



BJP to organise 'dahi handi' in Worli, Aaditya Thackeray's

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## SEAT-SHARING FORMULA WILL NOT BE EASY FOR NDA AND INDIA IN MAHARASHTRA



AV Team

BJP poached other political party leaders to form government in Maharashtra and on the other hand 2019, Shiv Sena also switched sides and formed a government with Congress and NCP by sabotaging BJP. In the past one year, the political landscape in Maharashtra has experienced an enormous uncertainty. Seat sharing formula will be really challenging for both the alliances in coming time.

INDIA is having its first nationwide meeting in Maharashtra and a state-wise seat-sharing formula could be discussed during the meeting. A logo of the alliance would also be unveiled on August 31. A Senior leader from the Opposition said "The logo will reflect the country and its unity, and those things that unify the country," adding that few more political parties may also join the meeting. The NDA and the INDIA bloc are projected to get 43 per cent and 41 per cent of vote share respectively, the recent survey found.

Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Mallickarjun Kharge will be attending the meeting scheduled for August 31 and September 1. Unveiling of INDIA alliance logo, formation of coordination committee, appointment of conveners, a discussion on the possible seat-sharing formula between the INDIA constituents for the general elections, strategies for the general elections and several others are on the agenda of the Opposition INDIA alliance. The Shiv Sena (UBT) on Monday also released the first video teaser of the Opposition IN-

DIA alliance meeting in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, matching the dates of Opposition INDIA front's third meeting in Mumbai, the ruling grand alliance of BJP, Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar group in the state will be holding a meeting at Worli in south Mumbai to discuss Lok Sabha polls. Ajit Pawar group NCP's state president Sunil Tatkare told media "We have been planning this meeting for many days now. Senior leaders of all the three parties will be meeting in Mumbai,"

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## Seat-sharing formula will not be easy for NDA and INDIA in Maharashtra

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Indian politics is more ideological than many believe, but most parties have proved to be masters of practical politics in the quest of power. Many alliances have been forged as quickly as they have fallen apart. In the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and Maharashtra assembly polls, the combined vote share of the undivided Shiv Sena and BJP was more than 45 per cent, giving them a clear edge over Congress and its allies. However, after the 2019 assembly elections, the alliance of Congress, NCP, and Shiv Sena tilted the reckoning towards MVA, achieving almost 50 per cent vote share.

BJP has already announced that it aims to gain more than 41 seats in Maharashtra. But it will have to convince both Shinde's Sena as well as

Ajit's NCP to give it a major share of seats for contesting the general elections. The task will be cut out as BJP leaders in the past stoked a controversy when they had declared that it would be giving Sena a share only in the assembly seats. BJP poached other political party leaders to form a government in Maharashtra to take revenge against the sabotage of Uddhav Shiv Sena and on the other hand 2019, Shiv Sena also switched sides and formed a government with Congress and NCP by sabotaging BJP. In the past one year, the political landscape in Maharashtra has experienced enormous uncertainty. Seat sharing formula will be really challenging for both the alliances in the coming time.

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# Editoritis

## Seat-sharing formula will not be easy for NDA and INDIA in Maharashtra

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INDIA is having its first nationwide meeting in Maharashtra and a state-wise seat-sharing formula could be discussed during the meeting. A logo of the alliance would also be unveiled on August 31. A Senior leader from the Opposition said "The logo will reflect the country and its unity, and those things that unify the country," adding that few more political parties may also join the meeting. The NDA and the INDIA bloc are projected to get 43 per cent and 41 per cent of vote share respectively, the recent survey found.

Meanwhile, tomorrow Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge will be attending the meeting. Unveiling of the INDIA alliance logo, formation of coordination committee, appointment of convenors, a discussion on the possible seat-sharing formula between the INDIA constituents for the general elections, strategies for the general elections and several others are on the agenda of the Opposition INDIA alliance. The Shiv Sena (UBT) also released the first video teaser of the Opposition INDIA alliance meeting in Mumbai.

Matching the dates of Opposition INDIA front's third meeting in Mumbai, the ruling grand alliance of BJP, Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar group in the state will be holding a meeting at Worli in south Mumbai to discuss Lok Sabha polls. After the 2022 Maharashtra political crisis, Eknath Shinde along with 40 MLAs formed a government with BJP. Eknath Shinde became the new chief minister. After the 2023 Maharashtra political crisis, Ajit Pawar faction of Nationalist Congress Party also joined the government. The BJP-Shiv Sena-led alliance government in Maharashtra has gained strength after the entry of Ajit Pawar-led NCP faction, but it is likely that the seat-sharing exercise for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls will be much more difficult for the BJP which aims to contest most of the 48 seats in the state. Eknath Shinde's rebellion in June last year led to the downfall of Maha Vikas Aghadi government, which comprised the Shiv Sena, Congress, and the NCP. Apart from this, Sharad Pawar's nephew Ajit joined hands with the Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis government, triggering a split in the

NCP.

Presently, the BJP and its alliance partners -- Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar's NCP--are short of 41 seats that the BJP had won in alliance with Shiv Sena in 2019. As per the survey, the NDA is projected to get a 40 per cent vote share with 20 seats, while the INDIA bloc is expected to get 45 per cent vote share and 28 seats. The MVA alliance parties are part of the INDIA bloc.

Considering the aggressive approach of Ajit, convincing the NCP faction led by him to settle for something less than what is due will be tough. Both Shinde and Ajit do not have a fallback option if BJP forces its demand for the maximum share of the 48 seats. "BJP has always dominated regional parties. It will not be so easy for Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar to go for a hard bargain as their fallback options are limited now. BJP will press for all 25 seats it contested in 2019 and will tell the Shinde and Pawar factions to divide amongst themselves the remaining seats. Notably, the survey shows that if Lok Sabha elections were to happen today, the BJP would secure only 15 seats, which is 9 less than its previous tally. "Yet, the biggest problem the BJP will face is to keep both Shinde and Pawar happy in the seat sharing for Lok Sabha polls. The BJP will promise its partners that they will be compensated in the assembly elections. And, this seat sharing will depend on the outcome of the Lok Sabha results. In contrast, Congress could improve its seat count to 10, a substantial increase from its single seat in 2019. Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar would contribute 18 seats to the INDIA bloc tally. Numbers favour MVA since 2019

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Editor

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Vaidehi has received several Awards like Icongokarmavir chakra, Bedal Powell scout and guide awards 2021- best journalist, Newspaper Association of India award- best journalist. She received lot of awards for her contribution towards journalism.

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## Letters to the Editor

### Somyaan vs Chandrayaan

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) earlier used to call Chandrayaan as a Somyaan. Chandrayaan 1 mission approval was given to ISRO in 1999 by Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji. It was on the advice of Atal Bihari Vajpayee that the name was changed because, the Chandrama word is a more common word than the Soma word and Chanda or Chandrama word is prevalent in the Hindi language in India today, that is why Indian citizens will be able to connect. In 2003, Atal ji announced Chandrayaan 1, and in 2008 was successfully inserted into the Lunar Orbit. And after success of the Chandrayaan- 3 mission on August 23, 2023 India became the fourth country to land on the moon. Additionally, it was the first country to successfully land near the south pole of the moon.

Md Mofidul Ali

### Good manners are vital!

The news was recently read that, a 10-year-old boy made mobile phone call to the police about a bomb at the airport. When the police searched, it was found that the boy was living in Satara. He made this call while playing a game on Pubg. Parents need to keep an eye on children when they are handling mobile phones. Because the side effects of mobile phones are likely to affect children. Children are like wet cement, good and bad things are immediately imprinted on their mind. Children behave as parents behave in the family, that is why, the behaviour of the elders in family should be decent. Even though the children are naive, their misbehavior troubles others in the society. For this reason, it is important that parents must teach good manners and discipline to children at an early age. Today's children are the backbone of the country's future.

Sudhir Kangutkar

### A Serious Swing at School Reform

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) has taken a big swing at education reform, and though its recommendations are not binding, they are likely to have a far-reaching impact on India's school education.

Education reform is a national priority for an India that hopes to make the most of its demographic bulge by educating its young people well, without unduly burdening or pigeonholing them. NCF represents a serious attempt at that. At the same time, the push for reforming examinations should be geared towards making them more insightful and moving students away from rote learning, not merely making them easier.

Mohammad Taukir

### Communal Bias Shameful

The incident where a teacher is encouraged her students to beat up their Muslim classmate in Uttar Pradesh is seen sowing the seeds of communal bias and violence in the impressionable minds of her students is a reflection of a social situation that is, sadly, contrary to the national motto of 'unity in diversity'. Particularly perturbing for two reasons. One, a teacher articulated a reprehensible thought, stemming from a deeply entrenched religious divide. Two, her innocent eight-year-old students were easily taken in by her communal remark.

That Islamophobia is becoming the elephant in the classroom is evident from the increasing frequency of such cases being reported. In this atmosphere of political polarisation, educational institutes should set an example by preaching and practising communal harmony. Otherwise, the social fabric of our country would be in danger of becoming tattered.

Jahangeer Shaikh

# Rakhi delights- for one missing out a sister's feelings

The bonding between a brother and a sister is simply unique and is beyond description in words. The relationship between siblings is extraordinary and is given importance in every part of the world. However, when it comes to India, the relationship becomes all the more important as there is a festival called "Raksha Bandhan" dedicated to sibling love. This is a special Hindu festival which is celebrated in India and countries like Nepal to symbolize the love between a brother and a sister. The occasion of Raksha Bandhan is celebrated on the full moon day of the Hindu luni-solar calendar in the month of Shrawana which typically falls in the August month of Gregorian calendar.

Rakhi is basically a sacred thread of protection embellished with the love and affection of a sister for her brother. This day is also known as Raksha Bandhan and celebrated on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Shrawana in India. This frail thread of Rakhi is considered as stronger than iron chains as it binds the most beautiful relationship in an inseparable bond of love and trust. Rakhi festival also has a social significance because it underlines the notion that everybody should live in harmonious coexistence with each other.

The festival of Raksha Bandhan is entirely dedicated to the love and affection shared between a brother and a sister. On this day, sisters pray for the long life of their brothers and ask God to bless them with his blessings. Brothers, in turn, give them enticing rakhi gifts and promise to care for life long. This custom has been there since time immemorial. Various other beliefs are associated



HAPPY  
Raksha Bandhan

with Rakhi and therefore, people follow certain customs and traditions to celebrate this festival.

The festival of Rakhi has taken a broader significance worldwide as it spreads harmony and brings together the family members under one roof. Rakhi stands for the love between brothers and sisters, the bond of love that they have shared since their childhood. This festival holds immense significance in India. The custom of celebrating Raksha Bandhan started in the ancestral period and even today people consider it a must to express their affection in a traditional manner. Rakhi has strengthened the bond of love between brothers and sisters.

The festival of Raksha Bandhan is observed as a symbol of duty between brothers and sisters. The occasion is meant to celebrate any type of brother-sister relationship between men and women who may not be biologically related.

On this day, a sister ties a

Rakhi around the wrist of her brother in order to pray for his prosperity, health and well-being. The brother in return offers gifts and promises to protect his sister from any harm and under every circumstance. The festival is also celebrated between brother-sisters belonging to distant family members, relatives or cousins.

We have to place Raksha Bandhan in this larger context to realise that it is not just a simple function of tying a love band, applying a tilak on your brother's forehead, offering him sweets and accepting his gifts. The rakhi is not a bond of love; it is a knot of affection and extending the brotherly relationship in the best way possible.

- C.K. Subramaniam

Columnist

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**No postal letters will be entertained**  
(The views expressed are authors' own.)

City

## BJP to organise 'dahi handi' in Worli, Aaditya Thackeray's constituency



The BJP will organise a 'dahi handi' celebration on Krishna Janmashtami in Worli which happens to be Shiv Sena (UBT) youth leader and MLA Aaditya Thackeray's constituency.

Mumbai BJP president Ashish Shelar on Monday said, "It was Devendra Fadnavis and BJP which fought the battle in the court to restore the dahi handi

festival. It helped hundreds of enthusiasts govindas (youths) who participate in this annual celebration."

Shelar said, "This year, we will organise dahi handi at Worli. When BJP stood by these govindas (participants), Thackeray and others ridiculed us. During his tenure as CM, Maha Vikas Aghadi had done nothing to save Hindu festivals."

## Fear Godhra-like incident during Ram Temple inauguration, BJP can do anything to win 2024 polls: Sanjay Raut



Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut Tuesday said that there is fear in the minds of people that a Godhra-like incident can take place at the time of Ram Mandir inauguration in Ayodhya,

which is scheduled to be held before the 2024 general elections.

"There is fear in people's and several political leaders' minds that the political party (BJP) that can stage the drama of surgical strike to win elections... it can do anything,

## Interior decorator booked for duping seven of Rs one crore

The Dindoshi police have booked a man, who is into interior decoration business, for allegedly duping seven people to the tune of Rs 1.02 crore. The accused person allegedly accepted money in advance from the complainant and six other victims under the pretext of getting their interior decoration and other house-related utility works done. However, the accused neither did their work, nor returned them their money,

thus defrauding them. No arrest has been made yet. The accused is suspected to have duped more people.

The accused has been identified as Samar Shah, alias Irfan Mehmood. The accused had allegedly operated from an office in the Express Zone on Western Express Highway, Malad (East). Police have booked Mehmood on the complaint of Nilesh Mahamunkar, (43), a resident of Goregaon (East).

Commenting on Thackeray's response to space mission, Shelar asked, "Uddhav ji, why were you reminded of felicitating the Chandrayaan-3 mission only after Pakistan extended its greetings? Why didn't you congratulate the scientists before that? All this while what was it that was bothering you so much? Was there something that India earned, the scientists conquered, the world witnessed but you were not quite satisfied with?"

"INDIA's meeting is more about ensuring family interests rather than national interests," Mumbai BJP chief opined. Hypothetically, he added, "even if we consider that this alliance comes to power, these people will take their respective parties, the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha all for a ride."

As former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik alleged that the 2019 Pulwama attack didn't actually take place but it was staged, similar things are also being said about the Godhra incident (in 2002), that it was engineered," said Raut in Mumbai.

## Farmers protest in Mantralaya building; NCP leader Rohit Pawar says govt should listen to their demands



Farmers belonging to the Wardha region were seen protesting in the Mantralaya against the Maharashtra government, demanding proper compensation for their land.

They jumped on the protective net placed on the first floor of the Mantralaya building in Mumbai.

Commenting on the same NCP leader Rohit Pawar said,

"If the government had heard the voices of the farmers before they jumped (on the protective net in Mantralaya), then such a thing would not have happened today. The government should hear the problems being faced by the farmers despite the fact that doing such a protest in Mantralaya is not right. The drought situation in Maharashtra is dangerous..."

## 28 transactions but not a single SMS alert; Mumbai senior citizen loses Rs 6.45 lakh to KYC cyber fraud

A 64-year-old man from Mumbai's Vikhroli area lost Rs 6.45 lakh in a KYC (know your customer) cyber fraud. The police probe indicates that the scamster managed to pull off the fraud in a very sophisticated manner and carried out 28 fraudulent transactions one after another but the account holder did not receive

even a single SMS alert.

The complainant, an elderly person, has an account in the Thane branch of a private bank. According to the police, Monday afternoon he received a call from a mobile number. The caller identified himself as an executive from the private bank where the complainant has his bank account.

## Seat-sharing formula will not be easy for NDA and INDIA in Maharashtra

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After 2022 Maharashtra political crisis, Eknath Shinde along with 40 MLAs formed government with BJP. Eknath Shinde became the new chief minister. After 2023 Maharashtra political crisis, Ajit Pawar faction of Nationalist Congress Party also joined the government. The BJP-Shiv Sena-led alliance government in Maharashtra has gained strength after the entry of Ajit Pawar-led NCP faction, but it is likely that the seat-sharing exercise for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls will be much more difficult for the BJP which aims to contest most of the 48 seats in the state.

BJP has already announced that it aims to gain more than 41 seats in Maharashtra. But it will have to convince both Shinde's Sena as well as Ajit's NCP to give it a major share of seats for contesting the general elections.

The task will be cut out as BJP leaders in the past stoked a controversy when they had declared that it would be giving Sena a share only in the assembly seats.

INC MP Kumar Ketkar told Afternoon Voice, "All anti-modi parties are coming together as we have an agenda of 'Modi Hatao' as we are trying to make sure that all opposition parties are coming together and fight unitedly for Lok Sabha Polls 2024".

INC LOP (Maharashtra state Assembly) Vijay Waddetiwar said, "Alliance of INDIA is trying for the new governance as we are trying to save country from the Modi government as it is trying to create dictatorship in the country and save citizens of the country our Alliance is formed".

AITC MP Sushmita Dev said, "Our party's agenda is leaders who have strong hold in their constituency should work freely and there won't be any barrier

from the party as supporting all the members of our party. This alliance will try its best to win in the upcoming

UBT Shiv Sena MLA Sunil Shinde said, "Alliance of INDIA is going strong and every party is trying their best that proper seats sharing is done to win the upcoming polls as it was seen earlier that approximately 18 seats were won by our party and this alliance should try our party to win maximum seats which has strong hold in their constituency against Modi government".

CPI leader Prakash Reddy said, "The agenda of this meeting will be to discuss on all the serious issues like Manipur, inflation, employment and other issues which are not heard by the Modi government. This meet is to get inputs from all the leaders who are a part of this alliance and also there is a strong possibility of new parties joining the alliance".

## Nation

### Fake currency case: Nepal national sentence to 7 years of imprisonment by special court of NIA in Bihar



and fine also awarded under sections 489B and 489C of IPC and 16, 18, 20 of UA(P) Act. "The sentences will run concurrently," NIA said.

He is the second accused to be convicted in the case relating to the seizure of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) in Bihar's East Champaran. The high-quality FICN, in the denomination of Rs 500 with a total face value of Rs 25,43,000, was seized on September 30, 2015. On that day, the other convicted accused, Mohd. Ali Akhtar Ansari had come to M/s Gati Kintetsu Express Private Limited, Raxaul, to take delivery of the fake currency and was arrested. ANI

A special court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Patna has sentenced key accused in Bihar's 'fake Indian currency notes' case to seven years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) and fined in

two separate cases, officials said on Tuesday. Abi Mohammad Ansari, hailing from Nepal's Bara district, has been convicted and awarded 7 years RI and Rs 5000 under Section 120B of IPC, with a similar quantum of punishment

### Assam Floods: Situation deteriorating, Over 1.91 lakh people affected in 17 districts



Pradesh, the water levels of the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries are rising up and crossed the danger level mark at many places in the state.

The Central Water Commission (CWC) report stated that the water level of the Brahmaputra river is flowing above the danger level mark at Dibrugarh, Neamatighat in Jorhat district, Tezpur in Sonitpur district, Dhubri while the water level of Subansiri river has crossed the danger level mark at Badatighat in Lakhimpur district, Dikhou and Disang river in Sivasagar, Puthimari river at NH Road Crossing in Kamrup district, Pagladiya river at NH Road Crossing in Nalbari district and Beki river at Road Bridge in Barpeta district. ANI

The situation in Assam has deteriorated as nearly 1.91 lakh people in 17 districts were affected by the current wave of floods. According to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), nearly 47,400 people have been affected in Lakhimpur district, 41,000 in Dhemajai district, 28,000 in Gola-

ghat district, 21,500 in Sivasagar district, and 17,800 in Sonitpur district.

In the last 24 hours, one person died after drowning in flood waters in the Sivasagar district taking the death toll to 15 in the state this year so far. Following torrential rainfall in Assam and the neighbouring state Arunachal

### Health Dept: Dengue cases crosses 600 mark in Uttarakhand, maximum cases in Dehradun

After nature's havoc in Uttarakhand, dengue cases are now creating fear among the people as the state has crossed six hundred cases of the mosquito-borne viral disease. According to the information received from the Health Department, Dehradun has the maximum number of four-hundred and eighteen

(418) dengue patients while the toll in the entire state stands at six hundred (600).

Haridwar, Udham Singh Nagar and Dehradun districts of the state are the most affected by dengue. In the aftermath of recent heavy monsoon floods that inundated parts of Uttarakhand, health officials are grappling with a significant surge in

dengue cases. Dengue (breakbone fever) is a viral infection that spreads from mosquitoes to people.

Waterlogging in areas due to incessant rains has caused a preferable environment for Aedes mosquitoes to breed. These mosquitoes are responsible for transmitting dengue, chikungunya, and Zika viruses. ANI

### Delhi HC grants bail to Pooja Singh, close aide of jailed Leena Maria Paul in Rs 200 cr PMLA case



The Delhi High Court on Tuesday granted bail to Pooja Singh, said to be a close aide of jailed Leena Maria Paul, wife of conman Sukesh Chandrashekar, in the Rs 200 crore money laundering case. The Bench of Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma allowed her bail plea on a personal bail bond of Rs 50,000 and a like amount surety. Earlier her bail plea was dismissed by the trial Court.

Advocate Satish Pandey appeared for Pooja Singh earlier submitted that Trial Court while rejecting the bail plea had failed to consider that petitioner is one of the employee of said 'Nail Art-

istry' run by the accused Leena Maria Palouse & she was bound to follow the instructions of her boss.

Petitioner Pooja Singh claimed she was doing the alleged acts on instructions of her boss understanding the same as a part of her service without knowing about the crime-racket of the alleged main accused. However, the truth was that she never supplied the alleged articles to the accused in Jail and the investigating Agency have not found any incriminating evidence to the effect of supply the said alleged articles in the jail by the petitioner to the main accused. ANI

### SC refers Vikas Yadav's plea for October 3 in Nitish Katara murder case



The Supreme Court on Tuesday referred Vikas Yadav's plea seeking consideration for remission to a three-judge bench and listed the matter for October 3 for further hearing. A bench of justices Aniruddha Bose and Sanjay Kumar adjourned the matter for October 3 for further hearing on the plea.

Vikas Yadav, son of former parliamentarian DP Yadav, challenged the bar on the consideration of his remission until he completed 25 years in jail for killing business executive Nitish Katara in 2002. Vikas Yadav

is serving life imprisonment in the case. The lawyer of deceased Nitish Katara's mother, Nilam Katara raised objection on the maintainability of the petition by Vikas Yadav.

Vikas Yadav and his cousin Vishal are serving life imprisonment in the Nitish Katara murder case. According to the prosecution, Vikas Yadav and Vishal Yadav killed Katara on the night of Feb 17, 2002, after abducting him from a marriage party in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad as they were opposed to his friendship with their sister Bharti. ANI

World

## G20 Summit: US President will “reaffirm US commitment to the G20” as the premier forum of economic cooperation globally, discuss Russia-Ukraine war: White House



US President Joe Biden will “reaffirm US commitment to the G20” as the premier forum of economic cooperation globally and will also speak about a range of issues, including the social effects of Russia’s war in Ukraine, the

White House said on Tuesday. White House press secretary, Karine Jean Pierre made the remarks during a media briefing.

Announcing the President’s schedule, Pierre said that Biden “will travel to Hanoi, Vietnam, on September 10 following his

participation in the G20 Summit in New Delhi.” Responding to a question on topline goals President Biden hopes to accomplish at G20, the White House press secretary said, “President Biden will reaffirm the US commitment to the G20 as the premier forum of economic cooperation globally.” She also said that President Biden will “discuss a range of joint efforts to tackle global issues, from the clean energy transition and combating climate change to mitigating the economic and social impacts of Russia’s war in Ukraine, to increasing the capacity of the multilateral development banks to better fight poverty and take on the significant transnational challenges that are afflicting countries across the world.” ANI

## Iran: Ambassador has urged international community to provide for Afghan refugees

Iranian Ambassador to Afghanistan Hassan Kazemi Qomi strongly called upon the international community for assistance intended for Afghan refugees in Iran, reported Khaama Press. During a conversation with the United Nations representative Stefan Prieser, Qomi highlighted Iran’s commitment to the cause and stressed the necessity for constructive diplomatic cooperation and a well-defined strategy to gather worldwide backing for Afghan refugees, according to Khaama Press.

Taking to the social media platform ‘X’, Qomi tweeted, “The development of diplomacy with the United Nations in the framework of the national development plan and the definition



of a specific road map to attract international support for Afghan refugees is one of the important issues pursued by Iran.” Moreover, Qomi also disclosed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United Nations Pop-

ulation Fund to train Afghans in healthcare sector, reported Khaama Press. Qomi added that Sathya Doraiswamy, UNFPA Representative in Iran, and Abolfazl Bagherifard, Deputy Minister for Education at the Health Ministry, signed the memorandum. ANI

## California: State assembly passes anti-caste discrimination bill



An anti-caste discrimination bill has been passed by the California State Assembly that seeks to combat caste discrimination and strengthen protections for marginalised communities across the state. The bill was passed by the Assembly on Monday. It now heads to Governor Gavin Newsom for his signature to make it into law, making California the first US state to add caste as a protected category in its anti-discrimination laws. The bill passed by the California Assembly seeks to combat caste discrimination

and strengthen protections for marginalised communities across the state. It was first introduced by State Senator Aisha Wahab and was supported by several caste equity civil rights activists and organizations from across the country. Thank you to all the Assembly members who voted in support of SB 403 today. We are protecting people from a long-standing form of discrimination with SB 403, Wahab said in a tweet. A coalition of Hindus of North America (CoHNA) described it as a black day in California history. PTI

## Pakistan: Video has gone viral on social media of Teenage boy tied up, tortured for stealing flour

A merciless shopkeeper named Sadiq is accused of torturing a teenage kid on suspicion of stealing flour. The child was seen on a video being thrashed by Sadiq while being tied to a pole, ARY News reported. The event took place in the Bora Chowk neighbourhood of Mian Channu.



People were outraged by the viral video and criticized the local authorities for doing nothing about the torture incident. A squad from the City police station arrived on the scene later and quickly took the accused shopkeeper into custody, as reported by ARY News.

In June, a video showing a man in Punjab’s Chishtian city hanging his cousin upside-down as punishment for allegedly steal-

ing gold rings circulated on social media. It was found that the man reportedly tortured his relative for stealing gold jewellery. Both the accused and the citizen, who is undergoing torture, can be seen in the footage.

Despite the fact that the video became viral on social media, authorities did nothing to prosecute the suspect. According to reports, the incident happened close to the City A Division police station, ARY News reported ANI

## Pakistan: Imran Khan’s party demands his immediate release from jail in Toshakhana corruption case

Imran’s Khan party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf on Tuesday demanded the immediate release of the jailed prime minister following the suspension of his three-year sentence in the Toshakhana corruption case by the Islamabad High Court. Khan



is currently in Attock Jail in Punjab province following his arrest from his Lahore home earlier this

month. A division bench comprising Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri suspended the 70-year-old PTI chief’s three-year sentence in the Toshakhana case and ordered his release from jail. PTI

# Raksha Bandhan: Festival of Protection and Love!

Rakhi is the Himalaya of ideals and the ladder of resolutions



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India has many religious-cultural traditions and festivals; every festival here has its own purpose and colour, which brings different religions, societies and people closer to one another. Raksha-Bandhan also is one such unique cultural festival. The thread of Rakhi is not just a thread of sacred love and protection of a sister, but it is an infallible means of religious, social and familial unity and solidarity. The Rakhi is a festival of providing equality and security to women, because if you look closely, women folk are now touching miraculous heights with their amazing work style in areas full of difficulties and challenges. Be it the army, flying fighter jets, or the wrestling arena, everywhere the whole world welcomes them with thunderous applause. The inspiration to liberate women from bondage, oppression and neglect is woven in the threads of Rakhi. Rakshabandhan is that invaluable bond of affection, which cannot be repaid even by giving everything, let alone money. This festival is a symbol of unbreakable love between brother and sister, and it is an assurance of protection to the woman who has been constantly struggling for security and self-esteem. Through Rakhi, sisters pray for the well-being of their brothers, while brothers take care of their sisters throughout their lives, whether it is a blood relation, or a non-kin sister! Surely, the festival of Rakhi, associated with women's identity and existence, is a monument of ideals and a step of resolutions.

Raksha Bandhan is a festival of

threads of love, which not only in every house-hold, but in the society and the nation, infuses new energy in human relationships. It infuses excitement and enthusiasm among the sisters, they are eager to tie rakhi on the hands of their beloved brothers. This festival, which is very decent and pure, is centuries old - till now it continues to be a unique festival focused on women's respect and safety. Apart from real brothers and sisters, many emotional relationships are also tied to this festival, which are beyond the boundaries of religion, caste and country. This festival is a festival of strengthening relationships with the bond of intimacy and affection. Raksha Bandhan is the bond of human emotions even amongst non-kinds. It is a bond of love, sacrifice and duty. Once tied in this bond, it is very difficult to break it. There is so much power in these threads, which is not even in iron chains.

To understand this unprecedented festival of Rakhi, it is very important to understand its historical context; otherwise the color of this festival will remain incomplete. This festival is described in the Bhavishya Purana that when the war started between the gods and the demons, then the demons started dominating. Lord Indra got scared and went to Sage Brihaspati. Indra's wife Indrani was sitting there listening to the conversation. She purified the silk thread with the power of mantras and tied it on her husband's hand after which Indra was victorious. There are many historical contexts of this festival as well. When the Rajputs used to go to fight, women used to apply Kumkum Tilak on their forehead, as well as tie Rakhi in their hands.

During the Mughal period, when the Mughal emperor Humayun went to attack Chittor, Rana Sanga's widow Karmavati took a promise of protection by sending a rakhi to Humayun. Accepting this, Humayun removed the thought of attacking Chittor from his heart and in spite of being a Muslim, in order to protect Chittor, he protected

Karmavati and Mewar state by fighting on behalf of Mewar against Bahadur Shah. Similarly, Alexander's wife tied a rakhi to her husband's Hindu enemy Puru and made him her brother-in-law and took a vow not to kill Alexander during the war. Puru gave life to Sikandar, honouring Rakhi tied in his hand during the war and the promise given to his sister. Alexander also returned Porus's kingdom through keeping the dignity of the defense formula, and behaving like a warrior.

Rakhi is a thread of love, which gives this festival a cosmic significance, this thread further strengthens the brother-sister relationship, which not only gives the message of love and belonging, but also gives a sense of duties. Seeing the thread of Rakhi, every brother realizes his duties towards his sister. The festival of Rakhi is celebrated on the last day of the month of Sawan. It is also mentioned in the Mahabharata that when the eldest Pandava Yudhishtira asked Lord Krishna how he could overcome all the difficulties, then Lord Krishna advised him to celebrate the festival of Rakhi to protect him and his army. He used to say that this silk thread of Rakhi has the power with which you can get rid of every objection.

There is another story of Shri Krishna and Draupadi related to Raksha Bandhan in Mahabharata itself. When Shri Krishna killed Shishupala with his Sudarshan Chakra, his index finger got hurt. At that time Draupadi tore her sari and tied a bandage on his finger. It was the full moon day of the month of Shravan. Shri Krishna later repaid this favour by increasing her saree at the time of tearing. In this way, with the two threads of Rakhi, there has been a deep connection not only between brother and sister, but also with the entire human sensibilities.

The festival of Rakhi was earlier more important in North India. Today it is celebrated with great enthusiasm all over India. In Maharashtra, it is celebrated as Narali Purnima. People

offer coconuts to Varuna Raja in the sea. The three eyes of the coconut are considered to be the three eyes of Lord Shiva. In South India, it is known as Avani Avittam. In Skandha Purana, Padmapurana and Shrimad Bhagwat, the context of Raksha Bandhan is found in the story called Vamanavata. The story goes something like this- When Danvendra Raja Bali tried to snatch away the kingdom of heaven by completing 100 yagyas, then there was panic among the deities like Indra and they all came to pray to Lord Vishnu. Then Lord Vamana disguised himself as a Brahmin and went to King Bali to beg for alms. Even after the refusal of his Guru, Bali donated three steps of land. God measured the entire sky, underworld and earth in three steps and sent King Bali to the abyss. In this way, because of Lord Vishnu shattering the pride of King Bali, this festival is also famous as Balev.

These popular stories about Rakhi force us to think that how great were those people with principles and human sensibilities, under whose supervision a whole tradition took birth and continues unabated till date. Today the tradition may be continuing, but that depth of feeling and love is not visible in it. Now he has got the mite of performance. Instead of celebrating the festival with simplicity, the sisters are more concerned about their decorations and in the greed of getting something from the brother on the pretext of Rakhi. Instead of taking a pledge to protect her and remove the crisis, the brother also lightens his pocket, and considers Itishree. Now the tide of brother-sister love is not visible in Rakhi, which might have once been there. That's why on this auspicious festival of Rakhi, brothers are expected to take an oath to protect and respect not only their sister, but the entire women folk. Only then this festival of Rakhi will become meaningful and the love between brother and sister will remain eternal!

# Entertainment



## Actress Jennifer Aniston opens up about plans if she was not an actor

American actress and producer Jennifer Aniston revealed a hobby of hers that could have developed into a job if she hadn't been an actor, People reported. Jennifer is passionate about interior design and would pursue it if she weren't an actor.

People reported citing an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Aniston tells the outlet. "I love putting homes together and creating spaces. I can walk into a house and see what it needs. And it's a fun process. Some people dread it. It can break up relationships. I thrive during that process." ANI

## Actor Shahid Kapoor drops new pictures on social media, exudes Punjabi Munda vibes

Shahid Kapoor on Tuesday exuded 'Punjabi Munda' vibes as he donned a turban in his latest pictures. Taking to Instagram, Shahid shared a string of pictures which he captioned, "Dad always says ghar pe Shaadi hogi to pag paega na."

In the first picture, the 'Jab We Met' actor can be seen sitting with his hand on his bicep and a helper tying the turban for him. Shahid wore a black kurta paired with an off-white turban. In one of the pictures, he can be seen posing with his father and veteran actor Pankaj Kapur as both of them donned off-white turbans. Soon after the 'Kabir Singh' actor shared the pictures, his fans flooded the comment section with red hearts and fire emoticons. ANI



## Pop star Selena Gomez responds to over claims of 'Single Soon' says, "Couldn't be more false"

Pop sensation Selena Gomez is dispelling rumours that the song is about her ex-boyfriend The Weeknd, after releasing her first single 'Single Soon,' People reported. The singer responded to a HollywoodLife Instagram post regarding the rumours.

In the post featuring Gomez with the "Blinding Lights" hitmaker at the 2017 Met Gala, the publication wrote, "...fans believe that ['Single Soon'] is about her romance with #The Weeknd. What do you think?" Gomez responded in the comments section. "Couldn't be more false," the pop singer responded, putting an end to the rumour.

Despite the fact that their romance ended nearly six years ago, some fans assumed that there were parallels to it in the song's lyrics. "Maybe I'll just disappear / I don't wanna see a tear / And the weekend's almost here," she sings early in the track, though any potential connection to him was emphatically disputed by the performer. ANI