President Jitu Patwari, state in-charge Bhanwar Jitendra Singh, screening committee chairperson Rajni Patil, CEC member Omkar Singh Markam will attend the meeting to be held at the Congress head quarter.

Team Absolute Bhopal

Congress can field MLAs to contest the elections strongly against BJP's Ram Mandir card. Jaura MLA Pankaj Upadhyay can be fielded from Morena Lok Sabha, Bada Malhara MLA Ramsia Bharti from Damoh seat, Silvani MLA Devendra Patel from Vidisha, Lakhan Ghanghoria from Jabalpur, Pushp Rajgarh MLA



Phundelal Marco from Shahdol, MLA Vipin Jain can be fielded from Mandsaur. Sources reveal that the Congress high command is asking senior leaders of MP to contest the elections. But all the leaders including Kamal Nath, Digvijay Singh, Sajjan Singh Verma are not ready to contest the elections. In such a situation, Congress can now bet on the youth. BJP has given tickets to women on 6 out of 29 seats in MP. Four women



have been made candidates in the first list and two women in the second list. Now the challenge for Congress is to select winning women. Strong women candidates have been found only in Balaghat, Rewa and Damoh seats. In the face of BIP's Women's Reservation Bill and 6 women candidates, Congress is facing difficulty in fielding women equally. The names that have come up include Pankaj Upadhyay,

Satyapal Singh (Neetu) Sikarwar from

Kothari from Indore, Surendra Singh Shera from Khandwa, Priyavrat Singh, Ramchandra Dangi, Chander Singh Sondhia from Rajgarh, Mahesh Parmar from Ujjain., Devendra Patel from Vidisha, Arun Srivastava from Bhopal, GP Mali, Sanjay Sharma from Hoshangabad, Hina Kanwre from Balaghat, Virendra Raghuvanshi from Guna, Rao Yadvendra Singh Yadav, Lakhan Singh Yadav from Gwalior, Praveen Pathak, Kantilal Bhuria from Jhabua, Dinesh Yadav and Lakhan Ghanghoria from Jabalpur, Ranjita Gaurav Patel, Ramsia Bharti, Tarwar Singh Lodhi from Damoh, The names of Neelam Abhay Mishra, Ajay Mishra Baba from Rewa, Phundelal Singh Marco from Shahdol, Prabhu Singh Thakur from Sagar, Guddu Raja Bundela, Nandkishore Patel, Vipin Jain, DP Dhakad from Mandsaur are

Morena, Akshay Kanti Bam, Swapnil

### IMPOSE NSA ON THOSE BUILDING ILLEGAL COLONIES

Team Absolute Bhopal

JP, which had announced legalization of illegal colonies in the previous government, is now preparing to resolve this issue afresh. Instead of legalizing them, a new law will be brought and National Security Act (NSA) will be imposed on the concerned colonizer. The action will not be limited to this only, in the area where an illegal colony will be built, direct action will be taken against the Tehsildar and Zonal Officer of the Municipal Corporation up to the Patwari. The process of drafting the new law has started. The responsibility for this has been entrusted to the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of

Urban Administration.

the government records in the capital Bhopal was 576. The BJP government had announced to legalize illegal colonies built before 2016. Under this, 320 colonies were legalized. Last year, the Shivraj government had announced to legalize all the illegal colonies built by December 31, 2022, but this order could not be implemented.

In such a situation, FIR has been lodged in 256 colonies. There are many posh areas of the capital, next to which there are illegal settlements like settlements. Most of these do not even have basic facilities like electricity, water, roads and drainage. Most of these colonies are such that people cheap plots.

Recently, this issue was also raised in the meeting with builders. The builders said that all the rules and regulations of the government are for us, who take all the permissions and pay all the taxes. Illegal colonizers leave the colony anywhere and no action is taken against them. Later, if the government legalizes them, it puts additional burden on everyone including the Municipal Corporation.

Nilgiri Colony is also included among the 238 illegal colonies of Bhopal that were legalized in May 2023. At that time this was vacant land. Here the builder reduced the 12 feet wide drain to 4 feet for plotting. and transformer has been done here, on the basis of which the sale of land is going on. Similarly, work has intensified in many colonies which have been legalized without building hous-

Neeraj Mandloi, Principal Secretary, Urban Administration Department, says that in the current system, effective action is not taken against illegal colonizers. There are instructions to file an FIR against him, but in most of the cases the police leaves him with a letter. The new law has been discussed. The minister has given instructions for this, we will start the work soon.

### Cheetah Gamini gave birth to not 5 but 6 cubs in Kuno

Team Absolute Bhopal

t has now come to light that female cheetah Gamini had given birth to not five but six cubs in Kuno National Park in Madhya

This has been confirmed by Union Forest and Environment Minister Bhupendra Singh

Sharing the pictures on Twitter on Monday, Union Minister Yadav wrote, "Gamini's legacy continues! There is no end to the happiness, these are not five, but six cubs!'

He further wrote, "A week after the news of Gamini giving birth to five cubs, it has now



Gamini has given birth to six cubs, a record of

### Guna LS seat: Battle of prestige for Scindia to get back his family pocket borough



Team Absolute Bhopal

he electoral battle for the Guna Lok Sabha seat, where Union Civil Aviation Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia, is contesting for the sixth time, is going to be a high-profile and highoctane contest like always.

Spanning eight Assembly seats of the three districts of Guna, Shivpuri and Ashok Nagar, most of the time, this particular seat was represented by the

Scindia as it is eyeing over three lakh Yadav votes in Guna constituency.

members of the Scindia family of the

Jyotiraditya Scindia's loss in 2019 was

a major jolt to his political career. Now,

as he is contesting for the first time on a

soned politician is taking this election as

a matter of prestige and is determined to

"Scindia was offered the choice to

chose Guna, because he wants to get

contest the election from Gwalior, but he

BJP ticket, local people said the sea-

erstwhile Gwalior dynasty.

get his family bastion back.

It will be no surprise if the grand old party fields former PCC President, Arun Yadav, against Scindia. Responding to his possible candida-

back his family pocket borough. In fact,

preparations for the election had begun

"In the last six months, Scindia has

been visiting Gwalior, Guna, Shivpuri

and Ashok Nagar districts frequently,"

During his visit to Guna last week,

Scindia had assigned some specific tasks

to his supporters and has asked them to

said a Shivpuri-based BJP worker.

meet him after 10 days for a review. The Opposition Congress, however, is

yet to announce its candidate against

months before the poll schedule was

announced.

ture from Guna, senior Congress leader Arun Yadav said he would be ready for it if the party gives him the opportunity.

"If the Congress leadership asks me to contest the election from Guna, I will come forward to take this opportunity. But, it depends on the party to decide the candidates," Yadav said during a conversation with reporter.

Notably, sitting BJP MP, KP Yadav, who defeated Scindia in 2019 with a margin of over one lakh votes, wasn't retained for the second term, and Scindia, who joined the BJP in 2020 is now the BJP's candidate from the Guna Lok Sabha seat

#### **DO NOT BURN HOLIKA NEAR ELECTRIC POLES OR UNDER POWER LINES**

Bhopal: Central Region **Electricity Distribution** Company has appealed to all electricity consumers and common citizens for safe Holika Dahan. The company has said that Holika Dahan should not be done under electric poles, transformers or electric lines through which electricity flows. There is always a possibility of accident due to Holika Dahan under the lines.

Central Region Electricity Distribution Company has appealed to all rural and urban consumers to organize Holika and burn Holika at some other place away from the power lines. There is always a possibility of aluminum wires and power cables melting, burning and breaking due to the flames. Any major unexpected incident can happen due to their breaking or falling. The company has appealed to all electricity consumers and citizens to keep Holika Dahan away from live power lines and appliances and celebrate the festival happily.

## World Glaucoma Week Observed at AIIMS Bhopal



Bhopal: Under the guidance of Prof. (Dr) Ajai Singh, Executive Director, AIIMS Bhopal, on the occasion of World Glaucoma Week, Glaucoma awareness campaign was run at AIIMS, Bhopal from 10 March 2024 to 16 March 2024. Pamphlets regarding prevention and detection of glaucoma were distributed to the patients in the Ophthalmology OPD of AIIMS Bhopal. Through various activities throughout the week, patients and their families were made aware about the seriousness of glaucoma and its early identification and treatment.

MBBS PG and Nursing students enthusiastically participated in this awareness campaign. They made posters on the topic of Glaucoma, played street plays and conducted health discussions. Family members of glaucoma patients are vulnerable to this disease. The main objective of this day is to prevent permanent blindness caused by glaucoma by encouraging people to get their eyes examined regularly.

EDITOR'S SPECS

#### **Kashi Vishwanath Dham records** all-time high footfall of devotees

rore than five lakh devotees of Lord Shiva visited the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham temple on March 17, setting a record especially given that this is not a festival season. Lakhs of devotees gather here for darshan during festivals in the month of Sawan and on Shivratri, but such a heavy footfall has never been seen before on a non-festival day. Vishwa Bhushan Mishra, Chief Executive Officer of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust, said that on March 17, a new record of the highest daily number of visitors on a normal day was established. "A total of 5,03,024 visitors visited the temple on this day. Before the inauguration of the temple corridor, on normal days, the number of devotees used to be around 20 to 30 thousand, whereas after the inauguration, the number of devotees has increased to 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh," he said. According to an official release, after the transformation of the Kashi Vishwanath temple complex from about three thousand square feet to a huge area of about five lakh square feet, devotees are flocking to the Dham for darshan. Pradeep Rai, Secretary, Travel Agent Association of India (TAAI), Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, said that tourists are getting maximum interest for the two-way circuit of Ayodhya and Kashi. In both religious cities, maximum number of tourists are coming during weekends.

### First show of strength by INDIA and NDA allies after poll dates declaration, electioneering heats up

tions 2024, the day marks a 'Super Sunday' for the ruling BJP and opposition INDIA bloc. Both the alliances are set for major show of strength in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra this evening, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi respectively

PM Modi is set to address a large congregation of people in Andhra Pradesh's Palnadu district, along with TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan-led Jana Sena Party. This will also be the first time former Andhra Pradesh CM Naidu and Pawan Kalyan will share the stage with the Prime Minister. NDA's first big election rally, just a day after announcement of poll dates, will set the tone for elections in the state and give the alliance a headstart in the campaign.

For the opposition parties under INDIA bloc, Mumbai's Shivaji Park is the zone of action this evening as supporters are rushing in large numbers to celebrate Rahul Gandhi's conclusion of Bharat

Many opposition leaders like Uddhav Thackeray (Shiv Sena-UBT), Sharad Pawar (NCP-SP), DMK President M. K. Stalin, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav will mark their presence the mega rally at

Shivaji park. The gathering of INDIA alliance leaders on stage, a day after culmination of Rahul Gandhi's 63-day long Nyay Yatra, is aimed at rallying its supporters for a spirited fight against BJP in Maharasthra, and all across the nation.

Political watchers see it as good optics by INDIA but have apprehensions about the message it wants to convey. Maharashtra remains the weakest link of INDIA as both Shiv Sena and NCP have fallen apart, with stronger and bigger splinter groups joining hands

For Congress, in particular, there has been many setbacks lately

as party stalwarts like Ashok Chavan and Milind Deora recently snapped ties with it.

In days to come, the electioneering is set to heat up and both NDA and INDIA allies will pull out all stops to woo the electorate. Recent opinion polls have already come as a shot in the arm for BJP while the INDIA bloc is seen playing catch-up, both in Mahasrashta and across India.

Also, the optics for today's rallies favour BJP, as experts feel. While PM Modi-led NDA is widely expected to bring major disruption in Telangana, the gathering of INDIA leaders on a 'lost territory' won't be enough to send the right message

In Andhra Pradesh, BJP finalised alliance with TDP and Jana Sena Party, days after PM Modi's call for 370 seats on BJP's own, and breaching the 400 mark, with support from allies. BJP has struck deals with both regional satraps to fight Lok Sabha and Andhra Pradesh Assembly polls together. It will contest on six Lok Sabha and 10 Assembly seats, while TDP and Jana Sena Party on 17 Lok Sabha and 144 Assembly seats, and two Lok Sabha and 21 Assembly seats respectively.

Although, TDP stands to gain much from the alliance, on a national level, BJP is expected to get a boost in numbers and make it easier to accomplish its "400 paar" target.

### Teena Sidana: A Tech Maven and Mother Making Waves at Amazon Alexa

omen navigate a complex world, balancing careers, famliles, and personal aspirations. They are the backbone of communities, demonstrating remarkable strength and resilience in the face of challenges. To commemorate International Women's Day, the 'She Is Amazon' drive by Amazon, under the theme of #InspireInclusion, recognizes women who are shattering glass ceilings and redefining success across the organization. They are the innovators, the leaders, and the relentless forces for change navigating demanding careers while nurturing families and communities. Their journeys serve as a beacon of inspiration, urging us to create a world where every woman can reach her full potential.

One such example is Teena Sidana, an MBA graduate with a passion for technology, who exemplifies this spirit. Born and raised in Delhi, Teena's academic journey reflects a thirst for knowledge. An MBA and a Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering laid the foundation for her impressive career. Her family, despite a business background, instilled a deep value for education, which Teena demonstrably embraced. Teena's foray into the corporate world began at a telecom company in 2010. There, she was drawn to emerging technologies like mobile payments and 3G/mobile internet. This fascination with innovation propelled her towards Amazon in 2015. Today, she gracefully navigates the realms of motherhood while excelling in her career at Amazon, epitomizing resilience and determination in the dynamic tech landscape.

Initially starting in a partnership role, Teena's keen interest in voice technology propelled her towards joining the launch team for Alexa in India. Witnessing the potential of voice technology to transform lives, she began as a Business Development lead, focusing on Alexa integration for third-party brands. Her dedication and



leadership qualities were quickly recognized, resulting in a broader role overseeing all third-party partnerships for Alexa. This widened scope, which occurred shortly after her maternity leave, allowed her to navigate the evolving landscape, transitioning the focus from integrations to monetization, advertisements, and the burgeoning realm of Large Language Models (LLMs).

"Amazon has been instrumental in fostering my professional growth," Teena reflects. "The supportive environment, coupled with programs like 'Ramp Back' which allows employees to gradually return to work after maternity or parental leave, allowed me to navigate the challenges of work-life integration with greater ease. I'm grateful for the opportunity to contribute to a company that prioritizes inclusivity and empowers women to reach their full potential." Teena's story transcends professional success. It exemplifies the delicate balance between career aspirations and family life. Finding a supportive manager who championed her throughout her maternity leave and return to work proved invaluable Teena strongly believes in fostering a truly inclusive work environment. Her own experiences have shaped her perspective, recognizing the challenges women often face, particularly when navigating career breaks and motherhood. At Amazon, she actively champions initiatives aimed at nurturing women talent, dismantling unconscious biases, and advocates for robust support systems and mentorship programs that empower women at all stages of their careers. Additionally, as a mentor in Amazon's Pinnacle program, which focuses on developing women leaders, Teena provides guidance to female employees in their career growth journey. While leisure time comes at a premium with a young child, Teena finds joy in travel. Embracing the adventure of exploring new destinations with her toddler, she's already instilled a love for travel in her son, proving that motherhood and exploration can beautifully co-exist. Teena's message to young women entering the workforce is one of self-belief and unwavering ambition. She urges them to advocate for themselves and never shy away from raising their voices. By refusing to settle for anything less than equal, women can pave the way for a more inclusive future. Teena defines true inclusion as an environment where women are secure in their abilities and contributions, valued for their expertise, and empowered to reach their full potential.

### international

#### Russia to scrap contracts of Nepalese nationals who joined Russian Army: Deputy Nepal PM

Kathmandu Agencies epal's Deputy Prime Minister, Narayan Kaji Shrestha, has said that Moscow has consented to cannationals who have joined the Russian Army, and efforts are

on to bring them back to the

country.

The statement came just days after seven more Nepalese nationals serving in the Russian Army reportedly died in the past week, taking the total number of casualties to 19. Responding to questions raised in the meeting of the House of Representatives, Shrestha said Russia has given its "in-principle consent" to cancel the contracts with the Nepali nationals, My Republica newspaper reported on

Monday. "The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said that it



Looming resignations of medical professors

a concern: S. Korean health minister

captive in Ukraine have been

released. Efforts are being

made to bring them back to

Hundreds of youths from the

Himalayan nation have joined

the Russian Army through ille-

gal channels, with many losing

Nepal," he added.

has agreed in principle to assist up on this. Photos of those held those who have joined the army to cancel their contracts. However, its modality is yet to be decided," Shrestha, who is also the Foreign Minister of

Nepal, said. The Nepali Embassy in Moscow is constantly following

Nepalese citizens serving the Russian Army.

As per media reports, Shrestha has expressed his willingness to visit Moscow to understand how Nepalese nationals were duped into join-

lives and several others report-

Earlier this month, Shrestha

also spoke to Russian Foreign

Minister Sergey Lavrov even as

ed missing or out of contact.

ing the Russian Army. Nepal has repeatedly requested Russia to refrain from admitting its nationals into the Russian Army and has asked for assistance in repatriating those who have already joined the country's forces to

fight its war with Ukraine. Last year, the police in Nepal cracked down on several travel agents and arrested 18 people on charges of human traffick-

### 'One step shy of World War': Putin warns NATO against troop deployment in Ukraine

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned the US-led NATO military Alliance against the deployment of would "be one step shy of a full-scale World

It is no secret that fighters from NATO nations are present on the ground in Ukraine, he claimed while speaking to his supporters and the media on early Monday after his landslide presidential election vic-

Putin stressed that Moscow is "well aware of the US-led military bloc's push to deploy troops in Ukraine".

"We hear both French and English speech there. There is nothing good in this, first of all for them, because they die there and in large numbers," he was quoted by Russian media as saying.

"Anything is possible in the modern world... But everyone knows that this

he Australian govern-

ment has reinstated

cancelled visas for some

Rasha Abbas, executive

director of the Palestine

Australia Relief and Action

(PARA) group, said on

Monday that eight of the 11

Palestinians whom her

organisation was supporting

after their Australian visas

were cancelled without warn-

ing have had them reinstated,

Xinhua news agency report-

ed. The federal government

faced criticism earlier in

March over the decision to

revoke the visas, which left

some Palestinians stranded

in a third country before

being notified of the cancella-

Canberra Agencies

Palestinians fleeing Gaza.



would be one step shy of a full-scale World War III. I don't think that anyone is interested in that," Putin said.

Commenting on French President Emmanuel Macron's earlier remarks

which suggested that the West "cannot exclude" the possibility of sending soldiers to aid Ukraine, he said Russia wants France "not to escalate the conflict but to help find a peaceful solution to hostilities".

### Australian govt reverses cancellation of Palestinians' visas

Seoul Agencies

outh Korea's Health Minister Cho Kyoo-hong on Monday expressed grave concerns regarding a decision by medical professors to collectively resign in support of junior doctors' walkout that has crippled medical services for nearly a month. About 90 per cent of 13,000 interns and resident doctors have

stayed off the job since late February in protest of the government's

decision to increase enrollment at medical schools by 2,000 spots from the current 3,058, Yonhap news agency reported. With the labour action by junior doctors showing little signs of backing down, the emergency committee of medical professors announced on Friday that faculty members from 16 medical

to seek a breakthrough in the prolonged impasse "Despite the people's concerns and the government's repeated appeals, we express grave concern over making such an

schools will submit resignations en masse on March 25 in an effort

announcement," Cho told a government response meeting. "The people will find it difficult to comprehend their claim that they will leave patients en masse in order to seek dialogue and compromise," he added.

The health minister urged professors to focus their efforts on persuading medical students and junior doctors to return to schools and hospitals while engaging in discussions to improve the country's medical system.

Cho plans to meet with heads of the country's top five hospitals later on Monday, followed by another session with administrators of state-run hospitals on Tuesday.

"We plan to monitor the overall status of the emergency medical

system and listen to their difficulties," Cho said. Second Vice Health Minister Park Min-soo, meanwhile, told reporters that the government plans to revamp a scheme to help

중앙재난안전대책<del>본</del>부 doctors in essential medical fields receive more fees from the

national health insurance.

"We aim to address the negative aspects of the fee-for-service system by revamping the medical insurance programme through the adoption of a value-based payment system, ensuring its sustainability," Park said.

Park also said the government will inject around 3 trillion won \$2.25 billion) to revitalise obstetrics and paediatrics departments, which have been hit by the country's declining birth rates.

The government has been pushing to sharply raise the number of medical students to brace for the country's fast-ageing population, and a shortage of physicians in rural areas and essential areas, such as paediatrics and emergency departments.

Doctors, on the other hand, said the quota hikes will undermine the quality of medical education and result in higher medical costs for patients.

They have called for measures to first address the underpaid specialists and improve legal protection against excessive medical malpractice lawsuits.



In letters sent to some of those whose visas were cancelled, the Department of Home Affairs alleged they were planning to breach the terms of their visitor visa by staying in Australia longer than allowed.

"We are delighted and happy that they are able to travel to Australia," Abbas told Nine Entertainment newspa-

"We are working through booking the flights for them and we will work with the government on the process for the remaining visa holders," Abbas added.

The Australian government has granted 2,200 visas for Palestinians and 2,400 for Israelis since the outbreak of

#### IDF launches operation in Gaza's Al-Shifa hospital

Team Absolute New Delhi

sraeli Defense Force (IDF) on Monday said it has launched a military operation in Gaza's largest hospital, Al-Shifa, media reports said. The IDF, in a statement, said that its soldiers are currently conducting a precise operation in the area of the Shifa

"The operation is based on intelligence information indicating the use of the hospital by senior Hamas members," the IDF said. On October 7 2023, Hamas launched an operation against Israelis in which at least 1,200 of its citizens were killed while over

200 were taken hostage. Israelis have killed 31,553 Palestinians, mostly women and kids, in its fight against Hamas.

DRPPL launches survey of Dharavi to collect data from informal tenement residents

Team Absolute | Mumbai

haravi Redevelopment Project Pvt Ltd (DRPPL), a joint venture between the Maharashtra government and the Adani Group, on Monday launched a survey at the Kamala Raman slum to collect data from lakhs of informal tenement residents of Dharavi.

According to DRPPL spokesperson, the data will be used by the state government to determine their rehabilitation criteria under the proposed redevelopment project. The survey will also create a 'Digital Dharavi', an advanced library of one of the world's largest information settlements.

The survey was launched with a unique number given to each informal tenement. This will be followed



by laser mapping of the respective lane, known as 'Lidar Survey'. DRPPL has deployed a trained team to visit every tenement with an indigenously developed application to scan documents. A toll free number 1800-2688888 has been activated to respond to the queries and concerns of Dharavikars.

The beginning of the Dharavi survey is the first step to make Mumbai slum free and also transform Dharavi

into a world class township, a state of the art city within Mumbai. DRPPL has urged all Dharavikars to support the survey which will enable it to execute the rehabilitation process and ultimately provide them with their dream home.

As per the redevelopment plan, each and every informal tenement holder will get a home. Homes will be provided to qualified ineligible tenement holders too. DRPPL has recently announced that all eligible and ineligible resident tenement holders will get a flat with an independent kitchen and toilet.

Further, eligible industrial and commercial redeveloped Dharavi will enjoy a five-year holiday in state GST payment to boost and help formalise their businesses.

#### Marathi-origin US health official to visit India for boosting health partnership

Team Absolute Mumbai

r. Atul Gawande, Assistant Administrator for Global Health, US Agency for International Development (USAID) will start a 4-day visit to India from March 19 to move forward the US-India health partnership, officials said here on Monday. Dr. Atul Gawande, 59, born to Marathi doctor parents who settled in the US, will have engagements with high-ranking government officials, healthcare professionals, academic, civil society and business leaders in New Delhi, plus Indore and Dewas in Madhya Pradesh. As a prominent member of the current US President Joe Biden's administration, he will underscore the US' commitment to partnering with India to forge global solutions to health challenges. The Indo-US development collaboration of more than 70 years has been transformational, strengthening both the US and India, besides making the world safer and more prosperous. Today, the two top democracies - both going to polls this year - are partnering to advance and achieve shared global health and development priorities.

The world's two top largest economies and hubs for technology and innovation, the US and India partner to test and pilot healthcare models and high-impact innovations to



address complex health challenges that can be scaled and replicated, not just in India, but worldwide. Dr. Gawande will reinforce the US' commitment to collaborating with India to address some of the world's toughest development challenges.

These would include harnessing emerging technologies to advance global health goals, bolstering primary health systems to strengthen global health security, and working directly with communities to formulate the most equitable and effective responses.

A renowned surgeon, author, journalist and public health researcher, Dr. Gawande was named by the President-elect Joe Biden as a member of the COVID-19 Advisory Board on Nov. 9, 2020, and in July 2021 was appointed to his current position.x

# Battle for Baramati becomes brutal for Pawar clan

Quaid Najmi Pune

aharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) President Ajit A. Pawar faces an onslaught from an unexpected quarter -- his elder brother, guide and mentor, industrialist Shriniwas A. Pawar -- sending ripples in political circles. Shriniwas A. Pawar, who had supported Ajit A. Pawar during his 2019 rebellion, has now turned his back on the younger sibling, leaving the latter virtually a loner in Pune politics as the battle for Baramati turns brutal.

Catching many unawares, Shriniwas A. Pawar suddenly stepped out to oppose not only Ajit Pawar, but also his wife Sunetra, who is the likely NCP candidate for Baramati, locking horns with her 'nanand' Supriya Sule, the daughter the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) patriarch Sharad Pawar.

Without mincing words, Shriniwas A. Pawar described Ajit Pawar as "ungrateful, incompetent and thankless without regards for the family elders". "It was hurting when he (Ajit) said that our uncle (Sharad Pawar, 83) has no political future now, he should just retire, sit at home, chant bhajan-kirtan and adopt a mentoring role. Just because someone has aged, you are being disrespectful to him in the hope of getting benefits for next ten years by allying with someone," said Shriniwas A. Pawar sharply. "You may be surprised why I am talking against 'Dada' (brother) when I have always backed him in the past. I clearly told him that he is



an MLA and he should voluntarily give the (Baramati LS) seat to our uncle Pawar Saheb, who has done a lot for us... Clearly there is no one more incompetent than Ajit," said Shriniwas A. Pawar.

He further reminded Ajit Pawar that it was Sharad Pawar who had made him a Deputy CM four times, plus given him many ministerial assignments and other political positions, and he was fortunate to have such a 'great uncle'.

Shriniwas A. Pawar's wife, Sharmila also took the stand and criticized her brother-in-law Ajit A. Pawar, questioning "were you ever defeated in any elections due to Sharad Pawar's support," while interacting with villagers on their campaign trail for Supriya Sule. This is the same Shriniwas A. Pawar who had once sheltered the wayward Ajit A. Pawar when he deserted the (undivided) NCP to abruptly take oath with Bharatiya Janata Party's Devendra Fadnavis as CM and himself as Deputy CM in a dawn ceremony in November 2019, but the two-

man regime crashed in harely 80 hours

When swords were out for Ajit A. Pawar at that time, he was found ensconced in the home of Shriniwas A. Pawar, and emerged out after the huge fracas subsided, though he was shunted to the political doghouse for weeks before being rehabilitated by Sharad Pawar as a Deputy CM.

This is the second jolt for Ajit A. Pawar in barely a fortnight after his nephew -- Yugendra Shriniwas Pawar -- also stood opposite him and has supported the NCP(SP)'s nominee Supriya Sule.

Sharmila Shriniwas Pawar chided her brother-inlaw (Ajit A. Pawar) saying: "This is a delicate and agonizing time for the entire Pawar clan, something like this is unprecedented, nobody wants to oppose you, but we have many elders in the family and shall overcome this moment. Our identity is owed to Sharad Pawar and even his opponents take his name with respect. We have to make him victorious." Shriniwas A. Pawar said that he did not wish to share many other things about Ajit A. Pawar, but desired that he should live with respect and dignity.

Reacting, NCP (SP) National General Secretary Dr Jitendra Awhad said that it was the "pain and indebtedness of Shriniwas A. Pawar that has come to fore as Ajit A. Pawar committed a 'paap' (sin) against Sharad Pawar". Responding to the sibling onslaught, NCP Thane chief and two-time MP Anand P. Paranjpe said that entire Baramati supports Ajit A. Pawar, and "everything will be clear after the elections".

## Eknath Shinde terms INDIA bloc's Mumbai rally as 'flop show'

Team Absolute Mumbai

aharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Monday termed the INDIA bloc rally in Mumbai on Sunday as a 'flop show', as he strongly criticised the opposition alliance partners for targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi when they "don't have a PM face" going into the elections. CM Shinde also launched a scathing attack against Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray for sharing the dais with those who "insult" Hindus.

"Those who criticise PM Modi will be defeated, as the INDIA bloc allies will find it difficult to get even the leader of opposition's post in the Lok Sabha after the elections. They have lost the claim to call themselves a Hindutva party," he said, taking an indirect dig at Uddhav Thackeray. CM Shinde also accused Rahul Gandhi of insulting Hindu deities, stating that the voters will defeat such forces in the upcoming general elections. The Chief Minister went on to take a swipe at the Congress leader on his comments on EVMs,



saying it shows that they have already conceded defeat in the elections. On seat-sharing, CM Shinde claimed that there are no differences between the MahaYuti partners -- the BJP, Shiv Sena, and the NCP. "The MahaYuti will win 45-plus seats (out of 48) in Maharashtra, and 'Ab ki baar, 400 paar' will be a reality," he said. Echoing CM Shinde's views, state Industry Minister Uday Samant termed the INDIA bloc's Sunday event as a 'damp squib'.

"It has been proved that no one can challenge our grand alliance (MahaYuti) government. I am sure that more than 45 nominees of the grand alliance will be elected in Maharashtra," Samant said.

#### BJP misusing probe agencies: Sanjay Raut

Team Absolute Mumbai

hiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut hit at Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accusing it of being a party built on corruption, and said they should try to save themselves after the Opposition government takes Central investigation agencies, here on Monday. "The BJP is steeped in corruption. But it is misusing the Central investigation agencies to target the Opposition parties. Wait till the Opposition government comes to office at the Centre, the control of ED-IT changes hands, then you should try to save yourself... Iron cuts iron," Raut dared. Elaborating, Raut said that he had written a letter to the BJP's Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis a couple of weeks ago seeking strong action



against the online gaming the people of the especially youth and dooming society. "There was a similar sentiment against the dance bars in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra which the then Deputy Chief Minister, the Late R. R. Patil had shown courage and banned them in 2005. The present government should act against the online gamers which promote gambling," the SS-UBT Chief Spokesperson said. However, the MP rued that the police are under pressure as "lot of money is being passed right to the top, I even

know through whom the cash is going or for what purposes." Taking a swipe at the BJP, he compared the development with the drug menace with drugs being smuggled from Gujarat which into Maharashtra and suspected its possible links with the Electoral Bonds financing not taking action? Is the drug mafia money being transferred to the BJP through the Electoral Bonds... Is this why they are so reluctant to reveal the identity of the donors," Raut said. The SS-UBT MP's no-holds-barred comments came a day after the national Opposition INDIA bloc launched its Lok Sabha 2024 poll campaign at a grand rally, after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi ended his 6,700-kms, 66 days long Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra and a brief foot-march, Nyay Sankalp Yatra on Sunday.

# India can create more jobs in esports, game development: CII

Team Absolute Pune

ven as India's gaming sector is poised for significant growth, more jobs can be created in the country in the esports and game development industry, according to experts at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

"India has immense potential to forge new pathways in intellectual property, paving the way for the creation of more jobs in esports and game development," R. Dinesh, President of CII, at the recently concluded India Gaming Show held in Pune. Dinesh emphasised the significance of this burgeoning sector, projecting exponential growth in the years ahead. He underscored the transformative journey of the video game and Esports sector, asserting its increasing prominence on both



national and international fronts.
The sixth edition of the India
Gaming Show boasted participation
from over 70 exhibitors representing
10 countries, with Indonesia making

its debut as the guest country.
While currently commanding a
market share of under 1 per cent,
India's gaming sector holds immense
potential for expansion, fueled by

prevailing trends in PC, mobile, and console gaming. Dinesh said India has "the unique opportunity to spearhead the development of tailor-made games, ensuring both global and domestic products attain global recognition."

Importantly, the rising sector

requires a responsible policy framework, said Chandrajit Banerjee,
Director General of CII.

He emphasised the importance of

"socialising responsible gaming practices to educate the populace and promote ethical usage."

Banerjee also highlighted the significance of innovation and skill development in the industry for enhancing the pool of available talent and significantly improving the demographics, leading to a 49 per cent increase in the number of women in the sector.

## Ashok Chavan on Rahul Gandhi's "Weeping senior leader who quit" comment

Team Absolute | Mumbai

BIP Rajya Sabha MP Ashok Chavan said Monday he was not the "senior leader... who left the Congress... weeping" that Rahul Gandhi referred to at a 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' event in Mumbai.

On Sunday Rahul Gandhi - set to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha election from Wayanad in Kerala and, most probably, the party stronghold of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh - concluded the Congress' pan-India yatra with sharp barbs at his rivals and an unnamed friend-turned-foe, who many saw as Chavan.

Gandhi suggested that a "senior leader" had moved to the BJP to evade scrutiny by probe agencies, repeating charges by the opposition - that the ruling party uses the Enforcement Directorate, the Income Tax Department, and others to intimidate rival politicians, particularly before elec-

"... A senior leader from this state left the Congress. Weeping, he told my mother (ex-Congress boss Sonia Gandhi)... 'I'm ashamed. Don't have the power to fight this force. I do not want to go to jail'."

Responding to the statement, ex-Maharashtra Chief Minister - who joined the BJP last month - pointed out Mr Gandhi had not actually named any



individual in his attack on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

"But if he is saying that about me, then it is illogical and baseless. The truth is that till I resigned from the Congress, I was working at the party headquarters. I resigned from the post of MLA and, a few moments later, from the party also. Till then, no one knew I had resigned," he said in a video message.

"I never met Sonia Gandhi. It is baseless (to say) I met Sonia Gandhi and expressed my emotions. It is a political statement from the election point of view," he continued.

Two high-profile political leaders from Maharashtra quit the Congress this year; former Union Minister Milind Deora went to the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Chavan went to the BJP.

# EC orders transfer of BMC commissioner IS Chahal, other bureaucrats

Team Absolute | Mumbai

he Election Commission of India, in a bid to ensure a level playing field in the Lok Sabha elections 2024, on Monday ordered the removal of certain bureaucrats across India including Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation chief Iqbal Singh Chahal and some additional and deputy civic commissioners. As per a report, the announcement came after Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, flanked by Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, held a meeting in the national capital on March 18. According to the report, the ECI had directed all state governments to transfer officers connected with election-related work, who have completed three years or are in their home districts. However, Maharashtra had partially complied with the directions. They had not transferred select municipal commissions,

additional and deputy civic chiefs.

According to the report, the commission directed the removal of BMC chief Chahal as well as deputy and additional commissioners, with a deadline of 6 pm on Monday.

The poll body also directed the chief secretary to transfer all similarly places civic chiefs and additional or deputy municipal commissioners of other cor-



porations in Maharashtra, the report further stated. A PTI report, quoting its sources, stated that the ECI ordered the removal of home secretaries of Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand as well. The report further stated that the poll body has also ordered the removal of the West Bengal director general of policies.

CEC Kumar, while announcing the Lok Sabha elections 2024 dates on March 17, had reiterated that the poll body will maintain a level playing field and ensure the integrity of the electorate in India. Voting f

Voting for 48 seats in Maharashtra in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024 will be held on April 19, April 26, May 7, May 13 and May 20. The votes cast across India will be counted on June 4.

Chief Electoral Officer of Maharashtra S Chockalingam, per the PTI report, previously said, that there are 4,78,50,789 male voters and 4,41,74,722 female voters in Maharashtra as of March 15. He added that the state has 5,559 transpersons who are eligible to vote. He added that the number of voters has risen by 34,69,534 since 2019.

## Zendaya, Tom Holland cosy up at Indian Wells, scotch split

rumours

Los Angeles | Agencies

endaya and Tom Holland visibly squashed rumours that they had split after they turned up, "all loved up", for the BNP Paribas Open women's final at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden in California, reports 'Daily Mail'.

The rumours snowballed into a speculative tsunami in January after Zendaya had unfollowed Hollander on Instagram. It later turned out that Zendaya had done so with all the people she had been following.
Adding to the concern of fans, notes 'Daily

Mail', was the fact that Zendaya and Hollander haven't been photographed together since October 25, when they were snapped grocery shopping in Los Angeles.

The Emmy-winning actress, who plays a tennis coach in the upcoming film, 'Challengers', appeared in a tennis skirt and matching crop

Seated in the stands, a polo-clad Tom cosied up to his girlfriend, and they shared a laugh. Later, Zendaya congratulated the top at the tennis final, adds 'Daily Mail'. winner of the match, Iga Swiatek, who defeated Maria Sakkari as they posed together near the tennis court. The outing, according to 'Daily Mail', comes after Zendaya and Tom put on a united front at the 'Dune: Part Two' premiere in London in February.

Zendaya stars in the film.





NICK JONAS IN MUMBAI TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH WIFE PRIYANKA AND DAUGHTER

Los Angeles | Agencies

inger-songwriter Nick Jonas, who earlier performed in Mumbai as the headliner for the second edition of Lollapalooza India along with his brothers, Joe and Kevin, is back in the city to spend some quality time with his wife Priyanka Chopra Jonas and their daughter. He was papped exiting the Mumbai airport dressed in a white shirt, matching pants and shoes. Nick also carried a black sling bag. He smiled and waved at the paparazzi and fans gathered outside the airport. The singer has come to India just a week before Holi. It remains to be seen if Nick and Priyanka would stay back in the country to celebrate the festival with their friends and family. Priyanka landed in India with their daughter, days before Nick's arrival. Meanwhile, on the work front, Priyanka will be seen in 'Heads of State' alongside John Cena and Idris Elba. She is also set to star in 'The Bluff', which will be directed by Frank E Flowers. The film will also star Karl Urban.

Los Angeles | Agencies

ollywood star Timothee Chalamet, who is

currently basking in the success of 'Dune:

Part Two, was spotted on the set of James

As the actor starts with his journey to step into the

shoes of the 'Blowing in the Wind' singer, he looks

In photos obtained by 'People', Chalamet can be

guitar case in his hand, as he walked the city streets

paperboy hat and had a large yellow backpack on his

back. Beside him, a retro-looking car drove by, setting

the scene for the biopic, which will reportedly centre

dressed in jeans, a green jacket, an orange scarf, a

like a spitting image of the singer, reports 'People'

Mangold's upcoming biopic on Bob Dylan.

Celebrity
DJ David Guetta London hand on Jessica's baby Agencies bump, 'Daily welcomes newborn son

Ledon

born celebrity DJ David Guetta, who has performed to full houses in India, has revealed that he and his girlfriend, the Cuban-born

tric guitar in the 1960s and his road to becoming a

Not much is known about the biopic, though Mangold previously confirmed that Chalamet will be

singing in character as Dylan in the film -- his latest

folk music legend, as per Deadline.

actress Jessica Ledon, 32. have welcomed their first child together -- a son, reports 'Daily Mail'. The jet-setting DJ, who's 56, shared a

joint Instagram post with the actress, announcing the news along with a heartwarming family photo. The post reads: "Love is in the air. Welcome Cyan." The unusual name,

which is familiar to anyone who has been exposed to graphic designing, means 'light blue-green'. The couple, who had begun dating in 2015, announced the pregnancy at the

Latin Grammy Awards in Seville, Spain, in

November, as David lovingly placed his

showed off her blossoming with girlfriend Jessica baby bump in a sheer green dress with a halter neckline and a hood. David looked delighted as he cosied up to his girlfriend.

> Guetta, according to 'Daily Mail', also shares two children with his ex-wife Cathy Lobe, 56. They have a daughter, Angie, 16, and a son, Tim Elvis,

> Family, friends and followers quickly took to the comments to congratulate the couple, with David's son confirming the gender of the baby by writing, "Little brother gonna be strong!" along with a red heart emoji.

Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka commented, "So beautiful! I am so happy for you both."Dutch celebrity DJ Tiësto added, "I am so happy for you two!! Congrats brother!

## Adele suffers major blow; European tour fails to be a sellout

ninger-songwriter Adele is staring at cancellation of her European comeback tour as she has failed to sell out the tour. Fans fear she may pull out of gigs at the last minute. Tickets for her 10-date Adele In Munich gigs went on sale two weeks ago and apparently extra dates were added "due to unprecedented demand", reports 'Mirror.co.uk'. Yet thousands of tickets remain available for the dates listed on

Ticketmaster from August 2 to 31. This seems to be the potential sec-



ond instance of tour cancellation after Adele was forced to pull out of some of her Las Vegas residency gigs, which were due to take place this month.

Apologising for the 'inconvenience' in a statement on Instagram on February 28, the 35year-old wrote: "Sadly I have to take a beat and pause my Vegas residency. I was sick at the end of last leg and all through the break."

She had further mentioned, quoted by 'Mirror.co.uk,' "I hadn't quite gotten the chance to get back to full health before shows resumed and now I'm sick again and unfortunately it's taken a toll on my voice. And so on doctor's orders I've had to rest thoroughly. The remaining five weekends of this leg are being postponed to a later date. We are already working out the details and you will be sent the information asap." Adele is set to play a string of

gigs in

Germany's

Munich singing

outdoors at a

bespoke open-

air arena large

enough to fit

80,000 fans each night. a surprise to

lies, reports

Usher told

an incredible

moment". He

the couple is

have another

As per 'People', Usher was

referring to his residency show,

there, her mother was there, our kids were

My Way, which ended in December 2023."My mother was

zine.

## **USHER SAYS HIS WEDDING** TO JENNIFER GOICOECHEA **'SURPRISED' HIS OWN FAMILY**



TIMOTHEE CHALAMET SLIPS INTO SKIN OF LEAD CHARACTER FOR BOB DYLAN BIOPIC musical feat following Wonka.

"It's such an amazing time in American culture, and the story of Bob's -- a young, 19-year-old Bob Dylan coming to New York with two dollars in his pocket and becoming a worldwide sensation within three years," Mangold, 60, told Collider last year.

He further mentioned, quoted by 'People', "First being embraced into a family of folk music in New York and of course kind of outrunning him at a certain point as his star rises so beyond belief."

The biopic will also include some other notable gures from the era, including Woody Guthrie, Joan Baez and Pete Seeger, who all "have a role to play in this movie", Mangold told the outlet.

"It's such an interesting true story and about such an interesting moment in the American scene," he

**ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY** Nadiya Bychkova

in Las Vegas. "Matter of fact, everybody was surprised," the 'Burn singer recalled. "I'm like, 'No no no no, we're having a wedding right now. They're 'What?'." Laughing, he recounted have Elvis officiate



# ad hoc committee for wrestling

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Monday announced the dissolution of the ad hoc committee for the Wrestling Federation of

This decision comes following the lifting of the ban imposed on WFI by the United World Wrestling and the successful completion of the selection trials overseen by the ad hoc committee appointed by the IOA.

Refer to this office Order No. IOA WFI/I-28/2023/1560 dated 27 December 2023, wherein an Ad Hoc Committee for wrestling was appointed, it is hereby ordered that the said Ad Hoc committee is dissolved with immediate effect," the IOA said in

"The decision to dissolve the Ad Hoc committee comes in light of the lifting of the ban of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) by the United World Wrestling (UWW) and the successful com-



pletion of Selection Trials by the Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the IOA as per the directives of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi. Consequent upon the aforementioned developments, there is no further need for running the activities of the WFI through an Ad Hoc Committee," it said.

"However, as instructed by the UWW, it is imperative that the WFI appoint a Safeguarding Committee/Officer at the earliest to address the concerns of abuse and harassment and to ensure adherence to all rules, regulations and guidelines set forth by the UWW and other relevant authorities. Furthermore, the WFI is also directed to conduct the elections of the Athletes Commission in a time-bound manner, in accordance with the established procedures and guidelines. This step is essential to promote athlete representation and participation in the decision-making process of the

"The WFI is also instructed to repay the loan provided by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to the Adhoc Committee for managing WFI's operation. All concerned are requested to take necessary actions to implement this office order effectively. This is issued with the approval of President IOA," the letter read.

#### IPL 2024: I will be bowling this season, playing all 14 matches, says MI skipper Hardik Pandya

Team Absolute Mumbai

bit agitated over the captaincy change, Mumbai Indians fans would at least have one thing to look forward to watching the upcoming 2024 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) -- a vintage Hardik Pandya essaying his role as an allrounder. Pandya, who is coming back from an injury that he suffered during India's match against Bangladesh during the 2023 Cricket World Cup in Pune in October, is fully fit and on Monday assured his fans that he would play all the 14 matches during the IPL and would be bowling as much as the teams needed him to.

"I got injured during the World Cup in October and initially, it was felt that it was just niggle and that I would recover in a few days. I went to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) to get it checked and to ensure that I was doing the right thing with it.

"But within a couple of days, my ankle had swelled into a big angle and then we realised that it would take time. It later recurred and kept me out for nearly three months as there was no cricket in two of those months. I did not want to play in the World Cup only 50% fit," said Hardik Pandya during Mumbai India's pre-season press conference here on

Pandya said he is now fully fit and is looking forward to doing his bit for the franchise with which he started his IPL career in 2015.

"I will be bowling in the IPL. I have recovered fully from the injury and I am looking forward to contributing with both the bat and

Though he loves to bat and finish games, Pandya said he enjoys being the all-rounder



tributing to the team's cause with both the bat and ball during the upcoming IPL.

Pandya said his focus for the next couple of months will be only on Mumbai Indians and the IPL and he will not be thinking about the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup later this year. But said that if during the tournament, he comes across any performance worth remembering, he will take into account for the T20

He said he will not be skipping any matches to preserve himself for the T20 World Cup, which will be started five days after the end of

"I have rarely missed any matches in IPL and so I will be playing all 14 matches this season," said Pandya.

#### 'Get a new javelin': Arshad Nadeem is the pride of Pakistan and must be supported, says Neeraj Chopra

Team Absolute New Delhi

ndia's Neeraj Chopra and Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem are javelin superstars and a symbol of perfect friendship.

Both the athletes are getting ready for the upcoming outdoor season. While Chopra is currently training in Turkey, 27-year-old Nadeem's preparations have hit a 'snag'.

The Pakistani recently said he is struggling to acquire an international standard javelin for many years and has been "using one for the past seven to eight years." Chopra, the world and defending Olympic champion, is rather surprised to hear this.

As per SAI statement, Chopra, who competed with Nadeem in the world athletics championships in Budapest last year, said, "It is hard to believe that he has been struggling to get a new javelin. Given his credentials, this should not be a big issue at all." Arshad Nadeem, who finished second behind

Chopra in Budapest, was recently quoted in the media, saying: "It has now got to a stage where the javelin is damaged and I have asked the national federation and my coach to do something about it before the Paris Olympics." "When I started off in 2015, competing in inter-

national events I got this javelin ... for an international athlete aiming to win a medal in the Olympic Games, you need proper equipment and training Chopra, whose entire training and international

tours are funded by the Indian sports ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme, feels that Nadeem

ed a new javelin throw record at the 2022

is the pride of Pakistan and must be supported. With a 90.18m throw, Arshad Nadeem had creat-



Commonwealth Games in Birmingham to finish on top of the podium. It ended Pakistan's 60-year wait for a CWG gold medal.

"It can't be that he (Arshad) doesn't have the means to buy a javelin. He is a champion and must be doing some brand endorsements. I reckon he has earned a bit of money too. But having said that, his government can look at Arshad's needs and support him just like how my government is doing

"Additionally, Arshad is top javelin thrower and I believe that the javelin makers will be more than happy to sponsor him and provide what he wants. This is a piece of advice from my side," said Chopra.

### Bangladesh Jaker Ali taken to hospital after on-field collision

Team Absolute Chattogram angladesh uncapped wicket-keeper bat-

ter Jaker Ali has been taken to hospital after he was injured while fielding during the third ODI against Sri Lanka at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

While attempting to catch Pramod Madushan off Taskin Ahmed's bowling, Anamul Haque and Jaker Ali collided after which Jaker was carried off the field via

Jaker Ali came to the field as substitute fielder, Soumya Sarkar, who had a neck injury after he struck the advertising board while stopping the ball, while Mustafizur Rahman also had to leave the game on a stretcher due to cramping. Tanzid Hasan was selected to replace Sarkar in cases of concussions.

Umpire Tanvir Ahmed took over for Richard Kettleborough for the third ODI since



## Indian Wells: Alcaraz, Swiatek win titles

California | Agencies

arlos Alcaraz defended his trophy after beating Daniil Medvedev 7-6(5) 6-1, whereas Iga Swiatek bagged the 20th title of her career without dropping a single set across the tournament, defeating Maria Sakkari 6-4 6-0, at the Indian Wells Open final.

For Alcaraz, the journey to defend his title was riddled with challenges and doubts. Nursing an ankle issue, the young Spaniard faced an uphill battle against the formidable Daniil Medvedev in the final. Alcaraz rose to the occasion, staging a remarkable comeback after a tense opening set. After a tight opening set which Medvedev led 6-5, Alcaraz forced a tie-break which he edged 7-5 to take the advantage in the contest.

In the second set it was a different story as Alcaraz steamrolled the world No. 4 to clinch his first title of the year and first since Wimbledon last summer. Alcaraz is only the sixth player to suc-

cessfully defend the Indian Wells crown. Reflecting on his triumph, Alcaraz expressed gratitude for overcoming obstacles and seizing the moment on the grand stage of Indian Wells. His victory not only cements his status as a rising star in the tennis world but also serves as a testament to the power of perseverance and self-belief.

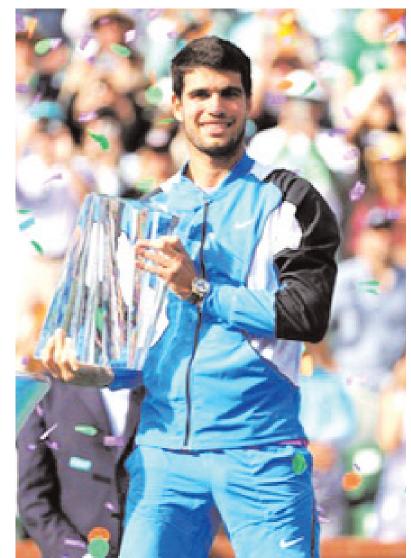
"I'm feeling great right now, this tournament means a lot to me," said Alcaraz, who is the first man to win back-to-back at Indian Wells since Novak Djokovic in

"Playing here is so special to me but I think this year is a bit more special because before the tournament I was thinking about whether I could play my best or not." "I was not feeling well with my ankle.

Weeks before the tournament I was hitting for 30 minutes with no movement, so there was a lot of doubt for me, but I was really happy to be able to overcome those problems and at the end feel bet-

In the women's final, Iga Swiatek showcased her dominance on the women's circuit with a commanding victory over Maria Shakari in two straight sets

The younger player, Swiatek, unsurprisingly jumped out to an early 3-0



lead. but Sakkari held her serve to win one back and start to pose a threat to her opponent. The Greek then leveled the score at 3-3 with a spectacular break of Swiatek and bit back again to make it 4-

But in the end, the rising star from Poland picked up a level and won the opening set 6-4.

She has won every single one of her 69 WTA 1000 matches prior to that place. And it wouldn't stop here, either. Nearly every rally saw Swiatek display her exceptional talent, taking down the

world No. 9 and obliterating any hope for improvement. Sakkari, who had lost all hope, appeared powerless during the disastrous final match.

Swiatek showed her supreme quality in nearly every rally, wearing down the world No.9 and closing up every suggestion of light at the end of the tunnel. An utterly demoralised Sakkari looked helpless in the destructive final game.

It was a ruthless display to dismantle Sakkari 6-0 in the second set, the end of which came just over 20 minutes after

#### Akhil, Anish, Niraj shine as India win six medals at the Polish Grand Prix

quota winners Akhil Sheoran and Anish Bhanwala as well as Niraj Kumar shone the brightest as Indian rifle and pistol shooters ended their Polish Grand Prix campaign with six medals, including two gold.

Some members of India's 50m rifle and 25m rapid-fire pistol squad are currently on an exposure tour to Europe to compete in various established international Shooting events, in the build-up to Paris 2024. Akhil Sheoran won gold for India in the men's 50m rifle 3

positions (3P) match two when he shot a scorching 468.4 to leave Patrik Jany of the Czech Republic a distant 2.2 behind in second at the Grand Prix Wroclawia & Dolnego Slaska.

Both those scores were however higher than the existing world record of 466.1, held by Jany's countryman Jiri

Anish Bhanwala also won gold in the men's 25m rapid-fire pistol, to extend a golden run of form at the Jozef Zapedzki Grand Prix held simultaneously. Navy shooter Niraj Kumar was also highly impressive finish-

ing with two bronze medals in both the men's 3P matches, thereby becoming the only Indian to finish with two medals. Niraj also shot impressive scores of 595 and 594 in the two

qualification matches. In the first match he finished third behind Jany and Rio Olympic silver medalist Serhiy Kulish of Ukraine. Swapnil Kusale also shot a solid 595 in match two to top the qualification standings, being more accurate than Niraj, but finished fourth overall.

The two Grand Prixes also saw another Paris quota winner Shriyanka Sadangi win bronze in the women's 3P and Ashi Chouksey pick up a silver in the second women's 3P.



#### Vijay Mallya, Jay Shah, Virat Kohli, Chahal, Sehwag hail RCB Women on maiden WPL title

Team Absolute New Delhi usinessman Vijay Mallya, the former Maliya, use some owner of the franchise, India cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal, former men's team captain Virat Kohli and Virender Sehwag led scores of Royal Challengers Bangalore fans in congratulating the RCB women's team for winning the maiden title

for the franchise. The Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) Women defeated Delhi Capitals by eight wickets in the final at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi with a dominant display to win the title, which most of the RCB supports feel is long due. The long-used phrase of 'Ee Sala Cup Namde', which translates to

'this year the cup is ours', and



the ridicule around it came to an end as a far-fetched dream finally became a reality for RCB in winning their first-ever WPL title and become just the second winners in the history of the a post on X, formerly Twitter. competition.

While Mallya said the team won the title which was longdue, Kohli and Yuzi Chahal called the title-winners 'Superwomen" and "Champions".

"Heartiest congratulations

to the RCB Women's Team for winning the WPL. It would be a fantastic double if the RCB Men's Team won the IPL which is long overdue. Good Luck," Mallya wrote in

Kohli, who interacted with RCB Women captain Smriti Mandhana over a video call, termed the RCB women players "Superwomen" as did Chahal while thousands of franchise fans took to social

media to hail the players for

their performance. Chahal put out a post on X

Team?'

in Kannada, which translated to: "Ananda, Paramananda, Paramananda. Congratulations to our RCB

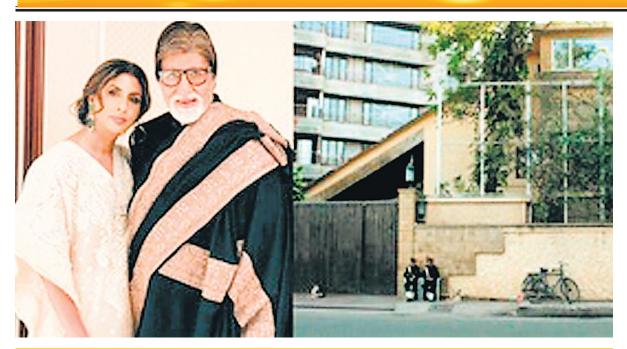
BCCI secretary Jay Shah also congratulated the RCB team for winning the title. "Congratulation to Royal Challengers Bangalore, the Champions of #TATAWPL Season 2!" he said in his post

Former India opener Virendra Sehwag praised the

RCB team for the temperament they showed in crunch situations. "Many congratulations RCB on winning the WPL. Great temperament shown in crunch situations and deserving winners. #WPLFinal," said Sehwag.

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## **BIG B RECALLS THE DAY HE BROUGHT DAUGHTER SHWETA HOME TO HIS BUNGALOW PRATEEKSHA**

Team Absolute Mumbai

eteran Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan said that family is the greatest bond one could have. The actor took to his blog on Monday and spoke about his daughter Shweta Bachchan's 50th birthday as he got nostalgic. Amitabh recalled bringing Shweta to his bungalow Prateeksha, when she was just two years

He said that she celebrated her 50th birthday, surrounded by family mem-

LFWx FDCI:

Ananya Panday

'sculpted' collection

turns muse for

bers.The actor also shared the updates including the "progress reports".

Big B wrote: "A day filled with the love of family and the greetings and the hilarity of the 'progress reports'...(rolling on the floor laughing emoji)...Birthdays galore... Shweta, the firstborn, and Nikhil, her husband... within a day of each other and the bringing in of the GOLDEN age - 50

The bungalow, which is situated in the Juhu area of Mumbai was reportedly gifted to Shweta by Big B in 2023.

The actor further mentioned, "At

## Shilpa Shetty Kundra pulls off one-leg squat on bench

Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra recently seen in the film 'Sukhee,' is giving a fitness nantra.

On Monday, the actress took to her Instagram and shared a video of herself doing one-leg squat on a bench. In the video. Shilpa can be seen wearing gym wear and pulling off the balancing act while

fully focused. The actress wrote in the caption: "Give me any 'RAMP and I will make it my OWN. Sab Balance ka khel hai! A great Leg workout in style."

Prateeksha, she was brought to the home,

our first home of our own, when she was

old... and today to see them celebrate the

day in the same home on the same table

and surroundings ... LIFE IS A WONDER.

barely 2, and Abhishek a few months

Children and grandchildren all

tioned, "Took me a couple of tries to get the whole drill, but it's challenging and really works the quads and glutes. Try it out and tag me. Let's see how many can complete est outfit. She

Earlier, the actress rocked the emerald colour with her latsported an emerald coloured outfit, which she paired with a cream coloured

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who is known for 'Super Deluxe' took to the comments sec-

shroud with flo-

ral patterns.

tion and lauded Shilpa's choice of outfit. She wrote, "Wow".

#### Oscar winner M.M. Keeravani to do music for Anupam Kher's 'Tanvi The Great'

Team Absolute Mumbai

**T**eteran actor Anupam Kher, who is gearing up for his upcoming directorial 'Tanvi The Great', has roped in the Oscar and Grammy-winning music director M.M. Keeravani for the film.

On Monday, the senior actor took to his Instagram and shared a video from the music session inside a studio, where the composer can be seen doodling on his MIDI keyboard in front of a digital audio workstation.

M.M. Keeravani can be seen playing some chords and humming the tune. Anupam applauds the composer at the end of the tune.

The actor wrote in the caption: "ALL DREAMS COME TRUE - Proud to announce that one of the finest music composers of our times #Oscar and #GoldenGlobe winner @mmkeeravaani sir is the music director of my directorial film #TanviTheGreat."

Anupam further mentioned, "I have been a fan of #Keeravani sir since I heard the song #TumMileDilKhile. Spending almost a year to create the music and songs for #TanviTheGreat has been a total BLISS and BLESSING! Thank you Sir for your brilliance and generosity! Jai Ho.'

Talking about the film, M.M. Keeravani shared, "I am thrilled to be a part of 'Tanvi The Great'. Collaborating with Anupam Kher is like being yourself all the time. Work was never this much fun before.'

M.M Keeravani is a recipient of Oscar Award and Golden Globe award for 'Naatu Naatu' song from 'RRR', which became a global phenomenon.

Team Absolute

about glamand star power at the grand finale of the fiverday-long Lakme Fashion Week. where Ananya Panday brought the curtains down, as she walked the runway for renowned designer Rahul Mishra.

On Sunday night, in the grand finale of the show, Mishra showcased a range of stunning ensembles from the AFEW collection christened 'Sculpt,' where he drew his inspiration from the designer's forever muse nature. AFEW stands for the four elements --

Air, fire, earth, water. "This was my show in Bombay after almost 6-7 years, so it was like homecoming... When we look at the whole exercise it was fun even at the studio. Everyone worked day and night for this collection," Rahul

Mishra turned sculptor as he elevated via Aari embroidery, hand sculpting, cutwork and patchwork. His garments took the limelight, but his showstopper Ananya Panday too looked stun-

ning as she walked the ramp, with her parents Chunky Pandey and Bhavna Pandey cheered for her from the front

Ananya said: "It feels great. This is the most fun I had walking on a ramp. I felt very easy and edgy walking. It was so much fun.

For Ananya, Mishra chose a black tube dress with flower patchwork on the side and a drizzle of sparkle. For



the make-up, the actress went for a very "sculpted" look with the House Of Lakme. She completed her style with a sleek ponytail.

The actress added: "My favourite thing about Rahul's work is that it's inspired by nature. He really knows anyone feels beautiful, the way his garments fit our bodies it almost feels it was made for us. I love that you bring awareness while portraying such beautiful collections."

## Randeep Hooda shares BTS pic of extreme body makeover

Team Absolute Mumbai

ctor Randeep Hooda, who is gearing up for the release of his directorial debut 'Swatantrya Veer Savarkar,' shared a picture of his physical transformation for the film on Monday. The actor, who essays the titular role in his upcoming film, took to his X on Monday and shared a monochromatic mirror selfie.

He wrote, "KAALA PAANI #SwatantryaVeerSavarkar #WhoKilledHisStory #VeerSavarkarOn22March #BTS #behindthescenes #VeerSavarkar #Savarkar (sic)".

The picture shows the actor having shed weight to suit the part of his character when the latter is sentenced to punishment in cellular jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Randeep looks lean with a receding hairline in the picture.

Randeep's journey in the film has been a testing one. However, he found strength in his persever-

He told in an interview: "The journey was honestly quite testing given that it's my first film as a director. However, I invested my energy in making the story more detailed. Normally, anyone would start with a film on a smaller scale or a short film for their directorial debut but, it was really not in my hands and it was not my intention to become a director of the movie but it happened as the film took its own course.'

"The opportunity came my way and I told myself, 'Okay, now you gotta do it well like how you put your 100 per cent in acting. I gave it my all and also learned many nuances of filmmaking. As an actor, you somewhere know about these things but you don't really pay much attention to them. But, when you don the hat of a director, you need to closely monitor these things," he added.



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