

NO INTERIM RELIEF

Team Absolute New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused any interim relief to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who has been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an excise policy case and is currently in its

custody. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, hearing Kejriwal's plea contending that his arrest and the remand order passed by a trial court were illegal and that he was entitled to be released from custody immediately, said that the probe agency has to be granted an opportunity to file a reply. "... the respondent has to be granted an opportunity to file a reply, as an opportunity for effective representation, and declining this opportunity would amount to a denial of fair hearing as well as

AAP'S LONE LS MP JOINS BJP

New Delhi: In a major political setback to the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab, the party's lone MP in the Lok Sabha, Sushil Kumar Rinku (48), joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) here on Wednesday.

In the bypoll to the Jalandhar Lok Sabha constituency held in May last year, Rinku trounced Congress' Karamjit Kaur by a thumping margin of 58,691 votes, as the grand old party faced defeat in the seat for the first time since 1999.

Rinku, a former Congress leader, joined the BJP in the presence of the party's National General Secretary Vinod Tawde and Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar at the party headquarters here. AAP MLA from Jalandhar (West), Sheetal Angural, also joined the saffron party along with Rinku.



violation of one of the principles of natural justice i.e., audi alteram partem, which is applicable to both the parties and not one," the court observed. Appearing for Kejriwal, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi urged the high court to order his release on Wednesday since his ED custody ends on Thursday, and contended that no reply is

AK'S DIRECTIVES FROM CUSTODY MAY ADD TO HIS & AAP'S LEGAL HASSLES

New Delhi: Two orders issued by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from the custody of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) over water and sewage issues in the national capital have triggered a controversy about the legitimacy and legality of such a step -- which could potentially multiply legal hassles for the Delhi CM as well as the Aam Aam Party (AAP).

The probe agency is examining the veracity and source of the so-called directives issued by CM Kejriwal to his ministerial colleagues Atishi and Saurabh Bharadwaj.

The ED is very likely to raise the legality of sending such orders before the Rouse Avenue Court when Kejriwal is presented next before the court on the expiry of his existing remand timeline. After his arrest, CM Kejriwal first issued an order to Water Minister Atishi from the custody of the ED on Sunday, while another directive was issued on Tuesday to the health department on smooth functioning of the AAP's flagship Mohalla Clinics.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has claimed that CM Kejriwal, despite being remanded to ED custody, is more concerned about the people of the national capital than himself.

However, the issuance of directives by Kejriwal in custody has triggered allegations of illegal operations and unlawful takeover of the Delhi CM's office.

BLA claims killing more than 30 Pakistani soldiers, issues stern warning to China ED REGISTERS CASE

Islamabad Agencies



Kochi: The Enforcement

required to be filed on behalf of the ED. In response to this, the court observed that while hearing and deciding a case, it is duty-bound to hear both sides fairly, keeping in mind the principles of natural justice. "Thus, the reply by the Directorate of Enforcement is essential and crucial to decide the present case," the judge noted. Justice Sharma also observed that she cannot presume that the respondent will have no reply to file and will remain bound only by the contentions raised before the trial court."Further, any release order from custody will amount to enlarging the accused/petitioner on bail or interim bail, as an interim measure," she observed. Justice Sharma has given the ED time till April 2 to file its reply to Kejriwal's interim application seeking immediate release from ED custody and even on the main petition, issued notice to the probe agency. The matter will be heard next on April 3.

RAID ON AAP LEADER'S RESIDENCE BASED ON KEJRIWAL'S INFORMATION

New Delhi: Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted raids at the residence of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Deepak Singla in the excise policy case, sources said. Sources said that the raids come after information was revealed during the grilling of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who was arrested on March 21 in the case and subsequently remanded to ED custody until March 28 by a Delhi court.

Singla, a former AAP candidate, had contested elections from Delhi's Vishwas Nagar Assembly seat under the AAP banner.

Madhya Pradesh CM calls Kamal Nath an 'outsider'



Team Absolute Bhopal

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Wednesday called the former Chief Minister Kamal Nath an "outsider" and asked the voters in Chhindwara to bid adieu to "outsider" in the upcoming elections.

"Outsiders came here (Chhindwara) but they are not willing to move out. It's an appropriate time (Lok Sabha election) to bid adieu to the outsiders," Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said while addressing a rally in Chhindwara on Wednesday, without mentioning Kamal Nath. The Chief Minister indirectly attempted to remind the Chhindwara voters that Kamal Nath, who has won nine times from Chhindwara Lok Sabha seat and made it his family bastion for the last 40 years, was born in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh).

the Congress leader did not see leadership potential "beyond his family members". Referring to the people of Chhindwara, the Chief Minister said: "Every time you elect a leader from just one family. Is there no leadership quality in your children? Why don't you elect the person who belongs to you and live with you?" He also questioned the

Hitting further at Kamal Nath, Madhya Pradesh Chief

Minister Mohan Yadav said

leadership quality of Chhindwara MP Nakul Nath, who is contesting his second Lok Sabha election from his family bastion.

"Do you see any potential in Chhindwara MP? Your children were not allowed to grow because Kamal Nath did not see leadership quality in you beyond his family members," the Chief Minister said.

ECI notice to Cong's Supriya Shrinate, BJP's Dilip Ghosh for distasteful remarks against women

Team Absolute New Delhi



Army claimed killing more than 30 Pakistani soldiers as it targeted PNS Siddique, the country's second-largest naval air station located in Turbat and warned China on its "illegal" settlements and projects in Balochistan.

In a statement, the group said that its Majeed Brigade successfully concluded the fifth phase of "Operation ZirPahazag" to "retaliate against ongoing Baloch genocide" and save the region from Chinese "occupation and exploitation".

"Majeed Brigade of Baloch Liberation Army, in the fifth phase of Operation ZirPahazag, last night (Monday) at ten o'clock, attacked the occupied army's Naval Airbase, PNS Siddique,



study published in

The Lancet, India's

total fertility rate

saw a significant

decline from 6.18 in

1950 to 1.91 in 2021.

The study predicted

that it may further

drop to 1.3 by 2050

Reasons that lead to

infertility include ris-

ing levels of obesity,

stress, smoking, pol-

lution, and unhealthy

lifestyles, said the

Infertility can affect

(TFR) by delaying

the total fertility rate

childbearing age and

reducing conception

probability.

doctor.

and 1.04 by 2100.

engaging the enemy till morning and successfully achieving the objectives of the operation by killing more than thirty enemy soldiers," BLA spokesperson, Jeeyand Baloch, stated.

The statement came as local media reports in Islamabad said that the attack killed one paramilitary

on the Pakistan side killed all f five attackers in retaliatory ore fire. Pakistan's Inter-Services s," Public Relations (ISPR) said the "terrorists" attempted to attack PNS Siddique in Turbat and the assault was "foiled" due to the "swift and effective response by the tary troops".

soldier while security forces

initiated an investigation into a money laundering case involving Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan's IT firm and the Cochin-based mining firm CMRL.

The case is already being probed by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO).

The Kochi office of the ED has filed an ECIR in the case. The ECIR is similar to the FIR lodged by the police for cognizable offences.

This issue was first raised last year by Congress MLA Mathew Kuzhalnadan on the basis of a media report, which quoted an Income Tax Department officer as saying that "CM Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan's IT firm Exalogic had received Rs 1.72 crore from the mining company CMRL, in which the KSIDC has around 13 per cent stake".Initially, CM Vijayan and the CPI(M) defended the case both inside and outside the Assembly. They said that this was nothing but a political witch hunt. But the defence fell apart when the SFIO took up the probe last month. of India (ECI) on

Wednesday issued a show cause notice to senior Congress leader Supriya Shrinate and the BJP's Dilip Ghosh for their distasteful remarks against women, in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections.

The Congress' social media incharge, Supriya Shrinate, in a now deleted post, made disparaging and derogatory remark against actress Kangana Ranaut, who is the BJP's candidate from Mandi, while BJP MP, Dilip Ghosh, made offending remarks against West Bengal Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee. The poll panel found the remarks of both the leaders "undignified and in bad taste."

Supriya Shrinate kicked up a storm when she mocked Kangana Ranaut for bagging the BJP's nomination from Mandi

Lok Sabha constituency for the forthcoming elections.

The BJP launched a blistering attack on the Congress spokesperson, accusing her of making sexist slurs on its candidate, while the latter tried to firefight the backlash.

The BJP's Dilip Ghosh stirred I controversy when he taunted a CM Mamata Banerjee over her d

father. Speaking to the Press, the BJP MP had claimed, "Wherever Mamata goes, she claims herself to be the daughter of that state. She should first identify her father."

The Trinamool Congress went all guns blazing against Dilip Ghosh, describing him as a "repeat offender" when it came to women.

China leads in govt-backed exploitation of zero-day bugs: Google report

Team Absolute New Delhi

hina continues to lead the way for government-backed exploitation of zero-day vulnerabilities and the cyber espionage groups in the country exploited 12 zero-day vulnerabilities in 2023, up from seven in

2022, a Google report said on Wednesday. A zero-day bug is a vulnerability in a system or device that has been disclosed but is not yet patched.

In 2023, Google observed 97 zero-day vulnerabilities exploited in-the-wild.

That's over 50 per cent more than in 2022, but still shy of 2021's record of 106, according to the report by Google's Threat Analysis Group (TAG) and cyber-security firm Mandiant. "Attackers are now shifting focus to thirdparty components and libraries in 2023. Zero-day vulnerabilities in third-party components and libraries were a prime attack surface in 2023, since exploiting this type of vulnerability can scale to



affect more than one product," said James Sadowski, Principal Analyst, Mandiant Intelligence. The team observed an increase in adversary exploitation of enterprisespecific technologies in 2023, with a 64 per cent increase in the total number of vulnerabilities from the previous year and a general increase in the number of enterprise vendors targeted since at least 2019. Exploitation associated with financially motivated actors proportionally decreased last year. "Financially motivated actors accounted for 10 zeroday vulnerabilities exploited in 2023, a lower proportion of the total than what we observed in

2022," said the Google report.

FORMER IPS OFFICER SANJIV BHATT CONVICTED IN 1996 NDPS CASE

Ahmedabad: Former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Sanjiv Bhatt was convicted in a 1996 narcotics case under the Narcotic Drugs and



Psychotropic Substances Act (ND)

Substances Act (NDPS) by the Palanpur Sessions Court, Gujarat on Wednesday.

The case dates back to Bhatt's tenure as the District Superintendent of Police in Banaskantha, where he was accused of framing a lawyer, Sumersingh Rajpurohit, by planting 1.5 kg of opium in a hotel room in Palanpur.

The Gujarat Crime Investigation Department (CID) arrested Bhatt for allegedly fabricating evidence against Rajpurohit. Bhatt was already serving a life sentence for a custodial death case dating back to 1989.In this earlier case, the Jamnagar court found Bhatt guilty of causing the death of Prabhudas Vaishnani, who succumbed to injuries sustained while in police custody.

According to a recent Team Absolute New Delhi

The decline in fertility rates in India is a matter of concern

MUST ADDRESS DIPPING FERTILITY RATES IN

and must be addressed properly by taking into account factors like urbanisation, education, and women's empowerment, said health experts on Wednesday.

"Numerous factors such as education, religious beliefs, and the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR), influence the total fertility rates of a country. In addition, delay in marriage and childbirth and change in social norms favouring smaller family size, financial independence, more and more women pursuing careers over motherhood, also result in a reduced fertility rate," Dr. Rachita Munjal, Senior Consultant, Birla Fertility & IVF, Gurugram, told cor-

respondent. TFR can be defined as the average number of children born to a woman in her lifetime.

"The psychological impact of infertility and related complications prompts couples to reconsider family plans, potentially leading



to fewer children. The societal stigma surrounding infertility and fertility treatment further restricts couples from seeking medical help, contributing to a lower TFR by limiting access to treatment," Dr. Rachita said.

Dr Nisha Bhatnagar, Medical Director at Infinite Fertility, told correspondent that the declining fertility levels can have manifold ramifications for public health policy and society.

However, reproductive technology developments like egg freezing can provide personalised answers

g- to infertility problems, the doctor r- said. "Egg freezing has become a

recognised technique for maintaining fertility, especially for those who choose to delay having children for personal or professional reasons," Dr Nisha said. However, these are not a cure-all for the general trends in population, the expert said, emphasising the need for more comprehensive public health policies that take into account "socioeconomic factors such as urbanisation, education, and women's empowerment."



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IIM JAMMU STUDENTS THRONG VIKSIT BHARAT AMBASSADOR MEET-UP EVENT, LAUD INITIATIVE



Team Absolute New Delhi

he Viksit Bharat Ambassador meet-up program was held in IIM Jammu on Wednesday and it saw the gathering of many students of the institute, raring to show their support and solidarity for the

Viskit Bharat 2047 mission. At the event, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Anurag Thakur spoke at length about landmark achievements of the past

decade under the Modi government

was paying heed to India's advances

and also explained how the world

in various fields including the digital sphere.

A lot of students of IIM Jammu students participated in the Viksit Bharat Ambassador meet-up program, that was organised in its campus on Wednesday.

Rishik Kumar, a student of IIM

ED issues third summons to Mahua **Moitra in FEMA violation casea**

Team Absolute New Delhi

he Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a third summons to Trinamool Congress leader Mahua Moitra for questioning in connection with a Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) violation case, a source said on Wednesday

Moitra, who was expelled from Lok Sabha last year in December, has been asked to appear before the ED on Thursday at the ED Headquarters in Delhi, according to sources.

Pranika Srivastava said that she

Notably, the Viksit Bharat

the country with an aim to encour-

age citizens to take responsibility for

contributing to India's development.

Through these events, the partici-

pants are encouraged to engage in

constructive discussions, exchange

ideas and also to explore practical

solutions to nagging problems.

The summons comes after she failed to comply with two earlier summons, missing scheduled appearances on March 11 and February 19.

ED sources said that Moitra has been asked to furnish certain documents pertinent to foreign investments linked to the ongoing investigation.

Moitra had been embroiled in a controversy over allegations of receiving cash in exchange for putting up queries in the Parliament on behalf of businessman Darshan Hiranandani



Scare at Kolkata airport as collision between IndiGo, Air India Express aircraft narrowly averted

Team Absolute New Delhi

n IndiGo aircraft narrowly avoided a collision with an Air India Express aircraft at the runway of Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport airport on Wednesday, sending shivers down the spines of 169 passengers aboard the latter plane.

According to reports, the IndiGo aircraft was awaiting clearance to enter the runway when it inadvertently brushed the wingtip of the Air India Express plane at around 10:30 a.m. The close call sparked immediate alarm, prompting the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to initiate a comprehensive investigation into the matter.

"A minor graze between a taxiing IndiGo aircraft and that of another carrier was reported from Kolkata Airport. The aircraft returned to the bay for inspection and necessary action, as per protocol. Consequently, IndiGo flight 6E 6152 between Kolkata and Darbhanga has been delayed," an IndiGo spokesperson said.

"Refreshments were provided to all passengers and an alternate aircraft has been



arranged to minimise delay and inconvenience to the passengers. IndiGo prioritises passenger safety above all else. An incident report will be submitted to DGCA in due course, as per protocol," the spokesperson added. Meanwhile, the Air India Express (AIX) spokesperson, in a statement, said that the wingtip of a taxiing aircraft of another airline grazed one of their aircraft, which was stationary and awaiting clearance to enter the runway at Kolkata for a scheduled operation to Chennai. "The aircraft has since returned to the bay and further investigation is underway, for which we are coordinating with the regulator and airport authorities. We apologise for the inconvenience caused to guests due to external circumstances," the spokesperson added.

CKNOW POLICE TO GET MOBILE DRONE

After Mumbai LS ticket, SS-UBT candidate receives ED summons in 'khichdi scam'

Team Absolute Mumbai

he Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday issued summons to Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Amol G. Kirtikar, who has been named the party's candidate for the Mumbai North West Lok Sabha seat.

The ED has summoned Kirtikar as part of its probe into the alleged money-laundering case arising out of the 'khichdi scam' first probed by the Mumbai Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

SS (UBT) MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut attacked the BJP over the development, terming it as a 'pressure tactic' applied on the party candidate.

"The ED summons followed soon after Amol Kirtikar was declared as the SS (UBT) candidate from Mumbai North West. These are simply the BJP's attempts to silence its political opponents by deploying such pressure tac-



pled, the EOW registered an FIR in The alleged 'khichdi scam' pertains September 2023 against several SS to the BrihanMumbai Municipal (UBT) leaders, including Raut's close Corporation (BMC) awarding conaide Sujit Patkar, Sunil Kadam, Rajeev tracts to serve this humble but nutri-Salunkhe from a catering company, some BMC employees, and others tious fare to thousands of migrants stranded during the Covid-19 panover the alleged scam of Rs 6.37 crore. demic, when the erstwhile Maha Vikas During probe, Kirtikar's name also Aghadi regime headed by Uddhav cropped up and he was quizzed by the

EOW for over six hours in September last year. After the money-laundering After the MVA government was top-Even as mercury approaches 40 degrees Celsius mark, Ahmedabad records 173 swine flu cases

angle emerged in the case, the ED stepped into the picture in October 2023.

The ED has filed its own complaint, and arrested Suraj Chavan, a close associate of SS (UBT) leader Aditya Thackeray, besides slapping attachment orders on his properties worth Rs 88 lakh. Former BJP MP Kirit Somaiya, who highlighted the scam, claimed that "Amol Kirtikar had received Rs 1.65 crore out of the 'khichdi scam', for which he would be held accountable". Kirtikar (52) is the son of a veteran Shiv Sena leader Gajanan Kirtikar, the sitting MP from Mumbai North West, who allied with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde after the party split in June 2022. While the prestigious seat is being coveted by the ruling Shiv Sena and the BJP, SS (UBT)'s decision to field Kirtikar from the seat drew huge flak from the MVA partners Congress-Nationalist Congress Party (SP) on Wednesday.

Lucknow Agencies

he new hi-tech Mobile Drone Vehicle (MDV) will soon join the Lucknow Police to make policing more effective.

The flying time of this drone will be 10-15 hours, some leap from the present 15 minutes.

The new MDV serves both as its base and carries the drone, allowing for remote monitoring. It is ready to be used as it can be installed within a few minutes. The drone has a 10-hour flight duration as opposed to the typical drone with a 15 to 20-minute flying limit.

Upendra Kumar Agrawal, Joint Commissioner of Police (JCP), Law and Order, said: "We did a trial run and it was successful. We are in the final stage to launch it, where big events such as processions, cricket matches, and upcoming Lok Sabha elections can be monitored.

The drone has been developed by a city-based Robotic company Roboz run by a robot expert Milind Raj and is being funded by Goenka Group under its corporate social responsibil

Six Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh encounter

Raipur Agencies

t least six Maoists were killed by security forces during an encounter in the Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh on Wednesday.

An official said that a search operation is underway to find more Maoists sheltering in the dense forest area

The incident occurred when a joint team of DRG and CRPF was carrying out a search operation following a tip of the presence of Maoists in the region. When the forces reached Chikurbhatti and Pusbaka villages, the Maoists started firing on the security forces. After more than two hours of exchange of firing, the bodies of six Maoists, including two women, were recovered from

the forest. Inspector General of Police (IGP), P Sundarraj confirmed the casualties, adding that the further search operation was still underway. As the Lok Sabha elections are getting closer, the Maoist activities have seen a spike in different regions in Chhattisgarh. On March 19, four Maoists, who collectively carried a cash reward of 36 lakh, were killed in an encounter with Gadchiroli Police commandos and CRPF along the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border. During the assembly elections held in

November last year, several incidents of Maoist attacks were reported in different parts of Chhattisgarh, including an IED blast triggered by Naxals in Sukma district a day before the first phase of the election.

Ukraine's foreign minister arrives in India on March 28 to discuss bilateral ties

Team Absolute New Delhi

n a first high-level visit by a Ukrainian leader since the start of war with Russia in 2022, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba will arrive in India on Thursday to discuss bilateral relations and regional and global issues of mutual interest.

tion of the External Affairs Minister S. engagements".

He would call upon Jaishankar and Deputy National Security Adviser to discuss matters pertaining to the bilateral partnership and cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual interest, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Wednesday



Kuleba will be arriving in New Delhi on a two-day official visit at the invita-Jaishankar and will have a "number of

In his maiden visit to the South Asian nation, the Minister is also

ity programme.

Continuous monitoring will be done through the drone installed in this vehicle. It will continue to get battery backup through a wire and a generator in the vehicle. Till now only 10-15 minutes of monitoring has been possible through drones," added the JCP.

tics," Raut said.

Thackeray was in power.

"A 32-inch screen in the car will help the team sitting inside the vehicle monitor captured proceedings. Interestingly, the drone will be able to keep an eye from a height of about 70 feet. Till now, drones can take good pictures only from a maximum height of 20 feet," he said adding that the drone will be significant to keep a watch on sensitive programmes.

Agarwal said that the drone system can be fed criminal data from police records and can be used to scan for criminals who may be present at such events.

"The device will be useful for managing traffic since, in the event of a jam, a parked drone in the vicinity may fly to identify the cause of the jam, eliminating the need for a traffic cop to investigate," said the JCP.

Ahmedabad Agencies

ven as mercury has approached 40 degrees Celsius mark, Ahmedabad has witnessed a rise in swine flu, diarrhea, vomiting, and typhoid cases in March.

The health department has reported significant infections: 173 cases of swine flu, 562 of diarrhea and vomiting, 85 of jaundice, and 204 of typhoid as of March 24.

The resurgence of swine flu, typically rare in summer, has alarmed health officials.

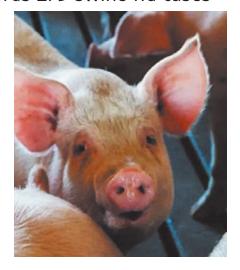
Cases are proliferating not only in Ahmedabad but also across other Gujarat cities like Rajkot.

The officials shared that the situation is exacerbated by the detection of cholera cases in various city localities, including Ramol, Amraiwadi, Jashodanagar and Lambha.

Government and private hospitals across Ahmedabad are overwhelmed with patients exhibiting symptoms of viral fevers, colds, coughs, and swine flu, leading to long queues and strained healthcare services.

Particularly, the Civil Hospital in Asarwa has been inundated with cases, including swine flu and coronavirus patients requiring urgent medical attention.

Moreover, the city's water quality has come under scrutiny as officials shared that nearly 472 water samples from eastern regions like Maninagar, Isanpur, Vatva, and Lambha have



been declared unfit for consumption.

The central areas, including Khadia, Jamalpur, Raipur, Kalupur, Shahpur, and Asarwa, are also facing severe water contamination issues, with 172 samples testing unfit, indicating a dire need for immediate intervention to prevent further health hazards. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation's health department has emphasised the critical need to address the pollution in drinking water sources, contributing to the ongoing rise in

Man in J&K's Pulwama booked for spreading rumours about militants

Srinagar Agencies

case has been filed against a man in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama for spreading rumours about militants on social media, police said on Wednesday.

Police said Sameer Ahmad Paray of Kabikoot village had recently uploaded a post on his Facebook profile 'Babar Azam', which "depicts arms & ammunition claiming that a new person has joined militant ranks in Pulwama district".

He has been found circulating incriminating content on social media, thereby disrupting public peace and tranquillity, a police official said, adding that case FIR no 23/2024 u/s 505(b)/IPC has been registered in police sta-



tion Rajpora and investigation started.

Police advised the general public to abstain from posting any false content on social media, warning of strict action against any person found involved in posting malicious content on the Internet.



expected to interact with the business community.

Kuleba announced his visit to India as he extended Holi wishes to the people of India on Monday.

"Standing here in Kiev, in front of Mahatma Gandhi's monument, I am also pleased to announce that this

India," Kuleba said in a post on X. Kuleba's visit comes just as Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Presidents of the warring Ukraine and Russia over the telephone this month.

In his talks with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky, Prime Minister Modi highlighted that India supports all efforts for an early and peaceful resolution of all issues between Kiev and Moscow.

The Prime Minister added that India would continue to do everything within its means to support a peaceful solution as Zelensky appreciated the country's continued humanitarian assistance for the people of Ukraine.

While discussing the Russia-Ukraine war with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Modi reiterated India's stable position in favour of dialogue and diplomacy.

week I will pay my first-ever visit to

waterborne diseases.



Madhya Pradesh

PM MODI, CMS OF 5 BJP-RULED STATES AMONG PARTY'S 40 STAR CAMPAIGNERS FOR MP

Team Absolute Mumbai

he BJP has released the list of 40 star campaigners for Madhya Pradesh in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, party chief J.P. Nadda, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Jyotiraditya Scindia, and Smriti Irani, Chief Ministers Mohan Yadav (Madhya Pradesh), Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh), Himanta Biswa Sarma (Assam), Vishnu Deo Sai (Chhattisgarh) and Bhajan Lal Sharma (Rajasthan) are among the star campaigners for the party.

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Deputy Chief Ministers Rajendra Shukla and Jagdish Devda, state BJP president V.D. Sharma, state in-charges Mahendra Singh and Satish Upadhyay have also been named as party's star campaigners.

Voting for the 29 Lok Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh will take place in four phases on April 19, April 26, May 7, and May 13. The BJP has declared its candidates for all 29 seats in the state.

The BJP had won 28 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections

Congress formed new media team in Madhya Pradesh

Sharma, Avnish Bundela,

President), Yogesh Yadav,

Vivek Tripathi, Aparajita

Sparsh Chaudhary, Avni

Bansal, Reena Borasi.

While making new

Pandey, Santosh Gautam,

Anand Jat, Abhinav Barolia,

appointments in the media

department, state party pres-

ident Jitu Patwari expressed

hope that the policy of the

Congress party will play an

important role in reaching

out to the people through

media.

Rajkumar Kelu (Vice

Bhopal: Congress has formed a new media team in Madhya Pradesh. State President's Media Advisor K.K. Mishra has been made while the chairman of the media department will be former minister Mukesh Navak

Congress has given responsibility to a total of 33 people in the media department in the state, in which, apart from the media advisor to the state president, the chairman of the media department, a total of 22 spokespersons have been made. Bhupendra Gupta, Mrinal Pant, Shailendra Patel, Kunal Chaudhary, Vipin Wankhede, Vinay Saxena, Nisha Bangre, Roshni Yadav and Abbas Hafiz will be the main spokespersons.

Other spokespersons are -Ashok Marscole, Baijnath Kushwaha, Ravi Saxena, Amit Sharma, Ram Pandey, Mithun Ahirwar. Ravi Verma Farhana Khan, R.P. Singh, Swadesh Sharma, Sangeeta



UMA BHARTI MISSING FROM LIST

Bhopal: Former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Uma Bharti is missing from the BJP's list of star campaigners for the Lok Sabha polls in the state. However, the party has picked Suresh Pachouri, who recently switched over from Congress, for the job.



The ruling party on Tuesday night released its list of 40 star campaigners for Madhya Pradesh, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Uma Bharti, who had led the BJP to victory in the 2003 assembly polls, had also failed to make it to the BJP's list of star campaigners during the 2023 state polls. Earlier this month, the senior BJP leader had said that she would not contest elections for the next two years and instead work for the rejuvenation of the Ganga river, but also made it clear that she won't retire from politics.

BJP candidate from Chhindwara Vivek Bunty Sahu filed nomination in the presence of CM

Chhindwara Agencies

vivek Bunty Sahu, BJP candidate from Chhindwara, one of the most prestigious Lok Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh, filed his nomination papers on Wednesday in the presence of senior party leaders. On this occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav made many allegations against Congress leader Kamal Nath.

Congress has once again made Nakul Nath, son of former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, its candidate from Chhindwara. Nakulnath had filed his nomination papers on Tuesday itself. On Wednesday, BJP candidate Vivek Bunty Sahu filed his nomination with a show of strength. A large number of workers were present in his rally.



Apart from the Chief Minister, State President Vishnudutt Sharma, State Government Ministers Kailash Vijayvargiya and Prahlad Patel were also present in the Collectorate office while filing nominations. In the public meeting organized on this occasion, CM Yadav fiercely attacked Kamal Nath. He said that people of the same family

are sitting here by matching

their horoscope, first the

son is contesting the elections. The people of Chhindwara know what he did in the last four and a half decades.

Kamal Nath had made an emotional appeal to the local people on Tuesday and said that he devoted his youth to the development of Chhindwara and did not even see his family. The Chief Minister took a jibe at this and said that the people of Chhindwara know the truth.

father is MP and now the A battle to save political strongholds for Scindia, Digvijaya and Kamal Nath

Team Absolute Bhopal

mid the electoral battle between the ruling BJP and the Congress, some seasoned politicians in Madhya Pradesh will also be fighting to save their own bastions and pocket boroughs.

Prominent among these political stalwarts are Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scinida and two former chief ministers, Congress veterans Digvijaya Singh and Kamal Nath. A member of the erstwhile royal Scindia

family of Gwalior, Jyotiraditya Scindia contested and won the first Lok Sabha (bypoll) election after his father and Congress leader Madhavrao Scindia, a Lok Sabha MP from Guna, died in a plane crash in 2001.

Jyotiraditya Scindia (53) was re-elected as MP from his family's pocket borough Guna for the next three consecutive terms - 2004, 2009 and 2014.

In fact, Guna was one of the two Lok Sabha seats that the Congress managed to win despite a massive wave in favour of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in 2014. However, Jyotiraditya Scindia lost the elec-

tion from Guna against the BJP's KP Yadav in 2019. One year later, Jyotiraditya Scindia along



with 22 Congress MLAs had shifted into the BJP, resulting in the end of the Kamal Nath-led

Congress government in March 2020. Jyotiraditya Scindia, who is a Rajya Sabha MP, is contesting his sixth Lok Sabha election, but the first on the BJP's symbol.

Spanning eight Assembly seats of the three districts of Guna, Shivpuri and part of Ashok Nagar, most of the time, this particular seat was represented by the members of the Scindia family.Local people said the seasoned politician is taking this election as a matter of prestige and is determined to get his pocket

borough back.

Congress veteran and former Chief Minister, Digvijava Singh is contesting the Lok Sabha election from his home turf Rajgarh.

Interestingly, the Rajgarh parliamentary constituency covers two Assembly segments -Raghogarh and Chachoura of Guna District and one Assembly seat of Agar-Malwa (Susner) along with five Assembly segments of Rajgarh District.

Veteran Rajya Sabha MP, Digvijaya Singh was elected as a Lok Sabha MP twice from Rajgarh, in 1984 and then again in 1991. In

1993, he became the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and remained on the post until 2003. Digvijaya Singh's younger brother Laxman Singh represented this particular Lok Sabha constituency five times, including one term on the BJP's symbol.

As the Congress could win just one Lok Sabha seat in the previous election, and Digvijaya Singh had also lost against BJP's Pragya Singh Thakur from Bhopal in 2019, the grand old party, which is striving hard to find its lost ground in Madhya Pradesh, has fielded the former CM from his home district Rajgarh this time. The Congress had won the last Lok Sabha election from Rajgarh in 2009, while the BJP's Rodmal Nagar won two previous elections in 2014 and 2019.

Another Congress veteran Kamal Nath is making all efforts to retain his bastion Chhindwara, the only parliamentary constituency the BJP lost in the previous general election. Though, ex-CM Kamal Nath is not the candidate from Chhindwara Lok Sabha seat, he is leading the campaign for his son and sitting MP, Nakul Nath.

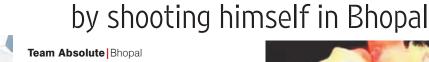
Senior leader Kamal Nath had won nine Lok Sabha elections from Chhindwara, and he would be fighting to save his stronghold.

India became the 5th largest economy in the world due to Modi ji's good governance and development: Rajendra Shukla

Anuppur Agencies

The country is safe in the hands of





Hotel businessman commits suicide



Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister is working to make the country an economic superpower. Today thousands of workers here have shouted that this time it will cross 400. Due to the development and good governance done by the Prime Minister, India has become the 5th largest economy in the world. Narendra Modi will become the Prime Minister for the third time and the country will become the country with the third largest economy in the world. To make Modi ji the Prime Minister for the third time, all of you should give your vote and blessings to the BJP candidate and make him victorious with historic votes.

Deputy Chief Minister of the state. Rajendra Shukla said this while addressing the rally of the party candi-

NOMINATION PAPERS WILL BE FILED FOR THE SECOND PHASE FROM MARCH 28

Bhopal: Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan has told that, nomination papers will be filed in 7 Lok Sabha constituencies of Madhya Pradesh from March 28 in the second phase of Lok Sabha Elections-2024.

Rajan said that Lok Sabha elections are to be held in Madhya Pradesh in 4 phases. In the second phase, voting will be held in Lok Sabha parliamentary constituencies number-6 Tikamgarh (SC), number-7 Damoh, number-8 Khajuraho, number-9 Satna, number-10 Rewa, number-17 Hoshangabad and number-29 Betul (ST). . Election notification for the second phase will be released on Thursday, March 28. Nomination papers will be filed by the candidates from this day itself. The last date for filing nomination papers is April 4. The nomination papers will be scrutinized the next day on April 5. Candidates who have filled the nomination form will be able to withdraw their names till 8th April. Voting for the second phase will be held on April 26. Counting of votes for all phases of voting will take place on June 4, 2024.

date from Shahdol parliamentary constituency, Himadri Singh, after reaching Anuppur Collectorate office and filing

her nomination. The meeting was also addressed by State Government Minister Dilip Jaiswal, Shahdol MP and

Anuppur District President Ramdas

party candidate Himadri Singh and

otel businessman Nadir Rashid (70) committed suicide by shooting himself in his house on Wednesday morning in Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh. Police have not found any suicide note.

The reasons for suicide have not been revealed as no suicide note has been found.

According to information received from the police, Nadir Rashid, owner of Hotel Jahannuma Palace, living in Shyamala Hills police station area, shot himself at his house, due to which he died.

Rashid is also related to the Nawab family of Bhopal. It is coming to light that he is suffering from illness and is suffering from depression.On receiving information about the suicide of hotelier Rashid, senior police officers reached the spot. Besides, his relatives have also gathered at his residence.

Why he committed suicide has not been revealed. Police is investigating the matter.

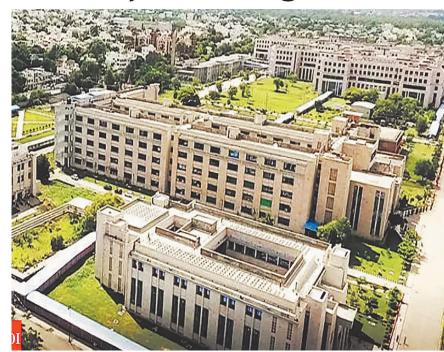
GOODS WORTH AIIMS Bhopal Successfully Saves Three Children **OVER RS 31 CRORE 92 LAKH INCLUDING** with Rare and Complex Congenital Heart Diseases **RS 1.5 CRORE CASH**

Team Absolute Bhopal

nder the leadership of Professor (Dr.) Ajai Singh, Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal, for the first time, rare and complex congenital heart diseases in pediatric patients were cured without surgery using Nitinol device. In a remarkable display of medical expertise and innovation, the Cardiology team at AIIMS Bhopal has achieved a milestone by saving the lives of three children suffering from rare and complex congenital heart diseases through percutaneous transcatheter interventions

The first case involved a 1-year-old female child weighing 6 Kg, presenting with feeding difficulties and chest indrawing. Upon diagnosis of a rare congenital heart defect known as Aortopulmonary window, the team swiftly performed percutaneous transcatheter device closure using a button-like nitinol device. This timely intervention prevented the child from becoming inoperable, utilizing only venous access from the groin to minimize risks associated with arterial access in pediatric cases.

In the second case, a 3-year-old boy weighing 12 kg was diagnosed with a large Ostium secondum Atrial septal defect of size 25 mm. Initially slated for surgical closure, the Cardiology team determined that



percutaneous transcatheter device closure was a viable and less invasive alternative. The child was successfully managed with a 28 mm button-like nitinol device, sparing

him from the need for cardiac surgery. The third case involved a 12-year-old male boy experiencing shortness of breath and dangerously low oxygen saturation lev-

els. Diagnosed with AV Malformation of Lung through bubble contrast 2D echocardiography, a preoperative CT Angiography was conducted to plan a percutaneous closure of the malformation. The procedure was executed with precision using a Vascular Plug device, resulting in the normalization of the child's oxygen saturation to 95%

These complex percutaneous pediatric interventions were spearheaded by the Cardiology team at AIIMS Bhopal, led by Dr. Bhushan Shah with Dr. Amber Kumar, Dr. Kislay Shrivastava, and Dr. Madhur Jain. Their collaborative effort with the Cardiac Anaesthesia team, led by Dr. Vaishali Waindeskar and Dr. S R A N Bhushanam Padala, and the CTVS team, led by Dr. Yogesh Niwariya and Dr. M Kisan, ensured the success of these groundbreaking procedures

Executive Director Prof. Dr. Ajai Singh extended his heartfelt congratulations to the entire team for their unwavering commitment to excellence in patient care and their pioneering spirit in taking on new challenges. This marks the first instance of AIIMS Bhopal performing such complex interventions in pediatric patients, underscoring the institution's dedication to pushing the boundaries of medical innovation and improving outcomes for patients.

SEIZED Bhopal: Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan said that after the Model Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha Elections-2024 came into effect from March 16, 2024, continuous action is being taken by the police and other enforcement agencies. He said that from March 16 to March 26, Goods worth Rs 31 crore 92 lakh 54 thousand 401, including Rs 1 crore 58 lakh 76 thousand 450 in cash, were seized. During this period, 6 lakh 58 thousand 157 liters of liquor worth Rs 10 crore 56 lakh 21 thousand 800 has also been seized.

Similarly, 8 thousand 696 kg of drugs worth Rs 4 crore 53 lakh 33 thousand 8 and more than 152 kg of precious metals worth Rs 3 crore 32 lakh 52 thousand 934 have been seized. Besides, other materials (readymade, garments etc.) worth Rs 11 crore 91 lakh 70 thousand 209 have been seized.



absolute edit



EDITOR'S SPECS

Most unicorns globally have 'underdog' founders

global study of 845 unicorns and more than 2,000 tech lead-**L**ers has revealed that most companies with a valuation of \$1 billion and above have "underdog" founders and female entrepreneurs are on the rise. The study, titled "Unicorn Founder DNA Report" by Defiance Capital found that 70 per cent of unicorns have "underdog founders" (like immigrants, women and people of colour). According to a TechCrunch report on Wednesday, unicorns used to earlier have only male founders *"but this is changing with 17 per cent* having a female founder in 2023". About half of them (53 per cent) have earned degrees from the top 10 global universities and 49 per cent of unicorn CEOs had STEM degrees, the findings showed. The study also revealed that unicorns were dominated by white founders, but that every third unicorn had an Asian founder. Several unicorn founders were forced to develop a growth mindset, "with values, work ethic, and ambitions all established during childhood". Meanwhile, India is now home to more than 8,000 startups that have women founders with a cumulative funding of nearly \$23 billion to date, according to the latest report by Tracxn, a leading market intelligence platform. Women entrepreneurs share of startups in the Indian tech industry exceeds 18 per cent, and among funded companies, the share is more than 14 per cent. Women-led startups represent a significant 14.8 per cent share of the overall Indian tech funding pie at nearly \$155 billion.

Countering the long-range threat from a prime adversary

D.C. Pathak

t is now well established that China has -- with the Sino-Pak axis bolstering its threat potential - emerged as the source of a lasting danger for India's defence and security and for that reason alone that country needed to be studied in depth on a continual basis from the angles of ideology that governs it, the philosophy that guides its military growth and the advance it is striving to achieve in the sphere of technology of combat. From what appears in the public domain by way of its proclaimed objectives, President Xi Jinping's China has been following the strategy of gaining 'civil-military fusion', total supremacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and a steady push towards becoming the second superpower through the economic and technological route -apart from pursuing the path of a defence buildup. Xi's rise to power in China now matches that of Mao Zedong and his definition of Chinese ideology as 'Marxism with Chinese characteristics' is part of "Xi's Thought" put in the party's constitution. Significantly, it calls for embracing the 'Civilisational strength' of China to build the nation- there is a learning from this for India. While making rapid strides in the area of using technology including artificial intelligence (AI) for the purposes of offence and defence, China wants to buy time for its economic consolidation and is apparently inclined to avoid a military confrontation with its main rival -- the US, at present. This came out during the meeting between US President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart Xi at the APEC summit in San Francisco in November last year.

It must have come as a relief to Xi when Biden observed that the US was "not seeking a conflict with China" -- the US President obviously had Russia weighing on his mind far more in the context of the ongoing Ukraine-Russia military confrontation. It is a matter of great satisfaction that India is putting a comprehensive strategy in place for countering the threat from China and in a multi-prong response concentrating on measures to deal with the adversary on land and sea as well as in the air- through the development of missile and drone technology. Indo-US relations are being constantly upgraded in the context of a new Cold War appearing on the horizon between the US and China and India is also successfully opposing the Chinese designs at international forums while assuming an active profile on a multilateral platform like Quad, in association with the US. In a Marxist state, the released party documents tell a lot about which way the country was proceeding and these have to be closely studied and analysed. Cyber warfare and the use of social media as an instrument of combat come naturally to China as they fit in with the Marxist maxim of 'winning a war without a battle' and so does the thesis of 'two steps forward one step backwards' that was designed to get away with 'salami slicing' which was likely to be practised by the adversary on our borders.

Since May 2020, the Chinese troops have engaged in aggressive activities and precipitated skirmishes along the Sino-Indian border.

India has done well in the regime of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to carry out the necessary military build-up along the India-China border, particularly in Eastern Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh and also push forward the civilian settlements there to match the Chinese activities along LAC. A lot is being done also to enhance the Naval power of India in the Indian Ocean where China was using Male as a springboard for deploying its Naval 'spy' ship possibly for hydrographic studies in the Indian Ocean. China has managed to have an ingress in Afghanistan because of Pakistan's initiative in arranging a 'give and take' between the Taliban Emirate and the Marxist state and has also stepped up its political and economic bonding with India's neighbours including Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Maldives. India has to safeguard its neighbourhood against China's attempts to use these countries to create bases for anti-India activities. Against a Marxist China that has called for rallying behind the 'civilisational strength' of the country, India has to respond with the 'whole of the nation' strategy and project the mandate that democratic India was 'one nation'. The substratum of 'one man one vote' on which India's democracy has been tested over decades, leaves little scope for politics of religion, caste and region particularly when the governance of the country did not carry any denominational stamp and the state policies did not make any distinctions amongst citizens. Moreover, nationalism strengthens democracy and the political opposition would do well to own it with full vigour. India is a land of socio-cultural diversities and different modes of worship but with one secular political umbrella created by the multi-party system submitting to a common electoral process. Indian parties have to learn to keep national security above politics and not inject any element of 'separatism' in their campaigns. Narratives of 'majoritarianism', 'authoritarianism' and 'minority concerns' can not become the tools of running politics from behind and care has to be taken to ensure that 'influence warfare' of anti-India lobbies often working in conjunction with civil society groups opposed to the government of the day, did not damage our national interests by running a 'proxy' offensive for vested reasons

Indian voters always prove to be shrewd judge of the merit and performance of the rulers and opt for good governance. Also, the average Indian showed great sensitivity to matters of security of the nation and even pushed personal economic concerns into the background whenever called upon to contribute to such a higher cause. In the present context, the promise of a stable government would be a major concern of the voter. There is another emerging area of concern for India attributable to Sino-Pak collaboration. The Biden administration in the US has for some time

been engaged in defending Islam as a faith that ought not to be discredited and defamed and seems to have felt particularly concerned over Islamophobic trends noticed in the US in the wake of the Israel-Hamas confrontation that began with the terrorist attack of Hamas on Israel on October 7 last year. In a statement issued by the White House on March 15, it was announced that the US will develop the first-ever "national strategy to counter the scourge of Islamophobia and hate in all its forms" in the US and elsewhere. The unusually large civilian casualties of over 30,000 resulting in Gaza from the Israeli attacks and domestic developments like forced resignations of the Presidents of Harvard and Pennsylvania universities for permitting pro-Palestinian demonstrations on the campus, seemed to have compelled the White House to try to be politically correct by speaking up against Islamophobia.

Not unexpectedly, Pakistan and China cosponsored on March 15 a draft resolution in the UN General Assembly on 'measures to combat Islamophobia', which was passed with 115 nations including both the US and Russia supporting it, no member expressing its opposition and 44 countries including India, Brazil, Ukraine and a number of European countries like UK, France, Germany and Italy, abstaining from voting. Pakistan was representing the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) -- the 57-member block of Muslim countries chaired by Saudi Arabia. India rightly took the stand that all acts motivated by anti-Semitism, Christianophobia or Islamophobia should be condemned and faiths other than Abrahamic religions should also be brought under the purview of the resolution. India pointed out that anti-Hindu, anti-Buddhist and anti-Sikh sentiments had also surfaced internationally. Indian representative strongly advised the UN to maintain itself above such faith-related matters as this otherwise would have the effect of dividing the world body into "religious camps" The move of Pakistan and China at the UN confirms the strategic strength of the Sino-Pak axis and reminds India of its adverse potential for this country. India houses the second-largest Muslim population in the world and believes in treating all religions with equal respect. There has been considerable criticism in Pakistan of the announcement of the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) by India which was meant for accommodating the non-Muslim minorities persecuted in the three Islamic countries in India's neighbourhood --Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The Paksponsored resolution in UNGA was aimed, on one hand, at defending Islam against the implicit criticism of Sharia-ruled states for the unequal status accorded to non-Muslims by them and running down India, on the other, for the alleged suppression of Muslim minority

in this country. Introducing the resolution in the UN General Assembly, Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan at the UN referred without naming India, to the lynching of Muslims by cow vigilantes as well as the attacks on women wearing the 'hijab' and particularly denounced the act of "gleefully consecrating a Hindu temple on the ruins of a historical 500 years old mosque". It appeared that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the US were on the same side of the fence -- in believing that there is a rising trend of anti-Muslim hate reflected in unequal immigration policies, profiling and restrictions placed on Muslims in according citizenship to them, in many parts of the world. The democratic world however, should be aware that it is Islam that claimed supremacism of faith on the ground that it was declared as the only 'perfect' religion -- which also happened to be the last -- and did not place other religions on an equal footing. The US wants to keep its hold in the Middle East and for that reason consistently stands by its old friends Saudi Arabia and UAE. It should however, be fully cognisant of the fact that in the wake of the 'war on terror', the hold of Islamic radicals had become stronger in the Muslim world creating a divide between the 'radicalised' countries hostile to the US-led West and those in deep friendship with the US. The former carries the historical legacy of the Nineteenth century Wahhabi Jehad that was directed against the European colonial powers in Algeria, Arabia and India -- this could be one reason why countries like the UK and France unlike the US, abstained from voting on the Pak-sponsored resolution against Islamophobia moved in UNGA. India has to watch out for hostile lobbies pushing ahead with their propaganda on Muslim issues on the lines of the UN verdict. Indo-US relations draw strength from a shared concern over the rise of Islamic radical forces in the Muslim world and this is reflected in the deep friendship enjoyed by the two countries with Saudi Arabia and UAE which were targeted by radical forces.

The US policymakers would do well not to let any manoeuvrings of Pakistan or the influence of anti-India lobbies alleging unequal treatment of Muslim minorities in India, affect their better judgement. In the final analysis, there is no change in the security assessment that the Sino-Pak strategic alliance remains on top of the threats to India and requires a comprehensive handling in the spheres of defence, internal security and diplomacy. Both Pakistan and China, it may be recalled, had joined hands in campaigning against India on the issue of Kashmir, particularly after the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution by the Indian Parliament in August 2019. India has to be extra vigilant against the 'information warfare' being run by the two hostile neighbours of India on the domestic matters of this country. (The writer is former Director of the Intelligence Bureau. Views are personal)

international

Israel withdraws negotiators from Qatar after Hamas rejects truce deal

Tel Aviv Agencies srael has recalled its negotiating team from Qatar after ected its latest



that Hamas military infrastructure has crumbled and only four battalions were remaining southern Gaza and that

was only a matter of time

briefed the Israel war cabinet

that it was only a matter of time

for the army to defeat Hamas

and to take out its elusive and

dreaded leader, Yahya Sinwar -

October 7, 2023 massacre.

the mastermind of the

The Israel defence ministry

sources told IANS that the

Hamas was trying to buy time

and was expecting an escala-

tion of violence in the West

before Hamas caves in. The IDF chief has also Baltimore bridge collapse



Six people presumed dead in Private information of 2.7 million Pakistanis compromised

offer on a hostage deal and truce, an Israeli official said.

The delegation led by the Mossad chief, David Barnea, had been in Doha for eight days. Israel has said that it will not relent to many of the demands put forward by the meditators, including Qatar and Egypt on behalf of the Hamas side. According to sources in the Israel defence ministry, Hamas had again put forward a demand of a total ceasefire, withdrawal of Israeli troops and rehabilitation of Palestinians in northern Gaza from the south where they have been staying as refugees since the war broke out.

Meanwhile, Israel Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a statement on Tuesday night said, "Hamas wanted a permanent ceasefire and its decision to reject a US brokered compromise was clear proof of it not interested in continuing talks, and a sad testament to the damage caused by the UN Security council resolution."

The statement also said, "Israel won't cave into delusional demands made by Hamas. The hawks in the Israeli

Bank area by the Hezbollah establishment, including side before the end of Holy Defence Minister Yoav Gallant Ramzan month, which would were not willing for even a temforce Israel to enter into mediaporary truce. This is owing to tion at the behest of internathe military intelligence reports tional pressure.

Childbirths in South Korea hit another low in January: Report

Seoul Agencies

he number of babies born in South Korea fell to a record low for any January this year, data showed on Wednesday, deepening woes about the country's demographic picture due to rapid ageing and ultra-low birth rate. A total of 21,442 babies were born in January 2024, down 7.7 per cent from a year earlier, according to the data compiled by Statistics Korea. It marked the lowest figure for any January since the statistics agency began compiling related data in 1981, Yonhap news agency reported.

The decline has also accelerated in recent years from a 1 per cent on-year fall in January 2022 and a 5.7 per cent decline in January 2023.

In January 2000, newborns stayed over 60,000 but fell below 50,000 in 2002 before sliding further to the 30,000 level in 2016.

The report said the January figure has hovered around the 20,000 level since 2020.

In terms of monthly readings, it marked the first time since March 2023 that the number of newborn babies rose to the 20,000 level, and the country usually logs a larger number of newborns in January, according to the agency.

South Korea is experiencing grim demographic changes, as many young people opt to postpone or give up on getting married or having babies in line with changing social norms and lifestyles, as well as facing high home prices, a tough job market, and an economic slowdown.

Last year, the number of babies born in the country dropped 7.7 percent on-year to an all-time low of 229,970, the report said.

The total fertility rate, the average number of expected births from a woman in her lifetime, also hit a record yearly low of 0.72, which came far below the 2.1 births per woman needed to main-



tain a stable population without immigration.

In the fourth quarter of last year alone, the rate came to 0.65, the lowest-ever quarterly figure.

The number of deaths inched down 0.5 per cent on-year to 32,490 in January this year, the report said.

The population, accordingly, declined by 11,047, the sharpest fall for any January ever. The number of deaths has outpaced that of newborns since November 2019.

The number of couples getting married rose 11.6 per cent onyear to 28,000, the data also showed, as more couples tied the knot after delaying marriage during the earlier stages of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The number of couples getting divorced climbed 9.5 per cent on-year to 691, according to the data.

South Korea is expected to be a highly aged country by 2072 as the median age will increase from 44.9 in 2022 to 63.4 in 2072, and the population will tumble to around 36.22 million in 2072 from last year's 51 million

Washington Agencies

rix people, who went missing due to a bridge col-Dapse in the US city of Baltimore, are presumed dead. Addressing a press confer-

ence, Rear Admiral Shannon Gilreath said due to the cold water temperatures and harsh sea conditions, it was likely the missing individuals were dead, Xinhua news agency reported.

The US Coast Guard has suspended search and rescue efforts.

The 2.6-km-long Francis Scott Key Bridge, a major bridge that held Interstate 695, collapsed at about 1:30 a.m. local time early Tuesday morning after being hit by a Singapore-flagged large container ship, which experienced a power failure before the colli-

approximately 11.5 million vehicles crossing it each year. "We're gonna work with our

partners in Congress to make sure the state gets the support it needs," President Biden said.

sion. The six individuals who

went missing, all road mainte-

nance workers, were reportedly

on the bridge repairing pot-

holes when the collapse

Two other people were res-

cued from the Patapsco River

earlier, with one in critical con-

dition, according to local

In brief remarks from the

White House Tuesday, US

President Joe Biden said he

wants the federal government

to pay for the reconstruction of

the bridge. The bridge opened to traffic in 1977 and saw

occurred.

authorities.



Islamabad Agencies

joint investigation team (JIT), which was formed to probe data leak from National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra), has confirmed that the personal information of 2.7 million Pakistanis had been compromised, local media reported. The JIT unearthed the scandal in its report submitted to the

Pakistan's Ministry of Interior, stating that the data theft took place between 2019 and 2023, Geo News reported.

According to the sources, the JIT has completed investigations into the enormous scandal of an alleged breach of Nadra's database and the officials concerned at the ministry are reviewing the contents of the report compiled by the panel.

The JIT report, the sources said, has identified that the data theft took place from the Multan, Karachi, and Peshawar offices of Nadra, Geo News reported.

The stolen data was allegedly moved from Multan to Peshawar before it finally reached Dubai, the sources said.

The JIT report has said there is proof that the stolen Nadra data was apparently later sold in Argentina and Romania, Geo News reported. The government formed the JIT after a cyber security incident occurred in March 2023.

policy

Russian lawmakers mull over reinstating death penalty after terror attack

Moscow Agencies

ussian lawmakers are discussing lifting the moratorium on the country's death penalty, following a recent deadly terror attack at a Moscow concert hall. "Today, there is no other form of punishment for these scumbags other than capital punishment," said Leonid Slutsky, head of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, referring to the suspects of the terrorist attack, at a plenary session of the State Duma, or lower house of the parliament, on Tuesday. Slutsky also noted that incitement to terrorism

should be punished by imprisonment, Xinhua news agency



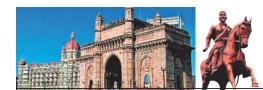
reported. State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin proposed creating an inter-factional

working group to analyze legislation regarding the use of the death penalty and migration

and Legislation Pavel Krasheninnikov said the committee is ready to discuss various proposals and bills on the moratorium on the death penalty, adding that it is ultimately important to "keep a cool head" when making such decisions. According to current legislation, capital punishment remains legal in Russia, however, a moratorium on the death penalty was instituted in 1996, after the country had joined the Council of Europe. Russia's Constitutional Court imposed a ban on the death penalty in 1999

Chairman of the State Duma

Committee on State Building



maharashtra

Eknath Shinde, Ajit Pawar, Ashok Chavan among BJP's 40 star campaigners for Maharashtra

Team Absolute Mumbai

he BJP on Wednesday announced the list of 40 star campaigners for Maharashtra where the party, along with MahaYuti allies, has set an ambitious target of 45 plus of the total 48 Lok Sabha seats in the state. Interestingly, the BJP has included names of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and union minister of state Ramdas Athavale indicating that the party treats allies on par to achieve its ambitious target in Maharashtra and at the national level of 400 plus seats.

Similarly, former Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader Ashok Chavan, who is now Rajya Sabha member after joining the BJP, figured in the list

BJP insiders said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address about 25 rallies during five phases of election. The list of star campaigners was announced a day before the MahaYuti plans to announce seat

sharing agreement (on Thursday).



The list of star campaigners

Shiv Sena (UBT) names 16 Maha LS candidates, three from Mumbai

Team Absolute Mumbai

fter days of dilly-dallying, the Shiv Sena (UBT) announced its list of 16 Lok Sabha candidates, including three from Mumbai, here on Wednesday. They include: Arvind Sawant (Mumbai South), Sanjay Dina Patil (Mumbai North-East), and Amol G. Kirtikar (Mumbai North-West). The party has fielded old loyalists: Anant Geete (Raigad), Vinayak Raut (Sindhudurg-Ratnagiri), Chandrakant Khaire (Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar -Aurangabad), Bhausaheb Waghchore (Shirdi), Rajan Vichare (Thane), and Omraje Nimbalkar (Dharashiv -Osmanabad).

The other nominees include: Prof. Narendra Khedekar (Buldhana), Yavatmal-Washim (Sanjay



Deshmukh), Sanjog Waghere-Patil (Maval), Chandrahar Patil (Sangli), Nagesh Patil-Ashtikar (Hingoli), Rajabhau Waze (Nashik) and Sanjay Jadhav (Parbhani). With this, the opposition

Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) has announced a total of 28 candidates for the 48 LS seats in the state, comprising



the state

include PM Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Goa CM Pramod Sawant, Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel, Chhattisgarh CM) Vishnu Deo Sai,

Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav, Rajasthan CM Bhajanlal Sharma, Maharashtra CM Shinde and Deputy CM Pawar.

Union Ministers Narayan Rane, Anurag Thakur, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Smriti Irani, MoS Raosaheb Danve-Patil, former chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis are also included in the list.

Other star campaigners include Sampat Choudhari, Vinod Tawde, Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Ashish Shelar, Pankaja Munde Palve, Chandrakant Patil, Sudhir Mungantiwar, Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil, Piyush Goyal, Girish Mahajan, Ravindra Chavan, K Annamalai, Manoj Tiwari, Ravi Kisan, Amar Sable, Vijaykumar Gavit, Atul Save and Dhananjay Mahadik.

Munawar faruqui detained during raid at Mumbai Hookah bar, released later

Team Absolute Mumbai

reality TV star Munawar Faruqui was among 14 people detained during a raid at a hookah parlour in Mumbai, police said on Wednesday.

The Big Boss 17 winner was later released, news agency said quoting a Mumbai police official. According to police, the

hookah parlour in the city's Fort area was being run illegally and Rs 4,400 in cash and nine hookah pots worth Rs 13,500 were seized during the raid on Tuesday.

The raid began around 10.30 pm on Tuesday and continued till 5 am of Wednesday, an official said.

A case has been registered under sections of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act. The police are still conducting a search at



the location. "During the raid, the police found stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqui and others smoking hookahs at the joint. We also have a video of their act. We detained Faruqui and others, but they were later allowed to go as the sections slapped against them were bailable," a senior police official told news agency PTI.

Faruqui and other were served notices and allowed to leave, he added. The 32-year-old reality TV

star became popular as a stand-up comedian and rapper on YouTube a few years

'Elect Nitin Gadkari with record majority', Fadnavis urges voters

Team Absolute Nagpur

he MahaYuti partners in Maharashtra -- BJP, Shiv Sena, NCP, and factions of the Republican Party of India -- staged a show of strength on Wednesday as Union Minister and BJP nominee Nitin Gadkari filed his nomination from Nagpur. Leaders present at the rally unanimously urged the workers to work wholeheartedly to ensure Gadkari's victory by a record margin. Two-time sitting MP from Nagpur, Gadkari is up against Congress nominee Vikas Thakre this time. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis, and NCP Working President Praful Patel were present at the rally before Gadkari filed his nomination, among others. "Gadkari, who is the commander-in-chief of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat 2047 resolution, should be elected with a record majority. The work done by the Narendra Modi government in the last 10 years was a trailer ... A lot more needs to be done to



make the country strong and developed. "Under the leadership of PM Modi, we want to create a poverty-free, unemployment-free, and egalitarian India in the next five years. The Prime Minister has resolved to make India a developed country by 2047. New milestones will be set up in the next five years, and therefore people should elect Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister for the third time. said Fadnavis. BJP nominee from Bhandara-Gondiya, Sunil Mendhe, also filed his nomination on Wednesday. Mendhe is pitted against Congress nominee Prashant Patole. The BJP, which has resolved to achieve 'Mission 45-plus' with its allies in Maharashtra, proposes to reach out to one crore voters by organising 21,000 Namo Samvads across the state. At

the Namo Samvad events. the party plans to present a comparative picture of India before and after 2014, with a focus on the emergence of a New India under the Narendra Modi-led government. BJP General Secretary Vikrant Patil said that many important leaders at the national and regional levels will campaign for the Lok Sabha elections. The Namo Samvad meetings will be organised to reach out to the maximum number of voters directly. These meetings will be scheduled as per the voting phases in the state. Nearly 300 speakers will participate in these meetings which will be held at 21,000 Shakti Kendras, he said. Patil also said that the party will undertake several other programmes, including 'Namo Choupal' and 'Coffee With Youth' in the rural areas of the state

Man kills son for objecting to his loud phone call, both were drunk

Team Absolute Nagpur

man allegedly killed his 28-year-old son following a heated argument Detween them over speaking loudly on a phone at a village in Maharashtra's Nagpur district, police said on Wednesday. The incident took place at Pipra village, around 30 km from Nagpur city, on Monday, and the victim died during treatment at a hospital the next day, an official said. The accused, Ramrao Kakde, was arrested following the

Newspaper delivery-boy to Mumbai 26/11 hero, IPS

incident, he said.

"Kakde hit his son, Suraj, with a steel rod following a heated argument after the latter objected to his loud phone conversation. Suraj was admitted to a hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries on Tuesday," the official of Bela police station said. According to police, the father-son duo was under the influence of liquor when the incident took place. Kakde was booked under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 302 (murder) and was arrested, he added.

VBA goes solo, Ambedkar names 8 LS candidates, allies with Jarange-Patil

Team Absolute Mumbai

attling the Opposition, the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi R(VBA) President Prakash Ambedkar has virtually snapped ties with the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) and named 8 out of 9 Lok Sabha candidates, while forming a new front with the Maratha community with the Shivba Sanghatana leader Manoj Jarange-Patil, here on Wednesday.

Simultaneously, Ambedkar said that the VBA will support certain candidates of the Congress in the state, offering some solace to the MVA.

The VBA's candidates are: Prakash Y Ambedkar (Akola)



Team Absolute Mumbai

aharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad chief Sadanand Vasant Date has been appointed as the Director General of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), according to a Personnel Ministry order. Date is a 1990-batch Indian Police rvice (IPS) officer of Maharashtra cadre. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Date as the Director General (DG) of the NIA for a tenure up to his superannuation on December 31, 2026, stated the order dated March 26. He will succeed Dinkar Gupta, who is due to superannuate on March 31. The ACC also appointed Rajeev Kumar Sharma, a 1990-batch IPS officer of Rajasthan cadre, as the Director General of the Bureau of Police Research & Development. He will have a tenure up to his superannuation on June 30, 2026, the order said. Sharma will succeed Balaji Srivastava, who completes his tenure at March end. Piyush Anand will be the new chief of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). A 1991-batch IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, Anand is presently the Special DG of the Central Industrial Security Force



Sanjay G. Kewat (Bhandara-Gondiya LS seat), Hitesh P. Madavi (Gadchiroli-Chimur), Rajesh W. Belle (Chandrapur), Vasant R. Magar (Buldhana), Prajakta T. Pillewan (Amravati), Prof. Rajendra Salunke (Wardha), Khemsing P. Pawar (Yavatmal-Washim), and the nominee for Ramtek shall be announced on late Wednesday.

Ambedkar said the VBA will support Congress candidate Vikas Thakre from the Nagpur constituency to take on Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, and the OBC Bahujan Party candidate in Sangli.

The VBA Chief added that he had a detailed negotiation with Jarange-Patil on Tuesday and it was decided to nominate OBC and Muslim candidates who are not being given any nominations by other major parties.

Flanked by top VBA leaders like state President Rekha Thakur, Vice-President Siddharth Mokale, D. Pundkar, Farooq Ahmed, Arundhati Sirsat, Ashok Sonone and others, Ambedkar said that a new front with Jarange-Patil will be formed "to initiate the politics of transformation", with maximum candidates from the poor and backward communities,

having a clean image

The new front will declare its full 'inclusive' list of Lok Sabha candidates on April 2, from the poor, marginalised, underprivileged Marathas and Muslims, who will be supported by the masses.

The VBA's announcement came amid appeals by the Congress-Shiv Sena (UBT)-Nationalist Congress Party (SP) and an offer of around 4-6 seats to stand with the MVA.

Ex-MP Sanjay Nirupam skins Congress for 'total surrender' to Shiv Sena (UBT); may rebel

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

eteran Congress leader and ex-MP Sanjay Nirupam on Wednesday whiplashed his own party leadership, alleging an abject 'surrender' to the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) ally, Shiv Sena (UBT), headed by former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Nirupam (59) launched a broadside at the Congress and SS (UBT) after the latter announced its list of 16 Lok Sabha candidates, including the Mumbai North West seat which he (Nirupam) had coveted. The SS (UBT) has fielded Amol G. Kirtikar -- an accused in the infamous 'khichdi scam' of the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation and the son of rival Shiv Sena MP Gajanan Kirtikar -- as its candidate for Mumbai North West, taking the MVA allies Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) by surprise. "I will not support such a 'khichdi chor' (thief) candidate... He has been unilaterally thrust upon Congress by the SS (UBT). We hope the (Congress) -- which adopts a 'high moral ground' vis-a-vis corruption -- lodges its strong protest with Thackeray for the tainted nominee (Amol Kirtikar)," Nirupam said. Launching a veiled attack at



Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, state Congress chief Nana Patole, and the party's Mumbai head Varsha Gaikwad - without taking names - Nirupam said the party has abandoned its lakhs of activists all over the city, state and the country. "The leadership does not seem to be bothered about its workers... The Congress talks of 'Nyay' (justice) to various sections of society, but injustice is being meted out to its own workers. Enough is enough...no more. Now it will be a decisive move for me," Nirupam said. Turning to the SS (UBT), the former three-term MP said that by announcing Amol Kirtikar's name for Mumbai North West, Thackeray has thrown a challenge at the Congress, which failed to carry out tough negotiations in the seat-charing talks. "The SS (UBT) is not as powerful as perceived ... It cannot win a single seat in

Maharashtra without Congress' support. Yet, it has pressurised us and that is highly condemnable. But the Congress did not retaliate though seats were snatched away by SS (UBT). Our leadership even failed to save Mumbai, Sangli, and other seats," said Nirupam. He alleged that the move by

Thackeray indicates 'a hidden agenda' to finish off the Congress in the state and bury it in Mumbai both places where it held sway for decades in the past.

"We have shown enough patience, but not anymore. I was waiting to be called for Mumbai North West which I was keen to fight. All options are open for me. I will announce my next move in the coming week or so," said Nirupam, signaling a banner of revolt

Amid the attack by Nirupam, other senior party leaders, including Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Balasaheb Thorat, expressed strong disapproval at the SS (UBT) for announcing candidates for Mumbai and Sangli seats where discussions are still going on. "The SS (UBT) must adhere to the principles of coalition sincerely ... There's time even now. We hope they will reconsider their



Late. Tukaram Sambhanna Nakman was a member of the Mahatma Phule SRA Co-Operative Housing Society Limited, having, Address Free Press Journal Road, Nariman Point Mumbai. 400021, and holding flat no.325 in the building of the Society, died on date. 04-04-2023 without making nay nomination. The Society hereby invites Claims or objections from the heir or heirs of other claimants / objector or objectors to the transfer of bie said shares and interest of the deceased Member in the capital / property of the society within a period of 15 days from the publication of this notice, with copies of such documents and other proofs in support of her claims objections for transfer of shares and interest of the deceased Member in the capital / property of the society If no claims / opjections are received within the period prescribed above, the society shall be free to deal with the shares and interest of the deceased Member in the capital/ property of the society shall be dealt with in the manner provided under the by-laws of the Society A copy of the registered Bye-laws of the Society / with the secretary of the Society between 7 PM to 8 PM from the date of publication of the notice till date of expiry of its period.

For and on behalf of Dated -27-3-2024 Mahatma Phule SRA Co-operative Housing Society Limited. Hon. Secretary



(CISF). He has been appointed as the DG of the NDRF for a period of two years, the order said. Anand will

on March 31. The ACC also appointed S Suresh, a 1995batch IPS officer of Kerala

replace Atul Karwal, retiring

cadre, as the Additional Director General of the Special Protection Group (SPG).

NO'

Shenalkar was a member of the Late. Nitin Tulshiram Mahatma Phule SRA Co-Operative Housing Society Limited,having, Address Free Press Journal Road, Nariman Point Mumbai. 400021, and holding flat no. 304 in the building of the Society, died on date.31-10-2021 without making nay nomination. The Society hereby invites Claims or objections from the heir or heirs or other claimants / objector or objectors to the transfer of bie said shares and interest of the deceased Member ir the capital / property of the society within a period of 15 days from the publication of this notice, with copies of such documents and other proofs in support of her claims / objections for transfer of shares and interest of the deceased Member in the capital / property of the society. If no claims / opjections are received within the period prescribed above, the society shall be free to deal with the shares and interest of the deceased Member in the capital/ property of the society shall be dealt with in the manner provided under the by-laws of the Society. A copy of the registered Bye-laws of the Society / with the secretary of the Society between 7 PM to 8 PM from the date of publication of the notice till date of expiry of its period

For and on behalf of Mahatma Phule SRA Co-operative Dated -27-3-2024 Housing Society Limited. Hon. Secretary

hollywood



New Delhi, Thursday, March 28, 2024

absolute india

Tom Cruise and Girlfriend Elsina Khayrova Split

Los Angeles | Agencies

om Cruise and his girlfriend, Elsina Khayrova, have called it quits shortly after debuting their romance." They weren't gelling and realized they weren't romantically compatible," a

source exclusively reveals in the new issue of Us Weekly, on stands now.

According to the insider, Khayrova 36. was the one to put an end to the their relationship. "There's no bad blood between them." the source tells Us. "They just had different ideas of what their relationship was going to be? The actor, 61, and the Russian socialite, 36, were first spotted cozving up to each other at a December 2023 party in London's Grosvenor Square, though a source exclusively told Us at the time that the pair had been dating for "a while? Tom Cruise and his

girlfriend, Elsina Khayrova, have called it quits shortly after debuting their romance.

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cally compatible," a source exclusively reveals in the new issue of Us Weekly, on stands now. According to the insider, Khayrova, 36, was the one to put an end to the their rela-

tionship. "There's no bad blood between them," the source tells Us. "They just had different ideas of what their relationship was going to be.' The actor, 61, and the Russian socialite, 36, were first spotted cozying up to each other at a December 2023 party in London's Grosvenor Square, though a source exclusively told Us at the time that the pair had been dating for "a while." Tom Cruise s Dating History Through the Years Nicole Kidman Katie Holmes and More 765 Related: Tom Cruise's

Dating History: A Look Back at His A-List Romances

"They're very happy," the insider added. "And Tom's extremely confident about it working out for the long term. ... They've hung out at Tom's favorite private members club and regularly enjoy afternoon tea and gourmet dinners out in London.'



Los Angeles | Agencies

ctress Eva Mendes spoke about meeting her partner and actor Ryan Gosling when they made their 2012 movie 'The Place Beyond

like that," she said of working with her now-partner on the Today show.

"The way he works, his commitment to his craft, how he wants to make everything as best as it can be - and that means making his costars as best as they can be. Unfortunately - or fortunately — there's only one Ryan, so I pretty much stopped acting after that,' she added.Mendes and Gosling started dating after meeting on set. The two, who are private about their relationship, share two daughters together. The couple welcomed their first

WHEN EVA MENDES WAS SMITTEN BY RYAN GOSLING AFTER THEIR FIRST MEETING

child, Esmeralda Amada, in September 2014, and then had Amada Lee in April 2016.

step back from acting after more than a decade onscreen not being a difficult decision to make.

lucky, and I was like, if I could have this time with my

children - and I still work, I just didn't act, because acting takes you on location," she said.

"It takes you away. It was almost just like a non-verbal agreement that it was like, 'Okay, he's going to work and I'm going to work. I'm just going to work here'," she added.

JOELY RICHARDSON ON HER CAREER POST 50: 'NO ONE WANTED ME'

Los Angeles | Agencies

ctress Joely Richardson has opened up about ageism in Hollywood and how she had to pivot to start getting work again. She was talking about all the projects she's currently involved in, including Netflix's 'The Gentlemen' and 'One Day'. She also has Disney+'s 'Renegade Nell'.

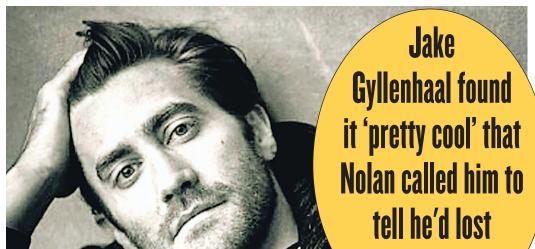
The actress noticed a change after she turned 50, which she shared on ITV's This Morning, reports deadline.com.

She recalled that when her agent "retired young to be with her mom," she was looking for a new agent and didn't find much luck.

"I went to get another agent, and it was like no one wanted me," she said. "And so, even though I had Golden Globe nominations, and blah, blah, blah, zero people wanted a woman over 50."

The actress then got new agents and said they "started finding little ins wherever we could, doing The Sandman (also Netflix),

Lady Chatterley's (Lover) playing the northern housekeeper Mrs Bolton, just like trying to sort of get through the door so people would consider me for roles. And then, they started to come."



the Pines'. "I've never experienced anything

Mendes also spoke about taking a

"It was like a no-brainer. I'm so



Los Angeles | Agencies

ctor Jake Gyllenhaal spoke about what it was like losing two major roles during the final rounds of casting, which includes Christopher Nolan's 'Batman Begins' and Christian in Baz Luhrmann's 'Moulin Rouge!'

In 'Moulin Rouge', the audition process came down to Gyllenhaal, Heath Ledger and Ewan McGregor. It's here where Gyllenhaal first heard of Ledger, who later featured as his co-star in 'Brokeback Mountain'.

"What I felt was disappointment when I didn't get it. Both Heath and I were disappointed," Gyllenhaal said on 'The Howard Stern Show'.

"But that's Ewan McGregor's part. You learn to go, 'There's another one. I can try and go in and audition for another one. I'll get something else.' You keep that attitude."

The actor maintained that healthy mindset when he lost out on 'Batman Begins', reports variety.com."To (Nolan's) credit and to Baz (Luhrmann's) credit, both of those directors called me personally to tell me (I didn't get the role),"

Gyllenhaal said."And they will tell you why. When you get that far, there's a real legitimacy to you potentially getting something."

"It's not like they're going, 'Oh, thanks so much.' They are going, 'I saw these aspects of you that I really wanted in the role and are wonderful, but in the end I ended up moving this way because it matches better with this person who is opposite you or would be opposite you."

"The colour of their hair or their height, whatever it is!! There are all these non factors that really are the inexplicable stuff that if you start to pick away at it doesn't work, it's not healthy."

He added: "To me, I just go: 'Look at how far you got! So just try and keeping going.' That's what I felt," the actor continued. "I remember getting a call from Christopher Nolan and thinking, 'I just got a call personally from Christopher Nolan."

He found it "pretty cool."

"That's pretty cool. I've got pretty far. I went from them going they aren't sure (about me) to a call saying they're really thinking about you for this movie. So okay, I should keep going. I should just keep going."

LOVE IS BLIND'S AMY CORTES AND **JOHNNY MCINTYRE WANT TO WAIT '3 TO 4 YEARS' BEFORE HAVING CHILDREN**



Pierce Brosnan to Aaron Taylor-Johnson on playing Bond: 'Be bold'

Los Angeles | Agencies

ormer James Bond depicter Pierce Brosnan has given his stamp of approval to actor Aaron Taylor-Johnson to play the suave spy.Taylor-Johnson is rumoured to be the next 007 agent. Brosnan played James Bond through the 1990s.Talking about the next to take on the role of the spy agent, Brosnan said that Taylor-Johnson "has the chops" to take it on, reports deadline.

Brosnan starred with Taylor-Johnson in the 2009 film 'The Greatest'."One of the first movies we made, one of our earliest movies, was The Greatest - and he was in it," Brosnan said."He was The Greatest in it. It's a lovely



movie with Aaron and Carey Mulligan and Susan Sarandon and myself. So yes, I read the news about his possibilities of being a Bond, so I would definitely tip my

hat to the fellow." If Taylor-Johnson becomes the next Bond, Brosnan advises the actor: "Be bold. Go out there, have a great time. Just love it. Just go for it."

Los Angeles | Agencies

my Cortes and Johnny McIntyre are looking forward to having kids - but aren't necessarily in a rush to expand their family. "In my perfect world, I would love to [have kids] when I'm in my early thirties, but it just really depends," Amy, 27, told Us Weekly while promoting her and Johnny's partner-ship with Natural Cycles. "I feel like we've had a beautiful year and we definitely want to keep continuing to do stuff within our marriage, traveling and just exploring each other and the world together."

Love Is Blind's Amy Cortes and Johnny McIntyre are looking forward to having kids - but aren't necessarily in a rush to expand their family.

"In my perfect world, I would love to [have kids] when I'm in my early thirties, but it just really depends," Amy, 27, told Us Weekly while promoting her and Johnny's partnership with Natural Cycles. "I feel like we've had a beautiful year and we definitely want to keep continuing to do stuff within our marriage, traveling and just exploring each other and the world together."

Amy, who married Johnny, 28, in the LIB season 6 finale, noted that she's "hoping" that the couple wait "three to four" more years before having children. 'That aligned with his timeline as well so it's perfect," she explained.

Richardson called being on the Ryan Murphy show a "dream" and after the series ended, "wanted to do something else" and returned to theater and "did lots of Off-Broadway productions." "I needed that," she added about doing theater after the FX series. "It was like a lovely bridge."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY





IPL 2024

SRH BEAT MI BY 31 RUNS IN SIX-HITTING RUN FEST

Hyderabad Agencies

ocal lad Tilak Varma made a stunning 64 off 34 balls, but his efforts went in vain as Sunrisers Hyderabad emerged triumphant in a stunning six-hitting run fest with a 31run win over Mumbai Indians to open their account in IPL 2024 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Wednesday.

After sizzling half-centuries from Heinrich Klassen, Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head helped SRH amass an astonishing 277/3, the highestever score in the competition's history, MI looked to get the chase done thanks to heroics of Tilak and other batters.

But SRH's bowlers shined by giving no pace and keeping the scoring rate in check in the middle overs to keep MI to 246/5. With this being MI's second defeat in a game where many records tumbled in front of 35,080 fans, questions will be asked of their listless bowling and changes made in the line-up, as well as of captain Hardik Pandya's performance and decision making.

Chasing a mammoth 278, Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan were off the mark from the word go. Rohit hit



Unadkat for two leg-side sixes in the second over, while Kishan smacked Bhuvneshwar Kumar for a four and three maximums in the third over as MI reached 50/0

But Shahbaz Ahmed struck with his second ball in the fourth over to have Kishan slog-sweeping to deep mid-wicket and fall for a 13-ball 34. Rohit was dropped by Abdul Samad at mid-on, but couldn't make much of the reprieve as his top-edge on the pull was caught by backward square leg off Pat Cummins. Naman Dhir and Tilak Varma

began to deal in hitting sixes regularly off SRH's bowlers to keep MI in the



out point came when Tilak scooped, switch-hit and swept Shahbaz for three sixes in the tenth over, before slamming a four off Jaydev Unadkat through extra cover to get his fifty in 24 balls

The 84-run stand off 37 balls for the third wicket ended when Dhir slashed straight to extra cover off Unadkat. Tilak and Hardik Pandya hit three boundaries between themselves, before the former was tricked by a slower delivery from Cummins and was caught at long-on, after the strategic timeout.

MI went 20 balls without a bound-

ary, before Tim David flicked, slashed and smashed Bhuvneshwar for a four and two sixes. David would hit Unadkat for a six and four each, before the pacer bounced back by having Hardik Pandya top-edge a pull to keeper behind.

Impact Player Romario Shepherd hit a six and two fours in the final over, but it wasn't enough to deny SRH a win in an absolute run-fest of a match which had the most runs scored collectively and most sixes ever hit in a T20 game.

Brief scores

Sunrisers Hyderabad 277/3 in 20 overs (Heinrich Klassen 80 not out, Abhishek Sharma 63; **Piyush Chawla 1-34, Hardik** Pandya 1-46) beat Mumbai Indians 246/5 in 20 overs (Tilak Varma 64, Tim David 42 not out; Pat Cummins 2-35, Jaydev Unadkat 2-47) by 31 runs

Arjan Nagra clinches title in first leg of National **Eventing Championship**

Gurugram Agencies

Ticolas Colsaerts, who called the DLF Golf and Country Club a tough course, got down to business as the Hero Pro-Am ahead of the Indian Open was conducted on Wednesday morning.Whereas, Manvendra Singh and Sthavi Asthana claimed the second and third positions respectively at the ongoing NEC Eventing Novice & Pre Novice 2023-24 Championship at the Army Polo & Riding Centre.

Nagra did not concede any penalty while clearing 11 obstacles, completing the run in exactly one hour. He also did not concede a penalty in show jumping but in the dressage section was 31.6 seconds more than the allowed time-limit.

In the 44-rider competition, over a 380-metre course, Nagra conceded the least penalties (31.6) and was followed by Manvendra (31.9) and Sthavi (34.2) in the leaderboard.

The eventing competition, also known as horse trial, comprises three disciplines dressage, cross country and show jumping.

Manvendra, who rode Hercules, and Stahvi who was riding Rustam Jee, also conceded penalty only in the dressage event.

The second leg of the National Eventing Championship will begin on Thursday.



IPL 2024 Rohit Sharma marks 200th appearance for MI; becomes third player to play 200 games for a team

Hyderabad Agencies

umbai Indians' veteran opener Rohit Sharma is all set to mark his 200th match for the franchise via the Wednesday's clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Raiiv Gandhi International Stadium.

Rohit now becomes just the third player after MS Dhoni (CSK) and Virat Kohli (RCR) to play 200 games single IPL team. He was also given a '200' special jersey by MI mentor, the legendary Sachin Tendulkar, ahead of Wednesday's match. Overall, this is Rohit's 245th IPL match, including taking in the appearances he made for the now-defunct Deccan Chargers, which is the second-most to Dhoni's 252 matches. Rohit has played in the IPL for Mumbai Indians in 14 different editions of the tournament, making him the only player to achieve this feat for the franchise



Djokovic ends partnership with coach Ivanisevic amid winless start to season

New Delhi Agencies

orld number one Novak Djokovic has ended his partnership with Croatian coach Goran Ivanisevic following a challenging start to his 2024 season.

Djokovic and Ivanisevic, the former Wimbledon champion, forged a formidable bond since joining forces in 2018. Under Ivanisevic's guidance, Djokovic honed his skills and embarked on a remarkable journey that saw him surpass tennis legends Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal to become the most successful men's singles player in Grand Slam history. Taking to Instagram on

Nednesday, March 27



years but emphasizing the

ing together a few days ago. Our oncourt chemistry had its ups and downs, but our friendship was always

rock solid," said Djokovic. "I remember clearly the moment I invited Goran to be part of my team. It was back in 2018, and Marian and I were looking to innovate and bring some serve magic to our duo. In fact, not only we brought serve, but also lots of laughter, fun, year end no1 rankings, record breaking achievements and 12 more Grand Slams (and a few finals) to the count since then. Did I mention a bit of drama too?"Despite their successful collaboration, Djokovic's recent performances have raised concerns. A semi-final exit at the Australian Open was folber 123 Luka Nardi. Djokovic's subsequent withdrawal from the Miami Open further underscored his need to recalibrate his approach amidst a demanding schedule.

Ivanisevic's contributions to Djokovic's career have been widely recognized, with the Croatian coach even nominated for the ATP Coach of the Year in 2023, following Djokovic's triumphant capture of three out of four Grand Slam titles.

Djokovic faces a pivotal juncture in his quest for tennis immortality with the French Open looming on the horizon. As he navigates the uncertainties of a coaching transition, Djokovic remains resolute in his pursuit of further Grand Slam glory ing the record for most Grand Slam singles titles with Margaret Court.

Since he became a part of the franchise in 2011, Rohit has become the all-time

leading run getter for them in the IPL, scoring over 5000 runs. Nobody else has more than 3500 runs for MI in IPL. Rohit has won 16 Player of the Match awards for Mumbai Indians, which again are the most by any MI

player. Rohit, who captained MI to five IPL title wins, is only the second Indian after the legendary Sachin Tendulkar to score a IPL hundred for MI and also has the 2nd highest

individual score for the franchise in the IPL, scoring 109 not v Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens in 2012.

Rohit has featured in 111 wins for Mumbai Indians, the most by any player for the franchise. He has also been the captain in 87 of those wins, again a record for the franchise. He has made 35 scores of 50+ for Mumbai Indians in the IPL, easily the most by any player for the franchise



firmed the split, acknowledging the duo's on-court chemistry fluctuated enduring strength of their friendship. "Goran and I decided to stop worklowed by a shocking third-round defeat at Indian Wells to world num-

DE SILVA, MENDIS GAIN BIG IN ICC TEST RANKINGS AFTER SYLH



Tri Lanka batters Dhananjaya de Silva and Kamindu Mendis have made huge gain in the ICC Men's Test Player Rankings after both the batters notched twin centuries in the first Test of the twomatch series against Bangladesh in Sylhet to help their side score a comprehensive 328-run victory. De Silva has moved up 15 spots to a career-best 14th position while Mendis has re-entered the rankings

in joint-64th position after recording only the third instance in Test history of two players from the same team scoring a century in each innings of a Test match, ICC reports.The previous two instances were of Australia's Ian Chappell and Greg Chappell against New Zealand in Wellington in 1974 and Pakistan's Azhar Ali and Misbah-ul-Haq against Australia in Abu Dhabi in 2014.Sri Lanka's new-ball bowlers Kasun Rajitha and Vishwa Fernando have also made notable

gains in the latest men's rankings update. Rajitha has jumped six places to 38th position after returning match figures of eight for 112 while Fernando has moved from 50th to 43rd after finishing with seven for 84.

Bangladesh's middle-order batter Mominul Haque's second innings knock of 87 has lifted him eight places to 50th while fast bowler Khaled Ahmed's four wickets in the match have taken him from 98th to 89th position.

Rybakina outlasts Sakkari; Azarenka battles past Putintseva into Miami semifinals

Florida Agencies

023 finalist and No.4 seed Elena Rybakina made a return trip to the Miami Open semifinals with a 7-5, 6-7(4), 6-4 win over No.8 seed Maria Sakkari.

Rybakina won the first set despite losing a 4-2 lead, and rallied from that deficit in the second set to earn herself two match points in the 10th game -- but she failed to convert.

A missed backhand in the net cost her the first, and a Sakkari down-the-line forehand was too much for her to handle on the second -- and a half-hour later, Indian Wells runner-up Sakkari forced a final set, WTA reports. She will next need



to knock off three-time tournament champion Victoria Azarenka to advance the final to the final at Hard Rock Stadium for the second year in a row.

Former World No.1 Azarenka defeated another Kazakh, Yulia Putintseva, in a three-set quarterfinal earlier Fuesday.

No.27 seed Azarenka needed 2 hours and 55 minutes of play to fend off unseeded Putintseva and clinch a spot in the Miami semifinals for the fifth time in her career. Azarenka is playing Miami for the 15th time,

having won the title in 2009, 2011 and 2016. She has 43 career matchwins at the event, fifthmost behind only Serena Williams (76), Venus Williams (67), Stefanie Graf (59) and Gabriela Sabatini (45)

Golf: Indian Open returns with strong field; Anirban Lahiri to lead India's charge

New Delhi Agencies

s Indian Open returns for its 2024 edition, two-time Olympian golfer Anirban Lahiri will lead India's charge at the tournament featuring 144 players, including 33 Indians. The golf tournament starting on Thursday at the DLF Golf & Country Club in Gurugram carries a prize purse of USD 2.25 million this year to attract the best of talent.

The Indian Open is the biggest golf event in India and the leading line-up of players include Rasmus Hojgaard and Yannik Paul, who will be looking to make their mark on Indian soil

Hojgaard will be the highest-ranked player in competition this year. Masters-bound Kazuki Higa is another name to watch, while Thorbjorn Olesen aims to defend his 2023 title.Lahiri, currently 401st in world golf rankings and third amongst Indians, returns to the Indian Open after five years, and others leading Indian challenge include Shiv Kapur, Shubhankar Sharma and Aman Ahlawat.

Lahiri's last global win came at this very event back in 2015 and a year later he was second. Since then he has had countless sec-



ond places, none more memorable than the runner-up finish at the PLAYERS Championship in 2022



Ananya Panday says she's 'not just friends' with **Aditya Roy Kapur**

Team Absolute Mumbai

ctress Ananya Panday, who received a lot of positive response to her work, has said that she and her rumoured beau Aditya Roy Kapur are "not just friends". The actress recently appeared on the 6th season of the popular chat show 'No Filter Neha' hosted by Neha Dhupia, and broke her silence on her equation with the 'Aashiqui 2' actor. In the promo of the show, Ananya and Neha can be seen discussing about Aditya and Ananya goes on to say that she and Aditya are not just friends but very good friends. Neha Dhupia said: "I clicked a photograph and

got the hashtag An-Adi. You and Aditya Roy Kapur were just talking, so I am just gonna clarify that you guys are just friends, just talking. I happened to click a photograph at Kriti Sanon's Diwali party and people started zooming into it. Do you wanna talk about that moment?"

Ananya Panday said: "I never said just friends Neha, you said that. Like we are very good friends now, not just friends. I don't think there's much to talk about.



entertainment

Second Front Page



Reveals she is best friends with her children



Team Absolute Mumbai

ctress Raveena Tandon shared that she is best friends with her children and that it helped her build a relationship with her on-screen son in the show 'Patna Shuklla'.

Raveena Tandon who plays the character of Tanvi Shukla, said: "There is an instance in the film where Tanvi's son forgets his lunchbox, she chases the school bus to deliver it midway. I think that is one scene every mother will relate to.""Every house has chaotic mornings but a mother will cut through the chaos and come through for her children and that is something even I have personally done when my children were going to

her daughter Risha and son Ranbir.

"I'm best friends with my kids and the same dynamics we've portrayed on screen with Tanvi's son. Bringing that chemistry on screen with Patna Shukla brought back some lovely memories for me with my children. I'm sure the audience will feel the warmth and pure friendship that Tanvi and her son share."

'Patna Shuklla' is based on a fearless lawyer who takes matters into her own hands when she sees a student entangled in an education scam, and soon realises that she is pitted against a Chief Minister candidate.



Telangana.

news.

Many regional news portals

have carried reports confirming the

The actors began dating after

It was earlier this year, when the

Aditi made her film debut in 2006

'Wazir' actress took to social media

working on the 2021 film 'Maha

Samudram'. However, the two always kept their relationship away

to confirm their relationship.

with the Malayalam film

from the public eye.

Team Absolute Mumbai

ctors Aditi Rao Hydari and Siddharth have reportedly tied-the-knot secretly in a temple in Wanaparthy, Telangana. According to reports, the two got married in a quiet ceremony but have not made any official announcement yet.

The two actors reportedly got married on Wednesday morning at the Sri Ranganayakaswamy Temple in Warnapathy's Srirangapur in

Aditi Rao Hydari, Siddharth get married in **Telangana temple:** Reports

'Prajapathi', after which she starred in movies such as 'Yeh Saali Zindagi', 'Rockstar', 'Wazir' and 'Padmaavat'. She will next be seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar'. Aditi was first reported to be married to Satyadeep Mishra. However, she never confirmed her marital status. It was in 2013 she revealed that the two have gone their separate ways.Siddharth made his acting debut with filmmaker S. Shankar's coming-of-age Tamil film 'Boys' in 2003. He was then seen in films such as 'Aayutha Ezhuthu', 'Nuvvostanante Nenoddantana', 'Rang De Basanti', 'Bommarillu' and

childhood sweetheart named

'Chashme Baddoor' to name a few. The actor was married to his

Meghna in 2003. However, by 2006, the couple were living separately. In 2007, they got divorced.

She then went on to share details about the relationship she shares with

Kartik Aaryan endured 14 months of boxing training

Whenever I did a play, I came alive as a performer', says Richa on World **Theatre Day**

Team Absolute Mumbai

n the occasion of World Theatre Day on Wednesday, actress Richa Chadha spoke about how she owes a lot to theatre.

"The reason you feel alive when you perform is because you have some kind of theatre experience. I would really recommend that people treat theatre as an end in itself and not as a stepping stone to films because the journey of theatre is very rewarding," Richa told

She said that working on a play for months and then bettering it each time is a "really enriching experience."

"I have found that whenever I have done a play I have come alive as a performer and I feel warmed and charged up, and it is after all an actor's medium. So, I owe a lot to theatre and I hope I can give back as well."

On the work front, Richa will be seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's debut web-series 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar'. It also stars Sonakshi Sinha, Aditi Rao Hydari, Sharmin Segal, and Sanjeeda Sheikh.

The series explores the cultural reality of Heeramandi, a district, through the stories of courtesans and their patrons, set against the tumultuous backdrop of the Indian freedom struggle of the

Team Absolute Mumbai

ollywood star Kartik Aaryan, who will be soon seen in the upcoming sports drama underwent boxing training for 14 months for his part in the film. The actor plays a Paralympic gold medalist in the film.

To get into the skin of the character, Kartik followed a strict fitness regime in which he shed 20 kgs and completely gave up on sugar as a part of a tailored diet.

The film's canvas is also quite huge as it has been shot across India and the UK. In India, the film has been shot in Wai village of Maharashtra, Kashmir and in the UK it has been shot in London.

This is the first time the actor has stepped into such a physically demanding role, given that it's based on Murlikant Petkar.

'Chandu Champion' is directed by Kabir Khan, who is known for films like 'Bajrangi Bhaijaan', 'Ek Tha Tiger', 'New York' and '83'. The film also marks Kartik's reunion with producer Sajid Nadiadwala after their last successful collaboration over 'Satyaprem Ki Katha'

Puneet Issar on theatre: There's no knowledge or art form that can't be shown on stage

Team Absolute Mumbai

ctor Puneet Issar, who Aessays the role of Dadababu in the television show

'Vanshaj', has said that theatre is the ultimate artform for an actor and that there's no knowledge, art, wisdom, or action that theatre cannot successfully reproduce.

On the occasion of World Theatre Day on Wednesday, the actor spoke about his love for theatre and how the medium gives him satisfaction as a thespian. He said: "I have always loved theatre. It is

my passion and will always remain so. I continue to juggle between my plays, my TV show Vanshaj, and films. I love touring across India with my plays, especially 'Mahabharat'. It gives me a chance to interact with a wide variety of theatre-loving audiences.

"The applause from the audience that echoes the auditorium is very close to any theatre artist and it gives us an adrenaline rush. There is no such knowledge, art, wisdom, or action, which cannot be shown in theatre. Theatre experience allows an actor to grow. It's the best playfield for any actor," he added.

0 **INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY**



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