

absolute india

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

NATION >02
Amid infighting in Bengal BJP, Nadda calls Dilip Ghosh ...



HOLLYWOOD > 06
Are Kim and Kanye ready to get back together?...



SPORTS > 07
From Accidental weightlifter to Olympic medallist...



Saikhom Mirabai Chanu wins 1st medal, (as an Indian) at Tokyo Olympics

SILVER WEIGHTLIFTER

- Mirabai, ranked third in the world, had a total lift of 202kg with 87kg in snatch and 115kg in clean and jerk. This is India's second medal in the sport after Karnam Malleswari's bronze in the 69kg category at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.
- Hou Zhihui of China won the gold medal, setting a new Olympic record of 210kg. She set the record too in snatch with 94kg and 116kg in clean and jerk. Indonesia's Windy Cantika Aisah took home the silver medal with a total lift of 194 kg.
- With the silver at the Olympics, Mirabai has now won medals in the Commonwealth Games, Asian Championships and World Championships.



after a one-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the lead up to the Olympics, Mirabai had set a new world record in clean and jerk (119kg) in a bronze-medal show of 205kg, at the Asian Championships in Tashkent in April this year. In the process, Mirabai has now completed a redemption path which started from the disappointment at the 2016 Rio Olympics. Her debut at the Olympics in the 48kg category was a horror show, unable to lift in all three attempts of clean and jerk. The effect was so hard that Mirabai had to take the help of a sports psychologist to get over the happenings of Rio. Five years from Rio, toughened up mentally and richer in experience, Mirabai completed the turnaround at Tokyo by becoming the second Indian woman and fifth individual overall to win a silver medal at the Olympics.

- Mirabai started off with a lift of 84kg in her first attempt at snatch. She went better in her second attempt, lifting 87kg. In the final attempt, she couldn't lift 89kg. But her second attempt, also her personal best in snatch, was good enough to be placed second, behind Zhihui.
- Zhihui, the overwhelming favourite in the event, lifted 88kg in the first attempt followed by an Olympic record of 92kg. She bettered her own mark with 94kg in the final attempt of snatch.
- In clean and jerk, Mirabai had a confident lift of 110kg in the first attempt and 115kg in the second attempt. Though she couldn't lift 117kg in the final attempt, she was able to confirm a silver medal in the Olympics.

TOKYO | Agencies

Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu bagged a historic silver medal in the women's 49kg weightlifting at the Tokyo International Forum to lift the gloom after four top pistol and rifle shooters flattered to deceive on Saturday. The 26-year-old Mirabai was deemed as a medal prospect for India at the Olympics which opened on Friday

346 COVID ORPHANS IN LUCKNOW TO GET FREE EDUCATION AND STAY IN SCHOOL

Into the knowledge

Sunita Gandhi, the founder of the school and the NGO had approached the UP Women and Child Welfare Directorate with an offer to educate the Covid orphans and she was forwarded a list of 346 children who have lost either a breadwinner parent or both parents, or have an income of less than 3 lakh per annum as decided under the UP Mukhya Mantri Bal Vikas Yojana.

Team Absolute | Lucknow

The City International School and the NGO, DEVI Sansthan, has stepped forward to provide free education to those 346 children of Lucknow who have lost either one or both their parents during the pandemic.

Gandhi said that the children would not only study but also stay in the care of the school where she has set up a residential section for these children. These are children who would have otherwise been accommodated in the Rajkiya Bal Grah.

"We have been touched to the core when we began to meet these children. We have decided to support Mukhya Mantri Bal Sewa Yojana, a step taken by the chief minister, Yogi Adityanath, who has pledged to support these children with their education with a laptop and Rs 4,000

"So many dreams have been shattered. We cannot replace the loss. All we can do is give them a loving and nurturing environment in which they can rebuild their lives, create lovely new memories, and thrive by giving them an aspirational environment."



per month until they turn 18," said Gandhi.

Manoj Rai, Director, Women and Children Welfare, UP, lauded the initiative and said, "Our department is very thankful to Sunita Gandhi for volunteering to educate these children for free. All these children will benefit a lot."

"I appeal to other educational institutes in UP to

come forward, as Dr Gandhi did, and educate children who have been orphaned due to Covid. It will go a long way in ensuring a bright future for these children. I am sure not only that the children are in safe hands under her care, but are also going to get much-needed care and a loving environment in which they can flourish."

ICSE, ISC board exam results for 2021 out

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Council for Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE) on Saturday announced the results for the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) or class 10 and the Indian School Certificate (ISC) or class 12 exams on its official website.

Nearly 99.98 per cent students have passed the ICSE exams. The pass percentage of ISC exams is 99.76 per cent. Both girls and boys have secured a pass percentage of 99.98 per cent in ICSE. For ISC, the pass percentage for boys was 99.86 per cent and that of girls was 99.66 per cent. The region wise results of ICSE stand as 99.97 per



cent pass percentage in north zone, 99.98 per cent in east zone, 99.99 percent in west zone, 100 per cent in south zone and 100 per cent in foreign countries. CISCE has released the results of 2,19,499 students across the country. Out of these 219,499 students, 1,18,846 are boys which comprises 54.14 per

cent of the total number of students. At the same time, 45.86 percent i.e. 1,00,653 are girls who passed the exams. To view the ICSE 2021 exam results, the candidate has to enter his/her unique ID, Index Number and Captcha code on the website. All board results will be released online only.

COUNTRY'S LARGEST FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE OPENED IN KERALA

Thiruvananthapuram: The country's largest family health centre was opened at Vazhakkad in Malappuram here on Saturday by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan online.

Fully funded by Shamsheer Vayalil, an NRI entrepreneur from Kerala and also the CMD of VPS Healthcare, a leading healthcare service provider in GCC nations and India, the 15,000 sq. ft. family health centre, has been reconstructed at a cost of Rs 10 crore. It has an open gym and a play area for children, and is disabled-friendly.

The original primary health centre was destroyed in the 2018 floods.

The family health centre, which is expected to cater to the medical needs of around 75,000 outpatients annually, was reconstructed as part of the CSR initiative of UAE-based VPS Healthcare.

Vayalil said healthcare across the globe has been undergoing tremendous changes, especially since the outbreak of the pandemic.



'Shark Tank India' hopes to open new business avenues

Team Absolute | Mumbai

"Shark Tank", the popular American business reality show, is making headway into India. "Shark Tank India" is all set to provide an opportunity to entrepreneurs with interesting business ideas, business prototypes or active businesses that will be evaluated by experienced investors and business experts.

Registrations for the first season of "Shark Tank India" have commenced in June and are currently active on SonyLIV.

StudioNEXT has collaborated with Venture Catalysts as the Startup Ecosystem Advisor for the first season of "Shark Tank India".

Indranil Chakraborty, Head, StudioNEXT, SPN shares about the show and says, "The show will certainly give a boost to the dynamic entrepreneurial



ecosystem in the country and we are looking forward to showcasing some interesting 'pitches'. Will the 'Sharks' bite the bait? That remains to be seen."

Adds Anuj Golecha, Co-Founder Venture Catalysts,

For entrepreneurs, Shark Tank is not just about monetary gains but the exposure, mentoring and support that they receive. It also provides founders with a direct go-to-market strategy and that is very valuable."

In 6 minutes, police arrest eve teaser on Disha app alert

VIJAYAWADA | Agencies

Demonstrating the effectiveness of Andhra Pradesh police department's women's safety mobile app Disha, Vijayawada police apprehended an eve teaser within six minutes of a victim pressing the SOS button.

"In six minutes we apprehended the offender," Vijayawada police commissioner B. Sreenivasulu told reporter on Saturday.

Further elaborating the incident, Mary Prasanthi, deputy commissioner of police (Administration) said the crime



occurred near the railway club in Satyanarayana Puram part of the city. "Both are students, classmates I think

and he (Akash) was harassing like anything. Vexed by Akash's eve teasing, the girl pressed the SOS button on the app, triggering an alert to the police station from the Disha call centre. We immediately responded and within six minutes police reached the spot and Akash was taken to the police station and a case was registered against him," said the DCP. According to the AP police department, the girl triggered the alarm at 12.31 p.m. and the police took the accused eve-teaser under custody by 12.37 p.m.

UNGA adopts resolution on illicit wildlife trafficking

United Nations: The UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution on tackling illicit trafficking of wildlife. The resolution, adopted on Friday, recognises the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife, and emphasises the importance of effective international cooperation among member states, relevant multilateral environmental agreements and international organisations, reports Xinhua news agency. It urges member states to reinforce their efforts and adopt effective measures to prevent and counter the serious problem of crimes that have an impact on the environment, conservation and biodiversity, such as illicit trafficking in wildlife and wildlife products. The resolution urges member states to take decisive steps at the national level to prevent, combat and eradicate the illegal trade in wildlife, on the supply, transit and demand sides, including by strengthening their legislation and regulations.

WHO, ECDC call for enhanced efforts to prevent Delta transmission



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday reviewed the development plan for Ayodhya as Uttar Pradesh government officials made a presentation which encompassed various aspects of Ayodhya's development.

COPENHAGEN | Agencies

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have called for the reinforcement of enhanced efforts to prevent the transmission of the Delta Covid-19 variant as it has become the most dominant strain across much of the continent. The Delta variant is moving fast across Europe based on surveillance data collected between June 28 and July 11, the two world bodies said in a joint statement released on Friday. Hans Kluge, regional director of WHO Europe, said that "we are seeing a significant rise in cases associated with the

spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant." He warned that despite tremendous efforts to inoculate people, millions more remain unvaccinated and therefore at risk of ending up in hospital. The WHO official reiterated that receiving a full vaccination series significantly reduces the risk of severe disease and death. "When called to do so, people should get vaccinated." Both organisations noted that intensive implementation of the current public health measures, including increased access to testing, will be required to control Covid-19 transmission, particularly while the progress of vaccination is still not sufficiently high in many countries.

NASA to take SpaceX flight for Mission to Jupiter's icy moon

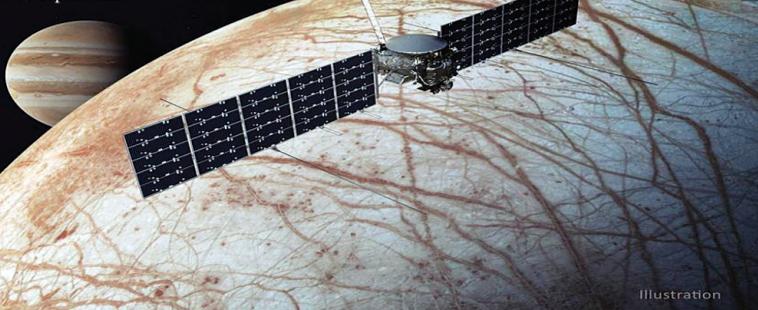
The mission -- 45 times fly by the moon -- aims to produce high-resolution images of Europa's surface, determine its composition, look for signs of recent or ongoing geological activity, measure the thickness of the moon's icy shell, search for subsurface lakes, and determine the depth and salinity of Europa's ocean, NASA said. The mission to Jupiter's icy moon Europa was cleared by NASA in 2015.

WASHINGTON | Agencies

NASA's Europa Clipper spacecraft, slated for a launch to Jupiter's icy moon in October 2024, will fly aboard a Falcon Heavy rocket built by SpaceX.

The US space agency will pay approximately \$178 million to SpaceX for launch services, it said in a statement on Friday. Europa Clipper will conduct a detailed survey of Europa and use a sophisticated suite of science instruments to investigate whether the icy moon has conditions suitable for life. For years, the Clipper was legally obligated to launch on NASA's long-delayed Space Launch System (SLS). But with the SLS perpetually delayed and over budget, NASA has urged Congress to consider allowing the Europa Clipper to fly commercial. Switching to another vehicle could save up to \$1 billion, NASA's inspector general said in 2019, the Verge reported. In the 2021 budget, NASA got permission to consider commercial alternatives to the SLS. It soon started officially looking for a commercial alternative. On Friday it awarded the contract to SpaceX. SpaceX first launched its Falcon Heavy rocket in 2018, and started flying satellites in 2019. Earlier this

year, NASA also selected the rocket as the ride to space for two parts of a planned space station orbiting the Moon, the report said.



Illustration



ALL NE STATE CAPITALS TO BE LINKED BY AIR, RAIL BY 2023-24: AMIT SHAH

SHILLONG | Agencies

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said here on Saturday that the northeastern region would be the country's growth destination and all the state capitals of the eight states of the region would be connected by air and railway network by 2023-24.

On Day 1 of his two-day visit to Meghalaya, Shah inaugurated several projects, including the inter-state bus terminus at Mawiong in Shillong. Funded by the North Eastern Council (NEC), the ISBT was built at a cost of Rs 48.31 crore.

The Home Minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier announced that before 2022, all the capital cities of the eight northeastern states would be connected by air and railway network.

"But due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the works have got slightly delayed though the projects are on the pipelines. By 2023-24, all the state capitals of the eight states of the region would be linked by air and



railway network, though some of the state capitals are already connected," the Home Minister said. Shah said that improving connectivity of the northeastern states is the top priority of the Modi government, as without connectivity, development would not be possible. "The works are being carried out with utmost priority to develop and further expand the road, rail,

air and waterways networks of all the northeastern states to connect them with the rest of the country," he said.

Shah also said that the Central government led by Prime Minister Modi has done a lot of development and welfare works in all the sectors for the all-round development of the region and economic prosperity of the people of the eight states.

The Home Minister said that the Central government has three important focus points for the region -- protection and development of the region's culture and tradition; resolving internal disputes among the northeastern states; and making the region a development hub and a destination of growth for India.

The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), in collaboration with all the northeastern states, would take all steps to achieve the desired purposes, Shah said. The Home Minister also chaired a review meeting of the North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) at Umiam, 20 km from Shillong.

He said that NESAC has been playing a key role in stimulating the overall growth of the northeastern region by using space science and technology. He applauded the efforts and dedication of 'Team NESAC' and assured that the Centre is committed to providing advanced technology support to the region, which can transform the lives of the people of the northeastern states.

BSF lodges protest with Pak Rangers over increased drone activity

LONDON | Agencies

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Saturday lodged protest with the Pakistan Rangers over increased drone activity in the region during a sector commander-level meeting held on the international border in Suchetgarh sector of Jammu district.

The BSF said in a statement that on the request of Pakistan Rangers, a sector commander-level meeting was held between the BSF and Pakistan Rangers in the Suchetgarh area.

The BSF delegation was led by Brigadier Murad Hussain, Sector Commander, Pakistan Rangers, Sialkot Sector. It was the first sector commander-level meeting between the two border guarding forces after the declaration of ceasefire by the DGMOs of both nations earlier this year. During the meeting, commanders from



both sides discussed various issues, with the BSF putting special emphasis on the recent drone activities carried out in the region by Pakistan. Other issues included terrorist activities by Pakistan from across the border, digging of tunnels by Pakistan and other matters related to border management," the BSF said. A very

strong protest was lodged by the BSF delegates regarding the drone activities being carried out by the Pakistan authorities in the Jammu area," it added.

"It was decided to re-energise instant communication between the field commanders, whenever required, to resolve the operational matters.

First All India Media Common Entrance Test to be held on Aug 14

Kolkata | Agencies

In a unique initiative the country's first-ever national level common entrance exam for media studies across universities will be held online on Saturday, August 14. The test is being guided by the recently set up Global Media Education Council (GMEC).

The AIMCET (All India Media Common Entrance Test) offers admission to the undergraduate Journalism, Mass Communication, and other media courses in various partnering Universities across the country for the current academic year and in the next academic year it will include the post-graduate media programs as well.

To maintain the right balance between theory and practice in media syllabi and help develop employability in today's time, the Global Media Education Council (GMEC), a media body of educators and senior professionals has been set up earlier in 2021. The test is organized by one of the leading educational news portals, Edinbox.com, for over 30 universities across the country including MUIT Noida, Adamas University Kolkata, Uttaranchal University Dehradun,



JagranLakeCity University Bhopal, Ajeenkya DY Patil University Pune, Mody University Rajasthan among several others.

The test involving five sections will be of total 100 marks consisting 100 objective-type questions and has to be completed in 120 minutes, which can open doors to many universities. The last date to apply for AIMCET examination 2021 is August 12, 2021. Interested students can look up AIMCET website (www.aimcet.in) for more information and apply for the test.

Death toll mounts to 9 as rain plays havoc in Karnataka

BENGALURU | Agencies

Torrential rain continued to cause a flood-like situation across Karnataka on Saturday with the death toll rising to 9.

The continuous rain affected 12 districts of north Karnataka, coastal Karnataka and Malnad region.

It is estimated that some 830 houses collapsed, 15 school buildings were damaged and 8,733 people, including women and children, have been shifted to safer places across the state.

The state government has opened 80 relief centres. As heavy rain continued to lash the Western Ghat region, life was thrown out of gear in north Karnataka districts and coastal Karnataka region.

The body of a 12-year-old girl Kiran Shanura Veebhuti, who was washed away in the floods on Friday, was found by rescue teams at Chikkodi in Belagavi district.

The National Disaster Response



Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have been deployed in 12 districts for rescue operations. Since the water flow towards the dams across the state is

steadily increasing, water is being released from dams and this is causing the rivers to cross danger levels, endangering the safety of people. Due to floods in the Western Ghats,

all major connecting roads to the rest of Karnataka have been closed. The Bengaluru-Mangaluru highway has also been closed as it is impossible to cross the inundated stretch of roads that run through thickly forested areas. As many as 300 people in Yaduravadi village of Belagavi district were evacuated in boats to safer places as the village was inundated. The rain water has submerged thousands of houses and several others are on the verge of collapse in the region.

The floods have damaged state highways across Kodagu district. Many villages in Hassan, Chikmagalur and Shivamogga districts have been flooded.

Meanwhile, the Indian Meteorological Department has warned that heavy rain will continue to lash Udipi, Mangalore, Karwar, Chikmagalur and Shivamogga and Hassan districts for five more days. A red alert has already been sounded across the state.

Most wanted gangster nabbed with AK-47 in Bihar's Gopalganj

Patna | Agencies

A most wanted gangster, involved in over four dozen criminal cases, was arrested from a village in Bihar's Gopalganj district on Friday in a joint operation of the Bihar and Uttar Pradesh Police.

Gopalganj SP Anand Kumar said that the joint team also seized huge cache of arms and ammunition including an AK 47 rifle, one magazine and 27 live cartridges from Munna Mishra's possession. The joint team has also arrested his wife as well. Mishra was involved in murder of a teacher named Dilip Singh -- with whom he had a land dispute -- in Jamuah Bazar in Gopalganj 60 days ago. "During investigation, it was appeared that the accused's wife Anu Mishra was also a co-accused in this murder,"



the SP said. "Both the accused were on the run after that murder. They were frequently shifting locations in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Uttar Pradesh ATS learnt that Mishra was hiding in Pakaha village under Kateya police station in Gopalganj. The Uttar Pradesh ATS contacted us and we immediately constituted a

dedicated team to raid the village," he said. "The accused is wanted in more than four dozen criminal cases including murder, attempt to murder, dacoity, kidnapping, extortion and rape cases in several districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Further investigation is on," he added.

CBI ARRESTS STATION DIRECTOR OF CSMT IN GRAFT CASE

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday said that it has arrested a Station Director posted at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) and an official in a graft case.

A CBI spokesperson said that the agency arrested G.S. Joshi, an IRTS officer posted as Station Director at CSMT of Central Railway and an official.

The CBI official said that a case was registered against the accused on the allegations of demanding undue advantage in the form of a bribe of Rs 10,000 from the complainant, a Contractor for allowing him to operate his contract without any problems. "CBI laid a trap and caught Babu for accepting bribe of Rs 10,000 from the complainant on the alleged directions of Joshi," the spokesperson said. He said that searches are being conducted at the premises of the accused. "The arrested accused will be produced tomorrow before the Competent Court in Mumbai," he added.

UP govt to provide free WiFi in every city from Aug 15

Lucknow | Agencies

The Uttar Pradesh government will provide free WiFi facility to the youth of the state from August 15 this year.

Under this initiative by the state government, people especially the youth will be able to avail free WiFi facility across all 75 districts, offices, municipal councils, 17 municipal corporations and 217 public places in the state.

On the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the urban development department officials are now busy with the campaign to provide free WiFi facility to the people. Divisional Commissioners, District Magistrates and Municipal Commissioners have been instructed to provide the facility at major public places. They have been instructed to make sure the hotspots for WiFi services are identified so that from August 15, people in the state can get the free facility at every bus station, places near the railway stations, tehsils, courts, block offices, registrar offices and main markets in each city of Uttar



Pradesh. The BJP government in Uttar Pradesh had promised to provide free WiFi facility to the people of the state in its poll manifesto. After it came to power, free WiFi facility was provided at Lucknow and major places in various cities. For this purpose, hotspots were set up in Hazratganj area of Lucknow to provide WiFi facility to the people.

Now on similar lines, CM Yogi Adityanath has decided to extend this scheme to major public places in every district headquarters, municipal councils and 17 municipal corporations.

It's raining stones, onions, jackfruit seeds on these Kerala houses

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

An unexplained phenomenon is taking place at two homes in the hilly district of Idukki. For the past two weeks, at the two residences of a father and son duo of Suresh and Selvaraj, it's literally raining stones, onions and jackfruit seeds.

The Upputhara residents of these two homes were first baffled alone, then it was the police and the locals turn, who first failed to believe, but when they saw for themselves, they believed.

Suresh and Selvaraj both eke their livelihood by engaging in casual labour and there are two homes in their 10 cents of land.

Suresh told reporter that their home is located on hilly terrain and it is along a slope.

"It was on July 2 that we first heard the sound of a stone falling on the roof top. We rushed out to see who did it but did not find anyone out there. Soon it became a regular feature and it became unbearable as it soon turned dangerous too, with stones, onions, jackfruit seeds all starting to fall on



our roof top. "When we told about this to our friends, not a single person believed, but when they came and saw, all were left stunned. Now we have moved out of the houses and today morning when we went to check the house, stones continued to fall," said a beleaguered Suresh. Even

though there are other homes in the vicinity of these two houses, so far they do not have any similar issues.

"The nearest house is about 100 metres away from ours, so far they have not reported any issue like ours," added Suresh.

Speaking to IANS, the Upputhara village

council president James K. Joseph said he was surprised when he was briefed of what's happening by the father and son at their homes.

"They said stones are landing on their roof tops. I was literally surprised when they told me. Then I decided to visit their homes and I realised what the father and son have been telling is the truth. As time and again stones were seen going up and coming down and while some landed on the roof top, some others hit the side walls. One has to see it to believe it," said Joseph.

The local police officials have also visited the place and have found out for themselves. The villagers have also checked out the happenings. "We have now moved out the two families to a different accommodation, as we felt it would not be safe for these families to remain there," added Joseph.

By now the village council have intimated this phenomenon to the Geology department and are waiting for them to come and check. Earth science scientists are also expected to arrive to witness this strange happening.

7 die in Gaya road accident



Patna | Agencies

Seven people onboard an SUV were killed in a late night road accident in Bihar's Gaya district.

Six of the deceased were residents of Gaya city. They died on the spot while another succumbed to his multiple injuries on the way to the hospital.

The SUV was involved in a head-on collision with a pickup truck. The impact left the SUV mangled after the accident. Six of the deceased were trapped inside the car and the police team were unable to rescue them. They

eventually used gascutter machines to remove the dead bodies from the SUV.

The accident took place around 10 p.m. on Friday at Kanjiyar Mor on the Dobhi-Chatra highway. "We have sent the dead bodies for post-mortem and the deceased's families have been informed," said SH Kumar, Investigating officer of the case. "We have also registered an FIR under rash and negligent driving amounting to deaths in Dobhi police station and hunt is on to nab the driver of the pick-up," the officer said.

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Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success.



Swami Sivananda

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J&K arms licence case:

CBI raids 40 locations, including two IAS officers' homes

A CBI spokesperson in Delhi said that the agency is conducting searches at around 40 locations in Jammu, Srinagar, Udhampur, Rajouri, Anantnag, Baramulla and Delhi, including the official and residential premises of certain then public servants (including IAS, KAS officers, then DM, then ADM etc).

The CBI had registered two cases on the request of J&K government and further orders from the Central government and had taken over the investigation of two FIRs on May 17, 2018 on the allegations of bulk issuance of arms licence in the erstwhile state of J&K during the period between 2012 and 2016. It was alleged that more than 2.78 lakh arms licences were issued to non-entitled persons.



Team Absolute | New Delhi/Srinagar

Launching a swift action, multiple teams of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday carried out searches at 40 locations, including the residential premises of 2 IAS officers, in Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi in connection with its probe into an alleged illegal arms licence case.

The official said that it is also carrying out searches at around 20 gun houses or dealers as part of its ongoing investigation into a case related to an arms licence racket. Another CBI official said that the searches began early on Saturday morning. An agency source revealed that the CBI is carrying out searches at the premises of former Deputy Commissioner of Srinagar, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, and another IAS officer named Neeraj Kumar, among others. The CBI also collected documents pertaining to the issuance of the said armed licences, allegedly spread over 22 districts of J&K. The official said that during investigation and scrutiny of documents, the role of certain gun dealers was found, who in connivance with the public servants, including the then DMs and ADMs of the concerned districts, had allegedly issued such illegal arms licences to the ineligible persons.

He said that it was also alleged that the per-

3 TERRORISTS KILLED IN KASHMIR ENCOUNTER



Srinagar: With the killing of one more terrorist, the number of terrorists killed in an ongoing encounter between terrorists and security forces in Shokbaba forest at Sumblar area of Bandipore district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday morning rose to three, officials said. "One more unidentified terrorist got killed in Aragam-Sumlar (total 3). Search operation is in progress," police said. Earlier the firefight between terrorists and security forces took place after a joint team of the police and the army cordoned off the area and launched a search operation on the basis of specific information about presence of terrorists. As the security forces zeroed in on the spot where terrorists were hiding they came under a heavy volume of fire that triggered the encounter.

sons who got these licences were not residents of the places from where the said arms licences were issued.

GOVT OFFICIALS WORLD OVER AMONG 1.4K WHATSAPP USERS TARGETED IN 2019: WHATSAPP CEO

NOBODY IS SAFE!

The reporting matches what we saw in the attack we defeated two years ago, it is very consistent with what we were loud about then, this should be a wake-up call for security on the internet ... mobile phones are either safe for everyone or they are not safe for everyone.

Will Cathcart, in an interview with The Guardian

WASHINGTON | Agencies

Senior government officials from across the world, including individuals in high national security positions who are "allies of the US", were targeted by governments using the NSO Group spyware in a 2019 attack against 1,400 WhatsApp users, according to the messaging apps Chief Executive Officer, The Guardian reported. WhatsApp CEO Will Cathcart disclosed the new details about individuals who were targeted in the attack after revelations this week by the Pegasus Project, a collaboration of 17 media organisations which investigated NSO, the Israeli



company that sells its powerful surveillance software to government clients around the world.

Cathcart said that he saw parallels between the attack against WhatsApp users in 2019, which is now the sub-

journalists and human rights activists were targeted in the 2019 attack against its users. Many of the targets in the WhatsApp case, he said, had "no business being under surveillance in any way, shape, or form", the report said.

As per the report, Cathcart questioned NSO's claim that the figure was in itself "exaggerated", saying that WhatsApp had recorded an attack against 1,400 users over a two-week period in 2019.

When WhatsApp says it believes its users were "targeted", it means the company has evidence that an NSO server attempted to install malware on a user's device, The Guardian said. As per the report, Cathcart said he had discussed the 2019 attack against WhatsApp users with governments around the world.

He also praised the recent moves by Microsoft and others in the technology industry who are speaking out about the dangers of malware, and called on Apple -- whose phones are vulnerable to malware infections -- to adopt their approach, according to the report. He also called on governments to help create accountability for spyware makers, the report said.

ject of a lawsuit brought by WhatsApp against NSO, and reports about a massive data leak which are at the centre of the Pegasus Project.

In addition to the "senior government officials", WhatsApp found that

MILLIONS OF PHONE NUMBERS OF CLUBHOUSE USERS 'UP FOR SALE' ON DARK WEB



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Millions of phone numbers of Clubhouse users have been allegedly leaked and are "up for sale" on the Dark Web.

The dataset of the popular audio chat app only shows mobile numbers and no other information. "A database of phone numbers of #Clubhouse users is up for sale on the #Darknet," leading cyber-security expert Jiten Jain tweeted. "It also contains numbers of people in user's phonebooks that were synced. So chances are high that you are listed even if you haven't had a Clubhouse login," Jain added. However, the audio chat app is yet to confirm the alleged data leak.

According to independent security researcher Rajshekhar Rajaharia, the hacker is selling alleged Clubhouse data which contains only mobile numbers without names.

"No names, photos or any other details are available. This list of phone numbers can be generated very easily. The data leak claim appears fake," Rajaharia told reporter.

In February this year, researchers at Stanford University in the US had warned that the app may be leaking users' audio data to the Chinese government. The Stanford Internet Observatory (SIO) had claimed that Agora, a Shanghai-based provider of real-time engagement software, supplies back-end infrastructure to the Clubhouse app.

CLASSIC CASE OF MISSING SPINE: RAHUL TAKES SWIPE AT GOVERNMENT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A day after the government informed Parliament that no fixed timeline can be indicated at present for the completion of the vaccination drive, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Saturday took a swipe saying people's lives are on the line and it's a classic case of a missing spine. In a tweet he said, "People's lives on the line, government admits no timeline, classic case of missing spine." He tweeted with the hashtag of #WhereAreVaccines.



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and Lok Sabha MP Mala Roy's unstarred question said, "The Covid-19 vaccination is an ongoing and dynamic process, which is being guided by National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAK) on the basis of concurrent scientific evidence."

His remarks came a day after the government said that no fixed timeline can be indicated at present for the completion of the vaccination drive. The government said it is expected that beneficiaries aged 18 years and above will be vaccinated by December 2021. Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar in response to

I'm not involved with HotShots claims Shilpa

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a latest development in the controversial porn case involving Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra, the Bollywood actress has denied her involvement with the company or its nature of content and has pointed fingers at Kundra's brother-in-law. After a court hearing on Friday, the Crime Branch team raided the Juhu residence of Shilpa and Raj. The investigative team is looking for money trail and corresponding emails, which will incriminate the accused and his alleged involvement in pornographic content.

According to police sources, Crime Branch officials recorded Shilpa Shetty's statement in the case. The actress has denied her involvement in the company,



claiming she was not aware of the exact content of HotShots. She also mentioned that erotica is different from porn, for which her husband has been accused of, and he is not involved in producing porn con-

tent. Sources claim that Shilpa Shetty named Raj Kundra's brother-in-law Pradeep Bakshi for running the functioning of the app and its operations. After the case came to fore, Shilpa Shetty

Kundra resigned from her husband's Viaan Industries, and stepped away from her active entertainment projects involvement, which included a television reality show and her current film.

FOREIGN-BOUND INDIAN NATIONALS CAN GET COVISHIELD SECOND DOSE IN ODISHA

Bhubaneswar: Foreign-bound Indian nationals, who have taken the first dose of Covishield or AstraZeneca vaccine in a foreign country, can now receive the second dose of Covishield in Odisha, state government officials said on Saturday.

If any Indian citizen, who has taken the first dose of Covishield vaccine in a foreign country, can take the second dose in Odisha after prescribed time period and will also get a certificate for the same. At present, the gap between the first and second doses of Covishield vaccine is 12-16 weeks, the officials added. After receiving instructions from the Central government, the Odisha Health and Family Welfare department's Additional Chief Secretary, P.K. Mohapatra informed all District Collectors, Municipal Commissioners and Chief District Medical and Public Health officials about the decision.



Al-Qaeda operates under Taliban protection: UN report

Kabul | Agencies

The United Nations has warned in a new report that the threat from terror groups such as Daesh and Al-Qaeda is expanding in many places in Afghanistan. It said the security situation remains fragile with uncertainty surrounding the peace process and a risk of further deterioration.

The report by the UN Security Council, published on Thursday, said that despite territorial, leadership, manpower and financial losses during 2020 in Kunar and Nangarhar provinces, Daesh's Khorasan branch, or ISIL-K, has moved into other provinces of Afghanistan, including Nuristan, Badghis, Sar-e-Pul, Baghlan, Badakhshan, Kunduz and Kabul, where the fighters have formed sleeper cells, Tolo News reported. The report said that the group



has strengthened its positions in and around Kabul, where it conducts most of its attacks, targeting minorities, activists, government employees and personnel of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

The report stated that the estimates of the strength of Daesh's Khorasan branch range widely, with one member state reporting between 500 and 1,500 fighters

and another stating that it may rise to as many as 10,000 over the medium term. The UN report said that as reported by the UN Monitoring Team in its 12th report to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011), Al-Qaeda is present in at least 15 Afghan provinces, primarily in the eastern, southern and south-eastern regions.

QUETTA IS BASE FOR INSURGENCY: FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO KABUL

Kabul/New Delhi: The French Ambassador to Kabul, David Martinon, has said that the base for insurgency is in Quetta, adding that Afghan leaders and people should show unity against any foreign interferences. "The base for insurgency is in Quetta, everyone knows that and that is a fact that cannot be discussed," he told The Kabul Times, in response to a question on Pakistani support to Taliban insurgency, adding that the Taliban is seeking absolute power in the country.

SERVICE LIFT CRASHES IN NEWLY-BUILT MUMBAI HIGH-RISE, 4 KILLED

Mumbai: In a tragic incident, at least four persons were killed and several others were injured after a service lift used for construction work at a newly-built high-rise came crashing down, officials of the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) disaster control unit said here on Saturday. The incident involving the construction lift occurred at around 5.45 p.m. at the Ambika Building in Worli, officials said. While one person died on the spot, three others were declared brought dead at the KEM Hospital. The exact cause of the disaster is not known yet. The victims have been identified as Avinash Das, 35, Bharat Mandal, 28, Chinmay Mandal, 33, while the identity of a 45-year-old man is yet to be ascertained. Another person, Laxman Mandal, 35, is stated to be in a critical condition at the hospital.

I-T DEPT CARRIES OUT SEARCHES IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS IN UP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Income Tax (I-T) Department recently carried out a search operation on a group in Uttar Pradesh dealing in mining, hospitality, news media, liquor and real estate. The searches were carried out in Lucknow, Basti, Varanasi, Jaunpur as well as Kolkata on July 22.

The operation resulted in the seizure of more than Rs 3 crore in cash, while 16 lockers were placed under restraint.

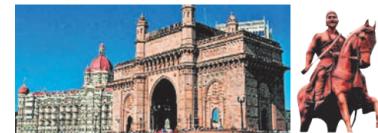
Documents, including incriminating digital evidence indicating unaccounted transactions worth nearly Rs 200 crore, have been seized, a Finance Ministry state-

ment said on Saturday. Evidence found during the searches establishes that the group has been earning huge outside-the-books income through mining,



processing and sales in liquor, flour business, real estate etc., the statement said.

The I-T Department has also found unaccounted income emanating out of these transactions exceeding Rs 90 crore, as per preliminary estimates.



138 DEAD IN MAHARASHTRA RAIN FURY, 90,000 MOVED TO SAFETY

At least 84,452 people, including over 40,000 in Kolhapur district, were shifted to safer places in Western Maharashtra's Pune division, officials said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At least 138 people have died in rain-related incidents, including multiple landslides, in Maharashtra. The deaths include 36 who died in a landslide in the coastal Raigad district, about 70 km from state capital Mumbai.

Several districts - primarily the Konkan region - have been receiving incessant rain over the past few days, leaving thousands stranded in floods and landslides.

"138 accidental deaths reported in Maharashtra due to rain and other monsoon-related incidents," Maharashtra Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation, Vijay Wadettiwar, said.

Satara district in Western Maharashtra has also been battered by rain and several people have been swept away by floodwaters, an official was reported as saying by news agency PTI. The official put the death count in Satara at 27.

Other fatalities include those reported from eastern districts such as Gondia and Chandrapur, he said.

"Rainfall in various parts of the state often coinciding with high tides and also discharge from dams led to various regions... getting inundated," the Maharashtra government said in a press release. At least 84,452 people, including over 40,000 in Kolhapur district, were shifted to safer places in Western Maharashtra's Pune division, officials said. At least 54 villages have been completely affected due to the floods while 821 were partially affected in Kolhapur, where the Panchganga river is flowing at a level higher than that witnessed during the peak of floods in 2019, officials said. Eleven people, including eight Nepalese workers, on board a bus had a narrow escape as they were rescued in the nick of time before the vehicle was swept away in Kolhapur district on Friday, police officials said.



Apart from Raigad district, landslides were also reported in Ambeghar and Mirgaon villages in Satara during Thursday night.

Rescue teams of the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force and other agencies are already in the state to assist the relief work. Six teams of the Indian Army and Navy are expected to join the rescue work today. The Maharashtra government has announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of those killed. The injured will be treated in hospitals at government expense, the statement from Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's office said. Heavy rains since the last two days have caused massive floods in Raigad, Ratnagiri, Palghar, Thane, Sindhudurg, Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts.

The India Meteorological Department, or IMD, has issued a red alert for six districts that have been already affected by the downpour, forecasting "extremely heavy" rainfall and recommending preventive measures.

Flooding and landslides are common during the monsoon season, which also often sees poorly constructed buildings and walls buckling after days of non-stop rain.

Pawar hints at relaxations in Pune

Maharashtra deputy CM Ajit Pawar said there was merit in considering the demand for relaxations in Pune such as letting shops open for longer since these norms were being flouted in any case.

Team Absolute | Pune

Maharashtra's deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar hinted on Saturday that Pune was likely to get some relaxations from Covid containment measures beginning Monday as per a decision taken in the weekly Covid review meeting. He added that a final decision will be taken after a ministerial meeting on Monday post consultations with chief minister Uddhav Thackeray.

"In the Covid review meeting there was [a] consensus to give some relaxations from Monday such as increase in the timing of shops' operation hours till 7 pm. I will conduct a meeting on Monday in Mantralaya. I will talk to the CM as well. A positive decision will be taken for shops and restrictions on weekends," said Pawar.

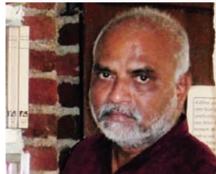
Pawar said there was merit in considering the demand for relaxations such as letting shops open for longer since these norms were being flouted in any case.



The Pune division on Friday reported 2,371 fresh Covid-19 cases and 36 deaths. Pawar said that the test positivity rate within Pune Municipal Corporation limits has dropped to 3.9 per cent in this week but it rose marginally from 4.9 per cent to 5 per cent in Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation limits, while the rural positivity rate dropped from 7 per cent to 5.4 per cent. The positivity rate indicates the prevalence of the coronavirus among the samples tested for the infection.

Renowned Marathi litterateur Satish Kalsekar dies at 78

Banker-turned-Marathi litterateur Satish Kalsekar - who was conferred the 2013 Sahitya Akademi Award for literature - passed away following a brief illness, a close associate said here on Saturday.



Mumbai this afternoon in the presence of his family, relatives and literary personalities, said his friend of many years in the banking industry Vishwas Utagi. Born in Malvan, Sindhudurg, Kalsekar is largely credited with bringing the stories of legends like Ruskin Bond and Mahashweta Devi to Marathi audiences by translating their works for the local readers here, he added. "A former officer with Bank of Baroda from 1965-2001, Kalsekar simulta-

neously bloomed in Marathi literature, and his poems and writings depicted the lives and travails of the ordinary lower-middle-class people and workers struggling for survival in a big metropolis like Mumbai," Utagi told IANS. Launching his literary career with a collection of poems "Indriyapanishad" (1971), he went on to bag the country's top literature award, the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for Marathi literature (2013) for his collection of essays, "Vachnaryachi Rojanishee".

Kalsekar's other collections of poetry/essays include 'Poems: For Lenin' (1977), 'Sakshat' (1982), 'Vilambit' (1997) and many others, which were translated in multiple Indian languages.

Flood-hit areas face uphill task of streamlining vaccination drive

Vaccination drives were put on hold in many of these districts. State Health Minister Rajesh Tope speaking to reporters in Pune on Friday said that Covid vaccination would be carried out on priority in the flood-affected areas.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Even as the State machinery along with NDRF continued the rescue operations in flood-hit areas of Maharashtra, the government now faces an uphill task of streamlining Covid-19 vaccination in these regions. Torrential rains in various parts of

the State coinciding with high tides and also discharge from dams have led to flooding in various regions.

Mahad and Poladpur in Raigad, Chiplun in Ratnagiri along with various areas in Satara, Kolhapur, and Sangli are worst affected. Parts in Thane and Palghar districts are also flooded. Vaccination drives were put on hold in many of these districts.

State Health Minister Rajesh Tope speaking to reporters in Pune on Friday said that Covid vaccination would be carried out on priority in the flood-affected areas. He said that the first priority is to rescue all people who are stranded. Tope reiterated that the central government must provide more vaccines to the State to speed up the vaccination drive. He

said that Maharashtra's health infrastructure and manpower is ready to face the challenge. Tope added that the central government is providing 10 lakh vaccine doses in 5-4 days. However, the State needs 10 lakh doses every day. The State Health Department officials said that the department will focus on vaccination once rescue and relief measure operations in flood-affected areas are completed. Meanwhile apart from the 17 teams of the NDRF present, eight more teams were requisitioned from Bhubaneswar. Also, support of the other forces including the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Air Force has been sought to speed up rescue operations. About 89,000 people were evacuated while 76 people were found dead according to the government's report.

Use Mobiles At Work Only If Necessary: Maharashtra Tells State Employees

Indiscriminate use of mobile phones in office maligns the government's image, an official order said, without any reference to the Pegasus spyware.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government on Friday asked its employees to restrict the use of mobile phones to a minimum during office hours, saying that landlines are more preferable amid the Pegasus snooping scandal.

An order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) said mobile phones should be used only if necessary for official work. Indiscriminate use of mobile phones in office maligns the government's image, the order said, without any reference to the spyware developed by an Israeli firm. The order encouraged communications through text messages in cases mobile phones are to be used at all, adding that conversation through these devices should

be as little as possible. The use of social media through mobile devices during office hours should be limited, the government said.

Personal calls on mobile phones should be answered by stepping out of office, the "code of conduct" further said. The order also said that conversations on mobile phones should be "polite" and "in low voice", keeping in mind people in the vicinity.

But calls from elected representatives and senior officials must be answered without delay. Mobile phones should be on silent mode during official meetings or inside the chambers of senior officials. Similarly, browsing the internet, checking messages, and use of earphones should be avoided on such occasions, the government advised.

JEE Main Session 3: Maharashtra Students Affected By Rain To Get Another Chance, Says Dharmendra Pradhan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The students of Kolhapur, Palghar, Ratnagiri, Raigadh, Sindhudurg, Sangli, and Satara from Maharashtra who will be unable to take the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main Session 3 due to heavy rains in the state on July 22 and July 27 will be allowed to re-appear for the engineering entrance test again. The Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan in a social media post announced that the JEE Main administering body, National Testing Agency (NTA) will re-conduct JEE Main for all the candidates who will not be able to take them on July 25 and July 27 in view of heavy rains in the state. The JEE Main re-exam dates will be announced soon.

The Education Minister in his Twitter account said: "In light of the heavy rains and landslides in Maharashtra, to assist the Maharashtra student community, I



have advised the NTA to grant another opportunity to all candidates who may not be able to reach the test centre for JEE (Main)-2021 Session 3."

"Students from Kolhapur, Palghar, Ratnagiri, Raigadh, Sindhudurg, Sangli, and Satara, who are unable to reach their test centres on 25 and 27 July 2021 for JEE (Main)-2021 Session 3 need not panic. They will be given another oppor-

tunity, and the dates will be announced soon by the NTA," he added.

The third session of JEE main has been scheduled on July 20, 22, 25, and 27, 2021. NTA had already conducted the JEE Main Session 3 exams on July 20 and July 22 successfully. As many as 7,09,519 students have registered for the third session of JEE Main.

All those students who have attempted Paper 1 in the first shift of JEE Main 2021 session 3 on July 20 had reviewed the paper as moderate. In terms of order of difficulty, Maths and Chemistry were of moderate level, while Physics was easiest amongst the three subjects on Day 1. While the Btech, BE paper held on the second day (July 22) of the third session had a "balanced paper in terms of coverage of chapters". The questions on Day 2, as per students' analysis, were "moderate". In terms of the order of difficulty, Chemistry was easiest followed by Physics and "toughest" Mathematics.

Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date: Not releasing tomorrow, board extends deadline for marks entry

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date is likely to be announced soon by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, MSB-SHSE. However, as per previous speculations, the result is not releasing tomorrow as the board has extended the deadline for marks entry. Students and other stakeholders can check detailed notice on the official website of MSB-SHSE, mahahssboard.in.

MSB-SHSE has released an official notice on Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date mentioning that colleges which have updated the marks have to confirm it with immediate effect. The notice further reads that the last date to complete the computerized evaluation process is today, July 24, 2021. Junior Colleges across the state must note that the last date to complete the evaluation process is today. The facility will not be available after the deadline. So, it is likely that the State Board would be announcing the

Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date by tomorrow, July 25, 2021 or latest by July 26, 2021. And, result can be expected by next week. Maharashtra State Board had earlier cancelled HSC examination following the cancellation of CBSE and other major boards. Later, MSB-SHSE decided to prepare HSC Result on the basis of internal policy. The criteria released were quite similar to 40:30:30 formula of CBSE. The board has considered the marks of the students obtained in Class 10, Class 11 and Class 12 internal exams. Keep a check on the official website, mahahssboard.in for more updates on Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date. The overall pass percentage secured in the Maharashtra board Class 12 exam 2020 was 90.66 percent. This year, the board is expected to achieve a bench mark of 100% pass percentage in Maharashtra HSC Result. Students must keep following the official website shared above and Notice 1 and Notice 2 for more updates on Maharashtra HSC Result 2021 Date.

Taliye hillside washout: Thackeray wipes tears of dazed survivors

Raigad | Agencies

A day after a hillside flattened the ill-fated Taliye village near Mahad in Raigad, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray visited the site, met the few survivors and with folded hands, attempted to wipe their tears.

Hopping onto a chopper from Mumbai for the short flight to Raigad, Thackeray later drove down to the village, where he was accompanied by Ministers Eknath Shinde (Shiv Sena), Vijay Wadettiwar (Congress), Aditi Tatkare (Nationalist Congress Party) and her father Sunil Tatkare, the local NCP MP, and other top officials.

En route, he grimly took in the scenes of the massive havoc wreaked by nature's fury in the past three days in the coastal Konkan and western Maharashtra.

The entire region reeks of disaster, destruction, deaths of humans and animals, stench of the fast-rotting remains, razed fields and farmlands, spelling doom for the dazed people wondering how to pick up the threads afresh for their future. "We have lost everything except the clothes I am wearing I have lost my entire 6-member family in the hillside," wept one of the lucky sur-



vivors, a woman, Archana, aged around 35. She was consoled by a similarly orphaned teenage girl, Sandhya, from the now-erased Taliye village, who miraculously escaped the thousands of tonnes of sticky wet earth, boulders, stones, tree clumps, bushes and water as a 60-70 meter tall portion of the hillside crashed early on Friday.

Of the total 35 single or double-storied homes standing in the once bustling village, 32 have practically disappeared and so far there have been around 50 deaths and an equal number feared missing. Another middle-aged man, dug out from the slush and was rushed to a Mahad hospital,

had horror writ on his face - "We had not time to escape. There was a rumbling sound and in seconds, our landscape and the world changed," he said.

One survivor, Mahendra Pol said with moist eyes that his entire family escaped the disaster and managed to flee to safety while most of his neighbours and friends were killed.

Thackeray gave patient hearing to the villagers and the survivors, and assured that the entire village would be redeveloped and resurrected, with full help to the locals who lost everything.

He also said that there are many villages in such potentially dangerous locations which would also be shifted to safer areas to prevent such tragedies in future.

"You please take care of yourself, leave everything else to us. We are with you and the government will ensure full help for your complete rehabilitation," Thackeray assured the weeping villagers, many of whom are yet unable to accept the changed scenario. Shortly afterwards, Housing Minister Dr Jitendra Awhad made the welcome announcement that the Taliye village would be fully rebuilt from scratch by the Maharashtra Housing & Area Development Authority.

Free rations, kerosene to flood-hit people

NASHIK | Agencies

The Maharashtra government will provide free food-grains and kerosene to the people in the flood-hit regions of the state, Food & Civil Supplies Minister Chhagan Bhujbal said here on Saturday.

The special aid will be given to all the people who have lost everything and around 89,000 have been rendered homeless in the ravaged regions of Raigad, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Sangli, Kolhapur and Satara which are hit the most by the torrential downpour since Thursday. Accordingly, the government will provide 10 kg



wheat, 10 kg rice, five kg dal and five litre kerosene to each family, as per a government policy of March 2019, said the minister.

The kerosene will help people cook their meals since many areas are still water-logged and are without electricity and other fuels supplies due to the floods have been hit since the past three days. Bhujbal added that in those areas where the flagship government-run Shiv

Bhojan Thali centres are submerged or washed out, the authorities will rush ready-to-consume packed meals from other nearby locations.

"We have decided to double the Shiv Bhojan Thali supplies to the six districts to help the people as there are other types of shortages due to muck and slush in homes, roads washed away and other problems of survival," the minister said. For those wanting Shiv Bhojan Thali packets but are hampered by the absence of power supply, mobile and Internet connectivity, he said people will be permitted to use the tehsildar's machinery to order their requirements till normalcy returns.



5 KILLED, 18 INJURED IN LIGHTNING STRIKES IN PANNA DISTRICT

Five persons were killed and 18 others injured in four incidents of lightning strikes in Panna district, the district officials said on Saturday. The incidents took place at Ureha, Pipariya Daun, Choumukha and Simrakhurd villages of Panna district on Friday, authorities said.

Team Absolute | Panna

Five persons were killed and 18 others injured in four incidents of lightning strikes in Panna district, the district officials said on Saturday.

According to district authorities, the incidents took place at Ureha, Pipariya Daun, Choumukha and Simrakhurd villages of Panna district on Friday.

While Ureha, Pipariya Daun and Choumukha villages reported one casualty each, two women were killed in the lightning strike at Simrakhurd, it was stated.

A 70-year-old man was struck by lightning when he ventured into a forest for grazing cattle in Simrakhurd, while another person died in



Pipariya Daun and a 65-year-old man was killed in Choumukha, sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) Rachna Sharma said. Seven persons were injured in the lightning strikes in these three villages, she said. Apart from this, two women in their 20s were struck by lightning when they were working in a field in

Ureha village, collector Sanjay Kumar Mishra said, adding that 11 others, who were injured the incident, are undergoing treatment at Panna district hospital. The two women Lakshmi 28 and Kajal 20 struck by lightning when they were working in a field in Kulhgawan village.

IMD issues 'orange alert' warning for MP, heavy rainfall likely over 24 districts

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an 'orange alert' warning of "heavy to very heavy" rainfall in 24 districts of Madhya Pradesh. Large parts of the state has witnessed heavy rain in the past 24 hours. The latest alert is valid till Sunday morning, senior meteorologist PK Saha from the IMD Bhopal office said.

Saha said that heavy to very heavy rainfall and thunderstorms with lightning might occur over isolated places in the districts of Jabalpur, Satna, Anuppur, Umarai, Rewa, Dindori, Katni, Narsinghpur, Mandla, Chhatrapur, Tikamgarh, Vidisha, Sagar and Sehore, Rajgarh, Betul, Burhanpur, Khandwa, Khargone, Dhar, Dewas, Agar Malwa, Ashok Nagar and Shivpuri.

Rain and thunderstorm with showers are likely in most of the ten divisions of the state including Bhopal, Indore and Chambal, the scientist said. Rainfall to reduce over west coast during next 24 hours

The IMD said on Saturday that rainfall intensity along the west coast including Konkan, Goa and adjoining interior Maharashtra is expected to decrease over the next



Rain and thunderstorm with showers are likely in most of the ten divisions of the state including Bhopal, Indore and Chambal while heavy to very heavy rainfall and thunderstorms with lightning might occur in isolated places in the districts of Jabalpur, Rewa, Satna, Anuppur, Umarai, Dindori, among other places.

24 hours. It said rainfall activity will increase over the north Indian plains and hills from 25 July. In the past few days, extremely heavy rains have killed scores of people in several rain-related incidents in Maharashtra. The weather department said that scattered to fairly widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls are likely to

continue over Gujarat till July and reduce thereafter. Widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy falls is likely to continue over east Rajasthan till July 26 and reduce thereafter.

In north India, rainfall activity is likely to increase over northwest India from July 25. "Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with

isolated heavy to very heavy falls (are) likely over Uttarakhand during July 25-28; Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and West Uttar Pradesh during July 26-28, and Punjab and east Uttar Pradesh on July 27 and 28," the IMD said. Extremely heavy falls are also likely over Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand on July 27 and 28.

CM congratulates for cent percent vaccination in Khajuraho

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the people of the state have played a vigilant role in the vaccination campaign launched to make Madhya Pradesh a Covid-free state. In many gram panchayats and urban bodies of the state, an example has been set by completing cent percent vaccination. In the same sequence, Khajuraho has also come under the category of cent percent vaccination due to the awareness shown by the people in the world famous tourist city of Khajuraho. Chouhan has congratulated the residents of Khajuraho, while appreciating the district administration, vaccination teams, social workers and Corona volunteers.

Chief Minister said that all sections have participated enthusiastically in the speed at which the vaccination campaign is being run to prevent corona infection in the state. Till date, about 2 crore 77 lakh people have got vaccinated in the state. The campaign will continue. Chouhan said that it is our endeavor that cent percent vaccina-



tion of all citizens of the state who are of 18 years of age or above should be done. Chouhan said that the success achieved through the public participation model of Madhya Pradesh in the vaccination campaign has also been appreciated at the national level. He has appealed to the people of the state that it is still necessary to remain fully

vigilant towards Corona. Everyone should continue to adopt corona appropriate behaviour and also follow the guidelines of corona control.

In the tourist city of Khajuraho, after cent percent vaccination was done, a ceremony was organised by the district administration to honor the Corona volunteers. Local MP VD Sharma said that the achievement in the field of vaccination in Khajuraho due to the combined efforts of all is a matter of pride.

He said that the participation of Corona Volunteers in the form of angels in the time of crisis is praiseworthy. This function organised by the district administration to pay respect to the Corona Volunteers will boost their morale and they will work with double energy in future.

In the function, Collector Sheelendra Singh informed that 13 thousand 659 people of the age group of 18 years and above have been vaccinated in Khajuraho. In this campaign, work was done by all sections with public participation for vaccination. He thanked everyone who became a partner in the campaign.

State Government Issues SOP For Reopening Of Schools

The Madhya Pradesh government has issued SOPs for the reopening of schools for Classes 11 and 12 with 50% attendance starting July 26.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government has issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) for reopening of schools for Classes 11 and 12 with 50 per cent attendance starting July 26, an official said on Saturday. As per the SOP released on Friday, physical classes for students of Classes 9 and 10 standard classes will resume once a week from August 5, the official said.

Classes will be held twice a week for students of Classes 11 and 12, and virtual sessions will continue simultaneously, he said. Class 11 students will attend school on Tuesdays and Fridays, while Class 12 students will convene at schools on Mondays

and Thursdays, he said. Students of Classes 9 will attend school on Saturdays and for those in Class 10, sessions will be held on Wednesdays, the official added. According to the guidelines, student gatherings such as morning assemblies and swimming lessons are not permitted to prevent the viral spread. Apart from this, the state government has asked schools to undertake a slew of measures such as running COVID-19 tests on students and teachers.

Schools are being reopened at a time when the state is seeing a significant decline in coronavirus cases. Madhya Pradesh on Friday reported 11 infections and no casualties. Meanwhile, chief secretary Iqbal Singh Bains

has directed district collectors and chief medical and health officers to inoculate teachers and non-teaching staff of schools and colleges that come under the Department of Higher Education and School Education from July 26 to 31, the official said. For this, a vaccination campaign will be organised from 9 am to 5 pm on an appointed date by selecting colleges with facilities in the district headquarters and development blocks, he added. It will be ensured that the first and second dose of jobs against COVID-19 is administered to teachers and employees of all government and non-government colleges and schools, including those of the Tribal Welfare Department, the official said.

Police rescue abducted girl, was sold for marriage

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A 16-year-old girl, who was abducted, sexually assaulted and 'sold' to a person for Rs 50,000 with whom she was also forcibly married, has been rescued from Bhind district and the accused arrested, police said on Saturday.

The accused, Rajeev Garg, had befriended the girl by creating a fake ID on social media and emotionally blackmailed her to meet him in northwest Delhi from where she was abducted and taken to Bhind, they said.

On May 29, the girl told her parents that she was going to one of her friends' house but when she did not return, her family starting searching her. When she was not found, a case was regis-

tered at Ranhola police station next day under section 363 (punishment for kidnaping), a senior police officer said. The call detail records of the victim were scrutinized. The police focused on a particular mobile number whose location was found to be in Uttar Pradesh's Etawah, and Gwalior and Bhind in MP, the officer said. "The location of that mobile number was in Delhi on the day the girl went missing. Its movement was followed and police apprehended Garg on Thursday from Bhind," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Monika Bhardwaj said. Based on his disclosure, the victim was rescued from a house near Bhind's bus stand, the police said.

Enquiry revealed that the accused had created an ID

on social media in the name of Mahi Garg, and came in contact with the victim there, the DCP said. Both of them started interacting. However, one day, when the girl came to know that her virtual friend is a male, she stopped talking to him and also blocked his mobile number when he tried to contact her, police said. Garg then called her from a different mobile number and emotionally blackmailed her to continue their friendship and unblock his phone number, they said, adding the accused also convinced her to meet him at to meet him at Madhuban Chowk in northwest Delhi.

On May 29, the girl went to Madhuban Chowk and met Garg who abducted her and took her to Bhind, police said.

Pregnant Woman Carried on makeshift cloth stretcher for 8 km

Bundling her into a bed-sheet tied to a bamboo pole on their shoulders, villagers carried her because there is no road to their village in Barwani district.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Carried on a makeshift cloth stretcher for 8 km with villagers using shovels and spades to level out muddy patches, a 20-year-old woman's experience of giving birth in rural Madhya Pradesh this week appeared to have changed little from an ordeal 200 years ago.

When Sunita, a resident of Rajpura village in Barwani district, went into labour on Thursday her family and neighbours were left with no other



option but to carry her themselves to a nearby village since her forest hamlet has no road connecting it with a hospital. Bundling her into a bed-sheet tied to a bamboo pole on their shoulders, they carried her for 8 km

to the Rani Kajal village that has a dirt track. An ambulance waiting at the village then took her to a hospital another 20 km away. The Community Health Centre at Pansamal where she gave birth, 28 km away, is the nearest

hospital to her village and yet there is no way to get there except by foot, locals say, in an egregious indictment of health services and connectivity in the farthest corners of the country.

While Sunita delivered her baby on Friday and both the mother and the child are doing fine, according to doctors, she could have been spared the inhumane experience had there been a hospital closer by or a better road.

According to residents of Rajpura, located nearly 400 km Bhopal in the south-eastern corner of Madhya Pradesh, applications for a road have been submitted to the public representatives of both the Congress and the BJP over the years but nothing has been done. Many pregnant women and people suffering from diseases have had to go through the same ordeal as Sunita in the past.

CM PLANTS NEEM SAPLING; CONGRATULATES MIRABAI CHANU

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a neem sapling in Smart Park on Saturday. Narayavali MLA Pradeep Laria was also present on the occasion. Chief Minister Chouhan plants saplings every day in fulfillment of his resolve. Rich in antibiotic elements, neem is known as the supreme medicine. Neem may be bitter in taste, but its benefits are like nectar. Neem is also very useful from environmental point of view. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Chouhan has congratulated and extended best wishes to Mirabai Chanu for winning the first medal for the country in the Tokyo Olympic 2021 Games. Chanu has won a silver medal in the Tokyo Olympic by securing the second position in the women's 49 kg weight lifting category. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan has tweeted that entire India is proud of Saikhom Mirabai Chanu.



ASI ferrets out X-ray style paintings in Buxwaha rock shelters

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Buxwaha diamond colliery in Chhatrapur has turned out to be a mine of Indian heritage which traces back to an unfathomable antiquity. According to a study by Archaeological Survey of India, rock shelters with historic and prehistoric paintings have come to light.

Now that three rock shelters with paintings of Mesolithic Age have been ferreted out at the diamond mine site, locals are worried about protecting their heritage. Earlier, they raised a hue and cry over destroying environment of the area by the company which has taken contract for mining diamond. Besides the paintings, the archaeologists have also come across several ancient idols of Ganesh and Hanuman. To save those precious paintings and idols, public interest litigation was filed at the high court, Jabalpur. The high court asked the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct a study and send a report. A team of ASI from Jabalpur circle, led by Sujeet Nayan, conducted a study of the

site from July 10 to July 12. They discovered many such artifacts from the womb of the site as depict the glorious past of the country.

Locals, however, told the ASI officials that there might be many more such sites in the nearby forests, says the ASI report. The survey began from Imlight, nearly 15km from Buxwaha town. Rock paintings were found at three sites.

Besides that, in a nearby village, Kushumra, lie many ancient sites containing icons. PG Najpandey and Rajat Bhargava filed public interest litigation at the National Green Tribunal. A copy of it was sent to a lawyer Prabhat Yadav who filed a PIL at the high court. In the wake of the high court order, ASI conducted the survey. It says that there was a human settlement in the area in the prehistoric and historic periods. The ASI report says that the paintings found in the first cave are hard to decipher, as it has lost its tinge because of the vagaries of weather. Lead red colour was used for the paintings.

The second rock shelter situated on a sandstone hillock was found in

Buxawaha. The paintings in this cave belong to the Middle Stone Age.

Most of the paintings are made at the ceiling of the cave. Ancient men used white colour and charcoal to make them. These paintings are still decipherable. Most of the paintings in this rock shelter are of historic period, but there are a few that belong to the Mesolithic Age. They are X-ray style paintings.

Therefore, it shows that the ancient men used this cave as settlement for a long time. The paintings portray daily life, flora and fauna of the area and hunting scenes. The paintings, made in lead red and found in the third rock shelter, lion horsemen, elephant riders and a wild boar. The prehistoric remains were discovered from Dhimarkhwa area in Kasera village. Another rock shelter situated 25km from the Buxwaha town comes under the forest range of the area. This site is known as Putariyanala in Nimaane village, but a few locals have recently made some paintings at the site. The area lies in the dark green forest occupied by wild animals.

Congress has lot to learn from BJP:VD

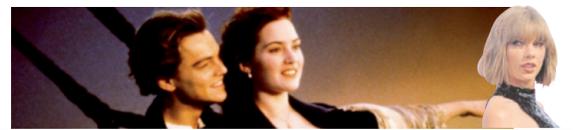
Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Congress party should learn from BJP that whatever party does it whatever is essential for the society, said state BJP president VD Sharma while talking to media here on Saturday.

The BJP leader raised the issue amidst Guru Purnima celebrations and said Congress leaders did not believe in the Indian culture and tradition. Sharma added that Guru Purnima has a great significance in Indian culture. "BJP respects both religious and political Gurus," he added. Sharma thanked the people of Khajuraho for achieving the target of 100 per cent vaccination. He added that because of awareness among people, the target has been achieved. Talking about



the ticket distribution for local body elections, he said winning candidate will get the ticket. Talking to media at different locations, state medical education minister Vishvas Sarang alleged that the Congress leaders celebrate traditions of Italy. "They don't know Guru and its tradition. For Congressmen, the family members of Nehru family are Guru and they take blessings from them," he remarked. He said Congress leaders feel ashamed in taking blessings from Gurus and they don't believe in the Indian traditions.



Are Kim and Kanye ready to get back together?



Los Angeles | Agencies

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West's divorce has been one of the stormiest in showbiz - but falling to knees and sobbing as he begged forgiveness from estranged wife Kim, Kanye hinted they may be ready to bury the hatchet. At the chaotic launch of his new album Donda, the rapper appeared with a stocking over his face as he admitted he had "hidden a lot of lies" and repeatedly ranted: "I'm losing my family" - in scenes likely to spark further concern for his wellbeing. Glamorous Kim and their four children were the star guests as Kanye played songs containing a raft of emotional outbursts and admissions of his own "lies" and mistakes - in what increasingly felt like a direct message to his wife. It was his first opportunity to have his say in public on the break-up, which followed months of bizarre outbursts and mental health struggles. Taking to the stage in Atlanta, Georgia, to present new track Welcome To My Life, he wailed: "I'm losing my family, God how could you leave? I hid a hundred lies but I repent for everything and I'm going to do it again." The song begins with a speech from his mother Donda, who died in 2007 following a number of cosmetic surgeries.

Kanye, 44, later rapped that he went into "deep depression" after her death.

QUENTIN TARANTINO FEELS SON MIGHT LIKE 'KILL BILL' WHEN HE TURNS FIVE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood filmmaker Quentin Tarantino has shared that he is open to letting his 17-months old son Leo, watch his movie "Kill Bill" when he turns five or six-years-old. The 58-year-old filmmaker shares Leo with his wife Daniella Pick. What age would he be comfortable letting his son watch his work? "That depends on his interest. If we're judging by me, I saw a lot of stuff early on when it came out, you know, so I would imagine (early). If I had to imagine, he would probably, as a little boy, be most attracted to 'Kill Bill', anywhere between five, six, or seven," Tarantino told Deadline, reports femalefirst.co.uk. "I saw 'Point Blank' when it came out in '68, when I was between 6 and 7. All the exalted New Hollywood movies, those were the movies I grew up watching, and that's a big part of what (my) next book's about. I'm writing about some of these movies from my perspective now, but I always touch on my perspective from when I first saw them." The "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" director still owns the infamous "wagon" from "Kill Bill" but doesn't drive it when he's out with his son because it attracts too much attention. He said: "The thing about the wagon is, whenever I drove it on the freeway, everyone recognised it's me. Everyone recognised the wagon. And then it would be a chain, because people would drive alongside me and try to talk to me. It's not a good ride for (my son). It's cool and it's fun every once in a while, to take it out for a Sunday drive. But I wouldn't run errands in it."



Jack Grealish parties with Amy Childs and Chloe Brockett

London | Agencies

AFTER an incredible summer of sport, England's Euro heroes deserve the chance to let their hair down - and I'm told they're doing it in real style. Poster boy Jack Grealish is enjoying a well-earned holiday on the Greek

Island of Mykonos, alongside Three Lions teammates Ben Chilwell and Luke Shaw, plus Love Islander Josh Denzel.

But the lads aren't the only glamorous faces partying at the hotspot's hottest haunts. I'm told they linked up with a host of TV stars too, including Towie favourite Chloe Brockett, who have been partying in the same smart bars.

An onlooker said: "Everyone seems to be out there at the moment, and they're all partying together. The footballers are the toast of the town and rightly so, but the TV girls can give them a run for their money. Everyone is getting on well and really hitting it off."

Meanwhile, Chelsea left-back Ben has caught the eye of stunning US influencer Kelsey Calimine.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Mabel never fails to look sensational in her eye-catching stage outfits and yet again she was commanding attention as she took to the stage for an energetic performance at Latitude Festival in Suffolk on Friday night.

The singer, 25, showed off her sizzling physique in a plunging black and yellow bralet and matching high-waisted biker trousers as she belted out her hits. She flashed her abs in the costume that covered her taut midriff and arms in black mesh as she danced on stage.

Mabel wore her long bright orange hair in loose waves over her shoulders and opted for a glamorous makeup look.

She was dressed the block colour biker trousers that had zip and stitch detailing high on her waist. Revellers at the Latitude Festival have spoken about the 'amazing feeling' of being at the first major music event since before the pandemic began.

Mabel wows fans in a performance at Latitude Festival



Vanessa Bauer celebrates the end of lockdown at a glitzy party

Los Angeles | Agencies

Vanessa Bauer certainly set pulses racing as she flaunted her toned physique in a sexy cut-out dress at Buzz Talent's End of Lockdown Party in London on Friday. The Dancing On Ice star, 25, showcased her toned pins through the ensemble's racy thigh-high split and also displayed her washboard abs. The brunette beauty added some extra height to her enviably gym-honed frame with a pair of strappy black heels.

Vanessa has been enjoying her time off lately, recently renting a boat to enjoy some downtime off the coast of the UK at Devon's Durdle Door.

The star shared some pictures and a video of herself relaxing in an iridescent orange bikini on Instagram.

She wrote: "Sailed along the English coast this weekend, at times it felt and looked like somewhere in Spain don't u think?!"

It came as Vanessa recently opened up about her inner demons such as her eating disorder, after learning of Nikki Graham's tragic death from anorexia in April.

JK ROWLING REVEALS PARTS OF HARRY POTTER WRITTEN IN A PUBLIC LOO

London | Agencies

JK Rowling has revealed she made a splash with the Harry Potter books after writing part of one on a public toilet. But the British author, 55, has refused to reveal where her creative juices flowed, insisting she is too embarrassed by the episode.

She said: "I once wrote a paragraph of Harry Potter sitting on a public loo. Literally. You know what? It was the moment, I had no time, it's gonna have to happen now... Maybe they would've been better written if I hadn't had that life but that's what it was."

It was then suggested the lav could be a money-spinner if it was found. But she added: "I'm not telling anyone where that loo was, I'm too embarrassed, I can't believe I've told you that."

The first Potter novel was published in 1997, and the author is worth £795million.

JK, real name Joanne, decided to use the pen name to avoid the attention of her ex-husband Jorge Arantes.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kelsey Merritt



MIRABAI CHANU'S STORY

FROM ACCIDENTAL WEIGHTLIFTER TO OLYMPIC MEDALLIST

Team Absolute | Mumbai

From failing to lift in any of her three attempts in clean & jerk at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games to winning a silver medal in Tokyo, life has come a long way for Indian weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu.

Mirabai, the 26-year-old from Manipur, finished second behind China's Hou Zihui (210kg -- 94 snatch & 116 clean & jerk) with a total of 202kg (87 in snatch and 115 in clean and jerk) to win the silver medal.

Indonesia's Aisah Windy Cantika took the bronze medal with an aggregate of 194kg.

With this, Mirabai won India's first medal in Tokyo and became the second weightlifter from the country to clinch an Olympic medal. Karnam Malleswari had won the country's maiden medal in the sport at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Mirabai ended a two-decade-long drought in Indian weightlifting -- a time in which the sport was tarnished by several doping scandals, including at the 2004 Athens Olympics when Pratima Kumari and Sanamacha Chanu disgraced the country. Mirabai's medal will also be a balm for a sport that has always produced champions alongside dope cheaters over the years.

An employee of the Indian Railways, Mirabai's entry into weightlifting was accidental. At the age of 12, she had gone to the Khuman Lampak Stadium in Manipur's capital Imphal to go to enrol herself in archery.

The archery centre was closed and Mirabai stepped into the nearby weightlifting arena to enquire about archery. Instead, she got hooked to the sport for life as the weights and weightlifting apparatus attracted her attention. As she had built her strength lugging firewood up and down the hills, weightlifting came easily to Mirabai.

For the next few years, she would travel nearly 20 km daily from her home in Mongkok Kakching village to the state capital Imphal for weightlifting training.

Mirabai moved to Delhi once she made a mark at the national level and soon made it to the national camp.

Her first breakthrough came at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games when she won the silver medal in the 48 kg weight category.

"She is very hardworking and determined and has a strong



willpower, which is evident from her comeback after the disappointment she faced in Rio de Janeiro," says N Kunjarani Devi, a legend in Indian women's weightlifting, who has won more than 50 international medals including silver at World Championships.

Kunjarani said that Mirabai has come up the hard way, spending years away from home struggling with limited resources.

"Manipur is a small state, not so financially rich. Mirabai comes from a middle-class family and had to struggle a lot to pursue weightlifting. Her parents and family supported her and she also took care of them once she got a job with the Railways. She also got cash awards for winning medals at the

Commonwealth and Asian Games. As a Manipuri, I feel proud that a girl from my home state has won India's first medal at the Tokyo Olympics," says Kunjarani, a senior officer with the CRPF posted in Delhi.

"Mirabai richly deserves all the accolades coming her way because she has proven that hard work always pays," Kunjarani added.

In the last five years, Mirabai has won multiple accolades. She has been conferred upon with the Arjuna Award, was honoured with the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 2018, and the Padma Shri. In 2017, she became the first Indian after Karnam Malleswari (1994) to win a gold medal at the World Weightlifting Championships. In 2018, she won a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia. In

April 2021, she set a world record in clean & jerk at the Asian Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent.

But this was also the period when her struggles with injuries began, especially her shoulder and back. In 2019, she went to the United States for a lengthy rehabilitation-cum-training camp under renowned strength and conditioning coach Dr. Aaron Horschig. Just before the Olympics, she had again flown to the United States to spend two weeks at Dr. Horschig's academy as the injuries had surfaced again and were troubling her.

While people following her career kept their fingers crossed as she flew from St. Louis to Tokyo, Mirabai had determination writ large on her face. She wanted to exorcise the ghost of the Rio Olympic Games once and for all.

SECOND TO NONE!

Saikhom Mirabai Chanu's road to Olympic glory

■ Diminutive Manipur lifter Mirabai Chanu opens India's account at the Tokyo Games in style, winning silver in the women's 49 kg category.

■ Chanu lifts 202kg (87kg+115kg) to better Karnam Malleswari's bronze performance in Sydney (2000).

■ China's Zhihui Hou takes the gold with 210 kg; Windy Cantika of Indonesia finishes 3rd (194 kg).

■ Chanu had qualified for the 2016 Rio Olympics, but couldn't finish the event as she failed to lift the weight in any of her three attempts in the Clean & Jerk section.

HER TRACK RECORD

SILVER Commonwealth Games, Glasgow, 2014

GOLD Senior Nationals, 2016

GOLD Senior Nationals, 2018

GOLD Commonwealth Games, Gold Coast, 2018

GOLD World Weightlifting Championships, Anaheim, USA, 2017

WORLD RECORD in Clean & Jerk -- 119 kg, Asian Championship, Tashkent, April 2021

AWARDS: Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, 2018; Padma Shri, 2018

Twist of Fate

■ Chanu's entry into weightlifting was accidental. At the age of 12, she had gone to enrol for training in archery.

■ As the archery pavilion was closed, she went into the weightlifting hall nearby to inquire about it and got hooked.

■ She has had to travel 20-odd km daily from her home in Mongkok Kakching village to Imphal to train.



Tennis: Nagal beats Istomin to record India's first tennis singles win since 1996

Tokyo | Agencies

India's lone hope in men's tennis singles Sumit

Nagal powered to a 6-4, 6-7(6), 6-4 win over Denis Istomin of Uzbekistan in the first round here at the Ariake Tennis Court on Saturday.

Nagal's win was the first for an Indian men's singles tennis player at the Olympics since Leander Paes' bronze medal-winning run at Atlanta 1996. Nagal won the first set 6-4 in 42 minutes but lost the second set in tie-breaker in 71 minutes. He, however, came back to win the final set in 41 minutes with a 6-4 margin. The 34-year-old Istomin, ranked 197th in the world was no match to his 23-year-old Indian opponent who is ranked 37 places above



him. Nagal was more agile and covered the court better. Istomin fired 17 aces against eight by Nagal. The Indian also committed more double faults with nine against three. However, it was in break-points and forced errors that Nagal was better than his Uzbek opponent. Istomin committed 32

forced errors to Nagal's 17. The Indian also won 10 out of 10 net points while his opponent won just five out of nine. Nagal managed to convert four out of the five break-points he got - 80% conversion - while Istomin could convert only two out of the 14 he had got - 14% conversion.

Hockey: Harmanpreet, Sreejesh help India beat New Zealand 3-2

Tokyo | Agencies

Drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh scored a brace and goalkeeper PR Sreejesh came up with some brilliant saves in the fourth quarter as India scraped through to a nervy 3-2 victory against New Zealand in a Group A encounter of the Tokyo Olympic men's hockey competition on Saturday.

India conceded an early goal when Kane Russell scored a penalty corner in the sixth minute. They levelled the scores four minutes later when they earned a penalty stroke off their second penalty corner. Rupinderpal Singh, who struck the crossbar in the fourth minute off India's first penalty corner, did not make any mistake and put the ball past New Zealand goalkeeper Leon Hayward.

Harmanpreet got into the act as he scored off India's second penalty corner with a brilliant flick to the left of the goalkeeper in the 26th minute. He struck again seven minutes later off India's third penalty corner as India went 3-1 ahead at the start of the second



half. Stephen Jenness made it 2-3 for New Zealand with an opportunistic goal in the 43rd minute. The Black Sticks created good pressure and earned three penalty corners in the fourth quarter but the Indians defended stoutly and survived the crucial period as they started their campaign on a winning note at Oi Hockey Stadium here. It was a good performance by the Indians in a tough opener as New Zealand are a dangerous opponent. They have a good attack and a strong penalty corner exponent in Russell. The Indians had to be at their best and their

solid defence, manned by Amit Rohidas and Birendra Lakra, excelled which helped them survive the Kiwi onslaught. Sreejesh was in his element as he blocked three good efforts by New Zealand in the fourth quarter, which could have turned the flow of the game in New Zealand's favour. India conceded possession to the Black Sticks in the second half and survived some anxious moments. New Zealand earned 10 penalty corners as against five by India. But it was the Indian defence that carried them to victory. New Zealand had singled out the opening match against

India as the key and wanted to get some points. It looked like they would manage it when Kane Russell put them ahead in the sixth minute.

But the Indians came back strongly to take the game away from them.

Though the defence, especially goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, stood firm, they will have to pull up their socks and tighten their midfield, which allowed the New Zealanders to launch some good attacks.

Ivek Sagar Prasad and Manpreet Singh were good in their role as attackers but the midfield left gaps that the Black Sticks managed to exploit. However, India's Australian coach Graham Reid would be satisfied with the result as India have always been slow starters and have found the first match tough to negotiate. A winning start gives them the boost for their second encounter in Pool A against world No 1 Australia, who survived a scare before beating hosts Japan 5-3. Australia were trailing 2-3 at half-time but managed to come back and win their first match.

Badminton: Shetty-Rankireddy hold nerve to win; Sai Praneeth loses

Tokyo | Agencies

Indian men's doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy defeated the higher-ranked Chinese Taipei pair of Lee Yang and Wang Chih-lin 21-16, 16-21, 27-25 in their first Group A badminton match at the Tokyo Olympics.

However, India's hope in men's singles, B Sai Praneeth suffered a shock loss against Misha Zilberman of Israel in his first Group D match.

The Indian pair won the first game before the Chinese Taipei duo bounced back in the second game. The final game was closely fought till the end as the Indians ensured they wouldn't give in.

The Chinese Taipei pair seemed to have moved into a decisive lead at 16-13. But Chirag and Satwik refused to budge. The Indians saved a match point at 24-25 in the final game before closing it out. op seeds Marcus Fernaldi Gideon



and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo from Indonesia, and Ben Lane and Sean Vandy of Great Britain are the other pairs in Group A. Only the top two teams from the group will advance to the quarterfinals. Sai Praneeth, the No. 13 seed, who lost 17-21, 15-21 to world No. 47 Zilberman had started off well, taking a 3-0 lead. The Israeli bounced back to make it 4-3 before the Indian took 8-4

lead. However, Zilberman wasn't the one to give in as he pushed the Indian into corner and earned some points. Both were almost level, with Sai Praneeth moving to 11-10. But then Zilberman cashed in on an error-prone display from Sai Praneeth and moved to game-point. Praneeth tried hard and saved three break-points but the Israeli player won the game. Sai Praneeth tried to come back in the second game but Zilberman moved to 11-7 at the break. Sai Praneeth came hard at the Israeli in the second game as the pair was locked at 4-4. But Zilberman showed good defence and court coverage to move ahead and went 11-7 into the mini-break. He maintained the lead and defeated the Indian.

Sai Praneeth will now take on Mark Caljouw of Netherlands in his second and final group match. Only the topper from the group will progress to the Round of 16.

Hockey: Indian women lose steam after bright start in opener



Tokyo: T India, ranked 9th in the world, matched world No 1 Netherlands in the first half but their challenge fizzled out as the Dutch cantered to a 5-1 win in a Group A match in the women's hockey competition at the Tokyo Olympics on Saturday.

The Dutch took lead through Maria Verschoor in

the sixth minute but were stunned when India scored the equaliser four minutes later through skipper Rani Rampal. The Indians then kept the Netherlands at bay in the remaining part of the first quarter and the entire second quarter to go to half-time 1-1. But the Netherlands, the reigning world champions and 2016 Olympics runners-up got control of the match and went on a goal-scoring spree in the second session, scoring four goals to hand India a big defeat.

Margot van Greffen (pc) 33rd minute, Felice Albers in the 44th minute, Frédérique Matla in 45th minute and Calavan Maasakker in the 52nd minute scored for the Netherlands as India got totally outplayed. The Dutch are three-time Olympic champions and a dominant force in women's hockey while India have qualified for the Olympics for only the third time. The Dutch won silver in Rio de Janeiro while India had finished 12th among 12 teams. The gap was evident on Saturday, though the Indians did well in patches. They denied the Dutch for a large part of the first half. The Dutch made 12 circle entries but could score only three field goals, they earned six penalty corners but could convert only two of them. They made 23 attacking circle penetrations while the Indians could manage only nine.

ARCHERY: INDIA CRASH OUT IN MIXED TEAM QUARTERFINALS



Tokyo: The Indian mixed team in archery comprising Deepika Kumari and Pravin Jadhav crashed out in the quarterfinals, losing to South Korea 2-6.

Although the Koreans won three sets to India's one, all of them were closely contested.

South Korea, comprising An San and Kim Je Deok, won the first two sets -- 35-32, 38-37 - before the Indian pair bounced back winning the third 37-35.

The Koreans then sealed the final set 36-33 with the Indians struggling to get a decent score in their four shots. Earlier, India's world No. 1 woman archer Deepika and Jadhav had secured a place in the quarterfinals by overcoming the Chinese Taipei pair of Lin Chia-En and Tang Chin-Chun 5-3 in the opening elimination round.

The opening set went in favour of the archers from Chinese Taipei 36-35 as Jadhav had two poor shots of eight. However, the Indians came back strongly in the second set with 38 in their four shots. But the Chinese Taipei archers were equally good and forced a draw in the second set to maintain their lead at 3-1.

Deepika and Jadhav shot a perfect score in the third set, winning 40-35 to level the scores at 3-3. In the deciding, with India needing 20 points in the final two attempts, Deepika and Pravin held their nerve to shoot perfectly and win the set 37-36 and with it the match.

The Indian team had qualified as the ninth-best team after the ranking round on Friday while Chinese Taipei were ranked eighth.

Shooting: Manu Bhaker, Divyansh Panwar headline Day 2 of competition

Tokyo | Agencies

Indian shooters will aim to lift themselves from Saturday's disappointing show when they begin Day 2 of their campaign at the Asaka Shooting Range on Sunday.

A host of events, including women's 10m air pistol, men's 10m air rifle and men's skeet, are lined up on a busy day for shooters. While young Manu Bhaker and Yashaswini Deswal will compete in women's air pistol, Deepak Kumar and Divyansh Singh Panwar will be keen to erase the disappointment of their fellow teammates on Saturday when they compete in 10m air rifle. Experienced shooter Mairaj Ahmad Khan and young Angad



Vir Singh Bajwa will then attempt to qualify for the medal rounds in skeet. The women will again be looking to break the 580-mark at the bare minimum, to strengthen their claim for a finals spot. The top-eight will qualify from the 53-woman field after 60 shots are fired in 75 minutes. The men's air rifle event has a 47-man draw and will also have a 60-shot qualification round, but with decimal scoring in place, the cornfort

score is around 630 to ensure a finals berth. Yashaswini and Manu go into the competition as world No. 1 and 2 respectively, while Divyansh is world No. 2 in men's air rifle even as his senior compatriot Deepak Kumar ranks 11th. Action will also begin in shotgun with Mairaj and Angad attempting to qualify for the medal rounds in men's skeet. Sunday will be Day One of qualifying in men's skeet which will have three of the five 25-shot rounds being played out. Day two, (Monday, July 26) has the final two rounds before the top six make it to the 60-shot final. Mairaj, now into his second Olympics and Angad making his debut, have been training in Italy in the build up to the Games.

Table Tennis: Manika Batra through to second round

Tokyo: Indian paddler Manika Batra made it to the second round of women's singles table tennis at the Tokyo Olympics with a straight-sets win over Great Britain's Tin-Tin Ho at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium.

Following the 4-0 win, Manika will now face Ukraine's 20th seed Margarita Pesotska. Manika had a slow start against Tin-Tin, ranked 94th in the world. But she found her rhythm quickly to take the first game 11-7. Manika had a smooth run for a 2-0 lead by winning the second game 11-6. After trailing the paddler from Great Britain for much of the third game, Manika crossed the finish line with 12-10 for a 3-0 lead. She sealed the match with 11-9 in the fourth game. It was an easy win for Batra, who had earlier made an exit from the round of 16 in the mixed doubles event pairing Sharath Kamal. The duo lost in straight sets 11-8, 11-6, 11-5, 11-4 to Chinese Taipei's Lin Yu-Ju and Cheng I-Cheng after leading 5-1 and 5-3 in the first two games.



Raja Kumari wanted track 'Firestarter' to be 'fun, free-flowing'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Grammy-nominated rapper and singer-songwriter Raja Kumari unveiled her brand-new single titled 'Firestarter' on Friday. She says that the track has a universal appeal to it.

"After the last 16 months that we spent in the pandemic, it was important for me to put out something that represented what I was going through. I just love how universal the record is and how it's for everyone," said Raja Kumari.

The Indo-American music trailblazer, Raja has earned herself a plum position as a powerful female voice in the modern hip-hop landscape.

Recorded in the thick of the pandemic, 'Firestarter' reinforces how Kumari has galvanised popular music by belting grandiose vocal runs of self-love, inclusivity, and gender equality. Pivoted on the theme of renaissance and rebirth, the record combines the hip-hop heavyweight's sharp hip-hop sensibilities with her fashion aesthetics.

She said, "The song represents being reborn and rising from the ashes like a phoenix and the need to constantly reinvent yourself and not being fearful about it. This is my

25th music video and I have accepted now that it's my job to make these visual pieces of musical art."

She brings a freewheeling playfulness to 'Firestarter' with her cosmopolitan edge and strikes an alluring balance between her 'desi' and global avatar.

With phrases like 'I ain't afraid I'm only living for today', and 'There is no other can't replace me cuz I'm bossy', Kumari spits bars with her trademark forward-thinking spirit. She said, "It's been almost two years since I've been on the set, specifically for my own independent music video, where it's about the fashion and the production. This is the first time that I didn't take the whole creation process too seriously as I wanted it to be fun and free-flowing." The record mixes trap beats with Indian classical music, continuing Raja's mission to trailblaze a musical connection between the East and the West.

The 'Firestarter' video is directed by MTV VMA

2020 titleholder Michael Garcia. He has been credited for his work with artistes like Machine Gun Kelly, Ty Dolla Sign, Fetty Wap, and Jack

Harlow.

'Firestarter' is produced by the Indian film industry's music director Aditya Dev.

The single is released via Mass Appeal India in partnership with the American record label Capitol Records. Devraj Sanyal, MD and CEO, Universal Music Group, India and South Asia said: "At Mass Appeal India, our constant endeavour is to push the boundaries of our brand of global hip-hop and no one quite does it like Raja Kumari. Her sound, her vibe, and her words are unique and that makes her an amazing artist with massive mainstream crossover potential. It starts with 'Firestarter' now and we couldn't be more excited!"



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Aparshakti Khurana will once again be seen hosting the Indian Sports Honours. This is the second time the actor will be hosting this awards show.

Earlier, he had hosted the 2019 edition. Talking of the same, Aparshakti said in a statement: "It is an honour to be hosting such a prestigious awards show. I have always been into sports right from my childhood.

Hosting the Indian Sports Honours for the second time gives me a great sense of joy and I get to meet and talk to favourite sportspersons."

The event will be conducted virtually this year in the wake of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

On the work front, Aparshakti will be next seen in "Helmet", "Stardust" and an as-yet-untitled film, which will be Bhushan Kumar's next.

APARSHAKTI KHURANA TO ONCE AGAIN HOST INDIAN SPORTS HONOURS



ARSHI KHAN TO FEATURE IN PUNJABI SONG 'BOOK LIKHDA'

Mumbai: Actress Arshi Khan, who rose to fame with reality show "Bigg Boss 14", is all set to feature in upcoming Punjabi song "Book likhda" sung by Shok-E. "I'm excited to feature in the song, these days people enjoy Punjabi songs not only here but overseas too. After this there are more songs coming soon. I am back in action," says Arshi.

The actress recently underwent an image makeover. Talking about it, she says, "I have always enjoyed a simple look with a stylish aura. But now the lockdown has helped me to experiment with my looks and I'm really enjoying it. I feel like a princess. And of course my audience will witness a new me in the song."

Music of "Book likhda" is given by Jee Pro and lyrics are by Honey Kakawalia. The song is slated to release on August 5.

The actress, who has worked in television shows like "Savitri Devi College & Hospital", "Vish" and "Ishq Mein Marjawan", will soon start shooting for her upcoming reality television 'swayamvar' show titled "Ayenge Tere Sajna".

Mansi Srivastava to join the cast of 'Kundali Bhagya'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Mansi Srivastava will join the cast of the show "Kundali Bhagya". She will be seen playing the character of Sonakshi. Ecstatic about joining "Kundali Bhagya", Mansi

says: "Sonakshi and Karan are college friends and share a great bond. She will also become extremely close to Preeta too. In fact, the positive shade of this character along with the numerous other shades that she will bring to the role is what really got me

intrigued to portray this character. Also, I must say that this is my first show with Balaji, and I couldn't have gotten a better role or a better show to start off with."

The actress is all in praise of the team, especially co-stars Dheeraj Dhoopar and Shradha Arya and can't wait to begin shooting. "I was

extremely excited to even begin shooting

on the show because I was reuniting with Dheeraj after our last show together in 2016. So, I am happy to shoot with him again. I met him and Shradha during a photoshoot and was very warmly received by both of them. In fact, I feel the entire team is very sweet, I have also had the pleasure of meeting a few of them during my look tests and I am eager to begin shooting with all of them. I also hope the audience loves this new role of mine," she says. "Kundali Bhagya" airs on Zee TV.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Manushi Chhillar

RAVI TEJA TO RESUME 'KHILADI' SHOOT ON JULY 26

Hyderabad: Well known Telugu actor Ravi Teja will once again start the shooting of his upcoming film "Khiladi". The shooting re-starts on July 26.

The film, which is being directed by Ramesh Varma, and actresses Meenakshi Chaudhary and Dimple Hayathi will be seen alongside Ravi. According to the production team, the film had already completed the major parts of the shoot before the lockdown break happened. They will now wrap up the remaining bits of the film. Devi Sri Prasad renders soundtracks. Sujit Vasudev and GK Vishnu are the cinematographers. Ravi Teja plays a dual role in the film produced by Bollywood production house Pen Studios in association with A Studios. Srikanth Vissa and music director DSP's brother Sagar provide dialogues, while Srimani pens lyrics and Amar Reddy is the editor of the film.



Karan Johar to host Bigg Boss on OTT platform

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With the launch of recently announced Bigg Boss OTT, fans are all set to get a mega treat of entertainment, excitement and drama. In a recent announcement the news is revealed that director/producer Karan Johar will host the reality show on Voot.

Karan will be anchoring the melodrama of Bigg Boss OTT for the six weeks run on Voot. Bigg Boss Season 15 will premiere on 8th August this year.

For the first time ever, Bigg Boss fans will get a chance to watch all the major drama and action 24*7 live from the house. Apart from this fans will be treated with 1-hour episode on VOOT. Viewers will also get a chance to watch exclusive cuts, round the clock content drops and a fully interactive edition.



On his new role as the Bigg Boss OTT host on Voot, Karan Johar said, "My mom and I are huge Bigg Boss fans and wouldn't miss it for a day. As a viewer, it keeps me hugely entertained with dollops of drama. For decades now, I have always enjoyed hosting shows and now with Bigg Boss OTT... it will surely be Over the Top. It's my mother's dream come true."

"Bigg Boss OTT will undeniably have a lot more sensational and dramatic. I hope I can live up to the audience's and my friends' expectations make Weekend Ka Vaar with the contestants an enjoyable affair in my own style and up the ante on the entertainment quotient. Wait for it," the director added.