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Monthly rainfall to be normal in July, says met department

Team Absolute | New Delhi

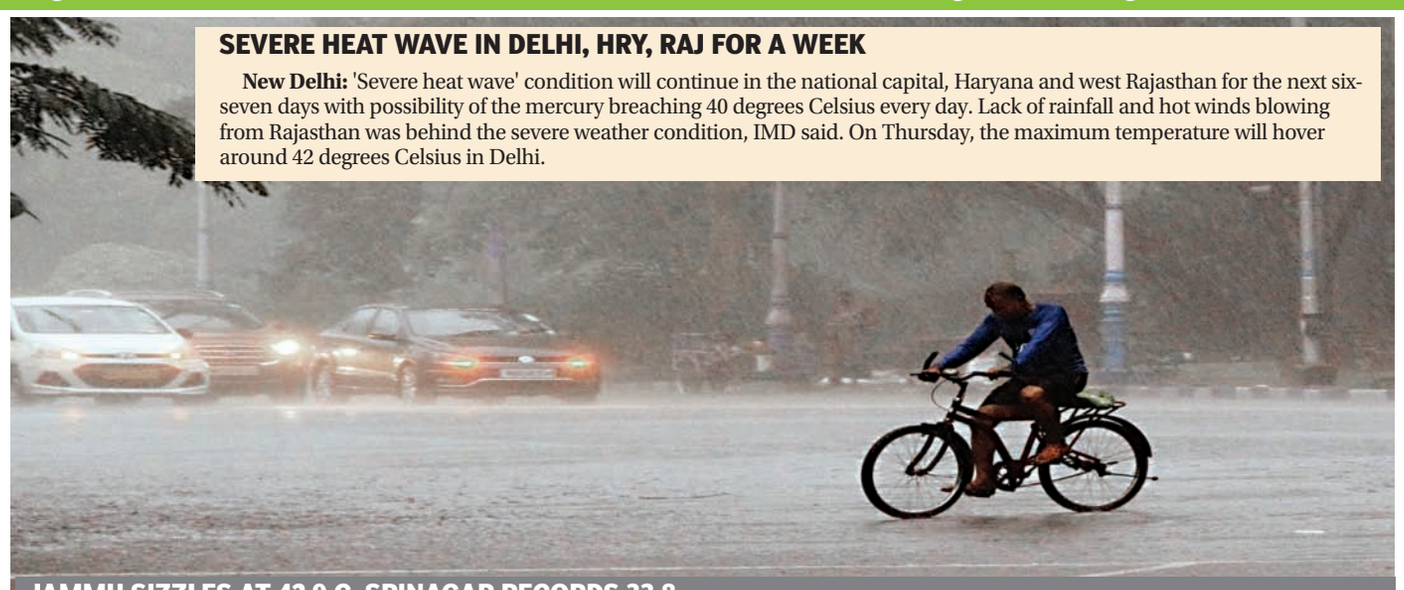
Even as northwestern India facing an intense heat wave, weather officials on Thursday said that monthly rainfall for July over the country, as a whole, is most likely to be normal. According to the India Meteorological Department's National Weather Forecasting Centre's Southwest Monsoon Rainfall Forecast, the monthly rainfall over the country as a whole in July is most likely to be normal (94 to 106 per cent of the Long Period Average).

The latest global model forecasts indicate that the prevailing neutral El Nino-Southern Oscillation conditions are likely to continue over the equatorial Pacific Ocean and that there is enhanced possibility of development of negative Indian Ocean Dipole conditions over the Indian Ocean during July to September. As sea surface temperature conditions over the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are known to have strong influence on the Indian monsoon, IMD is carefully monitoring the evolution of sea surface conditions over these ocean basins.

Prevailing meteorological conditions, large scale atmospheric features and the forecast wind pattern by dynamical models suggest that no favourable conditions are likely to develop for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Delhi, Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh and Punjab during the next one week, said the National Weather Forecasting Centre of IMD.

Under the influence of strong moist southwesterly winds at lower tropospheric levels from Bay of Bengal to northeast and adjoining east India, there is possibility of fairly widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall over Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim and Northeastern states during next 6-7 days.

Due to strengthening of moist easterly winds along the northern Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand from Thursday, there is possibility of enhanced rainfall activity with isolated heavy falls over East Uttar Pradesh during next five days.



SEVERE HEAT WAVE IN DELHI, HRY, RAJ FOR A WEEK

New Delhi: 'Severe heat wave' condition will continue in the national capital, Haryana and west Rajasthan for the next six-seven days with possibility of the mercury breaching 40 degrees Celsius every day. Lack of rainfall and hot winds blowing from Rajasthan was behind the severe weather condition, IMD said. On Thursday, the maximum temperature will hover around 42 degrees Celsius in Delhi.

JAMMU SIZZLES AT 42.9 C, SRINAGAR RECORDS 33.8

Srinagar: The MeT forecast mercury to rise further till the weekend even Jammu city recorded seasons hottest day at 42.9 degrees Celsius a day ago while the maximum temperature soared to 33.8 in Srinagar city. Srinagar city recorded 18.6 as the minimum temperature on Thursday while Pahalgam and Gulmarg recorded 10.3 and 11.4, respectively.

Zydus seeks DCGI nod for world's first plasmid DNA Covid vax

BREAKTHROUGH IN WAITHING

- **INDIA IS BATTLING A WAVE OF INFECTIONS THAT HAS KILLED MORE THAN 283,000 PEOPLE, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL FIGURES THAT MANY EXPERTS BELIEVE ARE SUBSTANTIAL UNDERESTIMATES, THE REPORT SAID.**
- **THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO), A CO-LEADER OF COVAX, HAS CALLED ON VACCINE MAKERS OUTSIDE INDIA TO ADVANCE SUPPLIES TO THE PROGRAMME TO MAKE UP THE SHORTFALL.**
- **COVAX HAS A DEAL WITH SII TO DELIVER I.IBN DOSES OF EITHER THE ASTRAZENECA VACCINE OR THE NEWER NOVAVAX SHOT, WHICH HAS STILL TO OBTAIN REGULATORY APPROVAL.**
- **COVAX AIMS TO PROVIDE VACCINES TO THE DEVELOPING WORLD IN 2021, A TARGET THAT WAS ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC AND NOW LOOKS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE, AS PER THE GUARDIAN.**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

MachZydus Cadila on Thursday announced that the company has applied for emergency use authorisation (EUA) to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for ZyCoV-D -- its needle-free plasmid DNA vaccine against Covid-19. If approved, it will become the world's first DNA vaccine against Covid.

ZyCoV-D had already exhibited a robust immunogenicity and tolerability and safety profile in the adaptive Phase I/II clinical trials carried out earlier. Both the Phase I/II and Phase III clinical trials have been monitored by an independent Data Safety Monitoring Board.

The vaccine is stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius but has shown good stability at temperatures of 25 degrees Celsius for at least three months. The thermostability of the vaccine will help in easy transportation and storage of the vaccine and reduce any cold chain breakdown challenges leading to vaccine wastage, the company has said.

The plasmid DNA platform also provides ease of manufacturing with minimal biosafety requirements (BSL-1). The Plasmid DNA platform also allows generating new constructs quickly to deal with mutations in the virus, such as those already occurring.

"This breakthrough marks a key milestone in scientific innovation and advancement in technology. As the first ever plasmid DNA vaccine for human use, ZyCoV-D has proven its safety and efficacy profile in our fight against Covid-19."

Dr Sharvil Patel, MD, Cadila Healthcare

Covishield Okayed By 9 Nations

New Delhi: Nine countries - Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Estonia and Switzerland - have cleared Serum Institute of India's Covishield, sources said today, amid a row over vaccines accepted for a "green pass" allowing free travel in the region. The European Medicines Agency (EMA), the EU's top medical body, has approved only four vaccines so far - Pfizer-BioNTech's Comirnaty, US pharma giant Moderna's Covid vaccine, the AstraZeneca shot manufactured and sold in Europe as Vaxzervria, and Johnson & Johnson's Janssen. Only those who have been given these shots are granted vaccination passports and allowed to travel hassle-free amid the pandemic.

Sputnik Light vaccine: No need for phase 3 trials in India

New Delhi: In a major boost for India's COVID-19 vaccination program, the subject expert committee (SEC) of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has told Hyderabad-based pharma firm Dr Reddy's Laboratories that it does not need to conduct a separate Phase-III trial in India for the single-dose COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik Light and instead can submit only the Russian Phase 3 immunogenicity, safety and efficacy data for approval in India. The latest development comes after India's drug regulator had refused to grant emergency-use authorisation to Sputnik-Light. The SEC noted that Sputnik-Light is the same as the component-1 of Sputnik V and said that the phase-3 efficacy trial is ongoing in Russia and the efficacy data is yet to be generated.

'No sufficient grounds'

SC on Centre's plea for states' power on SEBCs

The Supreme Court has dismissed the Centre's petition seeking review of its May 5 majority judgment which held the 102nd Constitution Amendment took away states' power to declare Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) for the purpose of reservation in jobs and admissions.

New Delhi: A five-judge bench said: "We have gone through the review petition filed against the judgment dated May 5. The grounds taken in the review petition do not fall within the limited ground on which review petition can be considered."

It added that the various grounds taken in the review petition have already been dealt with in the main judgment. The bench said: "We do not find any sufficient ground to entertain this review petition. The review petition is dismissed." The top court also rejected the Centre's application for open court hearing in the matter.

The top court, in a 3:2 majority verdict, had ruled that 102nd Constitution Amendment, which also led to setting up of National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), gives exclusive power to Centre to identify and declare SEBCs, and only the President can notify the list.

DELHI POLICE'S PLEA JUNKED

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday junked a plea by the Delhi Police challenging the High Court order, which asked it to supply the copy of statement of a witness to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and 11 other MLAs in a case connected with alleged assault of the then chief secretary Anshu Prakash in 2018. A bench told the police, "It may be a hot political potato for you but there is nothing in it legally". The bench also added that in accordance with the basic principle of natural justice, there must be a "robust common sense", which is that the accused must have the witness's statement copy.

130 countries support global minimum tax for world's largest corporations

- OECD said that 130 countries have joined a new two-pillar plan to reform international taxation rules and ensure that multinational enterprises pay a fair share of tax wherever they operate.
- These 130 countries and jurisdictions, representing more than 90 per cent of global GDP, joined the statement establishing a new framework for international tax reform.
- The two-pillar package -- an outcome of the negotiations coordinated by the OECD for much of the last decade -- aims to ensure that large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) pay tax where they operate and earn profits, while adding the much-needed certainty and stability to the international tax system.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) announced on Thursday that 130 countries, including Switzerland, China and India, have agreed to back a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 per cent, a policy priority for the Joe Biden administration, which has proposed major tax hikes on corporations to fund investments in infrastructure and social services, Forbes reported. A small group of the inclusive framework's 139 members have not yet joined the statement at this time. The remaining elements of the framework, including the implementation plan, will be finalised in October. The framework updates key elements of the century-old international tax system, which is no longer fit for purpose in a globalised and digitised 21st century economy.

The 130 countries that agreed to the framework include members of the OECD and all members of the G20. The OECD said that it expects the plan to be finalised in October and said that it has the potential to raise $150 billion in extra tax revenue every year, Forbes reported.

*Pillar one will ensure a fairer distribution of profits and taxing rights among countries with respect to the largest MNEs, including digital companies. It would re-allocate some taxing rights over MNEs from their home countries to the markets where they have business activities and earn profits, regardless of whether firms have a physical presence there.

*Pillar two seeks to put a floor on competition over corporate income tax, through the introduction of a global minimum corporate tax rate that countries can use to protect their tax bases.

Would be foolish to seek US arbitration on Kashmir issue: PoK PM

Hamza Ameer

Muzaffarabad: Raja Farooq Haider, the Prime Minister of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), has said that it would be foolish for Islamabad to seek US intervention on the Kashmir issue with India.

Haider said Pakistan's efforts and repeated demands to the US administration to act as an arbitrator in the Kashmir issue, will be against the true essence of the Kashmir cause, insisting that the dispute's resolution remains in the hands of the people of Kashmir, who deserve the right to self-determination and hold the authority to decide their fate.

Haider alleged that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan are no different, calling them the two sides of the same coin. Haider has been demanding the Pakistan government to not seek the US' arbitration in the Kashmir dispute, as that would undermine the demands of the Kashmiri people. Pakistan has been trying to seek international intervention in the Kashmir dispute, aimed at pressurising India to come to table talks on the matter.

INDIA NEEDS TO SHED OLD MINDSETS: ARMY CHIEF

New Delhi: The Chief of Army Staff, General M.M. Naravane, said on Thursday that the transition to a digital age is contrary to the existing concept of Defence Procurement Procedure (DDP) and Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP), and India needs to shed old mindsets and make the procedures flexible and adaptive. "All this would require simplified procedures that facilitate transition. Unfortunately, this has been one of our biggest stumbling blocks," said General Naravane in an address to a think-tank on Artificial Intelligence. He said that to harness niche technologies like Artificial Intelligence, exploit depth in IT and realise the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', India needs to shed old mindsets and make procedures more flexible and adaptive. These emerging military technologies have also raised an array of ethical considerations that could produce unintended consequences if they fail to perform as anticipated, he noted.

RAM TEMPLE TRUST GIVES CLEAN CHIT TO TRUSTEES IN LAND PURCHASE

Ayodhya : The Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust has given a clean chit to trustees involved in the purchase of land for the temple project. Talking to reporters at a press conference here on Thursday, Swami Govind Dev Giri, treasurer of the trust, said that he had studied all relevant documents in the past three days and found no discrepancy in the land deals. He said that Swami Vishwaprasann Teerth and Kameshwar Chaupal had scrutinised all documents with him.

"All allegations levelled in the land purchase are false and baseless. If those who have levelled allegations can help us in getting cheaper land at the same location, the Trust would be obliged to them," he said. Swami Govind Dev Giri further said that the campaign against the Trust was unfortunate.

RBI GUV CALLS FOR SUSTAINED POLICY SUPPORT, STRONGER CAPITAL BUFFER BY BANKS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das has said that sustained policy support along with further strengthening of capital buffers by banks and other financial institutions remain vital amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

In his foreword to the Financial Stability Report for July 2021, Das said that while recovery is underway, new risks have emerged, including the still nascent and mending state of the upturn which is vulnerable to shocks and future waves of the pandemic. Further, international commodity prices and inflationary pressures along with global spillovers amid high uncertainty and rising incidence of data breaches and cyber attacks also pose challenges, he added.

"Accordingly, sustained policy support accompanied by further fortification of capital and liquidity buffers by financial entities remain vital," Das said.

The RBI Governor also noted that with the scent of recovery, global financial markets are upbeat on reflation trade. Domestic financial markets are also boosted by the strengthening signs of the pandemic's abatement, the growing pace and breadth of the vaccination drive and renewed hopes of the economy clawing back to regain its lost ground.

Assam MLA Akhil Gogoi freed after acquittal in CAA protests case

Guwahati | Agencies

After over one and a half years in jail, Assam MLA and activist Akhil Gogoi was freed as a special NIA court on Thursday acquitted him in the second of the two cases filed against him in connection with the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in December 2019.

Hundreds of his supporters, amid heavy deployment of security forces, greeted Gogoi as he walked out of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital where he was being treated for numerous illnesses, after the special NIA court sent the release order to the Guwahati Central Jail.

"Truth has finally succeeded. The court upheld the democratic rights albeit all kinds of attempts were tried to keep me behind the bars," Gogoi, who is also the President of Raijor Dal, told media after his release.

Gogoi immediately visited the parents of "first CAA martyr" Sam Stafford at their residence in Hatigaon area of the city.

Earlier on Thursday, Special NIA judge Pranjal Das acquitted him and his three associates -- Dharjya Kowar, Manas Konwar and Bitu Sonowal -- in the second of the two cases filed against him in connection with the anti-CAA agitation in December 2019. Gogoi and his three associates were accused in two cases under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. They were cleared of all charges in the first case last week.

Welcoming the acquittal, Raijor Dal's Working President Bhasco de Saikia said the court's verdict has exposed the BJP government's attempts to target the party chief without any basis.

Gogoi, 46, was elected from eastern Assam's Sibsagar seat in the March-April Assembly polls, though being in jail since December 2019, for allegedly fomenting violence during the anti-CAA agitations.

Bihar Minister offers to quit over dispute with bureaucrat

Patna | Agencies

Bihar Social Welfare Minister Madan Sahani on Thursday offered to resign, levelling serious allegations on the department's Principal Secretary Atul Prasad.

"Atul Prasad has been sitting on the post of Principal Secretary for the last 4 years and has destroyed the department. He has ignored my suggestions during transfer postings. He should explain what his achievements are during his tenure in this department. "The department is run by bureaucrats and I am not having options other than resigning from the post," Sahani said. "We have complained to higher authorities about his approach in the department but no one has taken action on it," he added.

Sources have, however, said that the dispute between Sahani and Prasad happened during transfer postings of CDPOs and other officials of the department.

Sahani wanted transfer posting of officials according to his choice. As per the norms, reshuffle of officers can be possible only after once an officer has completed three years or more at one place. Sahani was allegedly wanting to transfer all officials including those who have not completed three years tenure. His recommendations were refused by Prasad. This was the actual reason for the dispute between him and Prasad, resulting in few transfer postings in the month of June. s per the norms, the Bihar government used to transfer officials and personnel of every department in June every year.

FIR LODGED AGAINST UPCC CHIEF, PRIYANKA'S PS

Lucknow: Infighting in the Uttar Pradesh Congress is now out in the open. Expelled Congress leader Konark Dixit has now lodged an FIR against Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee President Ajay Kumar Lallu and Sandeep Singh, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's personal secretary, at the Hussainganj police station here. The FIR has been lodged over an incident that took place at the state Congress headquarters here on June 29 when Dixit and some other Congress leaders had staged a protest against the state leadership. In the FIR, Dixit said that he was accosted by some supporters of the UPCC chief who came armed with bricks and rods. "They used offensive language, threatened us with dire consequences and then went on to use language that was highly communal in nature," he told reporters. The case has been registered under Sections 147, 323, 504,506 and 153 A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

It may be recalled that a few days ago, another Congress leader, Sunil Rai, had lodged a case against Ajay Kumar Lallu, claiming a threat to his life form the state Congress chief.

BJP MLA alleges Nitish Ministers took bribes for postings

PATNA | Agencies

A BJP MLA in Bihar has alleged that ministers in the Nitish Kumar government have taken massive bribes for transfers/postings of officials.

In the last week of June, the Nitish Kumar government transferred almost all officials and personnel from one place to another in various departments. Even on June 30, over 2000 officials were transferred on the last day.

Now, BJP MLA Gyanendra Singh Gyanu has alleged that ministers from both the BJP and JDU quota have collected massive bribes during the week-long reshuffle.

When asked for proof about his allegations, he said that an audio of BJP MLC Devesh Kumar went viral on social media where he was discussing about Rs 45 crore collected by a minister for the same. "We have urged our central leadership to take action against alleged ministers of BJP responsible for defaming the image of the party," Gyanu said.

Gyanu, who was earlier a MLA of JDU, said that ministers under the JDU quota are less involved in the postings game. "The ministers of the JDU quota are scared of Nitish Kumar. Hence, they are less involved in it," Gyanu said.

Haryana Cong MLAs in Delhi to meet state in-charge Bansal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After Punjab, now Congress MLAs of Haryana are in Delhi to meet the state in-charge Vivek Bansal to resolve organisational issues including appointments of Block and District committees and preparations for the local body elections.

Vivek Bansal, state in-charge of the party said, "there is no serious issue but due to pandemic we had not met in recent times, so we decided to have a meeting and listen to MLAs about the political situation in the state."

Bansal added that party is in the process of appointing new district committees in the state to strengthen the organization ahead of local body polls.

Due to turf war between former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and ex-Congress state chief Ashok Tanwar (not with Congress now) had resulted in non formation of the committees but after Tanwar's exit and Kumari Selja taking over as president on the eve of state elections, the status quo remained despite two years have passed since the new government has been formed with Congress as the main opposition party in the state.About 19 MLAS have met the state in-charge and discussed various issues related to political situation in Haryana.

The state is mired in factionalism as there are there prominent groups -- one of former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, another of Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala and also of state president Kumari Selja.

The Congress has ruled the state for 10 years but in 2014 lost the elections to BJP, however, the party missed the bus by a whisker as it stopped BJP to get absolute majority.

NIA searches 9 locations in UP, Punjab over extortion by Khalistani terrorists

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday carried out searches at nine locations in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab in connection with the case relating to extortion by Khalistani terrorists.

An NIA spokesperson said agency sleuths carried out searches at nine locations in Barnala, Moga, and Ferozepur in Punjab and Meerut and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh in connection with a case it registered related to threats and extorting money by Khalistani terrorists at Mehna and Moga in Punjab.

A case was registered in Punjab's Moga district in May this year relating to information received by Punjab Police that Arshdeep Singh alias Arash, a resident of Moga, Charanjit Singh alias Rinku, a resident of Barnala and Ramandeep Singh alias Jajj, a resident of Ferozepur, all currently residing abroad, had formed a gang and were threatening and extorting money from people.

NIA had taken over the probe on June 10. The official said that during investigation, three accused persons have been arrested and arms and ammunitions have been recovered at the instance of the arrested. The official said that Arshdeep Singh is a close associate of Hardeep Singh alias Nijjar, chief of Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF), who has been declared a designated terrorist by the Indian government. "As per Hardeep Singh's directions, Arshdeep Singh had formed this terrorist gang comprising gangsters and shooters based in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh," the official said, adding that the arrested accused persons have killed three businessmen and targeted entities based in Punjab and they had identified other targets as well.

The official said that during searches conducted at Beehla in Barnala, Dala in Moga, Ghall Khurd and Satiawala in Ferozepur in Punjab, and Hastinapur and Udyawali in Uttar Pradesh, empty bullet cartridges, one polybag containing 122 grams of narcotic substance, digital devices including compact drives, mobile phones, SIM cards and many incriminating documents have been recovered.

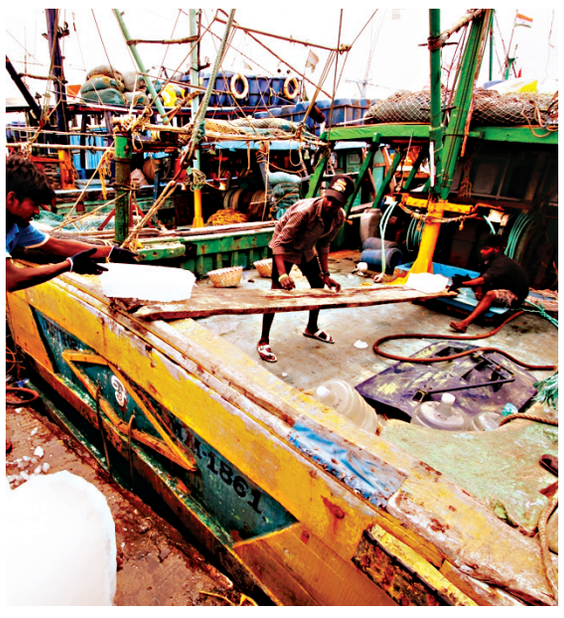
FAKE CALL CENTRE BUSTED IN GURUGRAM, 2 ARRESTED

Gurugram: A team of the cybercrime police has busted an illegal call centre operating in Sector-48 area in Gurugram, the police said on Thursday.

The call centre mostly used to threaten the US nationals to block their Social Security Number (SSN) and used to charge 100 to 800 dollars as a service charge per client, the police said. According to the police, a team from the Cyber Crime police station raided the call centre following a tip-off. During the raid, the police arrested two persons and seized laptops and mobile phones along with other electronic gadgets. The arrested persons have been identified as Manmohan Singh, the owner of the call centre and manager Nishant.

Fishermen demand that like crops, govt fix prices of fish

Chennai | Agencies



Fishermen's association leader Jesu Raja, heading the association of Rameswaram, Mandapam and Thangachimadam, has said that the state government must fix the prices for fish just like fixing the price for paddy and other produce. He said that export firms were procuring fishes like pomfret, seer and prawns at a paltry rate from the fishermen ranging from Rs 300 to Rs 600 a kilo and selling them in foreign markets at 3 to 4 times the price they buy.

He said that even as the exporters are making huge profits the fishermen who are braving rough weather in the sea and hard conditions get a paltry sum. While admitting that the export market has provided the fishermen with regular buyers, the benefits are very less.

Saju John, who is the president of the All Tamil Nadu Fishermen Welfare Association, told IANS: "Fishermen are always in difficulty. We venture into the sea, catch fish braving rough weather, rough seas and we end up being paid much less. The government can take the initiative and fix the prices for fish just like prices are fixed for paddy and other crops. Of course, if there is a huge catch, the prices will come down but even then the government can fix a price range and not allow exploitation in this field, otherwise, the labour will go waste."The association of Tamil Nadu Marine Products Exporters however said that they are making average payment to the fishermen and most important there are regular buyers. Sivashankaran .M of the exporters association told reporter, "At present, there is a proper balance between the fishermen community and the exporters. We are regular customers and we are paying for the fish according to our means. For a catch to be exported it requires a lot of other paraphernalia and hence we need to balance that also. I can vouch that the exporters and fishermen are having a symbiotic relationship."He added, "If there is any issue, we can discuss and iron out these differences." The fishermen of Tamil Nadu ventured into the sea only on Tuesday night even after the 61 day annual ban ended on June 14 as they had taken time to repair the boats, fishnets etc. Things got delayed as most of the fishermen had not taken even the first jab of the Covid-19 vaccine.Jesu Raja said, "We ventured into the sea only on Tuesday night as the annual maintenance of fishing nets, mechanical work on the boats, and other necessary maintenance work was not done as Covid-19 has created major problems for the fishermen community. Several of the fishermen were yet to take even the first dose of the Covid vaccine."

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Amol Mohan Kadam is son of Army No. 14824365L, Rank Hav/MT Name Kadam Mohanrao Vitthal residint at : VTC : Dongarwadi, P.O. Dongarwadi, Sub District: Miraj, District: Sangli, State: Maharashtra, PIN CODE 416407. I have changed my name Amol to Amol Mohan Kadam vide affidavit no. AY751823 Dated 01.07.2021 before Bhopal Court Madhya Pradesh.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Army No. 14824365L, Rank Hav/MT Name Kadam Mohanrao Vitthal residint at : VTC : Dongarwadi, P.O. Dongarwadi, Sub District: Miraj, District: Sangli, State: Maharashtra, PIN CODE 416407. I have changed my son name Rutuja Kadam to Rutuja Mohan Kadam vide affidavit no. AY751824 Dated 01.07.2021 before Bhopal Court Madhya Pradesh.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Subhadra Vitthal Kadam is mother of Army No. 14824365L, Rank Hav/MT Name Kadam Mohanrao Vitthal residint at: VTC:Dongarwadi, P.O. Dongarwadi, Sub District: Miraj, District: Sangli, State: Maharashtra, PIN CODE 416407. I have changed my name Subhadra Devi to Subhadra Vitthal Kadam vide affidavit no. AY751819 Dated 01.07.2021 before Bhopal Court Madhya Pradesh.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pramila Mohan Kadam is wife of Army No. 14824365L, Rank Hav/MT Name Kadam Mohanrao Vitthal residint at : VTC : Dongarwadi, P.O. Dongarwadi, Sub District: Miraj, District: Sangli, State: Maharashtra, PIN CODE 416407. I have changed my name Pramila Maruti Kadam to Pramila Mohan Kadam vide affidavit no. AY751821 Dated 01.07.2021 before Bhopal Court Madhya Pradesh.

GOVERNMENT FULLY PREPARED FOR POSSIBLE THIRD WAVE : CM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan interacted with doctors and honoured them on Doctor's Day

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that as a result of the sacrifice, hard work, service and dedication of the doctors during the crisis of Corona, a feeling developed for them in the public that 'Tum Rakshak Kahu Ko Darna' (you are the protector, then why should we be afraid). It was the result of the constant hard work of the doctors that in the dire circumstances of Corona, people started experiencing 'Sankat Kate, Hare Sab Peeda' (crisis is over, all pain is gone) due to the presence of the doctors. Control of corona infection in Madhya Pradesh became possible only due to the efforts of doctors and paramedical staff. On the occasion of Doctor's Day, on behalf of the people of the state, I express my gratitude to the doctors and pay them respects. Chouhan said that the possibility of a third wave of corona infection has been expressed by scientists. The state government is fully prepared to face, prevent and stop this wave. The state government is continuously active in this direction. Doctors also have to take all measures to save the state from the third wave. Chouhan was addressing a dialogue and felicitation programme organised on the occasion of Doctor's Day.

In the programme at Minto Hall, Chouhan interacted with the doctors. The doctors were also honoured by Chouhan in the programme. Digital certificates were also distributed by Chouhan to the doctors serving during the Corona period. The doctors of all government and non-government medical colleges and hospitals of the state were connected to the programme online. Chouhan paid a heartfelt tribute to the doctors who sacrificed their lives in the difficult times of Corona pandemic, remembering them for their unlimited services and duty and devotion to humanity.

Chouhan said that people's trust in government health institutions has increased manifold during the Corona period. Government as well as private hospitals were very cooperative in dealing with the corona infection. Special rates of corona treatment were fixed by the state government for private hospitals. Due to which a large number of people got the benefit of Ayushman Bharat Yojana. In order to build Aatm Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh, work is going on to strengthen the health infrastructure. The number of medical colleges is also increasing. People should also be motivated to adopt a healthy lifestyle by combining Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Yoga.

Chouhan said that just as doctors have played a role in controlling corona infection, in the same way your cooperation is expected in motivating people for vaccination. The communication of doctors with the general public is important in removing the confusion and fear regarding vaccination. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan appealed to the doctors to spread awareness among the people in this regard on social media. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that the corona infection has not gone yet. In England and some other countries, the situation of lockdown is returning once again. In this situation, the people of the state will have to be motivated to follow corona appropriate behaviour. In this, all the doctors of the state should provide all possible cooperation.Chouhan said that the state government is alert to prevent the third wave of corona virus. Large scale tests are being conducted daily in the state. The aim is to initiate immediate control measures as soon as the third wave is detected. Chouhan said that this is the topmost priority for me. That is why review meetings of corona virus are being organised regularly. Preparations are continuing to face the third wave. Increase in the capacity of hospitals, oxygen production, supply of essential materials, equipment and medicines are being ensured. Training of doctors, paramedical staff is also going on. In some countries of Europe, the situation of lockdown is being created again. In view of this, we need to be cautious.

PM Modi interacts with Ujjain's female street vendor Najmeen on Digital India Day

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On Digital India Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed through video conferencing with 41-year-old Najmeen Shah of Ujjain Municipal Corporation, who is among the beneficiary street vendors of PM Swanidhi Yojana across the country. PM Modi asked- Najmeen Shah ji do you take digital payment or cash. On this, Najmeen said - Sir, I take payment both in cash and digital. QR code has been placed on the fruit cart. I ask the customer to make digital payment. When the Prime Minister asked Najmeen to make online transaction, she showed by making an online transaction of Rs. 1520 with fruit trader Shubham with her mobile.Najmeen said that our financial condition became weak in the lockdown. We didn't have anything. We came to know about PM Swanidhi Yojana through newspaper. Applied online by going to MP Online. All instalments were also Najmeen Shah is the only woman from Ujjain district who did every transaction online. She is famous as Digital Najmeen. She filled the form through MP Online and paid the fees online. Approval was received from the corporation and also deposited the installments of the bank online under the scheme.

Najmeen Shah has set up a fruit cart at Nagjhiri square on Dewas Road in Ujjain. She also returned the loan of Rs 10,000 on time. After this she again took a loan of 20 thousand. She also repaid this loan on time. This time Smt. Najmeen also got cash back of Rs. 1000 on timely repayment of loan. Smt. Najmeen has told that she has also learned sewing work under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. With this, she earns about 200 rupees a day.

Urban Development and Housing Minister Shri Bhupendra Singh informed that till date, 6 lakh 12 thousand street vendors in Madhya Pradesh have been registered and 5 lakh 78 thousand street vendors have been given identity cards and sale certificates after verification under PM Swanidhi Yojana. Based on this, online applications were submitted to banks by 4 lakh 83 thousand street sellers. Loans of Rs.10 thousand each were sanctioned to 3 lakh 83 thousand street vendors through various banks. Out of these, 3 lakh 24 thousand were given loans to start their livelihood. Madhya Pradesh ranks second in the country by being a leader in the implementation of this scheme.

COVID-19

MP logs 40 new cases, 12 deaths

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh on Thursday recorded 40 new coronavirus cases and 12 casualties, which pushed its infection tally to 7,89,844 and death toll to 8,981, the state health department said. A total of 65 patients were discharged from hospitals in the last 24 hours, taking the state''s recovery count to 7,80,330, the department said. The active COVID-19 case count in the state stands at 533. The caseload in Indore went up to 1,52,846 with the addition of eight cases, while that of Bhopal rose by 10 to reach 1,23,138. No death was reported in these two districts. The death toll remained unchanged at 1,391 in Indore and 972 in Bhopal. There are 104 active COVID-19 cases in Indore and 115 in Bhopal. Of the total 52 districts in the state, 37 districts did not record a single new case in the last 24 hours, it said. With 75,095 new tests, the total number of samples tested for coronavirus in Madhya Pradesh has reached 1.21 crore. The coronavirus figures in MP are as follows: Total cases 7,89,844, new cases 40, death toll 8,981, recovered 7,80,330, active cases 533, number of tests so far 1,21,50,837.

MAN CALLED HIS VILLAGE 'MINI-PAKISTAN' ON FACEBOOK, ARRESTED

Rewa: Rewa district police chief Rakesh Kumar Singh said people in the neighbouring village, who appeared to taunt the Muslim village as a 'mini-Pakistan,' will also be warned not to indulge in such activities. A Madhya Pradesh man who referred to his village as a 'mini Pakistan' has been arrested in Rewa district, police said. Abrar Khan, 32, posted his photograph on his Facebook account with a caption, "See Amreti - a Mini Pakistan." Rewa district's superintendent of police Rakesh Kumar Singh said on Thursday. Singh said Khan told the police during his questioning that "it was a casual remark" as neighbouring villages used to taunt his Muslim-dominated village as "a mini Pakistan". Khan has been arrested under section 153 (wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot) of IPC and Section 66 of the Information Technology Act,

"We are also investigating the details of those who liked his post. We will issue a warning to villagers (in the neighbouring villages) not to indulge in such activities (call this village mini-Pakistan)," the district police chief said.

Abrar Khan reportedly told the police that he worked in an oilfield in Oman and returned to his village during the lockdown a few months earlier. Singh said the police has seized his passport and asked the passport office to cancel the travel document.Rakesh Kumar Singh said the district's cyber cell is investigating the case and verifying his credentials.

CM garlands portrait of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Rai

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on the birth anniversary of doctor and freedom fighter and Bharat Ratna awardee Dr Bidhan Chandra Rai paid homage here on Thursday. Chief Minister Chouhan garlanded the portrait of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Rai at the Chief Minister's residence. It is noteworthy to mention that his birthday, July 1, is celebrated as 'Doctor's Day' in India. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Rai was born on July 1, 1882 in Bankipur, Patna. He was a doctor and freedom fighter. Shri Bidhan Chandra Rai is considered the architect of modern West Bengal. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna in the year 1961.Dr. Rai had a prominent place among the doctors of the world. He was elected a Fellow of the 'Royal Society of Medicine' in 1909, 'Royal Society of Tropical Medicine' in 1925 and 'American Society of Chest Physicians' in 1940. Dr. Rai established 'Yadavpur Rajyakshma Hospital' in the year 1923 and his major contribution was also in the establishment of 'Chittaranjan Sewa Sadan'. Dr. Rai died on July 1, 1962. His date of birth and date of death are both on July 1.

'Sweet distraction:'

Birthday cake helps brothers escape leopard

- Firoz and Sabir Mansuri were heading at dusk to a birthday party for Firoz's son when the leopard burst out of a sugarcane field.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Two brothers pulled off a sweet escape from a leopard in India by throwing a birthday cake at the animal as it chased them while they rode a motorbike, officials said Thursday.

"Your first instinct when you sense danger is to do whatever you can to save yourself. That's what they did," a forest official told AFP.

"They had a cake with them and they threw it at the leopard."

According to the Times of India, Firoz and Sabir Mansuri were heading at dusk to a birthday party for Firoz's son in Madhya Pradesh state when the leopard burst out of a sugarcane field.

They accelerated but the big cat gained on them on the muddy path, leaving Sabir, riding pillion, no other option than to lob the box containing the cake at the predator.

Hit by the "weapon of sweet distraction", the flummoxed feline gave up its chase and darted back into the fields -- and without even trying the cake, the paper said."The leopard followed us for over 500 metres (yards). We narrowly escaped death," it quoted Sabir as saying.

Leopard numbers in India grew more than 60 percent between 2014 and 2018 to almost 13,000, according to the government, with the highest numbers in Madhya Pradesh.

They are less scared than tigers of people and often enter villages and even towns.Attacks on adults are rare but children are more at risk. Last month a leopard snatched a four-year-old girl from her garden in Kashmir. Her mutilated body was found the next day.

Tomar Falls From Dais During Program

- Energy Minister Pradyumna Singh Tomar on Thursday fell from the dais during a program in Gwalior. The minister was taken to a hospital for check-up and his condition was completely normal, a senior police official said. He later left for Bhopal.

Team Absolute | Gwalior

Madhya Pradesh Energy Minister Pradyumna Singh Tomar on Thursday fell from the dais during a program in Gwalior.

Around 25 people were sitting on the 10-foot wide stage. However, Tomar fell from the stage after suddenly losing his balance. All of the dignitaries present at the event rushed to help the minister.

The event was held to inaugurate the office of National Horticulture Board in Gwalior. Tomar has sustained some internal injuries after the accident.

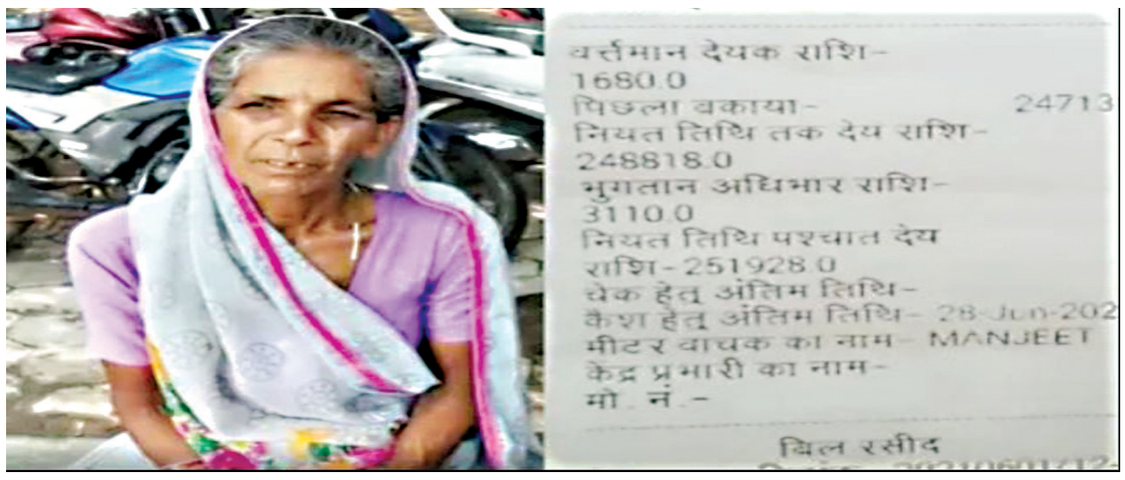
The minister was taken to a hospital for check-up and his condition was completely normal, a senior police official said. He later left for Bhopal.

The incident took place when Tomar, along with Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and others, was attending the inauguration of the National Horticulture Board's office in the city.As Tomar was called to address the programme, he got up from his seat and started walking towards the microphone when he slipped and fell down from the dais.Gwalior Superintendent of Police Amit Sanghi said the minister underwent a check-up at the hospital and his condition was totally normal. Afterwards he left for Bhopal for an urgent meeting, the SP added.

Maid Gets Rs 2.50 Lakh Electricity Bill

The senior citizen has been making rounds of the electricity department's office for the last 7 days, however, no official is ready to hear her matter and help her. She has now requested the government to help her as she won't be able to pay a bill of such a huge amount.

Team Absolute | Bhopal



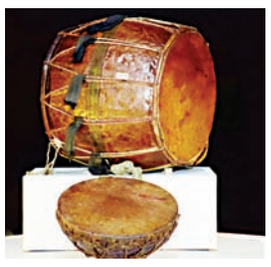
The Electricity department in Madhya Pradesh has sent a bill of Rs 2.50 lakh to a resident of Guna. The bill has been sent to 65-years-old Ram Bai Prajapati after which she has been running from pillar to post to get the correct electricity bill. The senior citizen has been making rounds of the electricity department's office for the last 7 days, however, no official is ready to hear her matter and help her. She has now requested the government to help her as she won't be able to pay a bill of such a huge amount.

The woman has been living in a shanty for many years. She uses electricity for a bulb and a table fan in her hut. She used to get a bill of Rs 300 to 500 every month. But, due to the lockdown, the woman could not deposit the bill for two months and this time she received a bill of Rs 2.50 lakh. After this, the woman reached the electricity department's office regarding inflated bill, but nobody came forward to help her."I earn my living by working as a maid in other's houses. I have a bulb and a table fan in my house. My bill has come to 2.5 lakhs. This is incomprehensible. I have been coming to the electricity department for the last several days, but there is no one to listen," she said. The officers of the Electricity Department refused to say anything on the matter.The MP Electricity Regulatory Commission has now issued new electricity rates (tariffs). The fixed charge has been increased from Re 1 to Rs 8. The power companies had sought permission for an increase of 6.23 percent to make up for the loss of Rs 2,629 crore, but the commission has not increased the prices as per their demand.

IGRMS Exhibit of the Month:

Dhol and Damau, A folk percussion instrument of uttarakhand

Team Absolute | Bhopal



Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya under its popular museum series 'Exhibit of the Month' displays a traditional object for a whole month.

In this regard, Dr RM Nayal said that The exhibit for the month of July , 2021 - Dhol and Damau is one of the ancient folk instruments of Uttarakhand. It is also known as the Mangal Yantra or divine instrument due to its divine origin. Not a single event of hilly culture takes place without echos of Dhol-Damau. It is said that it was originated from the Damaroo of lord Shiva. Shiva first recited it to mother Parvati, when Shiva was playing it one of his Gana present over there memorised it and the tradition is continuing since then. Dhol and Damau is the soul of the rural culture of Uttarakhand. Birth to death and abode to jungle none of the social activity or ceremony completes without Dhol (drum) and Dholi (Drummer). Dhol and Damau both are complement to each other and their mutual relation is considered as the husband and wife (Shiva-Shakti). This Exhibit of the Month' has been inaugurated by Rakesh Bhatt, Assistant Curator.Dhol is a double membrane or two way drum played with help of a wooden stick from one end and by hand on other end. Dhol is a cylindrical structure made of brass or copper. Its left end is covered with goat hide and the right one with of the buffalo or Barahsingha called Poodi. The membrane of right end is thicker and played with a wooden stick whereas left one is thinner and played by beating with hand. Both ends are tied well with a special kind of rope called Fulangu made of cannabis. A strip of brass is fixed in the middle of the drum called Bijesaar. Bijesaar is the symbol of snake deity. 12 braces are fixed for tuning the dhol by tightening or loosening these.The group of beats and rhythm played on dhol is called the dhol sagar. There are nearly 300 taals and nearly 1200 verses in the dhol sagar used for communication and exchange of special massages. Different rhythms are played at every different occasion or ceremony.

GOVERNOR KOSHIYARI WRITES TO CM THACKERAY, BATS FOR OPPOSITION'S DEMANDS

The Governor has referred to a delegation of the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Fadnavis which met him in Raj Bhavan on June 23 and submitted two memorandums to him. He said that since the three issues are of great importance, the CM should initiate suitable action and apprise him of the same.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In what could trigger fresh political tension, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari on Wednesday shot off a letter to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, asking him to take decisions on certain issues raised by the Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis.

The Governor has referred to a delegation of the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Fadnavis which met him in Raj Bhavan on June 23 and submitted two memorandums to him.The main points raised by Fadnavis were: extending the duration of the upcoming Monsoon Session of the Maharashtra Legislature, take steps to fill up the vacant post of Assembly Speaker, and postponing the local bodies elections due to the pending OBC reservations matter.The Governor said that since the three issues are of great importance, the CM should initiate suitable action and apprise him of the same.

However top leaders of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi allies -- Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress -- reacted sharply to the Governor's letter.

While Congress Minister Balasaheb Thorat said that the issue of the Speaker's election is already under consideration with the election likely on July 6, NCP's Minister Nawab Malik countered by asking why Koshyari has still not cleared the list of 12 MLCs from the Governor's quota. In a strong attack, senior Sena leader Kishore Tiwari, who is accorded MoS status, sought to know whether Koshyari is "Governor of Maharashtra or Fadnavis and state BJP?" Alleging that the Governor was interfering and arm-twisting the duly elected MVA government, Tiwari said instead of raising the state's burning issues, "why so much interest in raising issues of the state Opposition."

He demanded that the President and Prime Minister should recall the Governor "to save the federal democratic setup of the Indian Constitution" since he is "acting beyond his Constitutional dues."

After senior Congress leader Nana Patole was appointed the state party President, he quit his post as Speaker in February and since then, NCP's Deputy Speaker Narhari Zirwal is holding charge.Prior to the Budget Session the Governor had asked the MVA government to hold the Speaker's post election, but it could not be done.Last week, the state government decided to hold a two-day Monsoon Session on July 5-6 in view of the Covid-19 scenario and the anticipated 'third wave' against which the Opposition had protested.

Malik said that the final decision on the Speaker's election would be taken after the Covid-19 test reports of all legislators are received.

On the Speaker's election, the MVA expects it to be a smooth affair since it has a majority in the House.

Maharashtra At "Centre Of Kurukshetra Battle:" Sena's Sharp Attack On BJP

In the Saamana editorial heavy on references from the epic Mahabharata, the Sena says the BJP "should not become an Abhimanyu."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra is "at the centre of the Kurukshetra battle", fighting on multiple fronts like Covid and corruption investigations, the ruling Shiv Sena has said in a stinging editorial that takes digs at the BJP, its former partner.

In the Saamana editorial heavy on references from the epic Mahabharata, the Sena says the BJP "should not become an Abhimanyu." Abhimanyu was a character known for plunging into a difficult fight without an exit strategy.

"Maharashtra is battling the Covid pandemic but now it also has to battle autocratic action by the Enforcement Directorate and the CBI. Mamata Banerjee has fought and won against such autocrats. Maharashtra needs to adopt the same path to fight them," the Sena says.

"The Chief Minister (Uddhav Thackeray) must have said all this to Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

The comments are significant as a meeting last month between CM Thackeray and PM Modi, which segued into a one-on-one interaction, has fueled speculation that the parties -- partners for 25 years before their split in 2019 -- are on the verge of reviving their alliance in Maharashtra.

The buzz has intensified amid reports of growing strain in the Sena-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)-Congress coalition, specifically over an investigation targeting former minister Anil Deshmukh of the NCP.The Shiv Sena editorial referred to the meeting last evening between Thackeray and NCP leader Sharad Pawar.

"On Tuesday, in the meeting between Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray, this strategy must have been adopted. In the Mahabharata Lord Krishna took his Rath right to the centre of the Kurukshetra battle and fought enemies on all side and defeated 'adharma'," it said.

When Sharad Pawar left the Chief Minister's home "you could see joy and satisfaction on Pawar's face" the Saamana editorial said.

"The CM has also become more confident now. And what can I say about the Congress. All their top leaders are in the most comfortable positions now and hence the three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi government is moving like Lord Krishna's Rath on the Kurukshetra battlefield and destroying the enemy."

On the BJP, the Sena said their confidence about toppling the government in Maharashtra had been completely destroyed.

The party said the BJP "can go drum beating" that the Maharashtra government was about to fall but it was not going to happen.

Speaking about the Thackeray-Modi meeting, the Sena remarked: "They met in Delhi and rumours started floating around that there will be a secret swearing-in again at the Raj Bhavan. If anyone is dreaming about it, then it is a political nightmare."

It added: "What has happened in the meeting in Delhi that 'media corporations' are announcing dates of new government formation? Uddhav Thackeray must have told the PM that the BJP is responsible for whatever political formations have happened in Maharashtra. If the BJP hadn't pushed the Shiv Sena to this point, this current government would not have been formed. This must have been discussed."

The Sena also said the BJP was "hallucinating about political instability in the state" by using the Enforcement Directorate, CBI and the Governor to target the government.

Will introduce new agriculture bill in monsoon session: Ajit Pawar

Maharashtra has 305 APMCs with an average annual turnover of Rs 50,000 crore. Majority of the state's 1.56 crore farmers rely on these committees to sell their agriculture produce post- harvest in Kharif and Rabi season.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra government will bring in a new farmer-friendly agriculture legislature bill in the two-day monsoon session of the state assembly that begins on July 5, deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar said on Thursday.

Unhappy with Centre's three farm laws that have triggered protests in several parts of the country, the state's ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government wants to bring its own legislature, which will strengthen the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and "secure farmers from exploitation of outside traders", said Pawar.

Maharashtra has 305 APMCs with an average annual turnover of Rs 50,000 crore. Majority of the state's 1.56 crore farmers rely on these committees to sell their agriculture produce post-harvest in Kharif and Rabi season.

The state has decided to bring its own legislature as it believes the Central government laws are aimed at making APMCs irrelevant, said

revenue minister Balasaheb Thorat.

"We will make licences mandatory for every individual or trader who wants to procure farm produce from state's farmers," Thorat had said last week.

Another feature of the new bill would be related to strict implementation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) to farmers. Anybody violating the MSP could be subjected to punishment and fine, said sources. However, there are differences within the cabinet on making violation of MSP a criminal offense, with a section of leaders arguing that stringent punishment would lead to confrontation between farmers and APMC officials, "which would defeat the objective of the bill", they added.

GULSHAN KUMAR MURDER: BOMBAY HC UPHOLDS LIFE TERM FOR KILLERS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Thursday upheld the life imprisonment awarded to a convict Abdul Rauf Dawood Merchant for the sensational daylight murder of music baron and T-Series owner Gulshan Kumar, near a temple 24 years ago.

The court also confirmed the acquittal of TIPS company co-founder Ramesh Taurani but set aside the lower court's order acquitting Merchant's brother, Abdul Rashid Dawood Merchant, and sentenced him to undergo life imprisonment, said the Merchant brothers' lawyer Satish Maneshinde.A division bench comprising Justice Sadhana Jadhav and Justice NR Borkar found the Merchant siblings guilty of murder, conspiracy, common intentions and under the Arms Act.

"The appellant (Abdul Rauf) should not be entitled to remission if any. He has criminal antecedents and continued in similar activities thereafter. In the interest of justice and society at large, the appellant doesn't deserve any leniency," the court observed.

The court further noted that soon after the 1997 incident, Abdul Rauf was absconding till his arrest in 2001, and later released on furlough in 2009 and re-arrested in 2016.

The court's order came in the Maharashtra Government's appeal through the state counsel Prajakta Shinde against Taurani and Abdul Rashid's acquittal, and Abdul Rauf's appeal against his conviction and life sentence.

On August 12, 1997, the Delhi-based music baron Gulshan Kumar was shot dead with 16 bullets outside a temple at Juhu in suburban Mumbai, triggering a massive upheaval in Bollywood.

The prosecution contended that the killing was an outcome of business rivalries between Kumar and Taurani, and a rift between Kumar and music director Nadeem Saifi -- of the erstwhile Nadeem-Shravan duo.

As part of the differences, Saifi allegedly hired gangster Abu Salem of the Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar gang to eliminate Kumar, but sneaked away to London in June 1997 and has not returned since, while his partner Shravan Rathod died in April 2021.

Largest area under PMC, Pune officially becomes biggest city in Maharashtra

The PMC will now have a geographical area of 516.18 sq km, thus replacing the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), which has 440 sq km area, as the civic body with the largest area.

Team Absolute | Pune

Pune has officially become the city with the largest geographical area in Maharashtra after the state government on Wednesday issued an order for extending the boundaries of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) to include 23 new villages in the existing city limits.The PMC will now have a geographical area of 516.18 sq km, thus replacing the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), which has 440 sq km area, as the civic body with the largest area. With the new urban limits, Pune also becomes the seventh largest city in the country.Incidentally, the PMC has an estimated budget of Rs 8,370 crore for 2021-22, as compared to the Rs 39,038 crore budget of the BMC.The state Urban Development department had issued the notification on December 23 last year announcing its intention to extend PMC boundaries to include the new areas. "The state government has considered the objections and suggestions received to the notification," the order stated, adding that the government has decided to alter the limits of the civic body.

The 23 adjoining villages merged in PMC limits are Mhalunge, Sus, Bavdhan Budruk, Kirkatwadi, Pisoli, Kondhwe-Dhawade, Kopre, Nanded, Khadakwasla, Manjari Budhruk, Narhe, Holkarwadi, Autade-Handewadi, Wadachiwadi, Shewalewadi, Nandoshi, Sanasnagar, Mangdewadi, Bhilarewadi, Gujar Nimbalkarwadi, Jambhulwadi, Kolewadi and Wagholi.The state government had first declared its intention to include 34 villages in PMC limits in 2014, but the process was delayed and only 11 villages were merged in the PMC, that too after an intervention by the Bombay High Court in 2017. The High Court had urged the state government for a response over its delay in merging the villages in PMC limits, after the villagers approached the court.

The 11 villages merged in 2017 were Lohegaon, Mundhwa, Hadapsar, Uttamnagar, Shivane, Ambegaon Khurd, Undri, Dhayari, Ambegaon Budruk, Phursungi and Urli Devachi.

In 2014, the PMC had estimated that it would need Rs 5,741 crore to carry out basic development work on water pipeline, sewage network, road construction and solid waste management in these 34 villages. "The estimated cost for developing basic facilities in these areas as per the current market situation would be Rs 9,000 crore. It will be necessary to create a master plan for development of basic facilities," said a civic official.

The decision to merge the villages is also likely to have political ramifications. The ruling BJP in the PMC was earlier reluctant to merge the 23 villages, saying it should be done in phases to ensure proper development of the area, and not because of the civic polls scheduled for early next year. However, it has now welcomed the merger of villages.

"We were never against expanding the city by merging more areas but wanted it to be done in a phase-wise manner for proper development. The civic administration has estimated that Rs 9,000 crore to Rs 10,000 crore will be needed for the development of basic civic facilities in the new areas. The state government should provide the necessary funds for development of new areas," said Mayor Murlidhar Mohol.

Mumbai's biodiversity map is now interactive

Team Absolute | New Delhi

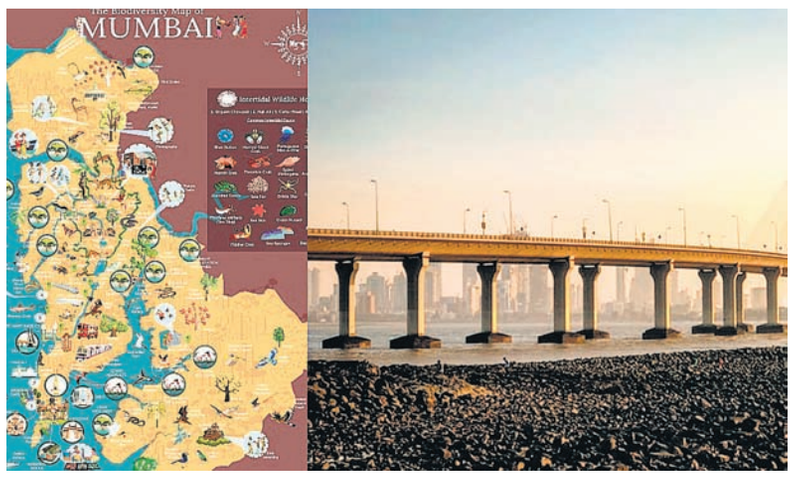
A unique Interactive Biodiversity Map presented by The Ministry of Mumbai's Magic aims to inspire and educate the citizens of Mumbai about the city's rich biodiversity. It was launched on Wednesday. Illustrated by well-known cartoonist, Rohan Chakravarty, a.k.a Green Humour, whose artworks are inspired by themes of wildlife conservation, the map highlights the biodiversity that thrives in Mumbai's Metropolitan region.

The map is being launched with the objective to invigorate a sense of ownership amongst Mumbaikars to take responsibility towards protecting and fostering their city's biodiversity.

First launched in 2020 as a static map, the new interactive map will document different species with clickable features that present details of the species, their habitats and their conservation status. The map covers the Mumbai Metropolitan Region and the water bodies of Thane Creek, Mahim Bay, Vasai Creek and the Arabian Sea. Highlighting 17 species of flora and 78 species of fauna, the map also emphasizes the interdependence of the Indigenous Communities -- Adivasis and Kolis -- on the local biodiversity for their livelihoods.

Mumba's Ministry of Magic (MMM) is a platform to unite citizens and showcase their collective action, mobilizing them to draw the attention of the local government to prioritise protection of Mumbai's biodiversity hotspots, green spaces and its inhabitants.

"Illustrations can make a lasting impression on one's mind. Mumbai has always been portrayed as the city of glamour, speed, and everything urban. Yet, it remains green at the heart. This map is a true reflection of what this city represents, an island of diversity with a



bucket full of dreams and a treasure trove of natural wonders," says Rajesh Sanap, researcher and wildlife photographer.

Developed as an engaging and interactive digital experience, the Biodiversity Map will support the works of local citizens - local photographers and wildlife experts such as Rajesh Sanap, Kane Lew, Ashish Chalapuram, Pradip Patade and Vandan Jhaveri having contributed photographs and their expertise. The map will also be used as a tool to educate children at local schools, raising awareness of Mumbai's precious ecosystems and encouraging citizens to reconnect with the ecosystems in the city.

"Making the map interactive increases the scope of this project by leaps and bounds because now we can reach a wide section of the young audience that uses the internet. This is a resource that is available at a click which is very difficult to obtain because if you had to look up the biodiversity of Mumbai -- firstly, it is a very vast topic in itself and secondly, there is so much information dispersed far and wide on the internet that it would take time to collate all of that data," Rohan Chakravarty, Cartoonist -- Green Humour tells IANSlife.

Alongside information on the local flora and fauna the map will provide information on volunteering opportunities with local conservation organisations -- enabling Mubaikers to use their skills to protect the unique local ecosystem.

"The biodiversity map of Mumbai has excited Mumbaikars across the spectrum. Students, parents, young professionals, conservation experts and even decision makers; it managed to unite and invoke pride in their city and its rich biodiversity. Our interactions with people and also the media interest proved that the creative aspect of this map has the potential to unite people. So as a natural next step, we now want to move people to action. The interactive version of the map that both deep dives into the city's flora and fauna as well as showcases local organizations who have been working to conserve it is a step towards that," Arpita Bhagat, MMM Campaign Lead says.

EDITOR'S SPECS

Covid infection in pets, may be common

Are you Covid-positive? Stay away from your feline and pooch friends to avoid the risk of passing on the infection to them, suggests a study, which found that infection in pets is more common than thought. The researchers from the Utrecht University in the Netherlands, said that the most likely route of transmission is from human to pet, rather than the other way round. "If you have Covid-19, you should avoid contact with your cat or dog, just as you would with other people," said Els Broens from the varsity. "The main concern, however, is not the animals' health -- they had no or mild symptoms of Covid-19 -- but the potential risk that pets could act as a reservoir of the virus and reintroduce it into the human population. For the study, researchers studied 156 dogs and 154 cats of people who had tested positive for Covid-19. Six cats and seven dogs (4.2 per cent) had positive PCR tests and 31 cats and 23 dogs (17.4 per cent) tested positive for antibodies. With pets in 40/196 households (20.4 per cent) having antibodies for the virus, the study reveals that Covid-19 is highly prevalent in pets of people who have had the disease. A similar study Canada showed that cats that spent more time with their owners seemed to be at higher risk of infection than dogs. And cats that slept on their owner's bed were more likely to have Covid. It is because cats' biology, including their viral receptors, the "locks" the virus unpicks to enter cells, make them more susceptible to Covid-19 than dogs. Cats are also more likely to sleep near their owner's face than dogs, increasing their exposure to any infection.

SUZZANE CLARK BRINGS SIGH OF RELIEF

Rhydhima Raj

The much-awaitedpull up is right around the corner where several US companies have started opening up work related positions for Americans as well as people on various Visas in the US. This brings a sigh of relief amidst several unemployed people residing in the US and this wave of well ordered employment strategies and less restrictions over attaining Visas such as H-1B was brought by Suzanne Clark currently the CEOof the U.S. Chamber, the first woman to hold the position. Clark succeeded Thomas J. Donohue who served as the CEO of the U.S. Chamber for 24 years on March 11 this year.

As The Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation, representing more than 3 million businesses as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, Clark understands that there is a huge shortage of skilled and professional people in America. In view of this, the US Chambers of Commerce has started a massive campaign. Under this, the Biden administration and the US Congress have been urged to double the number of H-1B visas and eliminate the quota for each country for green cards. The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa through which US companies hire workers overseas for work that requires theoretical or technical proficiency.Tech companies rely on the H-1B visa system to hire thousands of people every year from countries including India and China. The demand of the US Chambers of Commerce is to increase the H-1B quota, which is currently 65 thousand. Apart from this, he has demanded that the quota of additional 20 thousand should be increased for those who have come from outside for higher education in America.

According to Suzanne Clark, President and CEO of the US Chamber of Commerce, if this is the time for the American to move forward once again, American companies will face problems due to the lack of workers. The Chamber has requested for employment-based immigrant visas to be increased from 1.40 lakh to 2.80 lakh annually. Chambers has requested the annual green card quota not to count the employee's spouse and minor children. With this, the number of employment-based migrant workers can easily be doubled every year.

Under the America Works agenda, the US Chamber has requested doubling the maximum limit for employment-based visas, doubling the quota for H-1B and H-2B visas. Apart from this, Chambers has also urged the implementation of reforms in the legal immigration system so that companies can easily hire workers. Chambers has urged the US government to increase investment in rogue education and training programs and expand it to childcare for working parents. According to Clarke, the US government should focus on developing skills that will make it easier for Americans to find jobs, and relaxing visa rules will help attract talent from around the world.

Early or late arrival of monsoon has little bearing on overall performance

Sanjeev Sharma

The y little bearing on its overall performance as seen over the past any years.

According to Skymet, in 2004, Monsoon landed on mainland Kerala on May 18, two weeks ahead of its normal date. The month of June clocked 100 per cent rainfall of LPA (long period average). National Weather Agency predicted the ISMR (Indian Summer Monsoon Rainfall) to be 100 per cent of LPA. However, the season ended with drought with an overall deficiency of 13.8 per cent. In 1983, the Monsoon announced its arrival over Kerala on June 13, with a delay of nearly two weeks. The month of June remained deficient by 16 per cent rainfall but the season finished with a record excess of 12.6 per cent, Skymet said.

The month of June is obsessed as a viral marker of Monsoon but factually it may not hold ground statistically.

In the recent past, seasonal rainfall found hardly any correlation with June performance. It is an opening month leading to phenomenal environmental changes, specially the oceans on either side of the Indian coastline. Continental and oceanic heat potential, the driving force behind the monsoon activity, changes drastically. The month of June accounts for the stabilization of these changes and is therefore susceptible to large variations in the rainfall pattern. June 2021 has been an undulating month with large daily variations. For the 1st three weeks, daily rainfall generally remained above normal except on two days (on 7th and 8th) when it was deficient by 44 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively. Monsoon advanced with a speedy pace covering 80 per cent area in just 10 days. Delhi missed an early arrival by a whisker and may observe substantial delay now. In the absence of any fresh monsoon system, the northern limit of monsoon (NLM) is stuck on the outskirts of Delhi and short of Punjab and Haryana. Rainfall surplus had sustained above 30 per cent during the 3rd week and even climbed to 41 per cent on 19th and 20th June. The spurt in the monsoon activity has now dipped and is mostly confined to east and northeast India. The surplus rainfall got consumed in the 4th week and now the month of June has ended with a monthly total of 110 per cent of LPA (Long Period Average). However, June rainfall need not be construed as any lead to the seasonal performance as such, Skymet said.

One mango tree with 121 varieties of the fruit

Saharanpur, a district mainly known for its hand carved furniture, has now become famous for something else -- a unique mango tree that has 121 varieties of fruits growing on it.

Unbelievable though it may sound, this mango tree is in the Company Bagh area and is 15 years old.

Horticulturists began this unique experiment on the tree about five years ago and the purpose was to develop new varieties of mangoes and experiment with their taste.

Rajesh Prasad, the then Joint Director of Horticulture Experiment and Training Centre, planted 121 varieties of mango branches on a single mango tree. "Different varieties of mango cuttings were planted on the branches of the indigenous mango tree. A separate nursery in-charge was appointed to take care of the tree. Now different types of mangoes are found on this tree including Dussehri, Langra, Chaunsa, Ramkela, Amrapali, Saharanpur Arun, Saharanpur Varun, Saharanpur Saurabh, Saharanpur Gaurav and Saharanpur Rajiv," said a local official.Besides these, other varieties of mangoes including Lucknow Safeda, Tommy at Kings, Pusa

Surya, Sensation, Rataul, Kalmi Maldah Mango, Bombay, Smith, Mangifera Jalonia, Gola Bulandshahr, Laranku, LR Special, Alampur Benisha and Asojia Deoband are also growing on this tree. Researchers say that work is continuing on new species, so that better varieties of mangoes can be produced. Officials say that those who are fond of mangoes can do similar experiments in the trees planted in their farms or kitchen gardens.

international

US URGED TO LIFT, WAIVE SANCTIONS OUTLINED IN IRAN DEAL

United Nations | Agencies

Rosemary DiCarlo, UN Undersecretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, has urged the US to lift or waive its sanctions outlined in the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"I echo the Secretary-General's appeal to the United States to lift or waive its sanctions outlined in the plan, extend the waivers with regard to the trade in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to once again facilitate nuclear-related activities consistent with the plan and the resolution," DiCarlo told a Security Council briefing on Wednesday regarding the implementation of the Resolution 2231.

Security Council Resolution 2231 was a July 20, 2015 resolution endorsing the JCPOA on the nuclear program of Iran, reports Xinhua news agency.

It sets out an inspection process and schedule while also preparing for the removal of UN sanctions against Iran.

The 15 nations on the Security Council unanimously endorsed the resolution, which had been negotiated by the permanent members of the UN Security Council - China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US - plus Germany, the European Union, and Iran.

The US announced its withdrawal from the Iran deal on May 8, 2018.

DiCarlo called on Iran to resume the temporary technical understanding with the International Atomic Energy Agency without delay, to refrain from taking further steps to reduce its commitments, and to return to full implementation of the plan. She said that the context for the implementation of the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 has improved considerably since last year.

The continued diplomatic efforts in Vienna, she said, offer a critical opportunity for both the US and Iran to return to the full and effective implementation of the plan and of the resolution. This would be "a welcome and crucial development."

DiCarlo said it is essential that all member states promote a "conducive environment" and avoid any action that may have a negative impact on these ongoing diplomatic efforts, as well as on regional stability.

'Pak effort for Taliban return via power-sharing can be undermined by quick pull-out'

Islamabad | Agencies

The quick withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and increasing terror attacks and claiming of various areas by the Taliban would undermine Islamabad's efforts to facilitate Taliban's return to Kabul through power-sharing arrangements, says a report compiled by the International Crisis Group.

The report titled "Pakistan: Shoring Up Afghanistan's Peace Process", compiled by the Washington/Brusselsbased think tank, warns that the quick withdrawal of foreign troops would have a direct impact on Pakistan-US and Pakistan-Kabul ties.

"Should the Afghan peace process continue to sputter or altogether fail, Islamabad's relations with Kabul and Washington would sour," it warns. "Further instability or Taliban gains in Afghanistan could embolden Pakistani militants aligned with their Afghan counterparts, deepening insecurity in Pakistan," the report added. It is pertinent to mention that the US had expected Pakistan to persuade the Taliban to announce a ceasefire and show some flexibility on their reinstating their version of Islamic governance.

The report further warns that Islamabad's failure in persuading the Taliban to opt for a peacefully-negotiated political settlement, would strain its ties with Washington and the Kabul administration.

"Pakistan should double its efforts to convince the Taliban to scale back both their attacks and their aspirations to reinstate their version of Islamic governance," read the report. The report raises serious concerns over the probable worsening situation in Afghanistan after the foreign troops' withdrawal, and that it could only reassure and bolster factions of the Pakistani Taliban and could also trigger massive influx of Afghan refugees.

It claims that Pakistan has facilitated and played an important role in the Afghan peace process, because it wants to ensure existence of a power-sharing arrangement with the Taliban in Afghanistan. However, the Biden administration's announcement to withdraw all US troops by September 11 has put difficult timelines and deadlines for the peace process to materialise and tackle a probable intensified conflict.Pakistan's position remains pivotal to the Afghan peace process. Even though its ties with the Taliban are not as strong as they used to be, but since the Taliban shura still operates out of Pakistani havens, Islamabad could still use its efforts and pressure to persuade the Taliban to break the deadlock in the peace talks and reduce violence in Afghanistan.

Etisalat announces of starting work towards 6G

Dubai | Agencies

While the world seems to be consumed by the potential of 5G, the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) leading telecom operator Etisalat revealed that it has already started working towards the transition to 6G, a mobile network that is expected to be 100 times faster than 5G.

Haitham bdulazzak, Etisalat's Chief Technology Officer, revealed that the UAE is "conducting research and developing international standards that are the main building blocks for the 6G ecosystem".He was speaking at the ongoing 2021 Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, as part of a panel discussing 'Setting the Roadmap to 6G'.

"Etisalat is upgrading tools and capabilities of its R&D centre to enhance the contribution towards 6G global standardisation within the international fora and alliances," Abdulazzak said.

"Advancement and development of new mobile technologies has become much more rapid than ever. Introduction of new features, capabilities and use of millimetre frequencies seen in 5G is a result of this advancement, which is expected to be complemented with terahertz (THz) spectrum in 6G."Etisalat is one of the ambitious players making steps towards the sixth generation of the network.

"As part of our vision and future technology planning, 6G is going beyond earth networks into space to enable a new era of services and usage scenarios with terabyte data traffic resulting in extraordinary human to machine interaction," he added.

While Etisalat has not spelt out any timeline, a report earlier this year by ABI Research forecasts 2028-29 as the early commercial deployment years for 6G.

The report also said that the Star Trek-like holographic communication and X Reality (XR, which is a combination of AR, VR, and Mixed Reality) are some of the applications that are very much possible with the speeds that 6G could provide.

16 INJURED DURING BLAST OF ILLEGAL FIREWORKS IN LA

Los Angeles: At least 16 people were injured during a blast in a Los Angeles neighbourhood as the police were attempting to safely detonate illegal fireworks that were seized from a home.

Cameramen of the local ABC7 news channel captured the moment that a cache of fireworks exploded on Wednesday night inside a bomb-disposal unit truck from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), reports Xinhua news agency. In the video clips posted online, the black truck with the logo "Bomb Squad, LAPD" and several cars parked in nearby streets were totally damaged. According to the report, the 16 injured had been transported to local hospitals. Nine officers from the LAPD and one from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives were described as being in fair condition with minor injuries, while three of the six civilians suffered serious injuries and three others had minor injuries. "Our bomb squad officers were in the process of seizing over 5,000 pounds (about 2,268 kg) of illegal fireworks in the area of 27th Street and San Pedro. Some of the fireworks were being stored in our Bomb Squad trailer as a precautionary measure," the LAPD tweeted on Thursday morning.

"Unknown at this time what caused an explosion," it said. The LAPD also revealed that the fireworks and other homemade explosives were seized by police in a resident's home, which is located in a neighbourhood near an elementary school.

Israel inaugurates Consulate General in Dubai

Dubai | Agencies

Visiting Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid has inaugurated the country's first-ever Consulate General in Dubai during his ongoing trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is the first by a senior official of the Jewish state to the Gulf nation since the two sides normalised ties last year.

According to the UAE's official WAM news agency, the ianuguration on Wednesday also saw the participation of Omar Bin Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications, reports Xinhua. In his welcoming remarks, Al Olama said: "As we look to a comprehensive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which the UAE and Israel have faced as close partners in scientific and technological innovation, we expect bilateral exchange to rapidly expand.

"The Consulate General of Israel in Dubai will provide essential services to Israeli visitors to the UAE and those seeking to travel from the UAE to Israel.

"Ultimately, the warm ties between the UAE and Israel are slated to grow in many areas, and in the coming period, our two countries will usher in the next phase of bilateral cooperation."

Lapid also officially opened the Israeli Embassy in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

UAE Minister of Culture and Youth Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi attended the ceremony. The Ministers reiterated that "with the opening of the Israeli Embassy in Abu Dhabi, we will further drive growth and widen channels of collaboration across all key sectors". In turn, the friendship between the peoples will flourish," they added.After signing the Abraham Accords in 2020, which formally established relations between the UAE and Israel, the two countries have engaged in high-level cooperation in the political, economic, and cultural fields, as well as diplomatic and consular coordination.

EU'S LANDMARK CLIMATE LAW ENTERS INTO FORCE

Brussels: The European Union's (EU) landmark climate law has entered into force as the Minister of Environment and Climate Action of Portugal Joao Pedro Matos Fernandes signed the text. The signing ceremony on Wednesday coincided with the conclusion of the Portuguese six-month presidency of the Council of the EU, Xinhua news agency reported. Slovenia will take over the rotating presidency on Thursday. The climate law, adopted by the EU member states on Monday, makes the bloc's ambitious target of becoming climate neutral by 2050 legally binding.

It also requires cutting of net emission by at least 55 percent by 2030 compared with the 1990 level. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the milestone on Twitter. "In 15 days we will propose the laws to make Europe FitFor55," she said, referring to the task of updating governing regulations in line with the new law.

KIM'S ROMAN FASHION PARADE

Kardashian steals her very own Dolce Vita moment at the Trevi Fountain, does a racy take on Audrey Hepburn at the Spanish Steps and drops jaws with that Vatican look

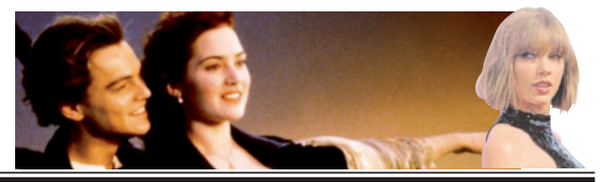
Los Angeles | Agencies

Kim Kardashian has been putting on a show-stopping display during her sightseeing visit to Rome over the past week - with her looks including a racy look for the Vatican and her latest borrowing from screen stars.

On Wednesday, the Keeping Up With The Kardashians star, 40, put on a jaw-dropping display as she enjoyed a nighttime stroll to the Trevi Fountain in a racy brown mini dress - before posing up a storm in her very own take on Anita Ekberg in 1961's La Dolce Vita, in which she famously dazzled in front of the landmark, reports dailymail.co.uk.

Shortly after, she posed up as storm in a tiny white two-piece on Rome's Spanish Steps - doing her own spin on Audrey Hepburn in 1953's Roman Holiday where she sat at the landmark with Gregory Peck. Kim's ensemble comprised a racy white bralet with a tiny white mini skirt - a far cry from Audrey's elegant garb.

The latest two looks come hot on the heels of Kim's Vatican ensemble, which left fans stunned when she failed to adhere to the church's strict dress code by wearing a sexy lace dress which didn't cover her shoulders and had cut-out sections throughout her mid-section.



Padma Lakshmi opens up on struggles behind stunning photo shoot

Los Angeles | Agencies

Indian American model, TV host, author and activist Padma Lakshmi has shared the true story of struggle behind an old stunning photo shoot that had turned heads when it was launched.

The 50-year-old star posted the throwback photograph on Instagram, of a jewellery campaign shoot, and quoted Oprah Winfrey in the caption.

"You can have it all, just not all at once" -- @oprah

"This is me in our jewelry campaign for The Padma Collection. I'm exhausted here, not only from doing Top Chef, losing the weight and running a jewelry company on the side but from all of the stresses that come with being a sole business owner. A year from when this picture was taken I had to make the difficult decision as a new mom to close my company, my lover was dying of cancer, and I just couldn't handle it all.

"I learned so much about my priorities during that time," wrote Padma.

In the photo, she is seen wearing a blazer with a plunging neckline and a few pieces of jewellery.

She welcomed her daughter Krishna, whom she shares with her former-partner Adam Dell, in February 2010.

'I'M GUTTED!'

London | Agencies

Love Island Shannon Singh has spoken out following her shock Love Island departure, just two days after the series started. The Only Fans star, 25, said she was 'gutted' to be asked to pack her bags after quarantining for two weeks before going on the show, and said she would be up for returning to the villa.

It comes as viewers pleaded with show bosses to have Shannon come back to the show in spin-off villa Casa Amor.

Of going back to the villa if she was given the chance, the OnlyFans star said: 'Yeah, why not? It was very short lived. Surreal, but I'm obviously very grateful I got the opportunity. I'm not coming away fuming from it, I'm coming away grateful.' Shannon added: 'I am a bit gutted. Do you know what, out of all the girls, I think it is fair it's me because I didn't have any emotional attachments to the guys, but all the girls had tiny little things [going on].'

The model said she wants to film more OnlyFans content now she has left the show, reports dailymail.co.uk.

Love Island's Shannon says she wants to return to the villa after shock departure... as fans plead with bosses to put her in Casa Amor

DEMI LOVATO TO HOST A TALK SHOW

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Demi Lovato is all set to launch her talk show on July 30. "The Demi Lovato" show aims to focus on a variety of topics including sex and body positivity, feminism, gender issues and mental health. Guests lined up to feature on the show include Jameela Jamil, Lucy Hale, Nikita Dragun, according femalefirst.co.uk.

"Some conversations can be difficult, but I've never been one to shy away from speaking candidly about things. We wanted to create a space that normalises living your own truth -- where people can speak, engage and more importantly, learn, together. There's something therapeutic about having raw discussions that people can relate to and with 'The Demi Lovato Show' no topics are off limits and opinions are welcome. I'm so excited for people to see how these conversations unfold on the Roku Channel," Lovato, 28, said in a statement.

When the show was initially unveiled in February last year, it was announced as "Pillow Talk With Demi Lovato". However, the title was subsequently changed, the website added. While the show marks a new chapter in the professional life of the globally popular music icon, it is yet tyo be officially announced for airing or streaming in India as of now.

New hunks of Love Island!

Bricklayer Liam Reardon, 21, and 23-year-old hat entrepreneur Chuggs Wallis - and they BOTH fancy Chloe

London | Agencies

Love Island's two new hunks were teased at the end of Wednesday night's episode. And ahead of their arrival at the villa, we've got the 411 on what makes them tick.

Bricklayer Liam Reardon, 21, and business owner Chuggs Wallis, 23, are set to rock the boat - especially as they've both got designs on Chloe Burrows, reports dailymail.co.uk. Love Island saw the first brutal twist of the series as Shannon Singh, 25, was sensationally dumped from the villa after new girl Chloe chose Aaron Francis during the recoupling on Wednesday night. The Only Fans star was shockingly asked to pack her bags and leave the villa on Wednesday after just two days, despite having quarantined for two weeks before going on the show.

RYAN REYNOLDS MAKES TIKTOK DEBUT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Ryan Reynolds made his TikTok debut on Wednesday by paying homage to his 2005 film Just Friends and donning a filter of the Wrexham FC shirt - having bought the football club recently. The 44-year-old actor joined the popular Chinese social networking app by performing a lip-sync of I Swear by All-4-One just like his character Chris Brander did in the comedy. 'I swear you will be disappointed by this account,' Ryan wrote in the caption accompanying the video. Ryan wore a long-sleeved polo shirt over a white T-shirt as he slid into frame to lip-synch the song. He later shared a video of himself shirtless in Deadpool makeup before wearing the red Wrexham Assocation Football Club jersey, reports dailymail.co.uk.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Francesca Farago

WIMBLEDON CHAMPIONSHIPS

ZVEREV CRUISES TO THIRD ROUND, MONFILS OUT

London | Agencies

World No. 6 Alexander Zverev defeated American Tennys Sandgren 7-5, 6-2, 6-3 in one hour and 45 minutes to advance to the third round of Wimbledon Championships on Thursday. However, 13th seed Gael Monfils fell to Spanish Pedro Martinez in four sets.

Zverev, who lost in the second round of Halle Open, hammered 13 aces and committed only two double faults. Tennys hit eight aces and committed as many as six double faults.

The 24-year-old German, who is yet to win a Grand Slam title, converted five of the 10 break points.

Martinez surprised 13th seed Frenchman Monfils 6-3, 6-4, 4-6, 7-6(5) to advance to the third round. Though Monfils's game was power-packed as he fired 21 aces as against six from Martinez and also won more on first serve, he still failed.

Seventh seed Matteo Berrettini scored a hard fought 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(4) victory over Botic Van de Zandschulp to advance to third round. The Italian fired 20 aces against de Zandschulp's seven. He also won 83 per cent points on first service. Although he could convert only two of the seven break points, he was still better than the Dutch player who failed to convert even one of his nine break points.

The 17th seed Cristian Garin of Chile reached the third round at Wimbledon for the first time in his career after he overcame Australian Marc Polmans 7-6(3), 6-2, 2-6, 7-6(5) in four sets.

SANIA-BETHANIE STUN IN DOUBLES OPENER

London: India's Sania Mirza on Thursday started her latest campaign in Wimbledon women's doubles by stunning the sixth seeded pair with a comprehensive win. On Thursday, Sania and her American partner Bethanie Mattek-Sands defeated Alexa Guarachi of Chile and Desirae Krawczyk of the United States 7-5, 6-3 in a first round encounter played on Court 8 here.

MAGDA SCALPS ELINA, ASHLEIGH ADVANCES

London: Poland's Magda Linette caused the biggest upset in Wimbledon so far as she knocked out third seed Elina Svitolina of Ukraine in the second round on Thursday. The world No. 44 won 6-3, 6-4. World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty of Australia though beat Anna Blinkova of Russia 6-4, 6-3 to enter the third round.

Elina was Magda's first-ever top-10 scalp. The Polish player committed three double faults but won three out of nine break-points to send the Ukrainian packing. She won 74 per cent of the points on first serve and 80 per cent on second.

Ashleigh's win was in straight-sets but it was a performance full of errors. The Australian committed as many as nine double faults but converted six out of 15 break-points. She was still good enough to prevail over her Russian opponent.

Ashleigh will next take on Katerina Siniakova of Czech Republic. The unseeded player came storming from a set down to beat the former World No. 9 Coco Vandeweghe, 4-6, 6-2, 6-2.

French Open champion Barbora Krejcikova and finalist Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova powered to second-round victories in straight sets.

The No.14 seed Barbora defeated Andrea Petkovic of Germany, 7-5, 6-4 while 16th seed Anastasia eased past Kristyna Pliskova of the Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-3.

Sophia powers England women to series win over India

Taunton | Agencies

All-rounder Sophia Dunkley, who earlier this month became the first Black woman to play Test cricket for England, hammered unbeaten 73 off 81 deliveries and shared an undefeated 92-run partnership for the sixth wicket with Katherine Brunt (33 not out) to help England women's team beat India by five wickets in the second ODI here. The win helped the host take an unassailable 2-0 lead.

England women had won the first ODI by eight wickets.

India, who were all out for 221 in 50 overs after being put into bat, began well by reducing England to 92 for four. They managed to remove the stars of the first match Tammy Beaumont (10) and Natalie Sciver (19) early.However, Sophia powered them to the target, hitting five fours and a six as the Indian bowlers struggled to get rid of her.

Earlier, England pace bowler Kate Cross took five wickets for 34 runs to help bowl Indian women out for 221. Indian skipper Mithali Raj scored a half-century before developing neck pain.

Sad to see bowlers today get tired after four overs: Kapil

New Delhi: Former India captain Kapil Dev, who was known to bowl a lot in the nets, has criticised the current generation of bowlers for complaining about workload and "getting tired after bowling only four overs".

"Cricket today is very basic. You either have to bat or bowl. In our time, we had to do everything. So cricket today has changed," said Kapil in an interaction with India Today.

"Sometimes it saddens me to see a player getting tired after bowling just four overs and I have heard they are not allowed to bowl more than three or four overs," he added.

The 62-year-old, who was the top wicket-taker in Test cricket at one point in time, said they would not shy away from bowling at least 10 overs to even the No. 10 batsmen since they believed it would help build muscles.

"I remember in our time -- I won't say whether it's right or wrong -- even the last player who would come out and bat, we would bowl at least 10 overs to them. The mindset was that it helps build muscles. Today perhaps those four overs are enough for them. So our generation feels a bit strange," Kapil said further.

ICC bans UAE players Hayat, Ahmed for eight years

Dubai | Agencies

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned United Arab Emirates (UAE) players Amir Hayat and Ashfaq Ahmed from all cricket for eight years after its Anti-Corruption Tribunal found them guilty of breaching the ICC Anti-Corruption Code. The bans are backdated to September 13, 2020, when they were provisionally suspended for corrupt conduct during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019 in the UAE.

The tribunal found them guilty on multiple counts like being involved in bribes to influence result and failing to disclose to ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) the details of corruption as well as cash/kind received as well as approaches from corrupt elements.

CHESS ACE KONERU HUMPY'S NAME PROPOSED FOR RAJIV KHEL RATNA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The name of Koneru Humpy, India's best woman chess player ever and reigning women's World Rapid Chess Championship champion, has been proposed for the highest sports accolade of the country. On Thursday, the All India Chess Federation (AICF) sent to the Sports Ministry its recommendations for the national sports awards for the year 2019-2020, with Koneru's name topping the list.The AICF has also recommended six players -- world No 22 Vidit Santosh Gujrathi, former national champion B Adhiban, SP Sethuraman, MR Lalit Babu, WGM Bhakti Kulkarni, and Padmini Rout -- for the Arjuna Award. GM Abhijit Kunte's name has been put forward for the Major Dhyanchand Lifetime Achievement award. Viswanathan Anand was honoured with the inaugural Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 1992. Since then no chess player has received this honour. Koneru has the best credentials among chess players to be considered for the award. The 34-year-old from Vijaywada, ranked No.3 in FIDE rankings, won the women's World Rapid Chess Championship in December 2019 and recently qualified for the women's World Championship qualifier in 2022. She played an important role as India and Russia shared the FIDE Online Olympiad last year. Koneru has played in all major chess tournaments and won many titles. She has won the World Under-10, World Under-12, and Under-14 titles and the World Junior Chess Championship in 2001.Currently she has a rating of 2586, behind China's Hou Yifan (2658) and Russian Aleksandra Goryachkina (2596).

JHAJHARIA WINS PARALYMPIC BERTH WITH WORLD RECORD

New Delhi: Devendra Jhajharia, the 2016 Rio Paralympic champion in men's F-46 javelin throw category, improved his world record on way to winning berth for the Tokyo Paralympic Games during the two-day national selection trials that concluded here on Wednesday.The 40-year-old para-athlete from Rajasthan hurled the javelin to a distance of 65.71 metres during the trials which was better than his own record of 63.97m.The Tokyo edition, which begins on August 24, will be Jhajharia's third Paralympics. The Rajasthan para-athlete first competed at the 2004 Athens Paralympics where he won gold. Jhajharia won his second gold at Rio.Mariyappan Thangavelu, the Rio Paralympic Games high jump champion in men's F-42 , Varun Bhatti and Sharad Kumar are among the 24 para-athletes shortlisted by the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) for the Tokyo Games.In men's F-64, Sandeep Chaudhary and Sumit Antil have made cut. Antil holds the world record of 66.70 metres while Chaudhary won gold at the 2019 World Para Athletics Championships held in Doha.

Messi not Barca player for 1st time in over 20 years

Barcelona | Agencies

Top Spanish football club Barcelona suffered a setback when they failed to sign a new contract with Lionel Messi before the June 30 deadline, leaving the Argentine star free to join any club he wishes. Messi could still return to Barcelona but him not signing a contract before deadline means that this is the first time in 7,504 days that he is not with the club on paper.

The 34-year-old wanted to leave Barcelona last year and had even handed a transfer request but the club wasn't willing to let him go. Barca management, in fact, had pointed out a 700 million euro release to the clubs interested in buying the Argentina player.According to a report in Spanish newspaper Marca, Barcelona club president Joan Laporta has been trying hard to get Messi back. However, some issues between the player and the club remain unresolved. Messi's departure will put the club in a fix since it is already facing financial woes. The club banks on his image to rope in sponsors as he is one of the most recognisable athletes in the world.At the moment, Messi is leading Argentina in the Copa America and is not linked to any other club.

SHOCKED BY INDIA LOSS, AUSTRALIA HIRE TWO BATTING COACHES

Sydney: Australia, who had surprisingly lost their home Test series to India 1-2 this year, have hired two assistant coaches to help them out with batting that has struggled in recent times.

Former Australia batsman Michael Di Venuto and ex-South Australia batsman Jeff Vaughan have been hired as assistant coaches to help head coach Justin Langer who had to act as batting coach as well ever since Graeme Hick was removed in 2020 due to Cricket Australia's cost-cutting measures.The Aussies struggled in the absence of a batting coach as only Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne could score centuries in the Test series against India. Known to mount big scores at home, the Australians failed to score 400 even once during seven completed innings in the series with India."I am excited to be rejoining the Australian team full time. I have spent some time around the group over the last month and really enjoyed being back with them," Di Venito was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au.

Cavendish clinches Stage 6 of Tour de France

Chateauroux (France) | Agencies

British cyclist Mark Cavendish, who won the Stage 4 on Tuesday, clinched Stage 6 of Tour de France as he took his tally of stage victories to 32 which is two short of the all-time record of 34 by former Belgian cyclist Eddie Merckx.

This is his third stage win in Chateauroux, where he had previously won in 2008 and 2011.Cavendish, 36, beat Belgian Jasper Philipsen and Frenchamn Nacer Bouhanni on the line just like he had done in Fougères in Stage 4.Mathieu van der Poel of the Netherlands retained the yellow jersey.

"It seems like every time we came here it was different. Ten years since I last won here. Pretty special and in pretty similar fashion," said Cavendish later.

"I am not thinking about anything, I just won a stage of the Tour de France. It doesn't matter if it's the first or the 32nd. That's what people work their whole lives for," said the cyclist when asked about Merckx's record.

Wrestler Punia needs one more week to return to action

Navneet Singh | New Delhi

Leading freestyle wrestler Bajrang Punia, who injured his knee last week during a competition in Russia, would require another week to get back to the mat, an official of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) said on Thursday.

"His knee injury is not that serious but still he will not take the risk of getting back to training on the mat. It would take a minimum of a week before he steps on to the mat for training," the WFI official told IANS on Thursday. The 27-year-old 65kg freestyle wrestler has qualified for the Tokyo Olympic Games starting July 23 On June 26, the Haryana wrestler injured his right knee during a semi-final bout of the annual Ali Aliyev Wrestling Competition in the Russian city of Kaspiysk.

"Punia's physio is working on the injured leg and he should be fit within a week and get back to normal training on the mat. Since he has hurt his knee, he is following an upper body exercise routine to keep himself fit," added the WFI official.

Currently based out of Russian city of Vladikavkaz, Punia competed in the Ali Aliyev tournament as a part of his preparation for the Olympics. But he injured his right knee half way through his semi-final match against Russia's Abdulmazhid Kudiev.

YOU HAVE TO WAIT FOR YOUR CHANCE: AKASA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Yashika Mathur | Mumbai

Singer-composer Akasa, who recently sang the title track "Main sherni" in the Vidya Balan-starrer "Sherni", is on a career high right now. She says the key to success is to not give up in the tough times.

"I believe that's one of the biggest challenges -- you have to persevere and wait for your chance and all you can do is give your 100 per cent, try and go independent with your music, so as to create opportunities and wait for your time to come to shine. Or, for your work to get due appreciation. The waiting, the rejections, the uncertainty is a huge challenge," she tells correspondent.

The singer believes that owing to abundance of talent in the Indian music industry, everyone goes through their share of challenges.

"I believe everybody has to face challenges while trying to make it big in the industry. It's such a huge industry, with competition increasing by the day because of the amazing talent our country is producing, while the opportunities aren't as many," she says. Akasa recently released her independent track "Yaad na aana" in collaboration with singer Yash Narvekar. The song has been received well by the listeners.

Talking about the experience of working on the number, she says: "It was a genre I haven't done yet, and Yash helped me bring out a tone of my voice that hasn't been explored."

'IT'S MY DUTY'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Nikita Rawal has pledged to donate her organs. "I researched on the blind in the country and found out that India can be cured of the entire blind population in about two to three weeks if everyone donated their organs. I think it's something that everyone should be involved in," said the actress, who has acted in films like "Mr Hot Mr Kool", "The Hero: Abhimanyu" and "Amma Ki Boli".

Nikita also focussed on innumerable people in the country in need of an organ -- be it eyes, kidneys or other implantables.

Nikita Rawal pledges to donate organs

"Organs have no use after death and they are either going to bury the individual or burn. Organ donation can light up someone's life or give a new lease of life. I think it's my duty as a citizen of this country," she said.

Nikita, who is the founder of Aastha Foundation that works towards the empowerment of underprivileged women in the Nayanagar area of Goregaon, Mumbai, also highlighted the need to get vaccinated.

"The pandemic is not yet over and let us be accountable to one another," said the actress, reminding of the necessity to get vaccinated," she said.

Nikita will be soon seen alongside Arshad Warsi and Chunkey Pandey in the upcoming film "Roti Kapda And Romance".

POPULARITY OF THRILLER GENRE NEVER FADES: TAAPSEE PANNU

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Taapsee Pannu, whose new thriller film "Haseen Dillruba" is all set for an OTT release, finds it natural that the genre has forever been popular with the audience. "It's thrillers that have been popular across generations because these films keep you gripped, because the idea holds you for two hours of the film," she reasons, while speaking to reporter. The actress feels the ability to keep people guessing is something that gives an is interactive quality to the genre. "It keeps you involved. You feel like you are also one of the judges there trying to find out who has done it and that is why you stay connected to the film if it is written and done well. That is why I think it is popular as a genre," she added. The film, which also stars Vikrant Massey and Harshvardhan Rane, has Taapsee playing Rani, who becomes the prime suspect following the death of her husband. "Haseen Dillruba" is slated to release on Netflix on July 2.

NETFLIX INDIA ANNOUNCES DATING REALITY SHOW 'IRL: IN REAL LOVE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Streaming giants Netflix India are stepping into the world of reality shows with their first dating show, "IRL: In Real Love".

"We are excited to expand our offering in the reality genre with a distinctive dating format, IRL: In Real Love. The concept is a true reflection of the times we love and live in. The choices and conundrums we experience everyday will be put to test in the show's unique social experiment," Tanya Bami, Director, International Originals, Netflix India, said.

"IRL: In Real Love" complements the series "Indian Matchmaking", "Love Is Blind" and "Too Hot to Handle."

SHAHID KAPOOR UNMASKS 20 SECONDS OF HIS LIFE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Shahid Kapoor took to social media on Thursday to share insights of his shooting schedule in a fast-paced 20-second video. "Unmasking 20 seconds of my life!" wrote Shahid on his Instagram account with 30.6 million followers. Shahid's behind-the-scene video shows him on a film set, navigating in the pandemic with his face mask on. "20 seconds of my life is over. Stop camera now. I want to go home," says Shahid at the end of the video, wearing a black mask. The video shows glimpses of Shahid reaching the film set, getting out of his vanity, shooting and interacting with the people on the set, and in the end getting back to his car to head home. Shahid will make his digital debut with a web series directed by Raj and DK of "The Family Man" fame. He will next be seen in the film "Jersey", also featuring his father Pankaj Kapur and Mrunal Thakur.

'I have left my family'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

TV actress Aalika Shaikh, best known for her role in the Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya 2, recently revealed why she changed her name from Shaheen Shaikh to Aalika Shaikh. She opened up on long-standing issues she's had with her family including how women were not treated equally at home.

Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya 2 actress Aalika Shaikh opens up why she changed her name and abandoned her family!

She reveals, "I have left my family and my home. I belong to a Muslim family and in my family women are not given education and are married off at a young age. My cousins are all married now. And I am hardly on talking terms with my family".

The actress also expressed that her family wasn't happy with her decision to star in TV shows."When I left home, I thought that I will make a name for myself. Because people used to tell my mom 'your daughter is doing this', 'your daughter is doing that', 'this is haram for us', I'm in such a family where girls don't get anything, life is over for them," she adds.

The actress, who made her debut in Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya in 2009, concluded by saying that apart from making her identity. she also chose to change her name so that her family doesn't face negative comments and their reputation stays intact.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Gracy Goswami

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