For Generation Ace

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MULTIPLE RATES, APPLICATIONS MAKE GST MORE COMPLICATED, REVENUE DEPT PUSHED TO ISSUE CLARIFICATIONS

THE FARRAGO THING...

- *AS PER THE CIRCULAR, THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT HAD CLARIFIED THAT SERVICE PROVIDED BY WAY OF COOKING AND SUPPLY OF FOOD, BY CLOUD KITCHENS/CENTRAL KITCHENS ARE COVERED UNDER RESTAURANT SERVICE AND HENCE WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO SAME TAX (5 PER CENT WITHOUT ITC) AS NORMAL RESTAURANTS.*
- *RESTAURANT SERVICE MEANS SUPPLY, BY WAY OF OR AS PART OF ANY SERVICE, OF GOODS, BEING FOOD OR ANY OTHER ARTICLE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION OR ANY DRINK, PROVIDED BY A RESTAURANT/EATING JOINT INCLUDING A MESS, OR CANTEEN, WHETHER FOR CONSUMPTION ON OR AWAY FROM THE PREMISES WHERE SUCH FOOD OR ANY OTHER ARTICLE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION OR DRINK IS SUPPLIED, THE CLARIFICATORY CIRCULAR SAID.*
- *BUT ON SIMILAR APPLICATION, SUPPLY OF OF ICE CREAM BY ICE CREAM PARLOURS ARE NOT CATEGORISED AS RESTAURANT SERVICES. THE DEPARTMENT SAID THAT ICE CREAM PARLORUS SELL ALREADY MANUFACTURED ICE CREAM AND THEY DO NOT HAVE A CHARACTER OF A RESTAURANT. ICE CREAM PARLOURS DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY FORM OF COOKING AT ANY STAGE, WHEREAS, RESTAURANT SERVICE INVOLVES THE ASPECT OF COOKING/PREPARING DURING THE COURSE OF PROVIDING SERVICE.*
- *THUS, THE CIRCULAR SAID, SUPPLY OF ICE-CREAM PARLOUR STANDS ON A DIFFERENT FOOTING THAN RESTAURANT SERVICE. THEIR ACTIVITY ENTAILS SUPPLY OF ICE CREAM AS GOODS (A MANUFACTURED ITEM) AND NOT AS A SERVICE, EVEN IF CERTAIN INGREDIENTS OF SERVICE ARE PRESENT.*

CLOUD KITCHENS ARE RESTAURANTS, ICE CREAM PARLOURS ARE NOT. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE IS NOT FOOD OR A FOOD PRODUCTS. MINERAL RIGHTS ARE TAXABLE BUT THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER THESE SHOULD BE TAXABLE AT ALL.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Revenue Department had received representations requesting for clarification as to the rate of GST applicable on supply of services by way of granting mineral exploration and mining rights during the above period. With effect from January 1 2019, the rate schedule has been specifically amended and it is undisputed since then that such service attracts GST at the rate of 18 per cent.

Accordingly, as recommended by the GST Council, it is clarified that where ice cream parlours sell already manufactured ice cream and do not cook/prepare ice cream for consumption like a restaurant, it is supply of ice cream as goods and not as a service, and thus ice cream sold by a parlour or any similar outlet would attract GST at the rate of 18 per cent, the circular said.

The circular also clarified that even if the rate schedule did not specifically mention the service by way of grant of mining rights, during the period July 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018, it was taxable at 18 per cent in view of the principle laid down in the 14th meeting of the Council for residuary GST rate. Post January 1, 2019, no dispute remains as stated above.

With regard to alcoholic beverage, the circular clarified that services by way of job work in relation to manufacture of alcoholic liquor for human consumption are not eligible for the GST rate of 5 per cent prescribed under the entry "food and food products".

The GST regime with five major different rates and few more for certain special products had created more confusion for taxpayers than bringing about simplicity. This confusion often results in litigation that affects both the authorities and well as taxpayers. In order to remove some of confusion created by differential tax rates and it applications, the Revenue Department has issued a circular directed at all the operative officials giving clarifications regarding applicable GST rates and exemptions on certain services.

It said that as recommended by GST Council, it is clarified that the expression "food and food products" in the said entry excludes alcoholic beverages for human consumption. As such, in common parlance also, alcoholic liquor is not considered as food.

The circular also clarified that entry to amusement parks having rides or family entertainment centre would attract 18 per cent GST and not the highest rate of 28 per cent which applies on admission to a place having casino or race club (even if it provides certain other activities) or admission to a sporting event like IPL.

KERALA FLOODS: ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE ROPED IN FOR RESCUE, RELIEF OPS

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

At least 21 people have been killed in Kerala since last night as a result of the heavy rains that triggered landslides in the districts of Idukki and Kottayam. 13 have been found dead in Kottayam, and eight in Idukki. At least 12 people were reported missing in Kottayam. All 12 bodies have been recovered, as well as another body of someone who had not been reported missing. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan held a high-level meeting to intensify the rescue efforts and said that all means will be used to evacuate people stranded in areas flooded due to heavy rain in the state, including Kottayam.The Army, Navy and Air Force have been mobilised to carry out flood relief operations in Kerala on Sunday as unprecedented rains resulted in heavy flow of water in various rivers, flooding multiple districts in the state. In view of Red Alert in five districts of Kerala, Southern Naval Command Headquarters has been made ready to provide assistance to local administration in rescue operations. Meanwhile, the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority has sought assistance from Southern Naval Command at Kochi for air lifting of marooned families at Koottickal -- the worst affected village in Kottayam district. Heavy rains have been lashing the state starting Friday evening leaving roads at several places flooded and normal traffic affected at quite a number of places.

HEAVY RAINS FOR 3-4 DAYS MORE: IMD

New Delhi: *There were extreme floods in at least three districts of Kerala, heavy to very heavy rainfall in eastern states, and moderate to heavy rainfall in several states of north-west India on Sunday with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting continuation of rainfall for next 3-4 days at least. However, as per the IMD, there would be some relief even when rains would continue, especially for Kerala, over next 3-4 days.*

FLASH FLOODS AT WATERFALLS TN

Chennai: ***In wake of incessant and heavy rains in southern Tamil Nadu, flash floods were reported in Courtallam waterfall in Tenkasi district and in Chinna Suruli waterfalls in Theni district. Forest Department officials are cordoning off the waterfall0 areas to prevent entry of public. Districts in south Tamil Nadu - Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Sivaganga, Thoothukudi, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli, and Kanniyakumari - have been witnessing heavy rains for the past couple of days and regular rains in the month so far.***

2 LABOURERS FROM BIHAR KILLED IN J&K'S KULGAM

Srinagar | Agencies

Two non-local labourers were killed and another critically injured by militants on Sunday in J&K's Kulgam district, police said.

Police sources said militants entered the residential accommodation of non-local labourers in Ganjipora village of Kulgam and fired indiscriminately at them.

"Two non-local labourers, identified as Raja Reshi Dev and Joginder Reshi Dev were killed on the spot while the third, Chunchun Reshi Dev was shifted to hospital for treatment. All of them belong to Bihar," a source said. Security forces have started a cordon and search operation to nab the killers. Meanwhile, Less than an hour after media picked up an emergency advisory on Sunday seeking non-locals be taken to the nearest security forces camps in the Kashmir Valley, in wake of killing of two more labourers from Bihar, authorities said they did not issue any such advisory.

Although there were reports of non-locals being asked to come to the police stations, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, said: "No such order has been issued, it is fake."

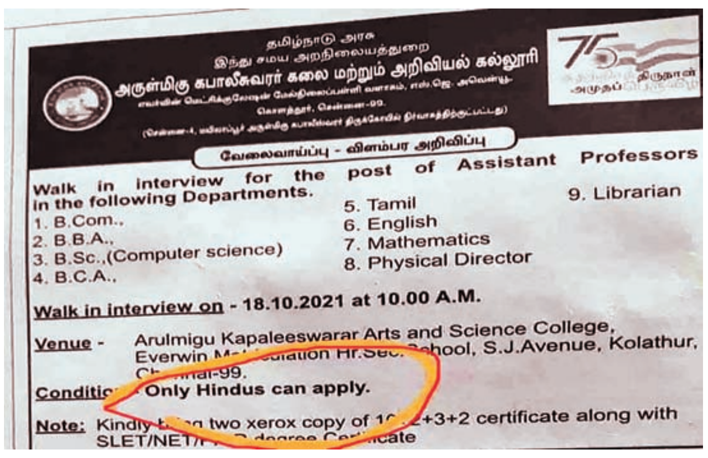
'Hindus only' job advertisement raises uproar in Tamil Nadu

Chennai | Agencies

An advertisement by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment (H&CE) for various posts in its college inviting only Hindus has created an uproar in the state with several individuals and organisations coming out against it.

The advertisement, which appeared in various publications on October 13 for various teaching and non-teaching posts for Arulmigu Kapaleeswarar Arts and Science College in Kolathur, has stated that the posts are 'Only for Hindus".

The HR&CE department is opening four new arts and science colleges, including Kapaleeswarar college in Kolathur from 2021-22. In the advertisement, walk-in-interview for the post of assistant professors to teach Bcom, BBA, BSc Computer Science, BCA, Tamil, English,


தமிழ்நாடு அரசு
இந்து சமய அறநிலையத்துறை
அருள்மிகு கபாலீசுவரர் கலை மற்றும் அறிவியல் கல்லூரி

வேலைவாய்ப்பு - விளம்பர அறிவிப்பு

Walk in interview for the post of Assistant Professors in the following Departments.

1. B.Com.,
2. B.B.A.,
3. B.Sc.,(Computer science)
4. B.C.A.,
5. Tamil
6. English
7. Mathematics
8. Physical Director
9. Librarian

Walk in interview on - 18.10.2021 at 10.00 A.M.

Venue - Arulmigu Kapaleeswarar Arts and Science College, Everwin [illegible] Hr.Sec. School, S.J.Avenue, Kolathur, Ch[illegible]-99.

Condition - Only Hindus can apply.

Note: Kindly [illegible] two xerox copy of 1[illegible]+3+2 certificate along with SLET/NET/[illegible] degree Certificate

Mathematics courses as also for Physical education director and librarian posts. Walk-in interviews for the post of non-teaching staff, including office assistant, junior assistant, watchman, and sweeper were also sought.

The advertisement said that only Hindus need to apply for the posts, which has led to a major uproar. HR&CE Minister P.K. Sekar Babu was not available for comment.

LAST CHANCE FOR RESURRECTION: SIDHU WRITES TO SONIA

Chandigarh: Days after sharing his concerns with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Punjab state President Navjot Sidhu on Sunday made public a letter he has written to party chief Sonia Gandhi, saying this is Punjab's last chance for resurrection and redemption. In a letter dated October 15, Sidhu talked about mainly on justice in sacrilege cases, state's drugs menace, agricultural issues, employment opportunities, sand mining, and welfare of backward classes. "Request you to kindly give me a personal audience to present to you the Punjab Model with a 13-Point Agenda to be part of the Congress Manifesto for the 2022 Assembly elections, which is separate from this by means of its long-term vision to be implemented over a longer period of time, have crafted it through years of consultations with academics, civil society, party workers and feedback from the People of Punjab. I express with a lot of pain in my heart that this is Punjab's last chance for resurrection and redemption, Sidhu wrote."

FARM UNIONS CALL 6-HOUR 'RAIL ROKO' PROTEST TODAY

New Delhi: The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) has announced a six-hour nationwide 'rail roko' protest on Monday, demanding immediate arrest of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Misra Teni over the Lakhimpur violence case.Train services are likely to be affected due to the bandh call.The SKM, an umbrella body of 40 farmer unions, said it has made it clear that, "until justice is not done in the Lakhimpur Kheri case, the agitation will not only continue but will intensify further"."There will be a 6-hour rail roko protest on Monday, under which rail services will be disrupted across India from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Rail roko will be completely peaceful and there will be no damage to railway property," it said in a statement.The SKM has also appealed to all its constituents to strictly follow the guidelines.Nine people, including four farmers, had died in Lakhimpur Kheri on October 3. Farmers were allegedly mowed down by a vehicle linked to the minister. The incident sparked a deadly violence in which angry farmers allegedly lynched some people in the vehicles.

Fuel rates hiked again

New Delhi | Agencies

Petrol and diesel prices on Sunday rallied to their highest ever levels across the country, as fuel rates were hiked again by 35 paise a litre.

The price of petrol in Delhi rose to its highest-ever level of Rs 105.84 a litre and Rs 111.77 per litre in Mumbai, according to a price notification of the state-owned fuel retailers. In Bhopal it rose to 114.45 per liter. In Mumbai, diesel now comes for Rs 102.52 a litre; while in Delhi, it costs Rs 94.57.This is the fourth straight day of 35 paise per litre increase in petrol and diesel prices. There was no change in rates on October 12 and 13.

Diesel prices have now increased 19 out of the last 23 days taking up its retail price by Rs 5.95 per litre in Delhi.

With diesel prices rising sharply, the fuel is now available at over Rs 100 a litre in several parts of the country. This dubious distinction was earlier available to petrol that had crossed Rs 100 a litre-mark across the country a few months earlier.

Petrol prices had maintained stability since September 5, but oil companies finally raised the pump prices last week. Petrol prices have also risen on 16 of the previous 19 days taking up its pump price by Rs 4.65 per litre.

India will launch industry-led policies in space sector: ISRO chief

India is planning to boost the space sector in the global market. With an aim to make the country an economic space hub in the future, it also recently launched a new industry body, the Indian Space Association (ISpA).

Dubai | Agencies

India is revising its existing policies and is also in the process of bringing in new ones to increase industry participation in the space sector, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman Dr K. Sivan said on Sunday.

Sivan, who is Secretary, Department of Space, said this, via a video message during the inaugural session on 'Future of Space-International Participations and Collaborations' at The India Pavilion, Expo 2020 Dubai.

He emphasised that the recent reforms in the sector has ensured that the role of the private sector has evolved from being just suppliers to partners in the process. He also highlighted that space is one of the significant areas that India is looking at for international cooperation.

"I hope space cooperation will further strengthen with commercial and technological collaborations, Indian industry has to play a big role in the space sector globally. India is focussing on international collaborations, including bilateral and multilateral partnerships."

Sivan said that the government is open to inviting private players in the space sector and ISRO is tying up with start-ups and industries.

In the recent past, the ISRO has also joined hands with Niti Aayog, and Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to encourage space start-ups in the country.

B'DESH VIOLENCE: INTEL ALERT IN ALL BENGAL BORDER DISTRICTS

Kolkata | Agencies

In the wake of the communal violence in Bangladesh and considering the immersion of Durga idols followed by Fateha-Dwaz-Daham (Eid Milad un Nabi/Prophet Muhammad's birth celebration) in West Bengal, the state intelligence department has issued an alert to all the districts particularly those bordering Bangladesh and asked the authorities to sensitize the officers to avoid any kind of untoward incident.

In a detailed alert sent to DG, ADG (Law and Order) and all the SPs and Commissioners, issued by the Additional Director General (Intelligence Branch) said, "Input further received reveals that some incidents of vandalism and arson on Hindu temples, Durga Puja pandals are reportedly taking place in Noakhali district and Chittagong district in Bangladesh after completion of Jumma Namaj. Iskcon temple at Noakhali has also been vandalised".

"Since 13.10.21 the social media platforms have been flooded with posts of vandalism of Durga Puja pandals in Bangladesh. Centering these issues, bordering districts of Indo-Bangladesh border have become hyper sensitive and the leaders of different Hindu fundamentalist organisations of India have become pro-active and are delivering press statement and urging PM of India to take necessary steps for the immediate relief of the Sanatani people of Bangladesh," the alert said.

The alert was referring to the letter written by Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari to the Prime Minister where he wrote, "I would like to bring it to your urgent attention towards the vandalism that has marred the vibrant festivities of Durga Puja in Bangladesh. The notorious vandals are habituated in targeting the 'Sanatani' minority community of Bangladesh. This time the religious fanatics took to the streets to vandalize several Durga Puja pandals and various temples also. Presently the condition of 'Sanatani People' living in Bangladesh is very miserable."

Urging the Prime Minister to take necessary and urgent steps to provide relief to the 'Sanatani People' in Bangladesh, Adhikari said, "Many relatives of 'Sanatani People of Bangladesh who crossed over in the past to escape the inhuman atrocities have settled down in West Bengal. They are making frantic calls to stand in support of the victims i.e. the 'Sanatani People' community of Bangladesh".

Nitish Kumar plays Muslim card ahead of Bihar by-elections

Patna | Agencies

Ahead of the crucial October 30 Assembly bypolls, Bihar's ruling Janata Dal-United (JD-U) on Sunday sought to woo the Muslim community as both the Tarapur and Kusheshwar Asthan constituencies have sizable numbers of Muslim voters.

"No one would dare to look up askance at the Muslim community until Nitish Kumar is in the power. After Independence, whatever development works have been done for the Muslim community, the contribution of Nitish Kumar is maximum. That is the reason why the popularity of Nitish Kumar has increased in the country," party national President Lalan Singh said at an event here to induct Salim Parvez into the party.

Parvez, is former Vice President of the Rashtriya Janata Dal and a close associate of former RJD MP, late Mohammad Shahabuddin.

"During every Muslim festival like Eid-al-Zuha, Eid-al-Fitr, or Muharram, Nitish Kumar used to sit near the telephone and personally direct district officials to maintain law and order so that no one could do violence against the minority community," Lalan Singh said.

He also noted that madrasas in the state were in a stage of disrepair under earlier governments, and even teachers were not getting salaries. Now, the situation has changed with not only teachers receiving timely payment but also the infrastructure has also been enhanced, he said.

With only 13 days left till polling, the JD-U, as well as the RJD and the Congress are also doing their best to woo voters.

RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, along with more than 10 top leaders, started a campaign from Tarapur on Sunday.

Congress state President Madan Mohan Jha and MLC Prem Chand Mishra were involved in door-to-door campaigns in Kusheshwar Asthan.

Priyanka Gandhi slams govt for fertilizer price hike

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday slammed the central government for increasing the prices of fertilizers ahead of sowing season.

Priyanka Gandhi, in a tweet said, "BJP government has increased NPK price by Rs 275 and NP by Rs 20. Diesel prices have been increasing daily and has reached Rs 100. Under BJP rule, workers and farmers are buried under the burden of inflation. Only Modi's friends are getting richer."

Her statement came after the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Thursday announced that the increased prices of Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers approved earlier shall be rolled over for the whole of 2021-22.

The increased prices, vide notification dated May 20 this year, would be applicable from October 1 till March 31, 2022, the CCEA, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, decided.

The Union Government has decided to increase the subsidy by Rs 438 per bag of DAP as a special one time package so that farmers can get DAP at the same price.

The increased international prices of raw materials for production of three most consumed NPK grades (10:26:26, 20:20:0:13 and 12:32:16) have been absorbed by the Centre by increasing subsidy by Rs 100 per bag on these NPK grades as a special one time package so that farmers can get these fertilizers at affordable prices.

The Centre has brought Potash Derived from Molasses (PDM) under Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme for the first time since its inception in 2010 to give a push to its manufacturing by Sugar Mills as a by-product. This Fertilizer is known as PDM-0:0:14.5:0.

TWIN TEENS FALL TO DEATH FROM 25TH FLOOR IN GHAZIABAD

New Delhi: Twin brothers, both 14-year-olds, died after accidentally falling from their balcony on the 25th floor, near here in Ghaziabad, an official said here on Sunday.The official told reporter that the incident occurred at around 1 a.m. in the night. Apart from the two children, their mother was also present in the house located in Prateek Grand Society, Siddharth Vihar in Ghaziabad. "We received the information about the incident at around 1.05 a.m. after which a team of cops was rushed to the spot," the official said. The deceased identified as -- Satya Narayan and Surya Narayan -- were studying in the 9th standard and were from Chennai.The police official informed that their mother had gone to their room at around 12 a.m. and asked them to sleep early, however, both the brothers insisted on seeing the moon first. "After that, she went to her room and some time later there was a thud which woke her up and she rushed to her kids' room," the official said where she saw that both her kids have fallen from the balcony.When asked about any suicide angle, in this case, the official told reporter that it is too soon to comment on this and they are awaiting the post-mortem report. "Further probe is on," he added.

Delhi minor girl who was sold for Rs 60K rescued from Rajasthan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A minor girl, who was sold for Rs 60,000, was rescued by Delhi Police from Sikar in Rajasthan.

The 15-year-old girl, resident of Haidar Pur, Delhi, was reported missing since September 16 and a complaint was registered in this regard, police said on Sunday.

As the cops began probe, it was found that the minor girl was in regular contact with a local boy named Neeraj Sonkar.

Further probe revealed that Neeraj and one Muskan, resident of Rohini had taken the victim to the house of their third associate, Sheetal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh.

"With Sheetal's help, they had sold the girl to one Gopal Lal, a resident of Sikar, Rajasthan for Rs 60,000," the police said.

Gopal Lal had reportedly bought the girl to marry her to his brother-in-law in Sikar.

An Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of Delhi Police first visited Agra and then Sikar, from where the minor girl was rescued.The accused Gopal Lal and Neeraj Sonkar and the victim were brought to Delhi and handed over to Shalimar Bagh police station.

"Further investigation in the case is in progress," the police added.

UP MAN SEEKS JUSTICE FROM LORD RAM IN POLICE CASE

Ayodhya | Agencies

Somnath Nishad, a resident of Uttar Pradesh' Basti district, has reached Ayodhya wearing a banner and carrying a placard. He is pleading before Lord Ram to help him get justice from police "atrocities".

Nishad, who has travelled 70 km on foot from Basti to Ayodhya, told reporters that the local police have lodged several fake criminal cases against him.

"I have knocked on every door but no one has helped me. I have no hope left for getting justice there so I have come to Lord Ram because he is almighty. I am confident that I will get justice here," he said.

Nishad said that trouble began when there was a minor clash with some other residents in his village earlier this year and the then Sub-Inspector Deepak Singh field a case against him, allegedly at the behest of a rival group.

"He booked me under the Gonda Act and I have been pleading with all police officers to review my case but no one has done so," he said.

Nishad alleged that Singh had asked him to pay Rs 20,000 and when he could not pay the amount, the police official booked him and sent him to jail.

Singh has been terminated form service after he booked a girl and eight members of her family in a fake case. The matter came under media spotlight and action was taken against him.

Manali-Leh highway shut owing to possible snowfall

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Authorities on Sunday closed the highway for two days that connects this Himachal Pradesh tourist resort with Leh in Ladakh owing to possible snowfall this week.

They also advised motorists to avoid travelling on high mountain passes till October 18.

"Chances of snowfall on the Manali-Leh National Highway-21 are high till October 18. We have closed the traffic movement beyond Darcha," Deputy Commissioner Neeraj Kumar told reporter. The General Reserve Engineering Force, a wing of the Border Roads Organisation, maintains the Manali-Leh highway that passes through rugged Himalayan ranges, including the Baralacha Pass (16,020 ft), Lachlungla Pass (16,620 ft) and Tanglangla Pass (17,480 ft).The weather at the passes is harsh. A sudden drop in the temperature, even in summer, can trigger winter-like conditions. The highway is strategically important to maintain supplies for the armed forces posted in the forward areas of Ladakh region along the borders with China and Pakistan.

Recent flash floods, landslides clear sign of climate change: VP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said there has been an increased frequency of extreme weather events in recent times which are a clear indication of changing dynamics of the climate.

"There has been an increased frequency of extreme weather events in recent times such as flash floods and landslides in different parts of the world. These are clear signs that climate change is real and it cannot be business as usual anymore," the Vice President said at a book release function.

'Nursery Rajyaniki Raraju' is a book on the life story of the late Palla Venkanna, who is credited with transforming the village of Kadiyam in Andhra Pradesh into a popular hub of plant nurseries.

To mitigate such weather events, Naidu said that, going forward, it is imperative that humans co-exist harmoniously with nature.

"We must balance our developmental needs with environmental protection and make sure everyone understands the importance of sustainable living. Meaningful development is possible only when it takes into account the cost on environment", Naidu added.

The Vice President called for a people's movement to protect the environment and urged people to voluntarily participate in various conservation activities.

IAF Chief reviews operational preparedness of Force in Ladakh

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief of the Indian Air Force, Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari, reviewed the deployment of aircrafts at the forward locations in Ladakh amid China rejecting the border dispute resolution proposal. This was Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari's maiden visit after taking over as the IAF chief earlier this month.

Chaudhari visited the Air Force Station at Leh and Indian Air Force deployments at forward areas in the Northern Sector on Saturday, the force said.

He took stock of the operational readiness of units and interacted with the personnel stationed at the airbase and units on deployment.

Ahead of 89th Air Force Day on October 8, Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari had said there was an increase in the presence of Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force across Eastern Ladakh.

He, however, mentioned that it was not going to make much difference to the Air Force.

He, especially, pointed out that the Chinese PLAF has increased presence at three Air fields across the Line of Actual Control.

He had said, "China is developing Air field with aircraft but flying from high altitude is a weak area."

Two days after Indian Air Force Day, India and China military held talks to end the border dispute, but it did not result in resolution of the remaining areas with the Chinese not agreeing to "constructive suggestions" provided by the Indian delegation.

India had decided to resolve other remaining friction areas like Hot Springs and 900 square km Depsang plains during 13th round of military talks.

The Indian side pointed out that the "situation along the Line of Actual Control had been caused by unilateral attempts of Chinese side to alter the status quo and in violation of the bilateral agreements."

It was, therefore, necessary that the Chinese side take appropriate steps in the remaining areas so as to restore peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the Western Sector.

BJP, CONGRESS SHARPEN ATTACK AS BYPOLLS NEAR IN MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With less than two weeks left for the bypolls to three Assembly constituencies and one Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh, both the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress have sharpened their attack against each other.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan, who was campaigning for BJP candidate Gyaneshwar Patil in the Khandwa Lok Sabha, took a jibe at the Congress, calling it a "party without a president".

"The Congress, which is already suffering due to the lack of a president, now has another group called G-23. Rahul Gandhi is not the president of Congress, but he can take a decision to change chief ministers. Here in Madhya Pradesh, they have only one face for every post. If it is the CM's post, they have Kamal Nath and if it is party chief in state, then again Kamal Nath is the only face for Congress," Chauhan said while addressing the gathering in Khandwa.

He also attacked senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Digvijaya Singh, alleging that all development works were stopped and the state was under the clutch of "goons and mafias" during his tenure.

Chauhan alleged that during his 15-month tenure, former Chief Minister Kamal Nath had stopped several development schemes launched by the BJP government and had given a free hand to corruption. "For 15 months, the Congress did nothing," he added.

The state Congress on its part accused the BJP of indulging in selling and purchasing of MLAs to remain in power.

Senior spokesperson of the Congress in Madhya Pradesh, Bhupendra Gupta, told reporter, "BJP claims that it is the largest political party in the world, but in reality it does not have its own candidates for elections. Every time the BJP purchases candidates from other political parties. It does not have confidence in its own leaders."

Gupta also alleged that out of the four candidates contesting the bypolls for BJP, one has been brought from another party.

"Shishupal Singh Yadav, who is the BJP candidate in Prithvipur Assembly bypolls, had contested the last election on a Samajwadi Party ticket. There are around 40 per cent votes of the Yadav community in Prithvipur and therefore the BJP did not trust its own party leaders and nominated its candidate from the Yadav community," Gupta said.

Bypolls to three Assembly seats -- Prthvipur under Nimar district, Raigaon in Satna district and Jobat in Alirajpur district -- along with one Lok Sabha seat -- Khandwa -- will be held on October 30.

Mob forces Bhopal woman to remove burqa, shows viral video

A young woman travelling on a scooty in Bhopal was forced to remove her burqa, as per a video going viral on social media.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The incident took place in Islampura under Itkhedi police station of Bhopal, when a young woman, who is riding a white coloured two-wheeler with her male friend, was seen being harassed by a group of men.

As per reports, some people stopped her and objected to her wearing burqa, asking her repeatedly to take it off.

In the viral video, some people are seen telling the girl that she is defaming their community. When the girl took off her burqa, she was then forced to remove the mask also. The video also shows both the girl and her companion pleading with the mob to leave them.

No complaint has been made by the girl to the police, but the police arrested two youths and released them after later. The video is likely of Saturday.

Sailing players win 8 medals in national championship

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Players of National Sailing School, Bhopal won total 8 medals including 3 Gold, 4 Silver and 1 Bronze in Youth National Sailing Championship-2021 organized by Yachting Association of India. The championship was held in Malad, Mumbai from 11 to 16 October. Sports and Youth Welfare Minister Yashodhara Raje Scindia has congratulated the medal winning players for this achievement. He said that this achievement of the players is a matter of pride for Madhya Pradesh. Best wishes to all the players for the future.

Ritika Dangi won gold medal in the Laser 4.7 event in the championship. On the other hand, Neha Thakur bagged the silver medal in the same event. It may be noted that this event is also the second round of the selection trials for the Asian Games. Eklavya Batham won the gold medal in Optimist Overall. In the same competition, Divyanshi Mishra bagged the silver medal for Madhya Pradesh by staying third overall in the girls' category. Madhya Pradesh also bagged gold, silver and bronze medals in the 420 mixed class event. In this event, the pair of Nancy Rai and Ani Raj Sendhav bagged gold, Vidyanshi Mishra and Manish Sharma won silver and Pushkar Bamre and Vanshika Singh Parihar won bronze medals. Shagun Jha gave silver medal to Madhya Pradesh in under -12 optimist class. It may be noted that all these players being coached by Arjuna Awardee G.L. Yadav.

Rain Rain go away

Heavy drizzles lashed the capital on second day at evening in a row. Although, Monsoon ended but unexpected rain has disrupted life. People seem stranded for long to protect themselves.

CM CHOUHAN PLANTS COCONUT SAPLING

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a coconut sapling at his residence. Coconut is considered auspicious in Indian culture. Therefore it is used for religious purpose and auspicious work. Coconut water contains a good amount of electrolytes, which gives a feeling of freshness when tired or weak. One coconut contains about 600 mg of potassium.

CM CHOUHAN CONDOLES DEATH OF SENIOR JOURNALIST CHANDRABHAN SAXENA

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has condoled the death of Chandrabhan Saxena, senior journalist at Dainik Hari Bhoomi newspaper. Paying tributes to Saxena, Chief Minister Chouhan prayed to God to grant peace to the departed soul and strength to the family members to bear the loss.

CAR MOWS DOWN PEOPLE DURING DURGA IDOL IMMERSION, 1 INJURED

Bhopal: A teenager, who was part of a procession to immerse Durga idol, was injured when a speeding car hit devotees near Habibganj railway station.

The incident occurred late on Saturday evening when a large gathering was celebrating the last day of Navratri and people were on the way to immerse Durga idol.

They were dancing and chanting slogans when suddenly a car drove past the crowd and tried to cross the procession.

Seeing the car close to the procession, some people objected against the driver's attempt to cross the road, following which the driver immediately applied reverse gear in speed and hit a teenager. Subsequently, the driver was surrounded by a group of people who beat up and later handed him over to the police.Bhopal Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Irshad Wali said the teenager has received a minor injury and is being treated at a government hospital."Doctor said the boy has received minor injuries and is out of danger now. The driver has been arrested and the car was seized. Further investigation is underway, "Wali added.This incident came two days after a speeding car ploughed into a crowd participating in a Durga idol immersion, killing one and injuring more than a dozen people in Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh.

First Hockey India Junior Boys Inter Academy National Hockey Championship-2021

Matches will be played on new blue astro turf at Major Dhyanchand Stadium, Top 28 hockey academy teams of the country will participate in the championship, Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh will inaugurate

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The first Junior Boys Academy National Hockey Championship-2021 is being organised under the joint aegis of Hockey India and Sports and Youth Welfare Department from 18th to 27th October at Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium. The championship matches will be played at the new astro turf hockey ground of Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium. Teams from 28 top hockey academies of the country are participating in this championship. The championship will be inaugurated at Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium at 11 am on Monday where Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh will be chief guest.

On the initiative of Sports and Youth Welfare Minister Yashodhara Raje Scindia, Hockey India has entrusted the responsibility of the championship to the Sports and Youth Welfare Department, Madhya Pradesh. Sports Department is organising this championship for the first time in association with Hockey India. Earlier the Sports Department had successfully hosted the Sub Junior Academy National Hockey Championship. It will prove to be a great platform for junior hockey players.

On Sunday, a meeting of the team manager and officials regarding the organisation of the championship was held at Major Dhyanchand Hall of Tatya Tope Stadium. Director Sports Ravi Kumar Gupta welcomed all the visiting teams. He informed that the Sports Department has successfully organised the Sub Junior Hockey Academy National Championship recently. The department has made all the preparations for this championship. He apprised that according to the intention of Sports Minister Yashodhara Raje Scindia, an amount of Rs. 20 thousand is being provided to each team as an incentive. In view of the Corona period, it is necessary to ensure that all protocols are followed. He extended best wishes to all the team coaches and managers for the championship. Earlier, Director Sports Ravi Kumar Gupta took stock of the preparations for the championship.

There will be a battle of superiority between 28 teams

The championship will be played on the basis of league matches. 6 matches will be played daily. The 28 teams participating in the championship are divided into eight pools. Three teams each have been placed in the first four pools. Four teams each have been placed in the next four pools. The top team from their pool will advance to the quarter-finals. A total of 44 matches will be played in the championship including 36 league matches. The final and third place match of the championship will be played on 27 October.

Future stars to be chosen

Hockey India selectors will also be present during the championship. The future stars of Indian hockey will be chosen from this championship. These include Olympian Syed Ali and Asian medalist Rajneesh Mishra. The selectors told that for the first time Hockey India has organised a tournament among the academies. This gives players a platform. Our aim is to give chance to more and more players of the country.

Class of cleanliness in Bhopal's Nipania Sukha panchayat

Team Absolute | Bhopal

To teach the lesson of cleanliness, a cleanliness school was set up in Nipania Sokha Gram Panchayat, located near Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh. People of all classes and ages participated in this school. During this, emphasis was laid on making the villages zero waste.

Nana Ji Deshmukh is honored with National Gaurav Gram Sabha Award from Nipaniya Sukha Panchayat of Tanda Development Block. Umakant Umrao, Principal Secretary, Panchayat and Rural Development, visited several villages of this block and took stock of the implementation of rural development schemes.

Principal Secretary Umrao inspected the Percolation Tank and Community Sanitation Complex constructed at Nipania Sukha and also attended the cleanliness school in the Choupal built here. Keeping in view the goals of Swachhta Survekshan Gramin 2021, a women's cleanliness school was organized. In order to achieve the goals of the survey, it was told in the schools of the children, elders and religious leaders of the village organized through women that what kind of behavior should be adopted to keep the village clean and tidy.

The level of awareness will be increased in the villages through the women trained through the pathshala and by achieving the goals of solid and liquid waste management through public participation, zero waste will be made in the villages, as well as the continuity of garbage collection will be maintained. Public representatives, officers of various departments, women of self-help groups and villagers were present in the school of cleanliness.

The biggest challenge in rural areas is to completely ban open defecation, because toilets have been built under the Swachh Bharat Mission, but many people still go for open defecation instead of using toilets. Along with this, garbage is made outside the houses, eliminating them is also a big challenge.

Numbers of old vehicles will also be allotted to new vehicles in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

If you like the number of your old vehicle, then now you can get it allotted for the new vehicle as well, for this you will have to pay some extra cost. In Madhya Pradesh, the Transport Department is engaged in innovating, in this sequence, arrangements have been made to allot old numbers for new vehicles. Now vehicle owners will be able to use the number allotted to the old four wheelers for their new vehicles. For this, the amount given by the vehicle owner for the old number or minimum 15 thousand rupees, whichever is higher, will have to be paid.

According to the present system, along with the scrap of the condom or unusable vehicle, its number was also blocked. In this system, the vehicle owner who took the VIP number had to take a new number.

In the new arrangement made by the state government, now the vehicle owners who take the VIP number will get the direct benefit. It is to be known that before May 2014, vehicle numbers were allotted on the basis of first come, first serve, in which the fee of 1 to 9 numbers is 15 thousand, 10 to 100 is 12 thousand, 10 thousand for specific numbers and rest of the numbers. It was two thousand rupees. Not only this, after this the online auction process was started for the VIP number. Since the original vehicle was purchased by the owner through the auction process by paying a very large amount in lieu of specific numbers.

absolute edit

EDITOR'S SPECS

Delta and Delta Plus variants

The Delta and Delta Plus Covid-19 variants were less well neutralised by antibodies from infected and vaccinated individuals as compared to the original virus, making them more dangerous and contributing to its rapid global spread, according to a study. The Delta variant (B.1.617.2) first emerged in India during 2020 and subsequently spread globally within a short time period. In addition to Delta, Delta Plus sub-variants have been observed which carry additional mutations that may make them more dangerous. In the study published in the journal 'Cell Reports', the researchers showed that both Delta and Delta Plus infect lung cells with higher efficiency than the original virus (the virus that circulated during the early phase of the pandemic). The Delta Covid variant was found to be better at entering lung cells compared to the original virus and also at fusing infected lung cells with uninfected cells. This enabled the variant to spread widely and infect more people. Moreover, one of four antibodies (bamlanivimab) used to treat Covid-19 was not effective against Delta, and Delta Plus was even resistant against two therapeutic antibodies (bamlanivimab and etesevimab). Similarly, antibodies generated upon vaccination with the BioNTech-Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines were also less effective against Delta and Delta Plus compared to the original virus. Results are consistent with the observation that vaccination efficiently protects against development of severe disease after infection with the Delta variant, but frequently fails to completely suppress infection. This can prevent the healthcare system from being overwhelmed in case of increased spread of Delta and closely related viruses during the winter months.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE POPULATION EXPLOSION DEBATE

NIRENDRA DEV

Mizoram has made news -- not necessarily for the wrong reasons but certainly for quite unexpected reasons. North-Eastern India generally makes news due to insurgency-related incidents or other instances of violence and killings. This time a mother of 15 children and a widow has been honoured and rewarded with a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh by Mizoram's Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte.

The reason is that the native Mizo population is dwindling and hence women like her are being awarded and honoured. The unprecedented show had the backing of the influential Young Mizo Association (YMA) and a Presbyterian Church leader Rev P.M. Manikama. The state Sports Minister, Robert Romawia Royte, also loves to be called 'Triple R', in fact has distributed Rs 2.5 lakh to 17 women who delivered 'more children' at a function held within his Aizawl East-II constituency.

The dwindling population and 'fertility' issues are of general concern in the North-East. There are also other issues. The local Christian tribals do not believe in the government's policy of small family or family planning. The Nagas generally use the refrain -- a mother's womb is not a graveyard. The population issue remains a vexed problem in the North-Eastern region, which has more than 200 linguistic and ethnic groups across the seven states of Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Assam, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh. Of these, three Christian-majority states are Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya.

Meghalaya, the hub of Khasis, Garos and Jaintia tribals practises matriarchy. Nagaland has so far not elected any woman legislator and Mizoram has elected only two in the past and more so as an exception. Royte belongs to the regional outfit Mizo National Front, the party led by state Chief Minister Zoramthanga. MNF was once led by a crafty rebel leader, the Late Laldenga. Royte said that the incentives to mothers were given in accordance with 'more children drive' launched by different church bodies and denominations and the Young Mizo Association (YMA). Such a gesture is not new to Mizoram. In 2018, a Baptist church in remote Lunglei district town had announced incentives to encourage couples to have more babies in an effort to check their dwindling numbers. Of course, this disregards the national policy for control population. The church in remote Lunglei town had said it would pay families a one-time cash assistance of Rs 4,000 for a fourth child and an additional Rs 1,000 rupees for each new child. These are very sensitive matters. The issue of dwindling numbers in the region should be understood in a sociopolitical context. Ethnic minority groups fear being swamped by 'outsiders' from mainland India and other tribal groups. Nagas witnessed violent days in the mid-1990s in their confrontation and clashes with Kukis. The menace hit both Nagaland and parts of Manipur. In Mizoram, the native Lushais are not happy to entertain Brus especially when it comes to casting votes.

The Mizo youth leaders would readily tell one that the locals are "not against professionals coming and working in our state". The fear and objections are of a regular influx. Here too certain complexities work. Mizoram has for months now accommodated and helped 'refugees' from Chin province of Myanmar who have taking shelter after facing persecution following the harsh military actions there since the February coup.

Yes, 'sharing' ethnic bond is a crucial factor in the entire debate. Moving out of the North-East, we know the population debate is of general concern. India currently is the world's second most populous nation after China. There is a 'national policy' to check population growth even as it is not illegal to have more children. According to the UN figures, in 2019, India had an estimated population of 1.37 billion and China 1.43 billion. Now experts say by 2027, it is possible that India will surpass China's population. It is estimated that India could add nearly 273 million people to its population between 2021 and 2050.

We have one more major dichotomy in handling issues like population growth between "mainland India" and among the tribal majority states of the North-East. In July, the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh law commission released the draft of a proposed Bill which made news, and certainly not without good reason. The first draft of the Uttar Pradesh population (Control, stabilization and Welfare) Bill, 2021 had proposed that the benefits of state government-sponsored welfare schemes will be limited to only those with two children or less. The State Law Commission in UP had also sought comments from the common people. In certain quarters, such moves are being linked to electoral politics and Hindu-Muslim divide.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had himself said: "There is also a lack of awareness about population in certain communities and we therefore need community-centric awareness efforts". The answers to some queries triggered by these debates are not known to us as of now. Nor do I want to hazard a guess. If an answer has to be decided by a democratic process, it is difficult to conceive of a more satisfactory method or system than that is embodied in the existing structures. Family is a private business and the state should have no business. But is it so?

Society and policy makers hence come back to the same question posed on a number of occasions pertaining to different pressing problems. The question is - What is the right way for us to get forward?

Know your immune response post vaccination

Nirmal Kumar Ganguly

Antibodies are proteins produced by the immune system to fight a disease. On exposure to a foreign body like bacteria or a virus, the body develops what is called the IgM antibodies. These are the first antibodies the body makes when it fights a new infection, are short term and may not be detectable after a few weeks of an infection. It is then followed by IgG antibodies, which provide a longer lasting immune protection. IgA also plays a crucial role in the immune defence of mucosal surfaces such as nasophryanx, lower respiratory tracts, etc., the first point of entry of SARS-CoV-2.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), over 232 million Covid-19 cases have been reported, out of which India has officially reported 33 million cases (1). If we aim to bring the pandemic under control, we need to employ measures that go beyond social distancing and wearing a mask. These measures need to be supplemented by a strong vaccination program. The Covid-19 vaccines help us develop immunity against the virus and its variants. They stimulate the immune system to create antibodies that fight the virus, thus preventing serious illness and death. According to WHO, the Covid-19 vaccine protects us from serious illness and death, but this protection from infection and transmission is not definite (2). How long the Covid-19 antibodies last after infection/ vaccination is yet to be determined. One way to be sure of our immune response and to determine if one has developed antibodies, is through a reliable IgG quantitative antibody test. This test measures the level of IgG antibodies developed by the individual. As IgG antibodies last longer in the body, they are detectable for a longer duration of time and are more accurate.

IgG antibodies and what they say about immunity A positive IgG antibody test would mean that the person was either previously infected by or was vaccinated for Covid-19 (3). A higher number of antibodies indicate a greater number of neutralizing antibodies. Neutralizing Antibodies are a different class of antibodies that prevent the interaction of virus and the host, thereby preventing the infection. Excellent correlation has been seen with IgG and neutralizing antibodies. Although developing antibodies does not guarantee we will not contract Covid-19, it does help us understand our individual vulnerabilities and subsequently helps us to be better prepared. Choosing the right test is essential as some antibody tests will only detect antibodies from infection, not from Covid-19 vaccination. Consult your doctor to choose the right test. These tests could thus play a critical role in managing the pandemic by informing scientists and health authorities if sufficient individuals have developed a robust immune response against Covid-19.

international

S.Korean nuke envoy pins hope on end-of-war declaration

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea's chief nuclear envoy said that a formal declaration of an end to the 1950-53 Korean War could pave the way for resuming the stalled denuclearization talks with North Korea.

Noh Kyu-duk made the remark on Saturday ahead of his meetings with his US and Japanese counterparts in Washington later this week to explore ways to bring Pyongyang back to the negotiating table, Yonhap News Agency reported. The upcoming talks will likely touch on President Moon Jae-in's recent proposal to declare a formal end to the Korean War, which Noh has said is the most effective among confidence-building measures with North Korea.

"I expect more in-depth discussions on various issues at the working level, including the end-of-war declaration," Noh said during a meeting with reporters upon his arrival at the Dulles international airport.

"(The declaration) is meaningful as a gateway to talks for the complete denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula."

South and North Korea technically remain at war as the Korean War ended only with an armistice, not a peace treaty.'

Noh and the US special representative for North Korea, Sung Kim, are scheduled to meet bilaterally on Monday before holding a trilateral meeting with their Japanese counterpart, Takehiro Funakoshi, the following day. Noh plans to hold a separate bilateral meeting with Funakoshi on Tuesday, according to Seoul officials. The three held their last in-person talks in September in Tokyo.

Noh said he expects to have a "constructive" discussions with Kim to come up with inducements for dialogue with the North, saying Seoul and Washington have been jointly preparing humanitarian aid for the North and it is nearly ready. Nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang have remained stalled since the Hanoi summit in 2019 between then US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un that ended without a deal.

4 ARRESTED IN B'DESH OVER VANDALISING HINDU TEMPLE

Sumi Khan | Dhaka

Four people, including an Imam, were arrested in Bangladesh's Kishoreganj district in association with the vandalisation and looting of a Hindu temple.

According to the police, the arrested persons -- Mamunur Rashid, 22, two teenagers aged 15 and 16 and Kafil Uddin, a 50-year-old village doctor -- admitted to their crimes on Saturday. The violent incident took place on Friday at the Kali Mandir in Kadim Maijhati area. The miscreants entered the temple, vandalised five idols and fled. The attack took place just as the worshipers were preparing to immerse the idol. According to the police, Rashid, who is an Imam, led the attack.

36 quakes hit Spanish island amid volcanic eruption

Madrid | Agencies

The Spanish island of La Palma was hit by 36 earthquakes in the last 24 hours, as the ongoing eruption of the Cumbre Vieja volcano continued for the 28th day, according to local authorities.

A quake measuring 4.6 on the Richter Scale hit in the municipality of Mazo at a depth of 37 km at 4.41 a.m. on Saturday, the Spanish Geographical Institute (IGN) said, adding that it followed by another 4.5-magnitude temblor at 6.07 a.m., in the same area, reports Xinhua news agency.

The quakes were measured after the volcano opened another mouth on the south-east face of its main cone Friday night.

The fissure mouth has started ejecting ash and pyroclastic material.

The volcano continues to behave in a "Strombolic" manner, with periods of high explosivity and others of relative calm, although TV images show what has been described as a fast-moving "tsunami" of lava cascading down its slopes.

Island authorities calculate that 732 hectares of land have been affected by the lava, leading to the destruction of 1,548 buildings according to the Copernicus satellite and causing the evacuation of over 7,000 people since the start of the eruption on September 19. The current eruption has already lasted longer than the 1971 eruption, which was the last to affect the island.

Earlier on Thursday, La Palma was once again rocked by more than 50 tremors.

IS says it will target Shia Muslims everywhere

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Islamic State (IS) terror group has said that they will attack Shia Muslims everywhere, Khaama Press reported.

The group's Al-Naba weekly has published the warning on Saturday, which adds that Shia Muslims will be targeted in their homes and centre.

The warning came a day after the terror group's Khorasan branch (IS-K) carried out the twin bombings inside the Shia mosque in Kandahar, that claimed the lives of 63 people while injuring 83 others.

Friday's attack took place exactly after a week when another Shia mosque in Kunduz city was hit by a suicide bombing which claimed the lives of at least 50 people.

The IS-K had claimed responsibility for the attack, which was the deadliest since the US forces left Afghanistan at the end of August.

Saturday's warning has especially threatened Shia

Muslims living in Afghanistan, and the IS added that that they cooperate and support Iran and other countries against the IS-K. The IS-K is now the biggest threat that threatens the Taliban government after they took over Afghanistan.

In the meantime, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has purportedly said that their fighters will be deployed to man the security of mosques, especially of the Shia Muslim ones.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had warned of IS fighters entering Afghanistan from Iraq and Syria and added that there were presently up to 2,000 affiliates in the north of the war-torn nation.

Global Covid-19 caseload tops 240 mn

Washington | Agencies

The global coronavirus caseload has topped 240.3 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 4.89 million and vaccinations soared to over 6.60 billion, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

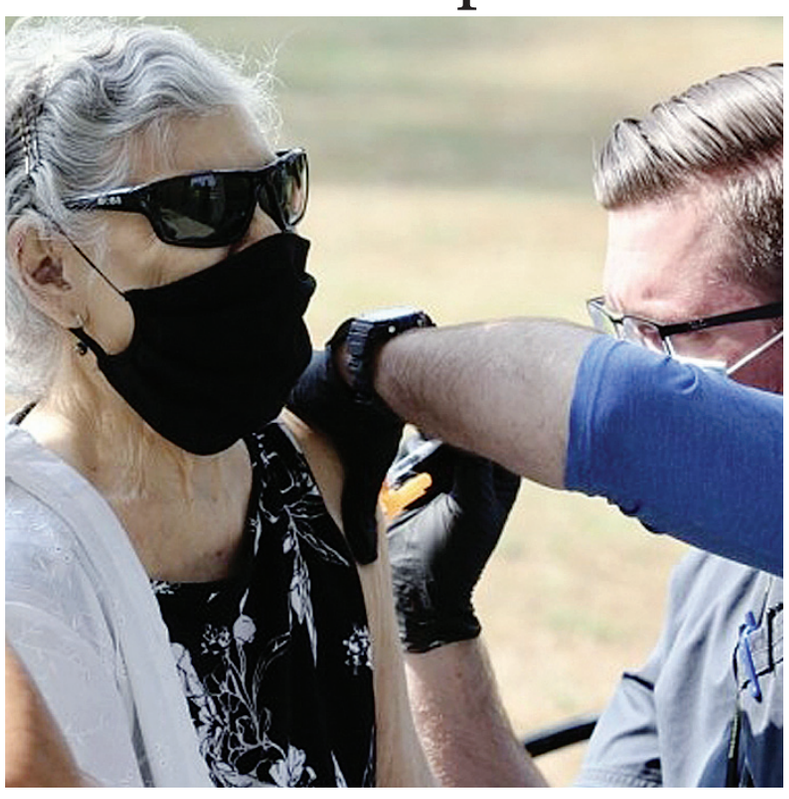
In its latest update on Sunday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload, death toll and the total number number of vaccine doses administered stood at 240,380,746, 4,894,371 and 6,606,982,770, respectively.

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 44,916,322 and 724,153, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 34,053,573 cases.

The other worst countries with over 3 million cases are Brazil (21,638,726), the UK (8,443,88), Russia (7,837,1012), Turkey (7,630,133), France (7,180,773), Iran (5,765,904), Argentina (5,271,361), Spain (4,984,386), Colombia (4,978,689), Italy (4,712,482), Germany (4,366,833), Indonesia (4,233,014) and Mexico (3,744,574), the CSSE figures showed.

Nations with a death toll of over 100,000 are Brazil (603,152), India



(451,980), Mexico (283,574), Russia (218,362), Peru (199,775), Indonesia (142,889), the UK (138,940), Italy (131,503), Colombia (126,796), Iran (123,695), France (118,153) and Argentina (115,660).

Seoul logs coldest Oct morning in 67 years

Seoul | Agencies

Temperatures in Seoul sharply dropped to nearly 1 degree Celsius on Sunday, marking the coldest morning for October in 67 years, the state weather agency said.

The morning low in Seoul came to 1.3 degree Celsius in the day, the lowest since October 13, 1954, when the figure was 1.2 degree Celsius, Yonhap News Agency quoted the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA) as saying.

Some areas of the capital city saw the mercury drop below zero, and the season's first ice was seen in the city, 17 days earlier than average, it added.

Cold weather also hit other parts of the country, with temperatures on average nationwide falling more than 10 degrees Celsius from a day earlier.

Temperatures on Mount Seorak in Gangwon province

plunged to minus 9.3 degrees Celsius in the morning, and the border county of Yeoncheon saw its mercury dive to minus 3.9 degrees Celsius, the agency said, adding that first ice and frost were witnessed across the country. As of 10 a.m. on Sunday, cold wave alerts, issued for most of the country the previous day, were all lifted. But the cold snap is expected to continue through next week, according to the agency. The unseasonable cold wave came as the Arctic chill from the North Pole descends to South Korea and subtropical high pressure goes away, it added.

MAHA BJP JOLTED AHEAD OF BYPOLL AS EX-STATE VP, EX-MLA JOIN CONGRESS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In jolt to the Bharatiya Janata Party, its former Maharashtra unit Vice President Bhaskarrao Patil-Khatgaonkar and former legislator Omprakash A. Pokarna on Sunday announced their return to the Congress fold.

The development, coming in the run-up to the crucial Deglur Assembly by-elections scheduled on October 30, is expected to boost the Congress prospects in the district.

Patil-Khatgaonkar and Pokarna made the announcement at a joint press conference held here this afternoon in the presence of Congress' Nanded strongman and Public Works Minister Ashok Chavan. Patil-Khatgaonkar, a three time MP and MLA and two time state minister - who quit Congress in 2014 - is the son-in-law of former party stalwart and Union Minister, the late S. B. Chavan, and brother-in-law of Ashok Chavan.

Pokarna, a former Nanded Mayor and a legislator, had joined the BJP in 2014, but has decided to return to Congress along with his mentor Patil-Khatgaonkar.

In Deglur, the Congress has nominated Jitesh Antapur, son of the late MLA Raosaheb Antapurkar, who passed away in April due to Covid-19, and the BJP has fielded ex-Shiv Sena legislator Subhash Sabne, who joined it recently. Besides Patil-Khatgaonkar and Pokarna, many other office-bearers and activists who will also walk over to the Congress, were welcomed by Ashok Chavan and other leaders.

Mumbai records zero Covid deaths, for first time in 20 months

Notching an achievement, Mumbai on Sunday reported zero Covid-19 deaths, for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic gripped the city around 20 months ago in March 2020.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The city also recorded 367 new cases, while 518 fully recovered patients went home on Sunday.

Presently, 5,030 active cases still remain in the city as the health authorities heave a sigh of relief.

Covid-19 scarred the country's commercial capital considerably with 751,293 total infections till date and 16,180 deaths, the highest in the country.

Presently, the city's doubling rate has increased to 1,214 days, with a recovery rate as high as 97 percent now.

With no containment zones in the city's chawls or slums, only 50 buildings remain under seal now, a huge improvement over the tense days in the first and second waves of Covid when these figures ran into thousands.

'Will Do Something That Will Make You Proud of Me': Aryan Khan to NCB

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Aryan Khan, according to sources, said he will work for social and financial upliftment of the poor after his release. Aryan Khan is currently lodged in Arthur Road prison after he was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau following a drug seizure from a cruise ship on October 2.

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, who was arrested in the Mumbai cruise drugs case, underwent counselling while in the custody of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), an official said. During his session, the actor's son promised Sameer Wankhede, zonal director of NCB's Mumbai unit, that he would do good work and make him proud one day.

Aryan Khan said after his release, he will work for the "social and financial uplift of the poor and downtrodden" and never do anything which could bring him publicity for the wrong reasons," said the agency official. He said "I will do something that will make you proud of me", the official added. Aryan Khan is currently lodged in Arthur Road prison after he was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau following an alleged drug seizure from a cruise ship off the Mumbai coast on October 2. A rave party was allegedly taking place on the ship and Aryan Khan was on board. No drugs were found on him, as per an NCB official.

'Govt killings' have replaced 'contract killings': Raut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Launching a stinging attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Centre over the alleged misuse of investigative agencies, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday alleged that "contract killings" are now replaced by "government killings" to finish off political rivals in Maharashtra.

With some ministers in the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government under the scanner of the Enforcement Directorate, Income Tax, and at least one of them facing a Central Bureau of Investigation inquiry, Raut said that Central investigating agencies are working as "contract killers for the party in power in Delhi".

"Is there a rule of law or (a rule of) raids in Maharashtra? This is the question which comes to one's mind considering the record-break raids being conducted through Central investigating agencies," Raut wrote in the weekly column Rokhthok in the Sena mouthpiece Saamana of which he is the executive editor.

Earlier, Delhi rulers used to lie but now (ordering) frequent raids have become a new business without any capital investment, he stated.

"Use people's money, government machinery to remove political opponents. In the past, contract killings were the order of the day in Mumbai (when Underworld was active). Hitmen were hired on contract to kill rivals (by gangs). This is now replaced by 'government killing'. Central investigating agencies are working as contract killers for the party in power in Delhi," Raut said.

Referring to the arrest of Nationalist Congress Party leader and state minister Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Raut said Khan had been arrested under the pretext of his involvement in a drug racket and was put in jail for eight months.

"Now the court has granted him bail. The court said herbal tobacco was found in the possession of Khan and not drugs. Malik should file cases against NCB officials," Raut said in the write-up.

The Sena leader further said the Central Bureau of Investigation was raiding homes of former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh instead of finding out the whereabouts of Param Bir Singh, the former commissioner of Mumbai police who had accused Deshmukh of corruption with the help of some police officers when he was serving as the home minister of the state.

Key to BJP's prospects in Goa Assembly polls may rest with MGP

Panaji | Agencies

Even as Union Home Minister Amit Shah earlier this week urged the BJP workers to work towards ensuring full majority for the party in the 2022 Assembly polls in Goa, the party's ongoing parleys with its 'natural partner', the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), could hold the key to retaining power in the state for the ruling party.

Over the last two-and-a-half decades, the electoral success of the BJP in Goa has relied on the shrinking but still valuable shoulders of MGP, much like the Shiv Sena had been critical in its support to the saffron party in Maharashtra since 1990s.

It was with MGP as its key ally in the 2012 Assembly polls that the BJP-MGP 'mahayuti' managed to win its first simple majority in the 40-member state Assembly.

In 2017, both the parties were on opposing sides, which also resulted in BJP managing to win only 13 seats. Unlike the Shiv Sena-BJP combine in Maharashtra, the MGP, led by the canny Dhavalikar brothers, Sudin and

Deepak, has proved to be a cantankerous ally, ever since the two parties first came together to contest the 1994 Assembly elections.

Founded by the state's first Chief Minister Dayanand Bandodkar, the MGP has been a grassroots party with an appeal among Goa's Hindu 'bahujan samaj' (non-Brahmin caste groups). The MGP was in power for 15 consecutive years since 1963, before ceding ground to the Congress and eventually to the BJP in the 2000s.

People in remote areas should get better facilities: Bombay High Court Judge

Thane | Agencies

Bombay High Court judge Justice A A Sayed said people living in far-off places and remote areas should be brought into the mainstream and provided better facilities, including roads, water, education and healthcare.

He was speaking at the inauguration of a one-day legal services camp at Shahapur in Thane district, jointly organised by the District Collectorate, the State Legal Services Authority and the District Legal Services Authority.

"Those living in remote areas should be provided road, water, education and healthcare facilities. They should be brought into the mainstream of society," he said.

He also asked different departments of the government to ensure that citizens get the benefits of various schemes.

"People should not be deprived of any of the benefits of the government schemes," Justice Sayed said.

He added that the legal services camps being organised in the district will go a long way in helping awaken citizens in the remote regions about their legal rights.

Thane's Principal district and sessions judge Anil L Pansare, district judge N K Brahme, secretary of the State Legal Services Authority Dinesh Khurana and district collector Rajesh Narvekar were present on the occasion.

NCB IS AN 'OSTRICH WITH HEAD BURIED IN THE SAND': EX-AG MUKUL ROHATGI

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

Delivering stinging punches, former Attorney General of India (AGI) Mukul Rohatgi has said that the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) is like "an Ostrich with its head buried in the sand", while the poor rich boy Aryan Khan is "paying the price for being a celeb".

Rohatgi said the law clearly states that "bail is the norm, jail is an exception" and the issue settled many years ago by the Supreme Court, since the most established tenet of the Constitution is the 'Right to Life' and 'Right to Liberty', not only for Indians, but also foreigners in India.

If they want to give him (Khan) bail, it can be done right away, even on public holidays, he unequivocally declared on a private news channel as others were all attentive ears.

"Its incredible that someone remains inside (jail) for so many days without seizure of drugs or any other proof. No medical examination, so no consumption. How can he be held in custody when the max sentence would be one year, assuming he was found with drugs," Rohatgi asserted.

Other prominent personalities who whipped the NCB included Shiv Sena leader Kishore Tiwari, designated as MoS, top-notch lawyers Vikas Singh and Dr. Pinky Anand, both former Additional Solicitor-Generals of India.

Elsewhere, the Nationalist Congress Party National Spokesperson and Minister Nawab Malik is meticulously 'investigating' the NCB's skeletons, catching it by surprise and rattling its super-sleuths -- reminiscent of a similar probe of an ex-CBI Director undertaken by a group of intrepid journos in the late-1980s.

Rohatgi also trashed the NCB's dark theories of "international conspiracy"

wondering who will believe that he (Khan) is a peddler or needed money so was doing it for money, plus he was not even a passenger on the cruise ship but a mere invitee, maybe impromptu at the last minute.

"WhatsApp chats are not evidence unless due procedures of law are followed... Confessions of an accused are not admissible as evidence without proper safeguards... In this case, (Khan) is clearly paying the price of being a celeb," Rohatgi said. He dismissively said that such 'run of the mill cases' come up by dozens daily and nobody even bothers about them, but because here a personality like Aryan Khan was involved the NCB is unwilling to listen to reason.

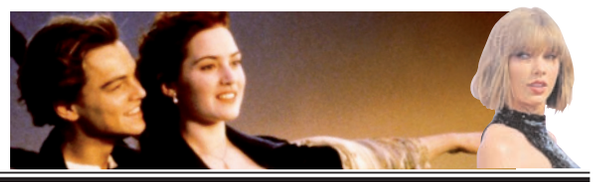
Rohatgi's censure of the NCB came even as Khan and the other (male) co-accused, were dumped from a quarantine cell to a general cell, in the august company of other hardcore criminals in the Arthur Road Central Jail (ARCJ), which once housed the Pakistani terrorist Ajmal Kasab.

Now, since his detention on October 2, and 16 nights away from the 'jannat'(heaven) of Shah Rukh Khan's iconic sea-facing bungalow 'Mannat' (prayer) in Bandra west, Aryan has changed to regular jail attire. albeit non-designer variety, with 'N956' allotted as his under-trial prisoner roll-call number.Last week, the celeb cub was permitted to make an emotional video-call with the Bollywood Lion King Khan and his wife Gauri amid reports that his sister Suhana had taken ill at her brother's continuing stints in custody.

Though no 'special' treatment is given to Aryan or the other youngsters lodged in separate barracks, each received a money order of Rs 4,500 from their families as per jail rules for subsistence.

They can spend this money to buy foods of their choice from the modest menu of the ARCJ -- a far cry from Aryan dad's generous wads of allowances and specially designed lavish cuisines -- no matter, if he occasionally has to take 'appointments' to meet his Pa at home.

Finally, pulling the NCB's ears, Rohatgi said given the changed values in modern times, instead of harassing youngsters, the NCB should go after and nab those who are enticing the youth by supplying such 'poisons' (drugs) whether in Punjab or Mumbai or anywhere in the country.



'The Rock' releases first teaser trailer of DC film 'Black Adam'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson treated his fans to the first teaser of 'Black Adam', the anti-hero film from the DC Extended Universe directed by Jaume Collett-Serra and co-written by Sohrab Noshirvani of 'The Mauritanian' fame. Collett-Serra directed Johnson most recently in Disney's hit film, 'Jungle Cruise'. Describing the character he had first signed up to play in 2014, Johnson tweeted on Saturday: "He is ruthless. He is unstoppable. He is the reason the hierarchy of power in the DC UNIVERSE is about to change."Johnson's Seven Bucks Productions has co-produced the movie with DC Films, New Line Cinema and FlynnPicture Co, which has made a number of films starring the wrestler-actor, including 'Skyscraper'.Along with Johnson's character, according to Variety.com, 'Black Adam' also focuses on the members of the Justice Society: Aldis Hodge as Hawkman, who can fly thanks to his special metal wings; Noah Centineo as Atom Smasher, who can control his molecules and thereby change his size, density and strength; Quintessa Swindell as Cyclone, who can control the wind; and Pierce Brosnan as Doctor Fate, an archaeologist who becomes a powerful sorcerer while wearing the Helmet of Fate. The film is slated to be released in the United State on July 29, 2022.

JOHN CENA GETS INTO ACTION IN JUST HIS UNDERWEAR

Los Angeles | Agencies

WWE wrestler-turned-actor John Cena strips down to his bare essentials, dancing and fighting in his underwear, as he plays a homicidally misguided costume vigilante in the first trailer for the television series 'Peacemaker', reports Variety.com.The trailer debuted on Saturday as part of the virtual fan event, DC Fandome. It opens with the Canadian Indian actor Rizwan Manji, whom audiences will remember from the comedy drama series 'Outsourced'. Manji plays the recurring character Jamil in 'Peacemaker'.A spin-off from the feature film 'The Suicide Squad', 'Peacemaker' will premiere on the streaming service HBO Max in the U.S. on January 13. The series has been created and written by the film's director, James Gunn.It follows Cena's Christopher Smith after the events of 'The Suicide Squad', in which Smith, aka Peacemaker, was nearly killed after betraying his team for what he believed to be the greater good.

According to Variety.com, Steve Agee and Jennifer Holland are also reprising their respective roles from the film as John and Emilia, aides to the Suicide Squad mastermind Amanda Waller. They are tasked to assist Peacemaker on his latest mission.

Rami Malek talks about his life on 'SNL'; Craig does a cameo

Los Angeles | Agencies

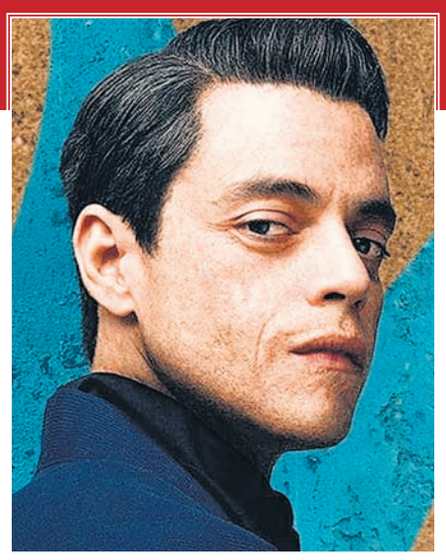
Rami Malek, who played the villain Lyutsifer Safin in 'No Time to Die', led such a sheltered childhood with his twin brother and a sister in San Fernando Valley, California, that he did not know Hollywood was just 10 minutes from where he lived. Of course, he clarified, that it was equal to "three hours of Los Angeles traffic time".

Malek, the son of Egyptian immigrants who first made headlines for playing Freddie Mercury in the 2018 film 'Bohemian Rhapsody', was a guest on the popular comedy sketch variety show, 'Saturday Night Live' (SNL).

Another highlight of the show was a cameo appearance by Daniel Craig, who comes dressed as a medieval prince for a hilarious take on an audition for the role of the late singer-songwriter Prince in a horror flick.

Opening his brief 'SNL' monologue with the admission that he does have a 'Resting Villain Face' and is well-aware of his natural bad guy looks, reports Variety.com, Malek went on to joke about how he's always felt "a kinship with the malefactors and sinners of cinema and TV".

He noted 'Jaws' was "just hungry", 'Dracula' was "just thirsty", Darth Vader was "just trying to reconnect with his son" and 'A Nightmare on Elm Street' character Freddy Krueger, well, he has just been "encouraging kids to dream".



Ezra Miller to play 'The Flash'

Los Angeles | Agencies

After being a super-success on television and OTT platforms, 'The Flash' from the 'Extended Universe' of DC Comics, creators of Batman and Superman, will return to movie theatres on November 4, 2022, as a full-length feature film.

On Saturday night at the DC FanDome virtual fan event, DC Films unveiled the movie trailer featuring Ezra Miller playing the 'Scarlet Speedster'. The Flash is the superhero persona of Barry Allen, a police forensic investigator from Central City and member of the Justice League who can move at superhuman speeds.

Barry's timeline-hopping abilities, according to Variety.com, allow him to shift from his cinematic universe - in which Batman is played by Ben Affleck, who first appeared with Miller in 'Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice' (2016) - into an alternative universe where Batman is played by Michael Keaton, reprising the role he originated in 1989's 'Batman'

First trailer out for 'The Batman' starring Robert Pattinson

Los Angeles | Agencies

The first full trailer for 'The Batman', directed by Matt Reeves of 'The Planet of the Apes' franchise, and starring Robert Pattinson (most recently seen in Christopher Nolan's 'Tenet') as Gotham's 'caped crusader', was released at a DC Fandome virtual event on Saturday night. Describing the "dark and gritty" film, Variety.com reports: "In a Gotham City saturated in rain and gloom, Pattinson's 'Batman', just a year into his reign as a costumed vigilante, attacks his enemies with a visceral, unhinged brutality that past live-action Batman movies never quite reached."

The film, it is speculated, pits Batman against the Riddler, played by Paul Dano ('12 Years A Slave'), but the trailer, although it begins with his arrest by the Gotham City police, is centred around the characters of Catwoman, played by Zoe Kravitz ('Big Little Lies') and an unrecognisable Colin Farrell, transformed by prosthetics to become Oswald Cobblespot a.k.a. Penguin, earlier most memorably essayed by Danny DeVito.

Jeffrey Wright, who was seen in action in 'No Time to Die', appears as Gotham City Police Department chief, James Falcone, and James Turturro from 'The Transformers' films as Carmine Falcone. The movie has been slated for a March 4, 2022, release in US theatres.

'THE END OF THE ROAD HAS BEEN REACHED'

Little Mix to 'formally announce they are SPLITTING UP next month'... after it's claimed trio are 'planning solo careers'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Little Mix are reportedly set to announce next month that they are formally splitting up.

Amid speculation that Perrie Edwards, Leigh-Anne Pinnock and Jade Thirlwall are planning on solo careers, it's said that they'll officially call it a day as a trio with an announcement in mid-November.

According to The Sun, the move comes as it's evident that 'the end of the road has been reached', with the girls' upcoming tour reported to be a final farewell to their devoted fans.

A source told the publication: 'There has been a lot of speculation about the future of Little Mix but it is now very clear that the end of the road has been reached.'A date is set to announce the split. The upcoming tour is going to be a farewell to their fans.'

Little Mix, alongside former member Jesy Nelson, formed on The X Factor in 2011, becoming the first ever group to win the competition.It comes as Little Mix's new single Cut You Off appears to take aim at Jesy Nelson after she quit the band in December last year.

In the song, Leigh-Anne, 30, Perrie , 28, and Jade, 28, are said to sing lyrics that reference Jesy's decision to quit the band.

According to The Sun, Jade savagely sings: 'I know you think you're all that, it'll be so sweet when you crawl back, but it's too late now.'

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Bella Thorne

2021 T20 WORLD CUP

INDIA LOOK TO FINE-TUNE PREPARATION WITH WARM-UP MATCHES

Dubai | Agencies

India would look to fine-tune their preparation for the 2021 men's T20 World Cup when they face 2016 runners-up England in their first warm-up match in Dubai on Monday. Match practice will not be an issue as the Indian players are coming after playing for their franchises in the recently-concluded IPL. It's more about finding the right combination ahead of their opening match.

The two warm-up matches, against England followed by the match against Australia on Wednesday, gives Virat Kohli and Indian team management a chance to finalise their playing eleven before the high-octane opening clash with Pakistan on October 24. India will be looking to test players for the showpiece event apart from assessing all-rounder Hardik Pandya's form, especially with the ball. Pandya's form is a big headache as the mystery over his availability to bowl in the tournament continues.With Rohit Sharma certain to open, it remains to be seen whether Ishan Kishan or KL Rahul will partner him at the top. Rahul's scores, while captaining Punjab Kings in the UAE leg of IPL 2021, read as 49, 21, 21, 67, 39, and 98 not out. Kishan, on the other hand, had measly returns of 11, 14, and 9 while batting in the middle order for Mumbai Indians. After a break of two matches, he returned to slam 50 not out and 84 as an opener.In terms of bowling, Ravindra Jadeja and Varun Chakravarthy could be the spin options. In the pace department, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Jasprit Bumrah pick themselves on account of form and experience. It could be a toss-up between Ravichandran Ashwin, Shardul Thakur, and Rahul Chahar for the fifth bowler's spot.

England, on the other hand, will look to decide on their best combinations in batting and bowling during the warm-up matches. Some players from their team also starred in IPL 2021, giving them a good knowledge of what to expect from the UAE pitches. The form of skipper Eoin Morgan, who had a very woeful IPL 2021 with the bat, will be of major concern for the think tank.

The warm-up match begins at 7:30 PM IST and will be streamed live on Disney+ Hotstar.

Squads:

India: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma (vice-captain), KL Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicketkeeper), Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Varun Chakravarthy, Rahul Chahar, Hardik Pandya Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

England: Eoin Morgan (captain), Jason Roy, Sam Billings, Liam Livingstone, Dawid Malan, Jos Buttler (wicketkeeper), Jonny Bairstow (wicketkeeper), Moeen Ali, Tom Curran, Chris Jordan, David Willey, Chris Woakes, Tymal Mills, Adil Rashid and Mark Wood.

Norrie sets up Indian Wells final against Basilashvili

Indian Wells | Agencies

Great Britain's Cameron Norrie dismissed Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria 6-2, 6-4 to make his maiden ATP Masters 1000 final at the BNP Paribas Open here on Sunday (IST).

The 26-year-old Londoner broke Dimitrov at the beginning of both sets at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden to claim his 46th match win of year and set up a title clash with Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia.

Dimitrov, who used his slice in earlier victories against world No. 2 Daniil Medvedev of Russia and Hubert Hurkacz of Poland to great effect, found playing the left-handed Norrie a different ballgame.

With his cross-court slice landing directly into Norrie's forehand, Dimitrov was forced to hit much closer to the baseline and to hit a greater percentage of topspin backhands, both riskier prospects that led to more errors.

Norrie notched his 46th match win of the year and is now within reach of his second title of the season to back up his triumph in Los Cabos. "I've been playing a lot of big matches this year, which has helped. I feel like I am used to the big moments and the big matches," Norrie told atptour.com. "I'm feeling more and more comfortable and I feel like I am playing on my terms in key moments."

After a below-par season, Georgia's Nikoloz Basilashvili is one win away from the biggest title of his career after fending off Taylor Fritz of the US in the other semifinals.

The Georgian, who had suffered five first-round losses from six appearances at Masters 1000 level this year heading into Indian Wells, saved three sets points in the first set and all seven break points he faced - including two in the final game - to defeat the 23-year-old American 7-6(5), 6-3 to reach his first final at this level.

The 29-year-old world No. 36 smashed 26 winners against 32 unforced errors.

T20 World Cup

Scotland Beats Bangladesh

Al Amerat | Agencies

Scotland began their men's T20 World Cup campaign with an upset six-run win over Bangladesh in the second match of the tournament at Al Amerat Cricket Stadium here on Sunday. Scotland used slower balls to good effect while bowling with discipline. In the field, they took their chances and were spot on with their fielding placements.

Chasing 140, Bangladesh made just 25 runs in power-play, losing Soumya Sarkar and Litton Das for five each. Mushfiqur Rahman struck back-to-back sixes over leg-side off Michael Leask in the ninth over to infuse some momentum in the chase. Chris Greaves struck with his first ball of the match as Al Hasan tried to pull but found fielder at deep mid-wicket.

Greaves returned in 14th over to knock over Rahim's leg stump with a googly sneaking past the attempted scoop. Afif Hossain crunched three boundaries before holing out to deep mid-wicket off Mark Watt in the 18th over. Mahmudullah hit a four and six but, in an attempt, to go big, holed out to long-on off Bradley Wheal.

Mohammad Saifuddin and Mahedi Hasan took three boundaries off Safyaan Sharif in the final over but it wasn't enough to stop Scotland from sealing a memorable win.

Brief scores

Scotland 140/9 in 20 overs (Chris Greaves 45, George Munsey 29, Mahedi Hasan 3/19, Shakib Al Hasan 2/17) beat Bangladesh (Mushfiqur Rahim 38, Mahmudullah 23, Bradley Wheal 3/24, Chris Greaves 2/19) by six runs.

Dutch Open: Lakshya Sen loses in men's singles final

Almere | Agencies

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen lost to Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the men's singles final of the Dutch Open 2021 badminton tournament, here on Sunday.

The world No 25 Sen went down to the 41st-ranked Singaporean 12-21, 16-21 in the final, which lasted for 36 minutes. He had defeated Canada's Xiaodong Sheng, Portugal's Bernardo Atilano, Singapore's Jia Heng Teh, and Belgium's Julien Carraggi in the earlier rounds.

The 20-year-old Indian had won the men's singles crown in the 2019 edition of the Dutch Open and was the top-seed this year. The Dutch Open 2020 badminton event was cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Along with Sen, 29 Indians competed in the five-day tournament that began on Wednesday.

The other Indians in the men's singles, including Ajay Jayaram, Siril Verma, and Rahul Chittaboina, lost in the opening round. Ukraine International winner Priyanshu Rajawat, who came through the qualifiers, also suffered a loss in the first round while Aryamann Tandon couldn't make it past the qualifying rounds.

In the women's singles, Aakarshi Kashyap was the best Indian performer, reaching the semi-finals. She lost to top seed Abigail Holden of England in the last four 21-17, 21-9.

Meanwhile, Ira Sharma lost to Hungary's Vivien Sandorhazi 19-21, 23-21, 15-21 in the quarter-finals. She had defeated compatriot Ananya Praveen in the round of 16. Samiya Imad Farooqui also bowed out in the round of 16 while Keyura Mopati's campaign ended in the first round of the main draw. Both came through the qualifiers. Sivaranjini Sivakumar, Likhita Srivastava, Shruthika Senthil, Meenal Rautela were knocked out in the qualifiers. India struggled in the doubles also as none of the pairs could go beyond the opening round.

World Snooker Qualifiers

Amee Kamani, Varsha Sanjeev score contrasting wins

Team Absolute | Mumba

Amee Kamani of Madhya Pradesh and Varsha Sanjeev of Tamil Nadu recorded contrasting victories in their opening round 'Y' Camp (1st leg) matches of World Snooker Qualifiers, a Billiards and Snooker Federation of India (BSFI) National Selection Tournament, here on Sunday.

The MP cueist Amee was on a roll as she quickly got into her stride and dashed the challenge from seasoned campaigner Chitra Magimairaj of Karnataka by romping to straight frames 3-0 victory in the best-of-5-frame clash to start on a rousing note.

On an adjacent table, the Tamil Nadu cueist Varsha was engaged in a grueling battle with Maharashtra's Arantxa Sanchis before she managed to pull through to a thrilling 3-2 victory.

India No. 2 Amee quickly found her touch to take control from the start. The experienced Chitra tried to put up a fight but could not stop the Indore-based Amee from racing to an 88-03, 69-42, and 70-35 win.

Meanwhile, India No. 3 Varsha and Arantxa ranked No. 5 fought well and the contest witnessed a battle royal for supremacy. The Tamil Nadu cueist Varsha made a bright start taking the first frame before Arantxa replied strongly by pocketing the next two frames to take a crucial lead. But, Varsha came up with a spirited fightback and went on to snatch the remaining two frames to clinch a satisfying 66-29, 25-67, 16-75, 56-12, and 76-33 verdict and a deserving win.

2021 T20 WC: Oman thrash PNG by 10 wickets

Al Amerat | Agencies

Oman produced a clinical performance with both bat and ball to thrash Papua New Guinea by 10 wickets in the opening match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 at Al Amerat Cricket Ground, here on Sunday.

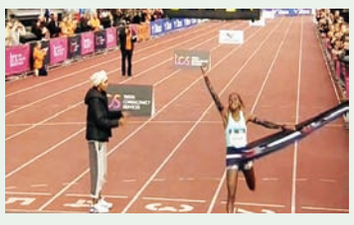
Captain Zeeshan Maqsood's (4/20) sensational bowling performance helped Oman restrict Papua New Guinea to 129-9 in the 20 overs. Assad Vala (56 off 43) and Charles Amini (37 off 26) were the top scorers for PNG.In reply, Oman overhauled the target in the 14th over of the innings with ten wickets in hand. Openers Jatinder Singh (73 off 42) and Aqib Ilyas (50 off 43) batted with full freedom and helped Oman chase the target in style. Oman will now face Bangladesh in their next match on Tuesday.

Brief scores:

Papua New Guinea 129-9 in 20 Overs (Assad Vala 56 off 43, Charles Amini 37 off 26; Zeeshan Maqsood 4/20 lost to Oman 131/0 in 13.4 overs (Jatinder Singh 73 off 42, Aqib Ilyas 50 off 43)

ETHIOPIAN, KENYAN RUNNERS WIN AMSTERDAM MARATHON IN COURSE RECORDS

The Hague (Netherlands): Ethiopian Tamira Tola and Kenyan Angela Tanui grabbed victories in the 45th Amsterdam Marathon on Sunday with course records in the men's and women's race respectively.



The 30-year-old Tola was part of a large leading group, which was down to six runners in the final kilometres. After passing the Rijksmuseum and entering the Vondelpark in the centre of the Dutch capital, Tola accelerated and left behind his co-leaders towards the end.After 42.195 kilometres, Tola finished at the Olympic Stadium in a personal record of two hours, three minutes and 38 seconds, breaking the former course record of 2:04:06 set by Kenyan Lawrence Cherono on October 21, 2018. Kenyan Bernard Koech ended second in 2:04:09, beating Ethiopian Leul Gebresilase (2:04:12) in a sprint, reports Xinhua. In the women's race, Tanui crushed the track record of Ethiopian Degitu Azimeraw from 2019 (2:19:26), winning in 2:17:57 ahead of compatriot Maureen Chepkemoi.

WBBL: Shafali stars in Sydney's five-wicket win over Hobart

Hobart | Agencies

Indian opener Shafali Verma's first WBBL half-century and a fine all-round display from Ellyse Perry led Sydney Sixers to five-wicket win over Hobart Hurricanes in the Women's Big Bash League match, here on Sunday.

Courtesy a strong bowling display from Perry (2/9) and Maitlan Brown (2/23), Sixers restricted the Hurricanes to 125/9, but when Alyssa Healy (3) and Ashleigh Gardner (3) departed cheaply, the Sydney club looked wobbly at 14/2.

A 63-run partnership between Perry (27) and Verma (57) then steadied the case and while both departed with runs still required, Nicole Bolton (17 n.o.) and Maitlan Brown (4 n.o.) sealed the win for Sydney with three balls to spare.

In another match, the Perth Scorchers started their Weber WBBL campaign with a thrilling super over victory over the Brisbane Heat, as they pulled off one of the greatest fightback wins.

Heat captain Jess Jonassen's 3/16 had helped restrict the Scorchers to 137/7, and her team looked well on track in reply before a stunning collapse saw them finishing their 20 overs on 137/9.

An entertaining Super Over battle of the South Africans saw Anneke Bosch smack 11 runs from four Marizanne Kapp deliveries, setting the Scorchers 13 runs to win from Jonassen's over.

Two huge sixes from Scorchers skipper Sophie Devine got the job done, sealing an entertaining victory.

WIN THE T20 WORLD CUP FOR VIRAT KOHLI: SURESH RAINA

Dubai: Former India cricketer Suresh Raina has asked the players, competing in the ICC T20 World Cup, to win the prestigious trophy for outgoing Twenty20 skipper Virat Kohli, adding that the recently-concluded Indian Premier League (IPL) would have given the cricketers the right kind of build-up for the mega event. Captain Kohli has decided to step down as the India T20 skipper after the T20 World Cup, though he has said that he would continue to lead the country in Tests and One-day Internationals. "For India, the message at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup is simple -- do it for Virat Kohli. It will probably be his last time at this tournament as captain, so it's very important for him to make everyone believe we can do it and for us to get behind him," wrote Raina in his column for the ICC. "India fans can't wait for the T20 World Cup to start for this reason. We have the players, we have the momentum -- we just need to go out there and execute now. All of our players have just played the Indian Premier League in the UAE and they have played themselves into top form with eight or nine games in this environment," added Raina.

Sofia Hayat's self-shot film selected for Cult Movies Fest

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ex-Bigg Boss contestant and actress Sofia Hayat has filmed a short film during her visit to France titled 'Portals of Truth'. Interestingly it has been selected for the Cult Movies International Film Festival. Sofia says: "The movie is about how I travel through time using portals to go back to the past to correct the past from evil entities called the Annunaki that landed on the earth at the beginning of time from planet Nibiru. The movie wasn't really planned. I was in France and I was in a beautiful hotel, and I started to daydream about what this place could have been. The hotel is called Negresco in Nice, France, and it is very artistic. I was inspired by its surroundings and took my phone and bought a ring light to make the movie! Hopefully I will get to show it in India."

Talking in detail about her character she adds: "My character is a Goddess and Queen of the heavenly realm, who becomes a human to find out who the evil ones are. I live like a human and trick the evil ones to give back what they stole from the children of earth."

The actress enjoys producing along with acting. "I am beyond excited to say that the short movie I made on my regular phone has been selected for the official Cult Movies Film Festival. I love acting and producing so I starred in the movie and filmed it. So the scenes I am in I filmed with my ring light," she wraps up.

Rashmika beats Samantha, Vijay Deverakonda, Yash to top Forbes list

Hyderabad | Agencies

Bengaluru-based actress Rashmika Mandanna, who has been busy with back-to-back movies in multiple languages is one of the most happening heroines in the South. With her upcoming Bollywood entry, Rashmika becomes quite famous in the North too. Topping the most influential actors list by Forbes India, Rashmika has beaten Samantha, Vijay Deverakonda and Yash. Recording a high growth rate in the number of followers on her social media pages, Rashmika Mandanna, who stars in Telugu and Kannada movies occupies the top spot on the list of the 'most influential actors'. Vijay Deverakonda, who shot to fame with his movies 'Pelli Choopulu' and 'Arjun Reddy', is second on the list, followed by Kannada's most happening handsome hunk Yash. Samantha Ruth Prabhu occupies a fourth place on this list, followed by Allu Arjun. The metrics considered are the average likes, average comments, engagement rate, average video views, and the follower count on the social media profiles of the celebrities. This influence is calculated and represented through 'Qoruz Score', which is out of 10. Rashmika scores 9.88, while Vijay Deverakonda earned 9.67. Yash's score is 9.54, while Samantha's score is 9.49, followed by 9.46 scored by Allu Arjun. Forbes has considered the Instagram activity of the popular celebrities from the Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada film industries over their most recent social media posts as of September 30.

Rashmika Mandanna is playing a rural girl in Allu Arjun's upcoming action-drama 'Pushpa', while she is to appear in Sharwanand's 'Aadavally Meeku Joharulu' soon.

HINA KHAN QUESTIONS 'BIGG BOSS' ON BEHAVIOUR OF HOUSEMATES

Los Angeles | Agencies

Television actress and ex-Bigg Boss contestant Hina Khan recently posted several tweets questioning 'Bigg Boss' about the behaviour of contestants.

She asked if the rules of 'Bigg Boss' have changed for this season as she feels the reality show gives a feeling of 'Smackdown and RAW'. Her tweet also mentioned that earlier contestants were not allowed to touch each other but now things have changed in the show and rules are being broken.Hina took to her social media account and posted: "So how is it going folks, are u enjoying smackdown and RAW mon-fri 10:30pm now a days on #colorstv Ek time tha jab ungli lagaana allowed nahi tha and now What's happening BB.. BiggieBoo? I usually don't tweet about BB But this is so damn funny and I could not resist.."She added further: "With all due respect BB, kahin aap vishwasundari ke pyaar mai to nahi pad gaye hain. Open your Aankh BB PLZZZ.. wake up..I don't blame anyone in the house.. it was the first and the most imp rule of BB tht u cannot touch anyone.. but now this rule seems non applicable." (With all due respect BB, have you fallen in love with Vishwasuntree? Please open your eyes).After the tweet many of her fans came in support of her and also commented expressing their views agreeing to the questions raised by her.

DARSHAN RAVAL OPENS UP ON HIS UPCOMING TRACK 'DUNIYA CHHOR DOON'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer-composer Darshan Raval is all set to release his latest single 'Duniya Chhor Doon'. The track is a quintessential romantic number and will be released on October 18.

Darshan is also known for his tracks like 'Jannat ve' which was a monsoon special song.

Raval on his end hopes his fans continue to give him the unwavering support as he gears up for this song's release: "'Duniya Chhor doon' is a song I believe my fans will enjoy. They have lapped up every track of mine and it's this unwavering support that pushes me to better myself with every track. Our entire team has worked very hard to create this number and I sincerely hope that the audiences enjoy it just as much as they have enjoyed my previous songs" he says.

The track will be released on Indie Music Label's official Youtube channel.

Remo says his plan to open dance studio delayed by Covid

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Well-known Bollywood choreographer Remo D'Souza has launched his much-awaited Remo Fusion Dance Studio. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic his plan of opening this dance studio was delayed.

But after a hiatus, showbiz is gradually getting back on its feet. Among other celebs who resumed work, Remo D'Souza has also fulfilled his plans.

Remo says: "I always wanted to open a dance academy where those who were passionate about dance could come and learn it in an organized manner. Covid-19 pushed things a bit but now with things opening up, I didn't want to wait longer and decided to launch the academy. The academy has been born out of passion and I want it to be a platform through which people understand the nuances of this beautiful craft called the dance".

He further added, "We are working on forming a structure for this, but yes it's a big part of our vision to give back to the society".

Remo Fusion Dance Studio's collaboration is with Avi Raj, Prem Raj Soni, Rohit Sharma, Sea-Connect Global, 21 Blessings, and Prem Raj Pictures.

DOES CHIRANJEEVI DISLIKE APPEARING ON OTT PLATFORMS?

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Telugu megastar Chiranjeevi has been busy with a few upcoming interesting projects in the pipeline. His upcoming action-drama 'Acharya' has grabbed all the attention and is gearing up for a release soon.

Being a Koratala Siva's directorial, 'Acharya' also stars Chiranjeevi's son Ram Charan in one of the lead roles.

Apart from 'Acharya', Chiranjeevi is to appear in his upcoming movies 'Godfather' and 'Bhola Shankar'. Well, there are reports that Chiranjeevi is being approached to host a huge OTT talk show. With other actors like Balakrishna and Nagarjuna hosting shows, it was expected that Chiru would grab similar opportunities.

But, it seems like Chiranjeevi has rejected the offer to appear on OTT platforms for now. There are also talks going on, that he was offered a huge remuneration to appear in an upcoming web series that would be streamed on an OTT platform. But, hard luck, the producers had to back off with these trials, as the 'Acharya' actor is uninterested to take up OTT projects right now.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Vaani Kapoor

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