

# absolute india

VOL. 7, ISSUE 181, NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, MAY 04, 2024 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL

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## RACE FOR CORRUPTION AND LOOTING: PM MODI

Ranchi | Agencies

Launching yet another blistering attack against the opposition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday accused the Congress and the JMM of "openly looting" Jharkhand's massive resources. "There's a race between the Congress and the JMM in Jharkhand - a race for corruption and looting. Recently, Rs 300 crore was recovered from the hideout of a Congress MP here. Whose money was it? It's the money of the poor, labourers, farmers, Dalits, and tribals of Jharkhand's villages. Is this not a loot of your money," PM Modi asked while addressing a public event in Singhbhum.

Prime Minister Modi also said that the people of Jharkhand are echoing 'Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar' (Modi government, once again) because they are now fully aware of the "vile intentions" of the other parties.

"With what face do the Congress and JMM leaders come to you? They are so shameless that even after getting caught in scams and corruption, they don't care. Why do you think they are so eager to form the government? Do you think it's for your



good? They want to form a government in Delhi because they want to unleash unrestrained loot in the country. Before 2014, they did nothing but loot the country," he said.

"The Congress, JMM, and their allies prioritise their vote bank over everything else. They provide shelter to infiltrators in Jharkhand, leading to the occupation of tribal land.

Consequently, the number of tribals, especially in areas like Santhal Pargana, is decreasing," the PM added. During his speech, PM Modi stated that the BJP has a "special bond" with Jharkhand as it was the government led by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee which had created the state.

"Only the BJP understands the state and its people. We initiated the creation of Jharkhand under Atal Ji's leadership, while Congress opposed it. Congress also stalled development and exploited resources," he said.

PM Modi also said that it is the BJP government that has given a "new identity" to Bhagwan Birsa Munda's birth anniversary by celebrating it as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, as he recalled inaugurating the museum at Bhagwan Birsa Munda's sacrifice site in Ranchi.

"Congress opposes respect for tribal history and the progress of the tribal society. They opposed making Draupadi Murmu Ji, a tribal woman, the President of India, unable to accept that tribal women can hold the highest post in the country," the Prime Minister said while asserting that the BJP government has always prioritised tribal development.

## Rahul Gandhi files nomination from Raebareli

Raebareli (UP) | Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday filed his nomination papers from the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul's mother and Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, his sister Priyanka Gandhi, brother-in-law Robert Vadra, former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot, AICC general secretary K C Venugopala and a host of Congress leaders from UP, were present on the occasion.

Congress workers and Samajwadi Party workers turned out in full force to welcome Rahul to Raebareli.

The workers of both parties that are a part of the INDIA bloc, loudly cheered Gandhi and shouted slogans. People showered petals on the leaders and various trad-



er organisations felicitated Rahul who is seeking his first election from Raebareli. A minor clash was reported between BJP workers and SP workers when the former shouted slogans "Rahul Gandhi wapas jao" (Rahul Gandhi, go back).

Meanwhile, earlier, Kishori Lal Sharma also filed his nomination for the Amethi Lok Sabha seat. Raebareli, after Independence, has been won by the Congress except on three occasions. Feroz Gandhi, husband of Indira Gandhi, first won

Raebareli in 1952 and 1957, and after he died in 1960, R P Singh and Bajinath Kureel - both of Congress - won the seat till Indira Gandhi took it over in 1967.

In 1977, Raj Narain of Janata Party defeated Indira Gandhi but Raebareli went back to Indira Gandhi in 1980.

In 1996 and 1998, the seat was won by BJP's Ashok Singh but during this period, no member of the Gandhi family was in active politics. From 2004 to 2019, Sonia retained this seat.

## BJP MLA threatens Police officer in Shivraj's meeting

Team Absolute | Bhopal

There was a ruckus when the mike was switched off in the election meeting of former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in Mandideep under Vidisha Lok Sabha. Shivraj stopped the speech. Showing the watch he asked - How did you switch off the mic? It's not ten o'clock yet, start it. He only said, but MLA Surendra Patwa present on the stage could not stop himself. He threatened the police station in-charge and said, come here, I will throw you in such a place that you will not come back.

The video of the meeting held in Mandideep on Thursday night has surfaced. According to this, former CM and Lok Sabha candidate from Vidisha Shivraj had reached Mandideep to campaign. He did a road show from Durga temple. After this he reached Satlapur intersection to address an election meeting. The mic went off around 10 pm. On this, MLA Surendra Patwa got angry at police station in-charge Mahendra Singh Thakur. Seeing this, Shivraj also appeared uncomfortable for a few moments. However, after this the mic was restarted. Shivraj started his speech.

Raisen SP Vikas Kumar Shahwal says that due to a technical problem, two or three minutes before 10 pm, the mic was switched off, which started again in a few seconds.



There has been no complaint of any kind yet.

State Congress, while sharing the video of BJP MLA Surendra Patwa on social media, wrote - Look at the arrogance of BJP, former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan questioned BJP's platform on following the election code of conduct and Surendra Patwa questioned police station in-charge Mahendra Singh Thakur. He was misbehaved and threatened. This level of a former Chief Minister? Very in-decent and condemnable act.

## PRAJWAL REVANNA RAPED ME REPEATEDLY, FILMED ACT FOR BLACKMAIL'

claims victim in 2nd FIR against Deve Gowda's grandson

Bengaluru | Agencies

The sexual assault videos case has taken an even more serious turn, with the family of one of the victims coming forward to register an FIR against former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda's grandson Prajwal Revanna on charges of repeated rape, threat and blackmail.

This is the second FIR in the case as on Friday the Karnataka Police registered a complaint against Deve Gowda's son, JD(S) MLA HD Revanna in connection with the kidnapping of one of the victims in the sex video scandal involving his son Prajwal Revanna. The son of one of the victims has filed a police complaint over the abduction of his mother and named HD Revanna as the prime accused in the case.

In the second FIR, the other victim, who is a local leader and also married, has recounted her horrific experience.

In the complaint that she lodged with the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the victim stated that she did not dare to lodge a complaint as Prajwal Revanna threatened her with making her rape video viral.

Now, as the Special Investigation Team (SIT) is probing the scandal, the victim has come forward after gathering courage, the FIR stated.

With this development, the arrest of Prajwal Revanna has become imminent.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has declared that the NDA's candidate for the Hassan Lok Sabha constituency would be arrested from wherever he is hiding.

According to sources, at present, the suspended



JD(S) leader is hiding abroad and is frequently changing locations.

The victim has recounted the horror in her complaint: "I approached MLA and MP for public work and to get them to make calls for the officers. In 2021, I had met JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna in connection with getting seats in hostels for college students. On the first day, he maintained that he was going out in an emergency and asked me to meet him the next day.

"I went to the MP's office in Hassan the next day that is located in MP Quarters. The ground floor was full of people. The staff directed me to another floor telling me that women were there.

"Prajwal Revanna came from the ground floor, spoke to other women and sent them away. I was all alone and he called me into his room. When I went inside he held my hand and closed the door. "I asked him why he was closing the door and he

maintained that nothing would happen and made me sit on the bed. Then he warned that my husband is assertive and he should be talking less. If not he would not spare him. He added that because of my husband his mother lost her MLA ticket. "Later, he asked me to remove my clothes and told me that if I obliged he would help my husband's political career grow. I refused to strip and he insisted. When I warned him that I would scream, he maintained that he had a gun and threatened he would finish me off and also my husband.

"He started raping me and even as I tried to get out of his clutches, he held my hands tightly. He threatened me not to scream. I got scared and remained quiet, as he raped me.

"Before the act he took out his mobile and started recording. He raped me and recorded the complete act. Later, he threatened that if I told anyone, my video would come out and he was not visible in it.

"He warned that he would keep the video with him and whenever he wanted, I should be entertaining him. If not, he would make the video public and finish off my husband.

"He continued to threaten me in the same fashion and made video calls, asked me to go nude and strip in front of the camera. Likewise, he tortured me mentally and committed sexual assaults on me many times.

"Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna has misused his power, threatened my life, and committed repeated sexual assaults on me. He had recorded the acts of sexual assault and used them to commit more sexual crimes on me by threatening that he would make them viral."

## Helicopter crashes en route to pick up Shiv Sena leader in Maha's Raigad



Raigad | Agencies

In a shocker, a private helicopter which was flying to pick up Shiv Sena Deputy Leader Sushma Andhare, suddenly crashed on landing, officials said here on Friday.

As per a live video recording shared by Andhare, the chopper was making a landing attempt at an unidentified location and suddenly it seemed to swerve, wobble, lose balance and then crash with a loud sound in a cloud of dust on an open ground.

The pilot of the chopper managed to jump off the ill-fated chopper and survived, but the white-and-blue hired rotary-winger was badly damaged in the crash that occurred at Mahad town in Raigad.

Police and rescue teams rushed to the spot to probe the incident while the shaken Andhare -- who was scheduled to fly by the same chopper -- proceeded in a car for her scheduled election meetings in different parts of the district.

## SC may consider the question of grant of interim bail to CM Arvind Kejriwal

The Supreme Court on Friday said that it may consider, on the next date of hearing, the question of grant of interim bail to incarcerated Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the excise policy case in view of the ongoing general elections.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rising for the day and posting the matter for further hearing on Tuesday, a bench, headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, told Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, representing the Enforcement Directorate (ED), to get prepared on the question of interim release of the AAP supremo due to elections.

The bench, also comprising Justice Dipankar Datta, clarified that it was merely informing both sides to get prepared on the question of interim bail as the final hearing in the case could be prolonged. "If it (conclusion of hearing) is going to take time, it does appear it



may take time, we may then consider the question of interim bail because of the elections," the apex court said.

Further, it asked ASG Raju to take instructions if Kejriwal, because of the position he holds, can be allowed to sign official files in custody.

During the hearing, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Kejriwal, submitted that elections in Delhi are due on May 26 and the AAP leader was arrested on March 21 soon after elections were announced on March 16. In the previous hearing, the top court asked the ED to explain the timing of the arrest of CM Kejriwal after



the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha polls came into force. It had also asked the federal anti-money laundering agency to explain the gap between the date of arrest and the initiation of the investigation. CM Kejriwal had argued that the ED is required to demonstrate the "necessity to arrest" on the "materials available" with a "reason to believe" that he has been guilty of an offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. He contended that a range of documents, including CBI's FIR and ED's ECIR, did not connect him remotely with the alleged scam.

## Mamata Banerjee questions PM's 'silence' on molestation complaint against Bengal Governor

Kolkata | Agencies

A day after a temporary female staff at the Raj Bhavan in Kolkata filed a complaint with the police accusing Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose of 'outraging her modesty', Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'silence' in the matter.

Addressing an election rally at Raina in East Midnapore district on Friday, the Chief Minister said without naming the Prime Minister, "You were there on Thursday night, but you did not utter a single word on this issue. You said a lot of things about Sandeshkhali. But I did not allow such things to happen there. There were some land-related problems, which my officials have solved. But what have you done?" CM Banerjee also claimed that she received similar complaints like the one that surfaced on Thursday before. "I received such complaints before as



well. But I did not say anything. I have seen the tears of the woman who filed the (latest) complaint. A video in this regard has come to me, which I have seen minutely," the Chief Minister said.

In a startling development on Thursday afternoon, a temporary female staff at the Raj Bhavan filed a written complaint with the police accusing Governor Bose of outraging her modesty.

Police sources said the woman, reportedly attached to the Peace Room in the Raj Bhavan, approached the officer-in-charge of the police outpost located inside the Governor's House and accused Ananda Bose of molesting her on the pretext of providing her a permanent job.



# WILL BRING BACK POLITICS OF 'SEWA' IN AMETHI: PRIYANKA

Raebareli (UP) | Agencies

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on Friday that the grand old party would bring back the politics of "sewa" to Amethi, where the party has fielded Kishori Lal Sharma.

Priyanka, who joined in the roadshow for Sharma for his nomination filing, acknowledged greetings from people and said that she was happy to see old and new faces in the crowd.

"I will be here in Raebareli from May 6 till the end of the elections and we will work together," she said.

She also posted a message for Kishori Lal Sharma on social media conveying her best wishes.

Hailing Sharma's candidature, Priyanka said he has served the people of Raebareli and Amethi with dedication for years.

Priyanka wrote that she was happy that the Congress had chosen Sharma to contest the election from Amethi.

Earlier, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, accompanied by his mother



and Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, sister Priyanka and brother-in-law Robert

Vadra arrived in a special plane at Fursatganj and went to the Bhuemau guest house to perform puja. Former

Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot was also present on the occasion.

# India getting global recognition : Sri Sri

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the spiritual guru and the Founder of Art of Living Foundation on Friday addressed the Viksit Bharat Ambassador event in Varanasi's BHU and said that the country was witnessing all-round development under the incumbent government.

The event also saw the presence of Bollywood actor Vikrant Massey.

Vikrant Massey posed a couple of questions to Ravi Shankar to which Sri Sri replied and explained in detail, including the realisation of the 500-year-old dream of grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar also made an appeal to everyone to exercise their franchisee by casting ballots.

He said that elections should be seen like festivals and every citizen should take part in it. At the Yuva Samvad with Viksit Bharat Ambassadors programme, actor Vikrant asked Sri Sri Ravi Shankar over what led to the delay of 500 years in the construction of a grand Ram Temple and were the earlier



governments hesitated and hindered its realisation?

Ravi Shankar, replying to this, said that there are many instances when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the first initiative and set the stage for further reforms.

"He said that opening a bank account was a troublesome task earlier, especially in villages. People were posed with multiple questions but now most of those hurdles have been removed and processes simplified. Many archaic laws have been given away. The country is progressing ahead in all fields including entrepreneurship, start-up business and spiritual growth," Ravi Shankar said.

He also said that the coun-

trymen going abroad are brimming with confidence today and they no longer change their names to look like foreigners, adding that this is a welcome change.

Overall, the country has found new recognition on the world stage, he added.

In an apparent reference to PM Modi's push for domestic tourism, Ravi Shankar asked why people should opt for Maldives, whereas Lakshadweep offers plenty of tourism potential.

"It's good that the country has got a new vision under the leadership. People listen to what he speaks and also follow, this is a good thing," he said.

# Nothing can stop me from contesting LS polls from Karakat: Pawan Singh

Patna | Agencies

Bhojpuri singer-turned-politician Pawan Singh said on Friday that he is the son of Bihar and no one can stop him from contesting the Lok Sabha elections from Bihar's Karakat as an independent candidate.

After Pawan Singh had recently said that he would be contesting the polls from Karakat as an independent, Union Minister R. K. Singh suggested that he should step back from the constituency.

Pawan Singh said, "Many leaders like R. K. Singh believe that BJP should expel me from the party if I contest the election from Karakat."

"I am a son of Bihar and the people of Karakat have accepted me as a son. Now, I will not say anything further. Our people are intelligent," he said.

The Union Minister had said, "NDA's candidate from Karakat is Rashtriya Lok



Morcha National President Upendra Kushwaha. Whoever will contest against Kushwaha will be his opponent. He would be against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi." From the grand alliance,

CPI-ML's Rajaram Singh will be contesting from Karakat. Pawan Singh belongs to an upper-caste family and is a native of the Bhojpur district. Karakat Lok Sabha constituency is slated to go to polls on June 1.

# RAJ BABBAR FILES NOMINATION FOR GURGAON LS SEAT

Gurugram | Agencies

Actor-turned-politician Raj Babbar, who is contesting the Lok Sabha polls on a Congress ticket, on Friday filed nomination for the Gurgaon Parliamentary seat.

Raj Babbar will be facing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate -- Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, and the Jannayak Janta Party candidate -- singer-rapper Rahul Yadav, popularly known as Fazilpuria.

Raj Babbar was accompanied by senior Congress leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Haryana unit Congress president Chaudhary Uday Bhan while filing his nomination.

After submitting the affidavit, Babbar along with party leaders addressed a public rally at the Old Club Ground, Civil Lines where he urged the people to vote for him. However, Captain Ajay Yadav, who has been denied the ticket this time, stayed away from the rally. Lots of chairs in the rally were empty due to his absence.

A number of people from the neighbouring Nuh district also attended the rally. On the 'outsider' banter,



Raj Babbar said: "My roots are from Haryana, my relatives are living in different parts of the state. He pointed out that he is not contesting against anyone but wants to provide basic facilities to the people of the constituency.

He criticised Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, the sitting Gurgaon MP, and said that despite being a ruling

party MP, he failed to expand the railway network in Nuh or the Metro line in Gurugram, and even failed to improve the city's overall condition.

Speaking at the rally, Raj Babbar said even as he has no house in Gurugram, he wants to stay in the constituency to resolve the pending problems of the people.

"Do vote for Congress and allow the

situation to improve. People from across the world live in Gurugram but during the rainy season I have seen that they face a lot of problems, mainly in commuting," he said.

Meanwhile, Bhupinder Singh Hooda said that this time, the people of Haryana will cast their votes to uproot the BJP from the Centre, and state.

# HM Amit Shah's doctored video: Delhi Police arrest Arun Reddy

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi Police have arrested Arun Reddy, who manages the 'Spirit of Congress' X handle, in connection with Union Home Minister Amit Shah's doctored video case, a senior Delhi Police officer confirmed on Friday.

Sources said that Reddy was arrested from Delhi.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police arrested five persons, identified as Pendyala Vamshi Krishna, Satish Manne, Pettam Naveen, Asma Tasleem and Koya Geetha -- all residents of Hyderabad, who were circulating the doctored video of the Home Minister.

According to police, Home Minister Shah made a speech during a public meeting in Telangana's Medak on April 23. "Pendyala Vamshi Krishna received a mor-



phed video of the speech on Whatsapp. He then uploaded the doctored video on the 'INCTelangana' Twitter (X) handle and shared it in various WhatsApp groups," said the Hyderabad Police in a statement issued on Friday.

The Delhi Police had registered an FIR after receiving complaints from the BJP and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The case has been registered under Sections 153, 153A, 465, 469, and 171G of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 66C of the Information Technology (IT) Act.

The investigators are yet to receive any response from social media giants X and Meta in connection with the doctored video, a Delhi Police source told IANS.

The Delhi Police had also summoned Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for questioning in connection with the case.

# Teenager stabbed to death over romantic rivalry in Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

An 18-year-old boy was stabbed to death by two individuals, including a minor, in south-east Delhi over enmity due to a girl, an official said on Friday, adding that they have nabbed the culprits.

Sharing the details, police said that on Thursday, two police control room (PCR) calls were received at Okhla police station at 5:27 p.m. regarding injuries to a boy, following which, a police team rushed to the spot.

Another PCR call was received at 6:22 p.m. at Okhla Industrial Area from Apollo Hospital, that a patient named Shivam, a resident of JJ Camp, Okhla Phase-II was brought in an injured condition and a quarrel had taken place at Salora Park in Okhla.

"He was admitted to ICU and later declared dead by



the doctor during the treatment. The crime team and forensic experts were also called on the spot, who inspected the crime scene," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Rajesh Deo. During the enquiry, it was found that Shivam, along with two other boys identified as Dharmender (18) and a juvenile (17), residents of the same locality, had come to Salora Park at

about 5:11 p.m. After 7-8 minutes, Shivam came out from the park and when he sat on his motorcycle, he suddenly fell down on the footpath and blood was oozing from his neck," said the DCP. Further probe revealed that the minor had stabbed Shivam in the neck. "A case under sections 302/34 of the IPC is registered and both accused are apprehended," the DCP added.

# AKALI DAL WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPING GREATER MOHALI, SAYS SUKHBIR BADAL

Mohali (Punjab) | Agencies

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Badal on Friday said his party's previous government was instrumental in developing the Greater Mohali area that was set to eclipse Gurugram, besides creating world-class education and research facilities and a thriving information technology sector.

During his 'Punjab Bachao Yatra' in Kharar and Mohali Assembly constituencies, the SAD President also appealed to the people to vote for his part to pave the way for expansion of the Greater Mohali area into a metropolis which would further augment employment and generate revenue for the state.

Badal, who was accompanied by the party's Sri Anandpur Sahib candidate Prem Singh Chandumajra, interacted with people across both constituencies and thanked the people for welcoming the Punjab Bachao Yatra.



"This is also a reward for the party which has developed Mohali from a sleepy town into a bustling city which is growing by the day," he said, adding that the SAD had not only planned the orderly and scientific expansion of Mohali and Kharar towns but had also created world-class infrastructure and institutions.

Asserting that the international airport established in Mohali by the previous SAD government had resulted in the speedy development of Mohali and resulted in an increase in commerce besides connectivity with the outside world, Badal said that the IT sector has also taken ground in Mohali due to the airport.

He also said that he had himself persuaded industry heads to establish the Indian School of Business in Mohali while adding the previous SAD governments were behind the establishment of the world-famous IISER and the Institute of Nano Science and Technology in Mohali.



## RAHUL GANDHI WILL NOW LOSE IN RAE BARELI : CM MOHAN YADAV

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has taken a dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's nomination for the Lok Sabha elections from Rae Bareilly. He said that now Rahul Gandhi is going to lose in Rae Bareilly.

While discussing with the media persons, he said that last time Rahul Gandhi had fled to Kerala after losing from Amethi. Seeing the possibility of defeat from Wayanad, Rahul Gandhi has decided to contest elections from Rae Bareilly. Smriti Irani has worked in Amethi for five years and in the last assembly elections, she got the Congress's deposit forfeited in four out of the five assemblies. He further said that the atmosphere of UP has become Modi-like. We are going to break the old record also. Now Rahul Gandhi is going to contest elections from Rae Bareilly instead of Amethi, so the people of Rae Bareilly are waiting for him. The Congress will have to answer for all the obstacles it has created in development, all the light talk it has made about PM Narendra Modi. Rahul Gandhi's defeat from Rae Bareilly is also certain.

On Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi not contesting the Lok Sabha elections, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said tauntingly that Priyanka Gandhi had left the war even before the battle.



## 'My remark on BJP leader Imarti Devi twisted, misrepresented': MP Congress chief

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Congress President Jitu Patwari on Friday claimed that his remark on BJP leader Imarti Devi has been twisted and misrepresented.

"My statement on Imarti Devi is misrepresented. My intent was just to ignore the question. Imarti ji is like my elder sister and elder sister is equivalent to a mother," Patwari posted on X.

"I had no intention to hurt anyone. If anyone was hurt, I apologise," Patwari said. During the poll campaign in Guna Lok Sabha seat on Thursday, Patwari had made objectionable remarks against her.

Imarti Devi, a staunch supporter of Union



Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, was a minister in ex-CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan's government.

## Bhopal man flees after pronouncing triple talaq to wife in moving train

Team Absolute | Jhansi

In a shocking incident, a man gave triple talaq to his wife in a moving train and then fled, the police said. The incident occurred just before the Jhansi Junction on April 29 when Mohammad Arshad, 28, was travelling with his wife Afsana, 26.

As the train chugged into the Jhansi station, Arshad gave triple talaq to his wife and got off the train. He also beat his wife before fleeing.

Shocked by the sudden turn of events, Afsana contacted the Government Railway Police, which sent her back to Pukhrayan in Kanpur Dehat, from where she had boarded the train for Bhopal, earlier that day.

An FIR was finally lodged and a manhunt launched for the accused. Arshad, a computer engineer employed with a private firm in Bhopal, had married Afsana, a graduate hailing from Kota in Rajasthan, on January 12 this



year. The match was made through a matrimonial advertisement. When the couple visited Arshad's ancestral house in the Pukhrayan last week, Afsana was shocked to find that Arshad was already married.

When she confronted him, he and his mother began to harass her for dowry, according to the complaint.

This continued until Arshad finally pronounced the triple talaq and disappeared after abandoning her on the train. In a video that

has since gone viral, Afsana has appealed to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to help her and also take action against such people who divorce women and abandon them.

Circle Officer (CO) Priya Singh said that based on the woman's complaint, a case has been registered against her husband Arshad, his maternal uncle Aqeel, father Nafeesul Hasan, and mother Parveen. "The matter will be investigated, and action will be taken," the CO added.

## Congress election campaign in MP: New generations in command

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The campaign for Lok Sabha elections is at its peak in Madhya Pradesh. The older generation of Congress seems to be missing in this election campaign. The new generation has completely taken charge of the campaign.

Two phases of Lok Sabha elections have been held in the state and now voting is to be held on 17 Lok Sabha seats in two phases. Congress has put all its strength into the campaign. Most of the elderly leaders are either confined to their own constituencies or are hardly able to reach the areas of their close ones for campaigning.

The leaders of the older generation of Congress mainly include former Chief Ministers Kamal Nath and Digvijay Singh. Kamal Nath's son Nakul Nath is contesting elections from Chhindwara and the first phase of voting has been held there on April 19.

After that Kamal Nath came to



campaign in one or two parliamentary constituencies only. Digvijay Singh is contesting from Raigarh parliamentary constituency. The situation is that he is not able to go out of his constituency.

There has been a big change in the politics of Congress after the assembly elections in the state. While the command of the state president was handed over to Jitu Patwari, the leader of opposition Umang Singhar was made. Apart from these two leaders, former Union Minister Arun Yadav and Rajya Sabha member Vivek Tankha are seen active in the election campaign. These four leaders are visiting many places together.

Political analysts say that while Congress has given a chance to new faces in the Lok Sabha elections, it has also brought forward the new generation in the campaign. It is a different matter that the ongoing tension between the State President and the Leader of the Opposition comes to the fore from time to time. Despite this, the young generation of Congress is trying to appear united. Whatever may be the election results, Congress has definitely done the work of bringing forward the new generation.

## BJP GAVE TASK TO WORKERS TO INCREASE VOTE PERCENTAGE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The voting percentage in the first two phases in Madhya Pradesh has been much lower than in the 2019 elections. BJP is gearing up to increase the voting percentage in the next phases. Besides, it is activating the workers to increase the voting percentage.

There are 29 Lok Sabha seats in the state. Of these, voting has been held on 12 seats in two phases and in the coming time, voting is to be held on 17 seats in two phases. Voting is going to be held in nine parliamentary constituencies in the third phase and in eight parliamentary constituencies in the fourth phase.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and party national president



Jagat Prakash Nadda held a meeting with senior party leaders during their stay in Bhopal.

In these meetings, the state leaders were instructed to make efforts to increase the voting percentage in the 17 seats where voting is to be held in the next two phases.

BJP had pledged to get 10 per cent more votes in the Lok Sabha elections by getting 370 additional votes at every booth. The party has instructed everyone from Panna Pramukh to regional MPs and MLAs to take charge during the voting in the upcoming phases of elections.

To increase the voting percentage in the upcoming two phases, party leaders will make efforts to take the voters from their homes to the polling booths.

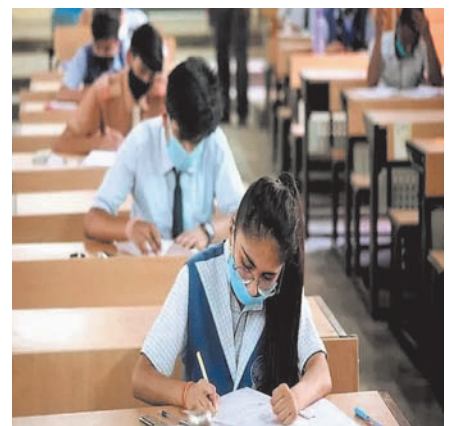
## State Education Center issued instructions regarding re-examination of classes 5 and 8

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The School Education Department has issued guidelines for class 5 and 8 re-examination session 2023-24. The State Education Center has written a letter to the district collectors in this regard. Re-examination of classes 5 and 8 will be held between June 3 and June 8.

Regarding the entry of marks of project work, the State Education Center has said that the project work of those students who have failed or have been absent should be compulsorily completed by May 15 and evaluated. Re-examination centers for these classes should be fixed at Jan Shiksha Kendra only. If the number of students exceeds 500, a second examination center can be set up with the permission of the State Education Centre.

It has been said in the instructions that it will be the responsibility of the concerned school head and teachers to transport the



candidates to the examination centre. Admit cards of the candidates can be downloaded and obtained. Detailed information in this regard can also be obtained from the District Coordinator of the State Education Center.

## Training for awareness on metabolic disorders and hemoglobinopathy screening in newborn baby organized at AIIMS Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Due to the tireless efforts of Professor (Dr.) Ajai Singh, Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has declared AIIMS Bhopal as a Center of Excellence for the treatment of rare diseases. Sickle cell disease/Thalassemia is also a rare disease. To prevent this disease, it is necessary to examine from childhood itself so that treatment can be started on time. Madhya Pradesh has the largest population of tribals in the country and this disease is very widespread among the tribals. In this connection, a project titled "Establishment of

lab facilities for Newborn Screening for common metabolic disorders and Sickle cell anemia, Thalassemia and other hemoglobinopathies" is being run at AIIMS Bhopal. An online training for awareness regarding screening of metabolic disorders and hemoglobinopathies in newborn was conducted by the Department of Pediatrics, AIIMS Bhopal in collaboration with National Health Mission (Blood Cell) under State Sickle Cell Mission.

This training was given to health care staff (medical officers, nursing and paramedical staff) in all 49 districts to start screening for neonatal hemoglobinopathy (sickle cell) and metabolic disorders. The objective of

the training was to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills required for examination of newborn baby and collection of samples. This included methods of newborn screening and sample collection.

This session was designed to train the participants. It involves various aspects including newborn screening observation, technical aspects related to specimen, collection, storage and transportation. The training was conducted in two batches in each district. The first batch was for medical officers and staff nurses and the second batch was for laboratory technicians. Around 350 participants from all the districts participated in the training.

## "Hospitality, Then Goodbye": Jyotiraditya Scindia To Congress Leaders Campaigning

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, facing his first election from home turf Guna after shifting to the BJP, appeared quite at ease on the campaign trail. "Politics and elections are not an end for us. It is a beginning to take forward the practice of service to people," he told NDTV in an exclusive interview.

The family of "Maharaj" -- as the erstwhile royal is known across the area -- has been representing the constituency since 1950s. His grandmother Vijayaraje Scindia and his father Madhavrao Scindia were both MPs from whichever party they represented.

Scindia contested his first election in 2002 after the death of his father, and has been a four-time MP from the seat -- till he lost to the BJP's KP Singh Yadav in 2019.

This time, his key opponent is Congress's Yadvendra Yadav, the son of BJP leader Rao Deshraj Singh Yadav, who was a three-time legislator from Mungaoli. The Congress strategy is to consolidate the Yadav vote, which had paid off for the BJP candidate in 2019.

The Yadavs comprise a chunk of Guna's population and are expected to account for around 250,000 votes. On the rare occasions the constituency has chosen a non-Scindia to represent



them, the candidate belonged to the Yadav community.

The Yadav community's heft has been reflected in the BJP's choice of Chief Minister this time. In March, after the Congress candidate was announced, Mohan Yadav had led a Yadav community meeting where Mr Scindia was also present.

The minister appeared unperturbed by the Congress choice.

"In this constituency everyone belongs to me and I belong to everyone. The Scindias have never contested elections on basis of caste and creed. And we have contested against candidates from every community. It is upto a party which candidate they choose," he told to a news channel.

Asked about Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra coming to campaign for the Congress candidate, Scindia - known to be close to the Gandhis before his crossover to the BJP - said: "Any leader can come, we provide them hospitality under the Atithi Devo Bhava (Guests are gods) maxim. We provide them hospitality and after that, bid them goodbye". For Scindia, senior BJP leader and former Chief Minister Uma Bharati had hit the campaign trail last week. It was the first time she took part in the current election campaign after being on a "break from politics", for about four months. "It is my good fortune. She is my aunt and has given me her blessings," Scindia said.

Asked about the chances of Digvijaya Singh, who is contesting from neighbouring Raigarh, Scindia said, "The Congress is bankrupt in terms of ideology and its human resources. Every day somebody or other is leaving. The Congress is bankrupt in terms of guiding the country's development, and in terms of candidates".

The BJP is hoping to win all 29 seats of Madhya Pradesh this time, including Chhindwara, which has traditionally voted for Congress. With former Chief Minister Kamal Nath fielding his son Nakul Nath from the constituency instead of contesting himself, confidence is particularly high in the BJP camp.



EDITOR'S SPECS

## Wayanad, Raebareli and Rahul Gandhi

With Rahul Gandhi deciding to contest the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh also, there was a mixed response from people in Kerala's Wayanad. Elections were held in Wayanad Lok Sabha seat on April 26. While some people said there was nothing wrong for him to contest Raebareli too, a few said it was wrong on his part. At a wayside shop in Wayanad, one person said there was nothing wrong with Gandhi's decision to contest from two seats. "He is leading the INDIA bloc and hence there is nothing wrong in it," said one, while another said, "if he wins from both the seats, it's most likely that he will vacate the Wayanad seat." "If he does it, then it might not look good. Anyway let us wait," said another. However, veteran Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader P.K. Kunhalikutty said there was nothing wrong at all in his decision to contest from Raebareli also. "The fact of the matter is we (IUML) requested the Congress party's national leadership that Rahul should contest from one more seat other than Wayanad. Did not PM Modi contest from two seats? We feel that this decision will be a boost for the INDIA bloc," said Kunhalikutty. Rahul won the 2019 polls from Wayanad but lost the Amethi seat in Uttar Pradesh. This time at Wayanad, he was pitted against CPI leader Annie Raja and state BJP president K. Surendran.

# When writer and realist actor Balraj Sahni raced against a train for a film scene

Vikas Datta

More than three decades before Aamir Khan's train stunt in "Ghulam" (1998), this actor, renowned for his natural performances, had already done such a hazardous exploit, not just a daredevil challenge on the screen, but to inject reality into the scene and save the filmmaker the "bother of back projection". Balraj Sahni also involved Meena Kumari in his risky ruse in "Pinjre ke Panchhi" (1966), which -- in another strange resemblance with Aamir's film -- was shot at Khandala. The scene had her walking on the rail tracks in a bid to commit suicide, even as he ran after her and managed to pull her aside from the rushing train at the last minute.

The filmmaker only wanted shots of him running after her and pulling her away; those of the were to be juxtapositioned. Sahni, however, knew that a train would pass the spot soon, and if they moved fast, the whole scene could be filmed there only. He asked the director, who, in turn, asked the actress, and she gamely agreed.

With all arrangements in place, he started chasing Meena Kumari amid shrill whistles from the approaching train's driver, who "must have been horrified to see us right in the middle of the track". The train must have been only a few yards away when Sahni dragged Meena Kumari away, he recalled in his autobiography "Meri Filmi Atankatha". The shot came out perfect, but Sahni, who was above 50 then, only later realised how he had imperilled both of them. Going to her hotel room to apologise, he found her sitting with her head in her hands and she asked him if he was tired of life. He acknowledged his recklessness but also questioned why she went along.

"You were so very keen on taking that shot at one go! How could I then stop you?" was her disarming response with a rare smile.

This aim of realism marked the film career of Balraj Sahni, born on this day (May 1) in Rawalpindi in 1913. He may not have been Hindi cinema's first 'natural' actor -- that honour was for near-contemporary Motilal -- but was matched by few when it came to researching his roles, which spanned from a dispossessed peasant to a rich landlord, among others.

He nearly missed his iconic role in "Do Bigha Zameen" (1953), when a bemused Bimal Roy nearly sent him off after Sahni landed at his office in a London-made suit. But he convinced the exacting filmmaker and prepared for the role of a farmer-turned-menial labourer by living -- and working along as Deen Bandhu -- with the rickshaw pullers of Calcutta to familiarise himself with their language, mannerisms and habits.

Before this, Sahni, jailed in a political case,



notched up an unparalleled record by being allowed to leave the prison in the day, under guard, to shoot for a film -- where he played the role of a jailor! This was K. Asif's "Hulchul" (1951), starring Dilip Kumar and Nargis.

Like many others of his generation, he was enamoured of films and came to Calcutta to join New Theatres after he completed his post-graduate studies at Lahore's Government College in 1936. It did not work out and he went back to the family business in Rawalpindi.

The next year, he was back in Calcutta, with wife Damyanti, and they became language teachers at Viswa Bharati, interacting with Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, who suggested the name of their son (Parikshit, born in 1939).

The Sahnis also taught at Mahatma Gandhi's

Sevagram before reaching London in 1939 where he became a Hindi broadcaster for the Indian Section of the BBC's Eastern Service. Here, he made the acquaintance of George Orwell, and in January 1942, read out his "The Meaning of Sabotage", ostensibly addressed to the conquered people of Europe -- but with wider ramifications for other colonised populaces. He also convinced BBC to feature Indian music, particularly K.L. Saigal. The couple returned to India in 1943, and he was at bit of a loose end when old friend Chetan Anand invited him to come to Bombay to join films. Sahni made his debut with "Dharti Ke Lal" (1946), based on the 1943 Bengal famine, though most such films before "Do Bigha Zameen" were nondescript. His

125-odd later films, including at least two in Punjabi, comprised social dramas such as "Seema" ("Tu pya ka saagar hai", 1955), "Chhoti Bahen" (1959), and "Kabuliwala" (1961), offbeat love story "Anuradha" (1960), war dramas "Haqeeqat" (1964) and "Hindustan Ki Kasam" (1973), and lost-and-found tales like "Waqf" ("A meri zohr-e-jabeen", 1965) and the distressing "Garam Hawa" (1973).

A writer too, Sahni, who passed away in April 1973, had half a dozen books in both Hindi and Punjabi to his credit -- and some of the latter are still on the syllabus in Punjab universities.

## international

# Risk of famine still present in Gaza: WHO

Geneva | Agencies  
The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday that the threat of famine still hangs over the war-torn Gaza Strip. More food has reached the Gaza Strip in recent weeks, but the WHO's representative to the Palestinian territories, Rik Peepkorn, said the risk of famine has not yet been averted.



The coastal strip has been under attack from the Israeli military for more than six months since Hamas launched bloody attacks on Israel on October 7.

The WHO reported that more than 40 severely malnourished children under the age of five have been brought to hospitals in the Gaza Strip with

additional health problems since March.

Some 2-year-olds weighed only around 4 kilograms, far under the average weight of 10 to 14 kilograms.

Before the outbreak of fight-

ing in October, malnutrition was practically non-existent in the territory.

The consequences of childhood malnutrition will be far-ranging, said Peepkorn. "We will see the effects for years to

come," he added.

Ahmed Dahir, the WHO's top doctor in Gaza, told reporters in Geneva via video link that the supply of food was still fragile and that he "cannot say the risk of famine is past."

According to Palestinian health authorities, a total of around 25 malnourished children have died in the territory in recent weeks.

Peepkorn emphasised that the children had not starved to death, but that malnutrition had contributed to the complications that ultimately led to their deaths.

The information provided by the Palestinian authorities cannot be independently verified, but UN officials have previously considered their estimates to be reliable.

## Germany summons Russian diplomat over cyberattack on ruling party

Berlin | Agencies  
Germany has summoned the Acting Charge d'Affaires of the Russian embassy in response to a Russian cyberattack on the governing Social Democratic Party (SPD) last year.

He has been summoned for noon, a spokesperson for the German Foreign Ministry announced in Berlin on Friday.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Berlin blames a unit of the Russian military intelligence service GRU for a 2023 cyberattack on the centre-left SPD, which is in coalition with the Greens and pro-business Free Democrats (FDP). "Russian state hackers attacked Germany in cyberspace," Baerbock said in Adelaide during a visit to Australia, adding there would be consequences.

In June 2023, the SPD said



that email accounts belonging to its executive had been the target of a cyberattack earlier that year.

According to the SPD, this was made possible by a securi-

ty vulnerability in software, which was not known at the time of the attack. "It cannot be ruled out that data was leaked from individual email inboxes," an SPD statement said.

## 6.0-magnitude quake hits Philippines

Manila | Agencies  
A 6.0 magnitude offshore earthquake rocked Leyte province in the central Philippines on Friday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said.

The institute said the quake, which occurred at 6:16 p.m. local time (10:16 GMT), hit at a depth of 8 km, about 32 km southeast of Dulag, a coastal town, Xinhua news agency reported.

The institute said the tectonic quake will trigger aftershocks and cause damage. The tremor was also felt in some parts of the province.

Details are awaited. The archipelagic Philippines has frequent seismic activities due to its location along the Pacific "Ring of Fire."

## 20 killed, 21 injured as bus plunges into ravine in Pakistan



Islamabad | Agencies  
At least 20 people were killed and 21 others injured after a passenger bus fell into a ravine in Pakistan's Daimar district on Friday. The incident occurred around 5.30 a.m. as the driver of the bus lost control over the wheels, Dawn reported.

The bus carrying 43 people was proceeding towards Gilgit from Rawalpindi.

The injured have been rushed to hospital. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi have expressed grief over the loss of lives and extended condolences.

## Death toll in Brazil's worst storms rises to 29

Sao Paulo | Agencies  
The death toll due to the worst storms mounted to 29 after four consecutive days of intense rainfall, floods and mudslides in Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul, Governor Eduardo Leite said. "Unfortunately, we know that these numbers will rise," said Leite on Thursday, describing the storms as the worst natural disaster in the history of the state, Xinhua news agency reported.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Thursday visited Santa Maria, one of the state's worst-hit cities, and met with Leite. Lula offered federal funding and aid to address the emergency in the state bordering Uruguay and Argentina.

"There will be no shortage of help from the federal government to take care of health, there will be no shortage of money to take care of transportation and food, everything that is within reach. Whether through ministers, civil society or our military, we will dedicate round-the-clock effort so that we can satisfy the basic needs of the people who are stranded by the rains," said the President.



With more rains forecasted to come, the governor called on residents to head for higher ground and stay away from flood-prone areas identified by the civil defence agency.

Some 4,400 residents have been evacuated, but thousands more are waiting to be rescued from their flooded homes, he said. According to a civil defence bulletin, 154 cities have been affected by the natural disaster.

## Iraqi Shia militia claims missile attacks on Israel



Baghdad | Agencies  
A Shia militia in Iraq has claimed responsibility for a missile attack on three sites in the cities of Tel Aviv and Be'er Sheva in Israel. The militia, known as the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, said in two online statements that on Thursday noon, its fighters launched three attacks with long-range al-Arqab upgraded cruise missiles on two vital sites in Tel Aviv and one in Be'er Sheva in southern Israel, without providing additional details about the specific location targeted or any resulting casualties, Xinhua news agency reported.

The statements stressed that the attacks were carried out "in solidarity with the people of Gaza" and pledged to persist in targeting "enemy's strongholds".

Since the outbreak of the Gaza war on October 7, 2023, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has launched multiple attacks on Israeli and US bases in the region.

## North Korean economic delegation returns from Iran amid suspected military ties

Seoul | Agencies  
A North Korean economic delegation has returned home from Iran, Pyongyang's state media said Friday, ending a rare trip that raised suspicions of possible weapons cooperation between the two nations.

The delegation, headed by External Economic Relations Minister Yun Jong-ho, arrived in Pyongyang on Thursday after visiting Iran, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a one-sentence dispatch.

The latest dispatch marked the first state media report on the visit since an April 24 dispatch announcing the delegation's departure, Yonhap news agency reported. It is rare for a ranking North Korean official to visit Iran. The last such visit took place in 2019 when Pak Chol-min, then North Korean

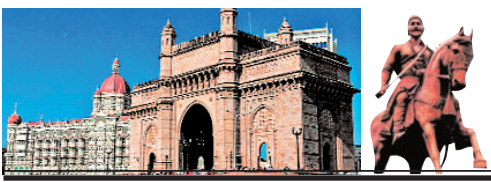


vice chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly, visited Iran to discuss cooperation. Having established diplomatic ties in 1973, Pyongyang and Tehran are known to have close ties while under international sanctions for their weapons programs. The countries have been suspected of exchanging ballistic missile parts and technology, especially during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The recent trip raised speculation that along

with economic cooperation, North Korea may seek to deepen military ties with Iran amid Russia's war with Ukraine. Pyongyang and Tehran are known to be key providers of weapons to Moscow to support the war.

The Iranian foreign ministry has dismissed such speculation as "biased," saying the North Korean delegation attended a trade show and held talks with officials from the government and private sector.



# Solapur Cong hopes to regain lost glory, BJP aims to score hat-trick

Sanjay Jog | Mumbai

The Congress and the BJP are locked in a direct fight in Solapur Lok Sabha reserved constituency in Maharashtra. Both parties have fielded young Legislators in a bid to lure Millennials. The constituency has traditionally been a Congress bastion, but since 2014 the BJP has made sufficient inroads. The Congress has fielded three-term Legislator from Solapur City Central Assembly, Praniti Shinde against the BJP's first-term Legislator Ram Satpute.

Shinde has an edge as she is the daughter of veteran Congress leader and former Union Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde who was also the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for a brief period, and she hopes to regain lost glory of the party.

Satpute, who hails from a family of sugarcane harvesters from Beed District, has the solid support of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and the BJP's poll machinery. He is approaching the electorate and seeking votes for a hat-trick for the BJP.

Shinde got a boost after the Congress' traditional rival, Communist leader Narsayya Adam extended support to her.

In addition, the Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen's decision not to field its nominee has been a booster dose for Shinde who hopes to mobilise maximum support from Muslims, Dalits, OBCs apart from Marathi-speaking voters and others.

The NCP(SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) have charged up their cadres in support of Shinde as together the Maha



Vikas Aghadi (MVA) has succeeded in putting up a united front against the BJP. Shinde and the MVA are cornering the BJP and Satpute over the '400 paar' slogan with an objective of change in the Constitution of the country. Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in his address at the campaign rally held last week criticised the BJP saying that this was not an ordinary election. He further alleged that for the first time after Independence, there was a party that wanted to destroy the Constitution.

Shinde has tweaked her campaign strategy by aggressively taking up the issue of change in Constitution that will put the existence of SCs, STs and tribals in jeopardy.

Further, Shinde, who has been vocal in criticising the Modi Government on core issues, is raking up the present state of unemployment, farmers' distress, inflation during the 10 year rule of the BJP at the

Centre. On the other hand, Satpute is riding on PM Modi's guarantee, apart from the presence of four BJP Legislators and their work in the constituency. Satpute and BJP Legislators who are joined by Shiv Sena and NCP hope to outsmart Shinde by exposing the rift among the MVA partners and cashing in on their organisational strengths.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally held last week has raised hopes for Satpute as the BJP feels that his message of a Viksit Bharat and his rebuttal to the Congress' campaign have gone down well with voters.

However, the BJP is finding it difficult to sell the Ram Mandir plank as the hype created after its inauguration has been missing in the constituency.

Satpute is taking up the Modi Government's slew of initiatives including 25 crore people getting

freedom from multidimensional poverty, direct transfer of Rs 34 lakh crore using PM Jan Dhan Yojana, Rs 13,000 crore PM Vishwakarma Scheme among others.

He also reaches out to the voters with development programmes proposed and implemented by the Mahayuti Government from 2022.

Despite development being brought to the centre stage, both candidates face the voters' wrath over Solapur city's water shortage and supply of drinking water just once a week.

This apart, the closure of Siddheshwar Sugar Factory, lack of commissioning of Solapur airport, ban on onion export, decline in the prices of soybean and other agricultural produce and failure in the implementation of Solapur Smart City project are other key issues that both the candidates promise to address after being elected.

There are 20,30,119 voters comprising 10,41,470 males and 9,88,450 females who will exercise their voting rights on May 7.

Of the six Assembly constituencies, BJP holds Solapur City North, Akkalkot, Solapur South and Pandharpur while Congress represents Solapur City Central and NCP has its Legislator in the Mohol seat.

During the 2019 elections, BJP nominee Jaisidheswar Swami defeated Congress candidate Sushilkumar Shinde. Swami had polled 524,985 votes against 366,377 votes by Shinde.

In the 2014 elections, BJP nominee Sharad Bansode had emerged victorious with 517,879 votes against Congress stalwart Sushilkumar Shinde who had polled 368,205 votes.

# Bhima Koregaon Elgar Parishad case: SC allows DU Prof Babu to withdraw bail plea



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed the withdrawal of the bail plea filed by Delhi University's Professor Hany Babu, an accused in the Bhima Koregaon Elgar Parishad case. A Bench presided over by Justice Bela M Trivedi was requested by Babu's counsel for withdrawal of the Special Leave Petition challenging an order of the Bombay High Court which had denied him bail.

He submitted that Babu - an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Delhi University and a resident of Gautam Buddha Nagar in Uttar Pradesh - will apply afresh for bail before the court. In January this year, the top court issued notice to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Maharashtra Government, and sought their response within a period of three weeks in the matter. Earlier, the Bombay High Court in September 2022 had refused to interfere with the judgment of Greater Mumbai's Special Court rejecting the bail application

filed by Babu. A Bench of Justices Nitin Jamdar and NR Borkar of the Bombay High Court had said, "We find that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the accusations of the NIA against the Appellant having conspired, attempted, advocated and abetted the commission of a terrorist act/s and the act/s of preparatory to the commission of a terrorist act, are prima facie true."

The case pertains to organisation of the Elgar Parishad at Pune, Maharashtra on December 12, 2017 which promoted enmity between various caste groups and led to violence resulting in loss of life and property and state-wide agitation in Maharashtra.

In its investigation, the NIA revealed that Prof Babu was allegedly in contact with Paikhomba Meitei, Secretary Information and Publicity, Military Affairs, Kangleipak Communist Party (MC), an organisation banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and was propagating Maoist activities and Maoist ideology and was a co-conspirator with other accused.

# Maha govt directs DGP to curb deepfake menace during elections

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government on Friday directed the state Director General of Police (DGP) to take stern action against those involved in creating deepfake videos, clips, photos or other content and circulating it through social media / digital media during the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

The government has said that these are created by abusing various techniques such as Photoshop, Machine Learning (ML) or Artificial Intelligence (AI). The misuse of this technique during elections is a matter of concern.

Such improperly created deep fake videos, clips or photos appear to be real and lead to misunderstanding or defamation of the concerned.

During the election period, there is an increase in such cases and to curb this for a



clean and transparent election process, the government has given instructions to the state DGP to take strict action against those who create and broadcast 'deepfake' content, said the government release.

The Election Commission has also given instructions in its guidelines to curb misinformation about candidates, political parties or an election issue or falsely circulating genuine photos, audio, and videos by altering them.

# Maha MLC's kin among 6 killed, 3 injured on Akola-Washim highway

Team Absolute | Akola (Maharashtra)

Six persons, including the kin of a Maharashtra lawmaker, were killed in a head-on collision of two private cars on the busy Akola-Washim highway near Patur in Maharashtra's Akola district on Friday, police said.

According to Patur police station head Kishore Shelke, the crash took place around 2 p.m. when the two speeding cars banged into each other.

"Three persons in each vehicle died in the major



accident. The cause of the collision is not yet clear and we are investigating," Shelke told reporter from the spot.

At least three other passengers from both cars were injured, including one who is

critical, and they have been admitted to nearby hospitals, he said.

Among the deceased is Raghuvir Sarnaik, the brother of Annavati Teachers' Constituency Member of Legislative Council Kiran R. Sarnaik, and further details, including the identities of the other victims, are awaited.

Locals said that the accident led to a huge traffic snarl in both directions, which was later cleared by the police and normal vehicular movement resumed after almost an hour.

# Constable murdered after confronting phone thieves

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Government Railway Police (GRP) and Mumbai Police have formed around 10 to 12 teams to investigate the murder case of Vishal Pawar, a police constable a few days ago, Pawar was attacked by members of the Fatka gang, which stole his mobile phone. The gang is known to strike the hands of people who talk on the phone while standing on the footboard of local trains, causing them to drop their device. Pawar chased them, but the group then allegedly injected poison into him, leading to his death on Wednesday. The GRP at Dadar have registered a murder case and are investigating the matter.

According to the police, Pawar, 30, was based with the Local Arms Unit division 3 in Worli. Pawar was recruited to the police department in 2015. He was married, and his wife and parents stayed in Chalisgaon in Jalgaon, while Pawar stayed in Thane.

Pawar told the Kopri police that on April 27, he boarded a train from Thane to go to his office. It was around 9 pm when the train was moving slowly between Matunga and Sion Railway station. While standing near the door and talking on his mobile phone, he was suddenly attacked by the Fatka



gang, causing his phone to fall. Despite being on a slow train, Pawar attempted to chase the gang but was surprised to encounter around five members. After assaulting him, they injected poison into his back, causing him to lose consciousness. They then gave him some red-coloured liquid, which was also poisoned. The police said Pawar, who was unconscious for almost 12 hours, woke up to find himself near the tracks. He then walked and took a train to reach home. "On April 29, he was not feeling well and got himself admitted to the Thane-based hospital for treatment. As the case was a serious issue, the hospital authorities

informed the Kopri police in Thane who came to take his statement. The Kopri police took the statement but didn't take any serious steps in the matter. On May 1, he passed away. The Kopri police then took the matter seriously and registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code apart from Section 302 (punishment for murder)," said a police officer from the GRP. The case was transferred to the Government Railway Police in Dadar who have started investigating the matter further. They registered a murder case under Section 302. The GRP is further checking all the CCTV footage to identify the accused.

# 10 pc discount for Mumbai Metro commuters on voting day in Mumbai



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Passengers of Metro Lines 2A and 7 in Mumbai suburbs are about to get a special 10 per cent discount on May 20, the day of voting for Lok Sabha elections, 2024.

Commuters of Mumbai Metro, utilising Mumbai 1 Card, Paper QR, and paper tickets will enjoy the privilege to travel to the polling stations and return home after voting with a special discount of 10 per cent on base fare.

"People residing across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) will be travelling from different corners to cast their vote. Thus, on May 20, Mumbai Metro has taken up the noble initiative of

offering discounts to its commuters. This meaningful direction permits the citizens of MMR to reach their desired voting stations and fulfil their responsibility to democracy with added convenience. Moreover, this step makes passengers feel more satisfied with the services of Mumbai Metro," said Maha Mumbai Metro Operation Corporation.

Maha Mumbai Metro is actively participating in SVEEP - Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation - to encourage metro riders to fulfill their civic duty and vote in elections. This initiative aims to motivate citizens to contribute to the nation by exercising their right to vote.

# Defective tongue rail caused derailment outside CSMT, says CR general manager

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The train derailment outside Mumbai's sprawling Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) on May 1 was due to a "defective tongue rail", Central Railway general manager Ram Karan Yadav said on Thursday, reported news agency. Yadav said he had ordered a study of the station yard to find a long term solution to the problem, including shifting a crossover point, to reduce a sharp curve of 7.5 degrees, since this causes the tongue rail to be replaced every month.

A tongue rail, also called a switch rail, is attached to a running rail and is part of the mechanism that allows a train to cross over from one track to another.

"We have been replacing tongue rails every month on this crossover since it is heavily used. At other locations such tongue rails are replaced every one-and-a-half years. This tongue rail was found to be defective," Yadav told agency.

Yadav, who visited the derailment spot outside the CSMT station this morning after two back to back derailments earlier this week, assured suburban services on Harbour line will normalise on Friday as all issues at the spot have been addressed.

"Work will be done tonight and it (services) will normalise from morning. The crossover point located just outside CSMT on which two derailments took place (including April 29) was replaced on April 30," Yadav said.

"I have asked for a study to see how it (curvature) can be



eased," the CR GM added. Railway officials said trains normally manoeuvre the crossover point at a speed of 30 kilometres per hour, but a new limit of 10 kmph had been enforced as a precautionary measure. This led to disruption of suburban services on Harbour line as it significantly slowed down the Up (towards CSMT) and Down (away from CSMT) trains there, these officials added. On Thursday, services on the Harbour line were badly affected during the morning peak hours due to bunching of trains. "A speed restriction of 10 kmph was imposed at the crossover point where the derailment occurred just outside the CSMT. The delay of suburban services on Harbour line is as a result of it," CR's chief public relations officer Swapnil Nila said.

# 4 injured after massive fire breaks out due to gas leakage in Andheri

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At least four people were injured after a massive fire broke out due to gas leakage in Andheri area of Mumbai, the officials said on Friday.

The civic officials said that a fire incident was reported due to a gas pipeline leakage near Juhu Oceanus building on A B Nair road, opposite Juhu Post Office in Andheri (West).

The blaze was reported to the civic authorities at around 11:56 am on Friday. The incident prompted swift action from emergency services including the Mumbai Fire Brigade and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials, the civic officials said.

According to civic body, the fire is suspected to have originated due to a leakage in the MGL gas pipeline. It engulfed 2 to 3 shops in the vicinity.

The MGL staff curtailed the gas leak, while the Mumbai Fire Brigade's (MFB) rapid response led to the extinguishing



of the flames by 12:18 pm, averting further escalation of the situation, an official said.

The incident resulted in injuries to as many as four people.

The injured were identified as Narsimha Fagilla, 50, Wazir Hussain, 30,

Shantilal Chaudhary, 24, and Asif Hussain, 30. All four sustained burn injuries and were rushed to Cooper Hospital, the official said.

The doctors at the hospital have informed the civic body that their condition is said to be stable.



# “I know my mom was involved!!!” Britney

Los Angeles | Agencies

Britney Spears explained what really happened to her at the Chateau Marmont hotel on Thursday, May 2. The 42-year-old music icon took to Instagram to insist that the incident wasn't serious, and she seemingly blamed her mother, Lynne Spears. However, Britney did not clarify whether she believed Lynne, 68, was responsible for the incident itself or the media coverage surrounding it.

“I know my mom was involved!!!” Britney alleged in her caption that day. “I haven't talked to her in 6 months and she called right after it happened before the news being out. I was set up just like she did way back when!!! I wish I had grandparents!!! I can't stand her!!! I honestly don't care I will say it [sic].”

In the accompanying clips she shared in the post, the “Toxic” hit-maker pointed out how swollen her ankle was from an injury she sus-



tained at the hotel.

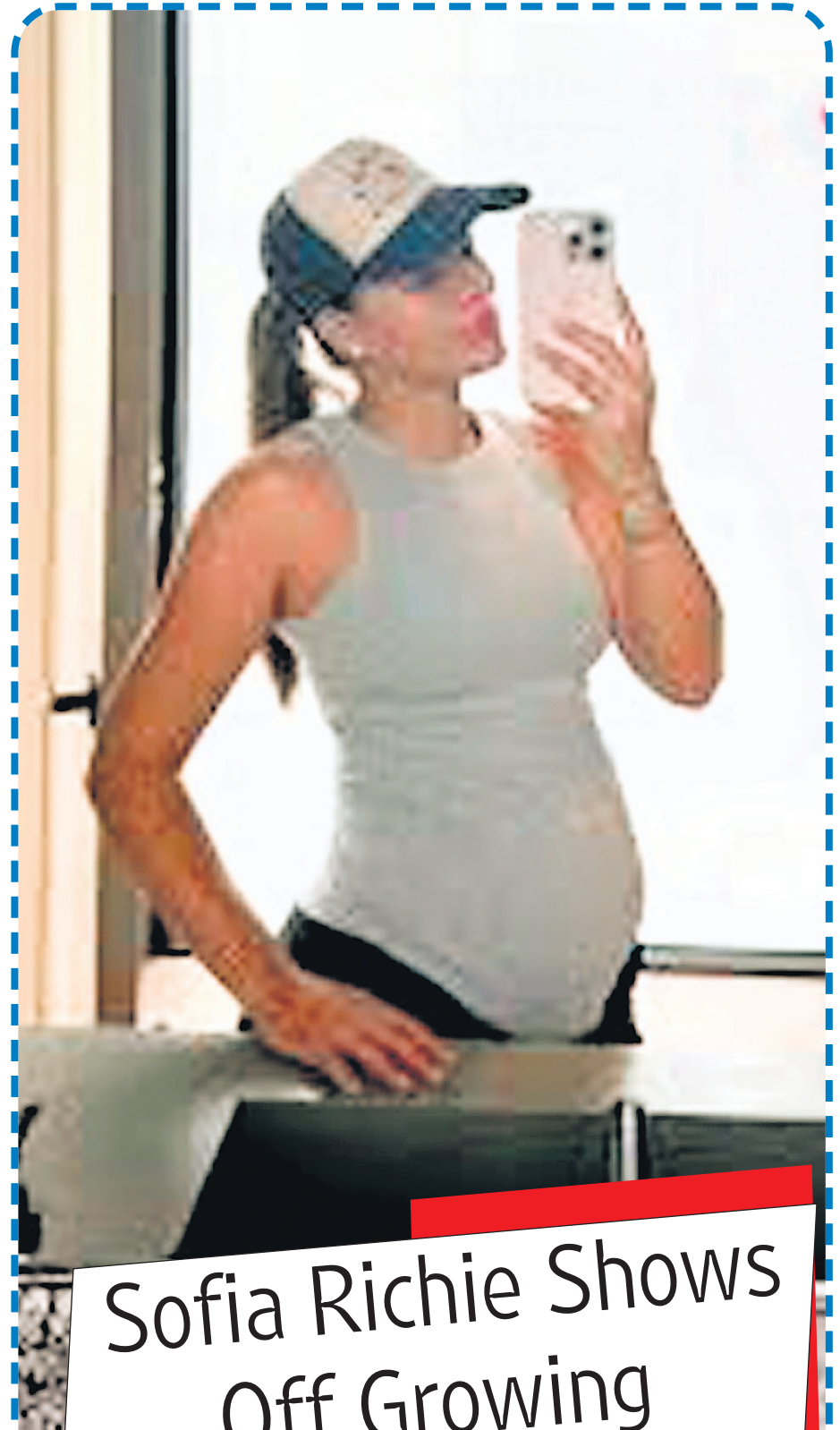
“I really twisted my ankle last night like an idiot — just to show proof,” Britney noted. “It's so bad. F\*\*king idiot here tries to do a leap

in the living room of the Chateau and I fell — embarrassed myself — and that's it.”

The “Circus” artist acknowledged that paramedics visited her but

accused them of causing “this huge scene, which was so unnecessary and all I needed was ice.”

“It is actually pretty bad, but s\*\*t happens,” she concluded.



## Sofia Richie Shows Off Growing Baby Bump

Los Angeles | Agencies

Sofia Richie gave her followers a look at her growing baby bump in a selfie on her Instagram Story on Wednesday, May 1. The pregnant social media star, 25, lifted her night shirt to show off her stomach and simply wrote “Morning” along with the selfie. She was absolutely glowing as she showed off the bump, and she seemed excited to show off the growing bump, while waiting for her daughter to arrive.

In the photo, Sofia was wearing some pastel, green pajamas. She blocked her face with her phone, but she lifted her shirt up to show off her growing baby bump. Shortly after

posting the selfie, Sofia also shared a photo of her breakfast, which looked like a delicious pancake.

Sofia announced that she was pregnant with her first child in January. The baby girl is also her husband Elliot Grainge's first child. She shared the exciting news in an interview with Vogue, where she also showed love to her husband for all of his help. “[Elliot] is such a sweet guy, he always wants to protect my emotions and expectations, so he kind of sat me down and said, ‘If these [pregnancy tests] are negative, don't be upset. Our moment will come.’ When we turned over all three tests at the same time, they were all positive,” she said.

## “I love us getting really old together!” Happy birthday David : Victoria Beckham

Los Angeles | Agencies

Victoria Beckham is celebrating David Beckham's birthday in her own special way. On Thursday, May 2, the Spice Girls member took to social media and shared a heartfelt tribute to her husband.

“Happy birthday David,” Victoria, 50, wrote via Instagram. “I love us getting really old together!!!! You aren't far behind me!!!! You are our everything!!!! The best daddy and husband we all love u so much xxxxx.” The fashion designer also shared a glimpse into David's celebration via her Instagram Stories where she posted photos of a room full of birthday balloons and a shirtless David enjoying a workout. “I love you so much!!!!” she wrote. “Happy birthday @davidbeckham.”

Married since July 1999, David and Victoria defy couple goals as they continue raising their children Brooklyn, 25, Romeo, 21, Cruz, 19, and Harper, 12. Despite busy schedules, the family unit shows up for life's big milestones.



## ‘Mrs. Doubtfire’ child stars reunite for pictures 30 years after film's release

Los Angeles | Agencies

Lisa Jakub, Matthew Lawrence, and Mara Wilson, who starred as siblings in the late Robin Williams-starrer ‘Mrs. Doubtfire’, reminisced about the 1993 film as they reunited for a picture some 31 years after its release.

“The sisters had so much fun hanging out with the brothers. @marawilson and @matthewlawrence still feel like my siblings -- even 30 years after filming ‘Mrs. Doubtfire,’” wrote Jakub, who portrayed the oldest child Lydia Hillard, on

Instagram.

Jakub added: “We had a little reunion. 30 years later, and my Mrs. Doubtfire family still feels like family.”

Wilson wrote: “So funny that the same week I went to San Francisco, I got to reunite with my Doubtfire siblings!”

“It's always a joy to see @lisa.jakub and @matthewlawrence, and always so much fun to be on @officialbrotherlylovepod,” she added, reports deadline.com.

The reference seemed to be an appearance from herself and Jakub on the Lawrence brothers' podcast, as evi-

denced by a larger group photo that included Joey Lawrence and Andrew Lawrence.

‘Mrs. Doubtfire’ tells the story of voice actor Daniel Hillard, played by Robin Williams, who is struggling to find work and whose personality is at odds with that of his wife, Miranda, portrayed by Sally Field. When Miranda asks for a divorce, Daniel becomes ‘Mrs. Doubtfire’, a nanny and housekeeper whom Miranda hires to watch over the children.



## Mauricio Moves Out of Shared Home With Kyle

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kyle Richards and estranged husband Mauricio Umansky are reportedly living apart as they continue to figure out what's next in their relationship. According to Us Weekly, Mauricio, 53, has purchased a luxury condo in a new West Hollywood development. As for Kyle, 55, she is continuing to stay in her Encino home frequently seen on The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills. “Kyle and Mauricio have been living separately for the last few months,” a source told the publication. “They've both been traveling a lot recently, so it's working out where they don't stay under one roof.”

Although they don't live together full-time, Mauricio will reportedly visit their primary residence often when Kyle is out of town. They also have homes in La Quinta, California and Aspen, Colorado. Mauricio and Kyle surprised fans in July 2023 when they announced their separation after 27 years of marriage. The pair have yet to officially file for divorce.

“We have had a rough year. The most challenging one of our marriage,” the reality stars shared in a joint statement via Instagram at the time. “But we both love and respect each other tremendously. There has been no wrongdoing on anyone's part. Although we are in the public eye, we ask to be able to work through our issues privately.”

## ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Fan Bingbing



## IPL 2024: PANDYA BLAMES LACK OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR MUMBAI'S 24-RUN DEFEAT TO KKR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya blamed his batters' inability to forge partnerships for their 24-run defeat to Kolkata Knight Riders in Match 51 of the Indian Premier League despite a brilliant effort by his bowlers at the Wankhede Stadium on Friday.

Jasprit Bumrah (3-18) and Nuwan Thushara (3-42) claimed three wickets apiece at each end of the KKR innings as Mumbai Indians restricted them to a paltry 169 despite brilliant fighting 70 off 52 balls by Venkatesh Iyer, who raised 83 runs for the sixth wicket in the company of Manish Pandey, rescuing their team from a precarious 57/5 at one stage.

Mitchell Starc claimed 4-33, claiming three wickets in the 19th over to end Mumbai innings for 145 after spin twins Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy had reduced them to 61/4 with identical 2-22 hauls.

Suryakumar Yadav waged a lone battle raising Mumbai Indians' hopes with a 35-ball 56, raising 49 runs for the seventh wicket with Tim David (24) before Andre Russell (2-30) and Mitchell Starc ended Mumbai's innings, sharing the last five wickets between them. Pandya said the lack of



partnerships undid the super effort by the bowlers and it will take time to find answers to the questions raised by their dismal performance throughout IPL 2024. "Obviously we couldn't form partnerships and kept losing wickets. There are a lot of questions that will

take time to answer. But for now, not much to say," said Hardik at the post-match presentation.

He said though the wicket played better in the second innings and there was dew too to make it tough for the KKR bowlers, he will have to go

through the game again to see what they can do better.

"Bowlers did a fantastic job on this track. The wicket got better if I'm not wrong. Dew came in the second innings. Will go through the game and see what we can do better.

## IPL 2024: 'I was thinking Super Over', says Cummins after SRH's one-run win over RR

Hyderabad | Agencies

After Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) sealed a one-run win over Rajasthan Royals (RR) in a nail-biting IPL 2024 match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, skipper Pat Cummins revealed he had thoughts of Super Over crossing in his mind.

SRH needed to defend 12 runs off the final over, which came down to two runs needed off the last ball. Moreover, they could keep only four fielders outside 30-yard circle due to slow-over rate penalty.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar, their veteran fast-bowler, trapped Rovman Powell plumb lbw with a low full toss on middle and leg to take 3-41 and complete a stunning win for SRH over the table-toppers, which now takes them to fourth place in the points table.

"Amazing game. That last ball I kind of forgot if we take a wicket, we could win. I was just thinking Super Over. It is T20 cricket, we get used to batters getting them over the line but when you get to that last over, you do feel like anything can happen. Bhuvu (Bhuvneshwar) just nailed six yorkers pretty much," said Cummins after the match ended.

"Natarajan is an awesome yorker bowler. He (Nitish) is fantastic. He sums up the conditions really well, took the first ten balls to get himself in and then hit the ball basically wherever he wanted. He is amazing, great in the field, and gives a couple of handy overs (with the ball) as well," added Cummins.

Sanju Samson, the RR captain, lauded SRH bowlers for stopping the visitors' from



winning the match. "We have really played some close games and won a couple of them. Lost one here, and we have to give credit to the SRH bowlers. We were going at 10 per over till the last over. Margin for error is very less in the IPL and you have to give SRH credit. Knowing the nature of the IPL, you never win the game until you actually win the game."

Despite losing Jos Buttler and Samson, Yashasvi Jaiswal's 40-ball 67 and Riyan Parag's 49-ball 77 helped RR be in the hunt of clinching an impressive win, as the duo shared 134-run stand for the third wicket.

"It was very tough to bat on with the new ball. We bowled well in the powerplay. When the ball got old, it was easier to bat and they capitalised really well. You have to give credit to both youngsters (Jaiswal and Parag). They took care of the innings, played responsibility to get there. You tend to take those chances and you tend to get out also. They played really well."

## Turkey's golden start at ISSF World Cup in Baku T20 WC: 'Virat should open; Rohit bats at No.3', believes Ajay Jadeja

New Delhi | Agencies

Turkey's pairing of Simal Yilmaz and Ismail Keles secured the first gold medal of the ISSF World Cup Rifle, Pistol and Shotgun in Baku as they won the opening 10m air pistol mixed team final.

The Turkish duo registered an overwhelming 16-2 victory in their gold medal match at the Baku Olympic Shooting Range over Kazakhstan's Valeriya Popelova and Eldar Imankulov.

This will be one of three mixed events that will take place at this summer's shooting sport competition in the Paris Olympic Games.

The current competition in the Azerbaijan capital will feature all three, as well as the 12 individual events that will take place in Paris across the shooting sport range of



events.

The first bronze in Baku was won by the Chinese pairing of Li Xue and Xie Yu, who beat Ukraine's Olena Kostevych and Oleh Omelchuk 16-12.

Yilmaz and Keles had topped the previous day's qualifying, while Li Xue and Xie Yu had qualified in fourth

place. Competition continues in Baku tomorrow with the men's and women's 10m air pistol finals, followed by the 10m air rifle mixed final.

The World Cup runs until May 11 when there will be concluding finals in the 25m rapid fire pistol men and the women's and men's 50m rifle 3 positions finals.

New Delhi | Agencies

Former India all-rounder Ajay Jadeja believes skipper Rohit Sharma should make himself bat at number three and promote Virat Kohli to open the batting for the Men's T20 World Cup, set to begin from June 1 in the West Indies and the USA.

Rohit and Kohli are India's top-order batters in their 15-member World Cup squad alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal and Suryakumar Yadav. India are placed in Group A of the competition alongside arch-rivals Pakistan, Ireland, Canada and co-hosts USA.

They will begin their campaign on June 5 against Ireland at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. "For me, Virat Kohli opens. Who goes back? Rohit Sharma bats at three. He gets a little cushion and gets to understand the game, he has so much going on, in his mind as a captain.

"If you have Virat in your side, you know consistency is the one thing you will get, so, might as well use him. He's best at the top and the powerplay allows him to settle in. When there's 20-30 on the board and then spin comes on, as he stays longer, he gets better. My pick has always been



that if Virat is in this squad, he should open," said Jadeja to JioCinema, the official streaming partner of IPL 2024.

Vice-captain Hardik Pandya has been in horrid form with the bat and ball while captaining Mumbai

Indians in IPL 2024, but Jadeja thinks the fast-bowling all-rounder will come good in the T20 World Cup.

"The spotlight is on him for obvious reasons. He's a special player, a rare commodity you find in our country where somebody bowls seam-up and can make it to the side with his batting. The selection has not been on form, there's no doubt about it.

"It depends on how you want to play. It's one of the things I look at this team and think they don't have many options. You have established players in the side, everybody is so solid with the numbers that they play at, and what stage they play. It will all depend on what Rohit thinks," he said. India have opted to take a spin-heavy bowling lineup comprising Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal. Suresh Raina, the former India batter, thinks Chahal and Kuldeep can be played together in India's eleven during the World Cup.

"I think both Kuldeep and Chahal should play. I think our X-factor is Chahal. Their partnership will be useful because you're playing on wickets where a spinner needs to create pressure. If Chahal can't do it, Kuldeep can. If Kuldeep can't, Chahal will do it," said Raina.

## BRIJESH, ARYAN AMONG SEVEN INDIANS TO ENTER FINALS AT ASIAN U-22

Astana (Kazakhstan) | Agencies

Brijesh Tamta and Aryan alongside five other Indian boxers entered the finals of the youth men's category at the ASBC Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships 2024, here on Friday.

Beginning the proceedings for India, Brijesh defeated Mongolia's Taalaibek Iasur in the 48kg category with a convincing 5-0 score. Following a similar suit, Rahul Kundu (75kg) and Aryan (92kg) outclassed China's Kanji Bayi Ersi and Kyrgyzstan's Alybaev Tynystan with identical unanimous decisions.

Sagar Jakhar (60kg), on the other hand, forced a Referee Stop the Contest (RSC) win in the final round over Kyrgyzstan's Sadirov Dilerbek. Aryan (51kg), Yashwardhan Singh (63.5kg) and Priyanshu (71kg) further extended India's winning run with split decision verdicts.

Meanwhile, Sumit (67kg) and Sahil



(80kg) signed off with bronze medals after going down 0-5 against Kazakhstan's Sabyrkhan Torekhan and Kyrgyzstan's Zakirov Mukhammadaziz. The Indian youth contingent has secured 22 medals, including 12 in the women's category, at the prestigious tournament.

Later on Friday night, Lakshay Rathi (92+ kg) and the reigning junior world champi-

ons Nisha (52kg) and Akansha (70kg) will fight for a place in the final along with 10 other Indian youth boxers. On Thursday night, Dhruv Singh (80kg), Guddi (48kg) and Poonam (57kg) made their way into the last-four stage of the U-22 category.

On Saturday, Olympics-bound Preeti (54kg) and reigning Youth World Champion Vishvanath Suresh (48kg) will lead the charge for India in the U-22 semifinals along with 17 other boxers.

Muskan (75kg) and Alfiya Pathan (81kg) have received byes in their respective U-22 semi-finals. The tournament has witnessed high-voltage action with 390-plus boxers from more than 24 countries, including strong boxing nations such as China, India, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan fighting for the medals across 25 weight categories.

The Youth and U-22 categories finals will be played on Monday and Tuesday respectively.

## National Women's Hockey League: Haryana and Bengal win on Day 5

Ranchi | Agencies

Haryana and Bengal won their respective matches on Day 4 of the National Women's Hockey League 2024-25 (Phase 1), at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Astroturf Hockey Stadium here on Friday. In the opening match of the day, Haryana defeated Mizoram 2-1 to bring up their second consecutive victory. Haryana captain Neelam (28') converted a penalty corner late in the second quarter to put her team in the lead as the score read 1-0 at halftime. Vanlalrinhlui (39) scored a field goal for Mizoram to equalize and apply pressure on their opponents. However, a decisive field goal from Pinki (43') towards the end of the third quarter meant that Haryana would go on to win the match 2-1 as no further goals



were scored.

In the day's second showdown, Maharashtra defeated Bengal 2-1.

The first goal of the game came late in the second quarter through a penalty corner conversion from Aishwarya Dubey (29'). The lead didn't stay with Hockey Maharashtra for too long as Jamuna Ekka (33') converted a penalty corner for Bengal to equalize early in the third quarter.

Tanushree Dinesh Kadu (54') scored a field goal in the final quarter to put Maharashtra in the lead once again. They went on to win the game 2-1 after holding on to their lead till the end of the game.

Later in the day, Manipur Hockey will take on Odisha, while Jharkhand lock horns with Hockey Madhya Pradesh.

## T20 WC: Nitin Menon, Jayaraman Madanagopal, Javagal Srinath amongst tournament match officials

Dubai | Agencies

Umpires Nitin Menon and Jayaraman Madanagopal, along with match referee, former India fast-bowler, Javagal Srinath, are included in the 26 match officials appointed for the first round of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, starting from June 1 in the United States of America (USA) and the West Indies.

Madanagopal will be making his senior men's ICC events as an umpire during the tournament, alongside Sam Nogajski, Allahudien Paleker, Rashid Riaz and Asif Yaqoob. In all, 20 umpires and six match referees will officiate the ninth edition of the Men's T20 World Cup.

The experienced group of umpires includes Richard Illingworth, the 2023 winner of the David Shepherd Trophy for ICC Umpire of the Year at the annual

ICC Awards, as well as Kumar Dharmasena, Chris Gaffaney and Paul Reiffel, who were appointed for the final of the 2022 edition at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Australia, which England won after beating Pakistan.

The match referees' team sees the return of Ranjan Madugalle, who oversaw the 2022 Final and also features the format's most capped referee, Jeff Crowe, with 175 T20Is and Andrew Pycroft, who is one match away from 150 T20Is. The tournament will see 20 teams playing 55 matches over 28 days, across nine locations in what the ICC calls it as the biggest ICC T20 World Cup ever.

"We are pleased to announce our team of match referees and umpires for the historic ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Within the selected cohort, we have a compliment of experienced match officials and other high performing mem-



bers who have been recognized for their strong and consistent performances.

"The throughput from the pathway programme will continue to see the development and emergence of high-



quality match officials across the game. With 20 teams and 55 matches played over 28 days, this will be the biggest T20 World Cup ever and we are proud of the team we have assembled.

"We are confident that our officials will perform strongly. We wish them all the best of luck for what promises to be a very exciting tournament," said Wasim Khan, ICC General Manager - Cricket.

The tournament will be held across six venues in the West Indies and three stadiums in USA. In the Caribbean, Kensington Oval in Barbados, Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad, Providence Stadium in Guyana, Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua, Darren Sammy Cricket Ground in St Lucia and Arnos Vale Stadium, St Vincent will be the hosts'.

In the USA, Eisenhower Park in New York; Broward County in Lauderdale, Florida and Grand Prairie Stadium in Dallas, Texas, will be the venues. 20 teams will be divided into four groups of five each for the first round. Top two teams from each group will qualify for the Super eight stage. In Super eight,

teams will be split into two groups of four each.

The semi-finals will be held in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago on June 26 and 27 respectively. The final will be held in Barbados on June 29. Reserve days are in place for both semifinals and the final.

Umpires: Chris Brown, Kumar Dharmasena, Chris Gaffaney, Michael Gough, Adrian Holdstock, Richard Illingworth, Allahudien Paleker, Richard Kettleborough, Jayaraman Madanagopal, Nitin Menon, Sam Nogajski, Ahsan Raza, Rashid Riaz, Paul Reiffel, Langton Rusere, Shahid Saikat, Rodney Tucker, Alex Wharf, Joel Wilson and Asif Yaqoob.

Match referees: David Boon, Jeff Crowe, Ranjan Madugalle, Andrew Pycroft, Richie Richardson and Javagal Srinath.



# ZEENAT AMAN URGES INDUSTRY COLLEAGUES TO AVOID BRINGING WILD ANIMALS TO SETS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Veteran actress Zeenat Aman on Friday shared her distress regarding the plight of both domestic and wild animals, urging her colleagues in the film industry to avoid bringing wild animals onto sets.

Taking to Instagram, Zeenat recounted an emotional experience she had while witnessing an elderly, domestic elephant on a project's set.

The actress posted a picture of herself wearing a blue and white kurta, standing beside a table adorned with miniature elephant idols.

Her heartfelt note read, "I was brought to tears recently when I arrived on set to find an elderly, domestic elephant on the scene. She was standing on the burning asphalt, bejewelled and bedecked... and she stayed there all day as the cameras rolled. I was bound by contract to do my job, but I am absolutely guilt-ridden that such a majestic animal suffered for my job and your entertainment. The plight of animals, both domestic and wild, has always distressed me. I do not believe that any wild animal belongs in captivity, especially not an animal as perceptive, intelligent and emotional as an elephant. From the little I have learnt about this species, I know that they are highly sentient, social animals. To keep them in captivity is to willingly support cruelty."

Making a sincere appeal to her industry friends and colleagues, the 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna' fame actress said: "It is my sincere and urgent appeal to my colleagues and compatriots in the film industry to avoid bringing wild animals onto set at all costs. We are so lucky that India hosts the majority of the Asian elephant population in the world, and that this species is our National Heritage Animal. We are also blessed to have numerous organisations in India that work towards the welfare and conservation of this incredible animal. I am sharing a few resources from such organisations on my stories. I will be elated if you peruse them."

The 72-year-old actress also shared an old newspaper clip with a headline 'Calcutta Raises Over Rs 94,000 for WWF'.

The newspaper page has a message from then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Zeenat said: "My concern for wildlife is an old story - please swipe to see a snippet from 1974 - but it is only now that I am in a position to make more concerted appeals on these matters. And

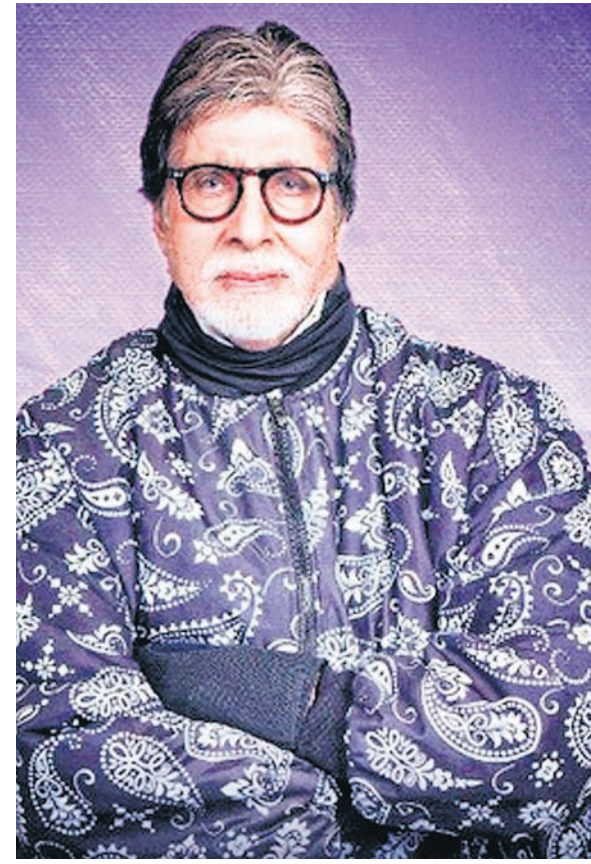


since I could not bear to pose with the beautiful ele that was subject to the chaos of our set, here is a picture of me with 'my' elephants that I have collected over the years."

"In honour of this sentiment, today I would like to hear about your favourite wildlife encounters! Please leave a comment, and remember that the operative word here is 'wild'. No comments about captive wild animals please! This includes performing monkeys, bottle-feeding tigers, talking parrots and all the rest," she added.

"Signing off with hope for a kinder world where non-human species are afforded the dignity they deserve," the note concluded.

The travel from Juhu to Marine Drive in 30 mins... amazing Coastal Road : Big B



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan reached his workplace in just 30 minutes from his residence in Juhu to Marine Drive.

The actor then showered praise, remarking on the "super constructed roads, tunnels, neat and clean construct, no traffic jams."

Big B took to his blog and wrote: "Yo! here before time for a very big change... haha... but at work and got a bit of time and BOOM!"

"Got to say the travel from Juhu home to work Marine Drive in 30 mins... amazing Coastal Road and the Tunnel emerging on Marine Drive, just before its flyover and simply amazing...! Super constructed roads, tunnel, neat clean construct... no traffic jams... and done," he added.

Ananya channels her inner black cat in fitted backless dress

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Ananya Panday looked every inch sharp as she shared a series of pictures from her latest photo shoot. Ananya shared the images on Instagram, showcasing herself in monochrome.

The actress wore a fitted backless dress paired with sparkly diamond jewellery and smokey cat-eye makeup. Her hair was left open, adding an edge to her look. In the caption, she simply included a black cat emoji.

Ananya's mother, Bhavana Pandey, dropped black heart emojis in the comment section.



Anushka shares b'day pix of her with Virat, du Plessis & Maxwell

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As she turned 36, Anushka Sharma's husband and star cricketer Virat Kohli hosted a dinner party with friends, including his RCB teammates Faf du Plessis and Glenn Maxwell, in Bengaluru.

Virat shared a photo of the menu from the restaurant Lupa on Instagram, with "Celebrating Anushka" written on it.

He captioned it: "Thank you, Manu Chandra (chef), for an unbelievable dining experience the other night. Hands down one of the best food experiences of our lives." In response, the chef expressed his pleasure, saying, "It's always a pleasure feeding the lot of you. Such passion and love for good food is a rare virtue."

Chandra also shared a picture of the group and wrote: "Shiny happy people + good food = joy. Such a lovely evening this was, made better for this lot's absolute love for the pursuit of great nosh. Happy birthday, Anushka Sharma."

Du Plessis shared a group picture and wrote: "Great night spent with good people."

"We hold you close in our hearts and memories maa" Sanjay Dutt



and shared a motley of old pictures featuring him and his mother.

The actor shared the pictures with the caption: "Miss you Maa! Even though you're not here, your presence is felt in every moment. We hold you close in our hearts and memories maa. Love you."

It was just three days before Sanjay made his debut in Hindi cinema with 'Rocky' when Nargis passed away in 1981 due to pancreatic cancer. A year after her death, Sanjay's father, Sunil Dutt, established the Nargis Dutt Memorial Cancer Foundation in her memory.

On the work front, Sanjay will next be seen in 'KD - The Devil' directed by Prem, starring Dhruva Sarja. He also has 'Welcome to the Jungle', reportedly set for release in Christmas 2024.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On the 43rd death anniversary of Nargis Dutt on Friday, actor Sanjay Dutt remembered his mother and shared that he holds her close in his heart and memories. Sanjay took to Instagram on Friday morning



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Sunny Deol has opened up on the recognition the Deols are finally getting and talked about the love and appreciation their family has been receiving from the audience.

Following their blockbuster year on the big screen, the Deols are basking in the unprecedented love and cheers from their fans.

Reflecting on the affection their family has been receiving, Sunny said: "Since the 1960s, my father has been here, and we have been in that same limelight. And then suddenly Drisha (Sunny's daughter-in-law) came home, and then 'Gadar 2' was released, before which Papa's film was released. I could not figure out what was happening after the release of 'Gadar 2'."

"I was crying and laughing on the inside because I could not believe what was happening. It felt like, 'Where did God manifest himself from?' After 'Animal' was released, all records were broken. And this is all because of the audience's love and support," he said, leaving Bobby emotional.

Dharmendra last featured in the 2023 romantic comedy 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani', starring Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt in the lead.

Bobby also won the hearts of viewers with his character Abrar in the Ranbir Kapoor-starrer action drama 'Animal'.

IT FELT LIKE, 'WHERE DID GOD MANIFEST HIMSELF FROM?' : SUNNY DEOL

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Suhana Khan