

absolute india

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NATION > 02

Farmers' agitation to continue after 'antim ardaas' in...



HOLLYWOOD > 06

George Clooney rules out political career...



SPORTS > 07

Sunil Narine's all-round show sends Kolkata into Qualifier 2...



Warning of risks of a new conflict:

INDIA MAKING 'UNREASONABLE,' UNREALISTIC DEMANDS: CHINA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After China and India failed to reach an agreement during the latest round of corps commander-level talks over the western section of the countries' border issues, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Western Theater Command on Monday slammed New Delhi for its "unreasonable and unrealistic demands, with India also sparking new incidents along the eastern section of the border recently", Beijing's mouthpiece Global Times said.

"Chinese experts have warned of the risks of a new conflict, saying that China should not only refuse to give in to India's arrogant demands on the negotiation table, but also be prepared to defend against another Indian military aggression," the newspaper said.

China and India held the 13th round of corps commander-level talks at the Chinese side of the Moldo-Chushul border meeting point on Sunday, "during which India insisted on unreasonable and unrealistic demands, adding difficulties to the negotiations", the PLA Western Theater Command said in a statement released on Monday. Eyeing the overall situation in the China-India relations and the relations between the two countries' militaries, China has



made tremendous efforts to ease and cool down the border situation and fully demonstrated its sincerity, Senior Colonel Long Shaohua was quoted as saying in the statement. "China's determination to safeguard sovereignty is unwavering, and China hopes India will not misjudge the situation, cherish the current, hard-earned situation and take actions with sincerity to safeguard the peace and stability at the border by abiding to the relevant agreements and consensus reached by the two sides," Long said. During the talks, China and India discussed further troop disengagement in the region, but as the Chinese statement suggests, India attempted to push China to make concessions to only India's favour, which is inappropriate from

China's consideration of safeguarding sovereignty, territorial integrity and security, Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University, told the Global Times on Monday.

"While China focuses on the big picture, wanting both sides to meet each other half way, its patience has run out, and it had to shatter India's arrogant thoughts with the statement," Qian said. Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert and TV commentator, told the Global Times on Monday that India has been conspiring to seize territories along the border, and it likely demanded for Chinese territories or unreasonable troop deployment along the Line of Actual Control. "It's a very aggressive move and compared with China's attempts to reach mutual accommodation, India is totally against the practical needs of both sides to manage difference," the newspaper said. "China should continue to negotiate with India to maintain peace and stability, but without yielding an inch of ground, Song said, noting that in the meantime, China also needs to brace for the possibility of another Indian military aggression, as India is risking a new round of conflict." Qian further said that "if India ignores China's stance displayed in the latest talks, continues or even aggravates its aggressions without changing itself, the possibility of another accident or conflict could arise."

India on path of swift recovery: FinMin report

As the post-pandemic economic activity in the country picks up pace, the Finance Ministry has said that India is well-placed on the path to swift recovery with growth impulses visibly transmitted to all sectors of the economy.

in vaccination bode well for revival of consumer sentiment, the upcoming festive season, but it warrants caution and continued adoption of Covid-19 appropriate behaviour. It said that the latest trends in high frequency economic indicators in August and September further indicate a broad-based recovery evidenced in sustained improvement in power consumption, rail freight activity, e-way bills, robust GST collections, highway toll collections posting a 21-month high, sequential uptick in air freight and passenger traffic, and quantum leap in digital transactions.

remain robust with India reporting highest inflow of \$3 billion in September among emerging market economies. Thus far in this fiscal, India is reported to have received FPI worth \$7.2 billion, the second highest after Brazil's \$9 billion.

These historic highs have engendered a bullish run in domestic equity markets as record additions of new Demat accounts broaden the base of equity investment in the country, the report said. The monthly report of the finance ministry also cited that global investor confidence in India stays intact with the country attracting total FDI inflow of \$27.37 billion during the first four months of FY 2021-22, 62 per cent higher as compared to corresponding period of FY 2020-21, with the automobile sector being one of the major beneficiaries. India's foreign exchange reserves comfortably stood at \$638.65 billion as on September 27, 2021.

In tandem with growth impulses witnessed across the economy, the rate of growth of bank credit stood at 6.7 per cent YoY in the fortnight ending September 10, 2021 compared to 5.3 per cent in the corresponding period of the previous year, the finance ministry said.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Monthly Economic Review for September 2021 released by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) on Monday said that sustained and robust growth in agriculture, sharp rebound in manufacturing and industry, resumption of services activity and buoyant revenues are suggesting that economy is progressing well.

"Strategic reforms undertaken so far along with new milestones in vaccination drive have enabled the economy to navigate the ravaging waves of the Covid-19 pandemic," it said.

The ministry noted that ebbing of the second wave coupled with rapid progress

Amit Shah meets power and coal ministers, reviews situation

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid reports of shortage of coal supplies, Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday met Union Power Minister R.K. Singh and Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi to review the situation.

In the meeting, senior officials of ministries and NTPC were also present. Sources said that the meeting lasted for an hour and Shah reviewed the situation and asked everyone present in the meeting to ensure adequate supplies of coal to thermal power plants across the country.

The coal ministry reassured that ample coal is available in the country to meet the demand of power plants.

"Any fear of disruption in power supply is entirely misplaced. The coal stock at the power plant end is about 72 lakh tonnes, sufficient for 4 days requirement, and that the Coal India Limited (CIL) end is more than 400 lakh tonnes, which is being supplied to the power



plants," in a statement the coal ministry had said Sunday. On Sunday, union power minister Singh also reviewed the coal stock position in all thermal power plants including those plants which are supplying power to distribution companies of Delhi. "Yesterday on October 9, the total despatch of coal from all

sources (Coal India Limited, Singareni Collieries Company, Captive Coal Mines and imported coal) was 1.92 million tonnes while the total consumption was 1.87 million tonnes. Thus, the coal despatch has exceeded the consumption, thereby indicating a shift to gradual building up of coal stock," the power ministry had said in a statement.

The power ministry had further stated that the coal ministry and Coal India have assured that there is ample coal available in the country to meet the demand of power plants.

"Any fear of disruption in power supply is entirely misplaced. The coal stock at power plant is sufficient for more than 4 days' requirement and as the coal supply is being ramped up by CIL, the coal stock at power plant would gradually improve," the power ministry had added. Last week, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned about a possible power crisis due to short supplies of coal to plants.

Modi speaks to UK PM, discusses climate change

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday spoke to his UK counterpart Boris Johnson over phone and had an extensive discussion on several issues related to climate change in the context of the forthcoming annual climate change summit, COP26, to be in Glasgow, Scotland, from October 31 to November 12.

"The two leaders had an extensive discussion on issues related to climate change. Prime Minister Modi conveyed India's commitment to climate action, as seen in its ambitious target for expansion of renewable energy and the recently-announced National Hydrogen Mission," a release from the PMO said.

The UK is to host the climate change summit of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow from October 31.

The two leaders also reviewed the progress made in bilateral relations since their virtual summit earlier this



year, and expressed satisfaction over the steps already initiated under the 'Roadmap 2030' adopted during the virtual summit. They also reviewed the progress of the Enhanced Trade Partnership and agreed on the potential of rapidly expanding trade and investment linkages between both the countries, the release said. The leaders also

exchanged views on regional developments, especially the situation in Afghanistan. In this context, they agreed on the need to develop a common international perspective on issues related to extremism and terrorism, as well as human rights and rights of women and minorities, the release added.

Is scarcity of coal artificially created, asks Siddaramaiah

BENGALURU | Agencies

Karnataka Opposition leader Siddaramaiah on Monday commenting on shortage of coal for power plants in the state said, "we have to first understand if the scarcity of coal is artificially created or not. Karnataka had never faced power crisis till now - we had excess production compared to demand," he said.

"As our thermal plants are closed, the requirement of coal is not very high. I condemn if this is an attempt to weaken government owned production plants and privatise them," he maintained.

He further said, power stations should not be privatised - this will be injustice to farmers. Once privatised, free power given to farmers will be stopped. "There is infighting in BJP for Bengaluru City in-charge. The main reason for their fight is their urge to make quick money through cor-

ruption. What else can we expect from BJP, he questioned.

The state government should demand the rightful share in GST compensation and tax devolution. We should not beg - devolution is our right, he said.

Prices of petrol, diesel and LPG are constantly increasing. Additional Rs 3,000 cr has been collected as tax between April and September compared to the last year. The Tamil Nadu's Stalin government has reduced the tax by Rs 3. Our State government should reduce by at least Rs 10 - only then prices of essential commodities can be controlled, he further said. The central govt should reduce excise duty as the government collected about Rs 23 lakh crore in the last 7 years. Rs 1.2 lakh crore is collected from Karnataka alone. Let BJP reduce the tax and provide relief to poor people, he said.

Lakhimpur Kheri violence:

Goa Cong leader likens Lakhimpur violence to Jallianwala Bagh massacre

PANAJI | Agencies

Goa Leader of Opposition Digambar Kamat on Monday likened the violence at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh last week to the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919.

Speaking at a 'maun vrat' protest in Panaji, part of a nationwide protest campaign organised by the Congress party, Kamat also said that such violence against peaceful protesters is possible only in a dictatorship and not in a democracy.

"It can only happen in a dictatorship. We have seen earlier, countries ruled by dictators have killed agitating people. When India was fighting for its freedom, then we have seen an incident like the Jallianwala Bagh and other incidents, where farmers performing a satyagraha were shot," Kamat told reporters on the sidelines of the protest at Azan maidan in Panaji, which was also attended by



former Union Finance Minister and senior All India Congress Committee official in-charge of the Goa polls P. Chidambaram. Hundreds of peaceful protesters at the Jallianwala Bagh were shot to death by British troops in 1919. "It is a shame for us that such an incident is occurring in a democracy. It has been four days, an FIR is lodged but the Union Minister's (Union MoS Home Ajay Mishra) son was not

arrested. Only after pressure and strictures from the Supreme Court have they arrested him and he is now in judicial custody," Kamat said.

"It is the duty of the government to listen to the people. A good government should always listen to the people. The farmer, who is the backbone of the country's economy, it is they who are protesting for their rights," Kamat said.

Lashkar terrorist behind civilian killing gunned down in J&K encounter

SRINAGAR | Agencies

The terrorist killed in a gunfight with the security forces in the Hajin area of Jammu and Kashmir Bandipora district has been identified as a Lashkar-e-Taiba member, officials said on Monday.

Police said he was affiliated with the proscribed terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and was involved in the recent killing of a civilian in the Bandipora district.

"Killed terrorist has been identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar affiliated with proscribed terror outfit LeT (TRF). He was involved in recent civilian killing at Shahgund Bandipora," a tweet by J&K Police quoting IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar said.

On Sunday, the Jammu and Kashmir Police said it has busted a LeT (TRF) module and arrested four terror associates involved in the conspiracy behind the killing of a civilian, Mohd Shafi



Lone alias Sonu, a resident of Naidkhai. The arrested terrorist associates were identified as Tariq Ahmad Dar alias Tariq Khoucha, Mohammad Shafi Dar, Mudasar Hassan Lone and Bilal Dar alias Sahb Khoucha. However, the police also said on Sunday that one of the terrorist associates involved in the killing, identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar alias Kotru, was absconding and had reportedly joined the terrorist ranks.



FARMERS' AGITATION TO CONTINUE AFTER 'ANTIM ARDAAS' IN KHERI ON TUESDAY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Terming Tuesday 'Shaheed Kisan Diwas', the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Monday said the "antim ardaas" of the martyrs of Lakhimpur Kheri massacre will take place in Tikunia in the Uttar Pradesh district and appealed supporters to pay homage with a candlelight vigil. "Tens of thousands of farmers are expected to join the prayer meeting at Tikunia. SKM appeals the farmers' organisations and other progressive groups across the country to mark the Shaheed Kisan Diwas by organising prayer and homage meetings all over the country with candlelight vigils in the evening," the SKM said in a release here.

Nine people, including farmers and a journalist, were moved down on October 3 during a farmers' protest allegedly by vehicles which belonged to Union Minister Ajay Misra Teni and his son, Ashish Misra, is accused of being in one of the vehicles then. Stating that it is shameful for the Modi government that the



Minister has not been sacked yet, the SKM said: "Due to the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, his earlier history of criminal cases has come into the public gaze, it is clear that in the Lakhimpur Kheri massacre itself, he had a role to play. It was his vehicles that were in the convoy that killed innocent people."

"The fact that Teni had sought to promote enmity, hatred and disharmony is clear from his speech on

October 25 against Sikhs of Terai region. His speech was of intimidation and threat, in a public meeting at that, where he was also proudly alluding to his criminal antecedents, and on the basis of this, stern action should have taken place by now, which could have prevented the entire episode of Lakhimpur Kheri massacre," the SKM said. The SKM had already issued an ultimatum about Monday being the deadline for

sacking and arrest of the Minister. "Tomorrow, in the prayer meetings organised in Lakhimpur Kheri for the martyrs of the massacre, SKM will go ahead with its announced plan of action. SKM reiterates that the farmers' movement cannot be dissipated or weakened by BJP-RSS playing their communal card. Farmers of the country are united in their struggle," the release said. Uttar Pradesh Police is laying curbs on movement of several farmers and farmer leaders to prevent them from proceeding to Lakhimpur Kheri, the SKM claimed and added, "Reports have come in of several AIKMS leaders being illegally detained in Bara in Prayagraj."

On the reports indicating that Uttar Pradesh government is deploying police and paramilitary forces in anticipation of the farmers' protests, the SKM said: "It is indeed regrettable that instead of assuring actions that will restore justice and thereby prevent intensification of protests, UP Government is preparing for protests that will follow lack of correct action, in its attempt to protect culprits associated with BJP."

Priyanka leads 'Maun Vrat' in Lucknow to seek Ajay Mishra's dismissal



Lucknow | Agencies

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra led a 'Maun Vrat' in Lucknow on Monday in support of their demand for the dismissal of Union Minister Ajay Mishra Teni, whose son is accused of mowing down farmers with his SUV. The 'Maun Vrat' programme in Lucknow began at 3 p.m. while in the rest of the

country the programme was held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. by the party.

The Congress leaders, including state party chief Ajay Kumar Lallu, former MPs Pramod Tiwari and P.L. Punia and Congress legislature party leader Aradhana Mishra sat with Priyanka, carrying placards on which their demand for dismissal of the Union minister was written. The party leaders staged the

'Maun Vrat' at the footsteps of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the GPO park.

Earlier, talking about the delay in the programme in Lucknow, former MP Pramod Tiwari said that the police had urged them to change the time and venue of their dharna because the swearing in of the new Chief Justice of Uttar Pradesh was scheduled to take place. Priyanka has been leading a campaign against the accused in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident and was even arrested while she was on her way to meeting the families of the deceased farmers.

In her rally in Varanasi on Sunday, she announced that she would continue to fight on the Lakhimpur Kheri incident until the minister stepped down from his post to pave the way for an impartial probe.

Ashish Misra sent to three days police remand

Lakhimpur Kheri | Agencies

A local court in Lakhimpur Kheri on Monday sent Ashish Misra, son of Union Minister Ajay Misra Teni, to three days police custody in connection with the October 3 violence.

He will, however, have access to his legal team during the period of police remand. The Special Investigation Team, set up by the Yogi Adityanath government to probe the incident, had sought 14 days police remand of Ashish Misra from the Chief Judicial Magistrate in order to carry out further investigations and recreate the crime scene.

The public prosecutor said the custody can be demanded within 15 days of the arrest. "It was pure non-cooperation. During the 12 hours, he did not reply," the public prosecutor said. Misra's counsel Avadesh Singh said, "They interrogated him for 12 hours. How much do they need to interrogate? Do they want to apply third degree on the accused? You can't beat him and take his statement... They have not given any reason why they



need remand." The hearing in Ashish Misra's remand case concluded with his lawyer denying all the allegations levelled against his client by the Uttar Pradesh Police.

Some technical issues in video conferencing were reported when the court was to start the hearing in the case. The judge left the court room as there was a delay in connecting the video.

Misra was arrested late on Saturday night and produced the same night before a magistrate who sent him to judicial custody.

PM Modi launches Indian Space Association

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Launching the Indian Space Association (ISpA) on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his government ensured that space technology became the delivery tool for leakage-free and transparent governance during the last seven years.

"Our vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is a well-thought, well-planned integrated economic strategy that is based on technological innovations and will ensure that India becomes a hub for it as well as play an important role in the global development... And therefore, the regulatory environment that we have been enabling has given priority to ensure the interest of both the country and the stakeholders," Modi added while addressing the launch event virtually.

He cited examples of the use of geo-tagging of housing units for the poor, roads and other infrastructure projects, how development projects are being monitored by satellite

imaging or even how space technology is being used in settlement of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna (crop insurance) claims.

Stating that the Union government's approach to space reforms is based on four pillars, The Prime Minister listed those as: "the freedom of innovation to the private sector; the role of the government as an enabler; preparing youth for the future and to see the space sector as a resource for progress of the common man."

For India, the space sector is a major medium for the progress of 130 crore countrymen, Modi said and observed that for India, "the space sector means better mapping, imaging and connectivity facilities for the common man. Also the space sector means better speed from shipment to delivery for entrepreneurs, this also means better security and income for fishermen and better forecast of natural calamity."

Considered as the premier industry association of space and satellite

companies, ISpA aspires to be the collective voice of the Indian space industry. It will undertake policy advocacy and engage with all stakeholders in the Indian space domain, including the government and its agencies. ISpA will help in making India self-reliant, technologically advanced and a leading player in the space arena.

The ISpA is represented by leading homegrown and global corporations with advanced capabilities in space and satellite technologies. Its founding members include Larson & Toubro, Nelco (Tata Group), OneWeb, Bharti Airtel, MapmyIndia, Walchandnagar Industries and Ananth Technology Limited. Other core members include Godrej, Hughes India, Azista-BST Aerospace Private Limited, BEL, Centum Electronics and Maxar India. The Prime Minister also interacted with representatives of the space industry on the occasion.

Modi said the government is moving ahead with a clear policy regard-



ing public sector enterprises and is opening most of these sectors to private enterprises where the government is not required. The decision regarding Air India shows our commitment and seriousness, he added.

He spoke about how the SpaceComm and Remote Sensing policies are being finalised with inputs from all stakeholders.

"The greed to rule space divided countries in the 20th century but in the 21st century, India will have to ensure that space will unite the world," he concluded.

Delhi Court summons BJP MLA Vijender Gupta in defamation case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Court on Monday summoned Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Rohini constituency, Vijender Gupta, in a defamation case filed by Delhi Minister and AAP leader Kailash Gahlot.

"The Court is of the considered view on the basis of an oral submission, document places and proved on record in pre summoning evidence by complainant... that accused has prima facie committed the offences punishable under sections 499/500/501 of the Indian Penal Code," the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at the Rouse Avenue District Court said in the order. Accordingly, the Court summoned Gupta on November 11 at 2 p.m.



The Delhi Transport Minister had filed a criminal complaint against Gupta for allegedly defaming him in a matter related to the procurement of 1,000 low-floor buses by the Delhi Transport Corporation and sought Rs 5 crore in damages and also removal of media posts by the BJP legislator.

Gahlot, in his complaint, had alleged that Gupta with "malafide purposes and to gain political mileage, has levelled defamatory, scandalous, mischievous, false and scurrilous allegations on the complainant both verbal as well as in writing on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook through his account." Gahlot had also mentioned in his complaint that after getting the charge of the transport ministry in the Delhi government, he took the initiative for inducting around 1500 new buses since the year 2017 for the welfare of the people. The BJP legislator had earlier dismissed the allegations and termed them as "baseless". Gupta had said he was referring to the findings of a panel appointed by the Lt Governor on the bus purchase controversy.

Madras HC stalls Puducherry civic polls again over lack of quota

Chennai | Agencies

The Madras High Court on Monday put on hold the local body elections in Puducherry, scheduled to be held in three phases on November 2, 7, and 13, for violating the constitutional mandate for providing reservation to Backward Castes and Scheduled Tribes. An interim stay order was issued by a division bench of Justice R. Mahadevan and Justice Abdul Quddus on a petition filed by DMK legislator R. Siva who prayed before the court that the poll process be kept in abeyance till October 21. It also posted the matter



before a bench headed by Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee.

In the order, the bench said: "All further proceedings shall be kept in abeyance and the matter is directed to be listed on October 21 before the first bench for filing

counter affidavit and for filing further orders." It noted that the bench headed by Chief Justice Banerjee had permitted the Puducherry government and the State Election Commission to clear and set right the anomalies pointed

out in the writ petitions appeared before it regarding the local body elections. "However instead of setting right the anomalies pointed out, the notifications for providing reservations for BCs and STs was rescinded," the bench said.

A fresh election notification was issued to reschedule the polls for five municipalities and 10 commune panchayats in three phases on November 2, 7, and 13. The original notification to hold polls on October 21, 25, and 28 was cancelled following non-compliance with reservations for women and Scheduled Castes.

42 regional parties received over Rs 676 cr through voluntary contributions: ADR

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A total of 42 regional parties collected Rs 676.326 cr or 77.03 per cent of their total income from voluntary contributions including donations, contributions and Electoral Bonds for the financial year 2019-20, according to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Rights (ADR).

Under the voluntary contributions, political parties collected 50.97 per cent or Rs 447.498 cr of their income from donations through Electoral Bonds while other donations and contributions amounted to Rs 228.828 cr or 26.06 per cent for the financial year 2019-20, said the report. However, the total income of the 42 regional parties for the financial year 2019-20 was Rs 877.957 cr.

The income of the top 5 parties with the highest total

declared income including the TRS, Shiv Sena, YSR Congress, TDP and BJD amounted to Rs 516.482 cr, 58.83 per cent of the total income of the political parties analysed collectively in the report. The Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) has reported the highest income of Rs 130.46 cr, 14.86 per cent of the total income of all the parties analysed, followed by the Shiv Sena with an income of Rs 111.403 cr, Yuwanjana Sramika Rythu (YSR) Congress Party with an income of Rs 92.739 cr, TDP with Rs 91.53 crore and BJD with Rs 90.35 crore. Altogether 42 regional parties garnered an income of Rs 877.95 crore while only 14 parties, including TRS, TDP, YSR Congress, JD(U) and RJD, got donations through Electoral Bonds.

Out of 39 parties from the 42 political parties whose data is available for both the financial



years, 23 parties have shown an increase in their income from the financial year 2018-19 to the financial year 2019-20 while 16 parties have shown a decline in their income during this period. The AIADMK reported the highest increase in its income of Rs 61.506 cr followed by the DMK and the AAP which

declared a total increase of Rs 38.557 cr and Rs 30.337 cr respectively, between FY 2018-19 and FY 2019-20, said the report.

According to the report, there are 24 regional parties who declared a part of their income as remaining unspent for 2019-20 while 18 parties spent more than the income

collected during that year. "TDP, BJD, DMK, SP, JDS, AJSU, JVM-P, INLD, PMK, MGP, GFP, SDF, MNE, AIFB, NPE, JKPPD, IPFT and MPC are the 18 regional parties that declared spending more than their income. BJD has declared spending highest amount of Rs 95.78 cr or 106.01 per cent more than its income," quotes the report.

The total declared expenditure of the 42 regional parties for the financial year 2019-20 was Rs 742.535 cr. The top 5 parties that have incurred the highest expenditure are the BJD which had spent Rs 186.13 cr or 25.07 per cent, followed by the TDP which spent Rs 108.84 cr or 14.66 per cent, SHS which spent Rs 98.379 cr or 13.25 per cent, DMK which spent Rs 71.038 cr or 9.57 per cent and SP which spent Rs 55.692 cr or 7.50 per cent of the total expenditure.



UTTARAKHAND MINISTER YASHPAL ARYA, SON JOIN CONGRESS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a setback for the BJP, Uttarakhand Cabinet Minister Yashpal Arya joined Congress on Monday along with his son who is also an MLA in the state. Congress Chief Spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said, "Arya has sent his resignation to the Chief Minister." "The Congress has got a big boost ahead of elections as Arya is a prominent Dalit leader in Uttarakhand. He had left the Congress to join Bharatiya Janata Party during last elections. Arya was holding Excise Transport and Social Welfare ministry in the state.

Congress General Secretary and Chairman of the Campaign Committee Harish Rawat, who has

been instrumental in the whole operation, said that the Congress has got a big boost in the state after Arya came back to the party fold. Uttarakhand goes to polls next year and the Congress is the main opposition party in the state. With BJP leaders joining Congress, which was on shaky ground due to the entry of the Aam Aadmi Party in the state, it is likely to be strengthened. Moreover, internal rift within the party will also subside, the party claimed. The Congress has recently appointed Rawat as Campaign Committee Chief but has not declared him as the chief ministerial candidate. However, supporters of Rawat are pushing his name up. The Congress has said that it will go for collective leadership in the state.



STRAY VIOLENCE MARS NEAR-TOTAL MAHA BANDH TO PROTEST LAKHIMPUR INCIDENT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Stray incidents of violence like stone-pelting at buses, private vehicles, burning tyres on roads to stop traffic and others marred an otherwise near-total Maharashtra Bandh, which disrupted normal life, here on Monday.

The voluntary shutdown call was issued by the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi allies -- Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party, Congress, CPI, CPM, trade unions, scores of farmers groups, students, women and other groups, barring the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena and their constituents.

Considered an unprecedented move by a ruling alliance, the bandh is to protest against the Lakhimpur-Kheri massacre in Uttar Pradesh and express solidarity with the protesting farmers near Delhi and other parts of India.

While the city's lifeline BEST



services remained off-roads, inter-district State Transport buses were also hit, but the suburban trains functioned normally though with a reduced passenger load, and all other essential services were exempted from the shutdown.

The Maharashtra Police and all other security forces deployed huge bandobast to prevent any

venturing out. Top leaders like Sena's Sanjay Raut, Kishore Tiwari, NCP's Jayant Patil, Nawab Malik, Congress' Nana Patole, Balasaheb Thorat, Bhai Jagtap and others at the state, region and district levels led the bandh by way of protests, demonstrations, processions, slogan-shouting against the BJP governments at the Centre and UP. The shutdown elicited huge response from the rural centres with APMCs downing shutters, though in urban centres a few vehicles were seen on the roads as public transportation was largely paralysed. In some areas, local shopkeepers complained that they were forced by the ruling parties' activists to shut shops and join the bandh. Last week, the state Cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had observed a two-minute silence in memory of the Lakhimpur-Kheri victims and later the ruling alliance announced the Maharashtra Bandh.

Maharashtra gov't imposed bandh on people by abusing official machinery: Devendra Fadnavis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Slamming the Maharashtra government over the bandh, the state BJP said that the ruling government's concern for farmers was "pure hypocrisy" while urging the ruling government to provide relief to those affected due to unseasonal rains in the state's Vidarbha and Marathwada regions.

"The bandh called by the Maha Vikas Aghadi is pure hypocrisy. If the government is really concerned about farmers, then it should declare immediate relief for farmers of Marathwada and Vidarbha," Fadnavis said. "People are being forced to observe the bandh using police and administration," Devendra Fadnavis said.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi government observed bandh to protest the Lakhimpur Kheri violence which killed eight, including farmers in Uttar Pradesh on 3 October. The former Maharashtra Chief Minister said that the UP government will take action against those guilty in the incident while pointing out that the farmers in Maharashtra are in deep distress. He alleges that over 2,000 farmers have committed suicide in the state without getting loan waiver or any assistance from Uddhav Thackeray's government. Hitting out at the Maharashtra government, state BJP president Chandrakant Patil said that the NCP was trying to divert the people's attention



from the Income Tax raids on entities close to Deputy Chief Minister and NCP leader Ajit Pawar. He added that bandh did not get good support from the people

"The bandh in Maharashtra was opposed by farmers, students, traders and the people, but the government imposed it on people by abusing the government machinery," BJP MLA from Mumbai Ashish Shelar said. The BJP leaders have accused that the government has forcefully imposed the bandh on the people, causing inconvenience to the people, especially farmers. BJP Trade Front president Pradeep Peshkar said the call for the statewide bandh by the MVA partners is akin to "rubbing salt on the wounds" of traders, who are still recovering from the losses suffered during the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Maharashtra stares at power cuts as 13 plants shut down amid coal shortage

As many as 13 thermal power generation plants supplying power to the state power distribution company MahaVitaran have been shut down, due to shortage of coal.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amid a possible power crisis in the wake of reports of coal shortage in the country, Maharashtra government has urged citizens to use power carefully and save electricity. As many as 13 thermal power generation plants supplying power to the state power distribution company MahaVitaran have been shut down, due to shortage of coal. Following this, Maharashtra State

Electricity Regulatory Commission (MSEDCL) has appealed to citizens to use electricity sparingly during peak hours.

In a circular, the energy department said, "Due to shortage of coal, 13 sets of various thermal power plants supplying power to MSEDCL have been shut down at present. As a result, 3330 MW power supply has been cut off. Efforts are being made to provide power supply from hydropower and other sources, including emergency procurement, to fill the power gap." MSEDCL is making strenuous efforts to prevent load shedding in the state and has appealed to consumers to use electricity sparingly from 6 am to 10 am and from 6 pm to 10 pm to balance the demand and availability," the statement added. The state gov't said efforts are being made to provide power

supply from hydropower and other sources along with immediate procurement to fill the power gap. According to report, everyday Maharashtra needs 1,49,000 metric tonnes of coal for power generation plants to run at 85% capacity but now getting less than 70,000 metric tonnes. MahaGenco's seven coal-based power generation plants have a coal stock ranging between 0.72 day and 1.62 days. In order to avoid load shedding as per the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission's order, MahaVitaran supplies power to farm pumps only for eight hours per day, and on a rotational basis during night hours. If the coal shortage is not rectified within the next few days, then Maharashtra may face load shedding for 6 to 8 hours each day, power department officials said.

CBI RAIDS MUMBAI IT INFRA CO FOR DEFRAUDING SBI OF RS 862 CR

Mumbai: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has raided at least nine official and residential premises in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra in connection with a case for allegedly defrauding the State Bank of India (SBI) and seven other consortium banks to the tune of over Rs 862 crore, an official said on Monday. The raids were targeted against Trimax IT Infrastructure & Services Ltd (TIISL), its Managing Director Surya Prakash Madrecha, Director Chandra Prakash Madrecha, and other unknown officials and private persons. The action followed a complaint by the SBI against the accused of cheating his bank and its other consortium member-banks of the amount between 2009-2017.

The SBI said that during the period, the accused were sanctioned credit facilities under consortium banking and these were enhanced regularly.

However, the company's MD and directors conspired to manipulated the books of accounts and diverted the funds released, thereby cheating the seven banks.

Cruise party raid: Aryan Khan's bail plea deferred to Oct 13

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Special NDPS Court on Monday deferred the bail application hearing of Aryan Khan to October 13 after the Narcotics Control Bureau sought time to file its reply in the matter.

Simultaneously, Special NDPS Court's Special Judge VV Patil has kept the bail pleas of other accused Arbaaz Merchant, Mummun Dhamecha, Nupur Satija and Mohak Jaswal also for hearing on Wednesday.

At the hearing today, Khan's lawyer Amit Desai sought the bail plea to be heard on Tuesday (October 12), but the NCB's Special Public Prosecutor A.M. Chimalkar asked for Thursday (October 14), after which the Special Court posted the matter for Wednesday.

Accordingly, Khan and others will



continue to spend the next two days at the Arthur Road Central Jail and the Byculla Women's Jail till they are enlarged on bail. All the 8 detained initially on October 2 after the NCB raided the rave party aboard a luxury ship, Cordelia Cruise and arrested the following day (October 3), have been in NCB's custody and then in

judicial custody for the past nine days. They were declined bail by Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate R.M. Nerlikar last Friday on grounds of maintainability and shunted to the jails.

After these arrests, the NCB has swooped in different parts of Mumbai and nabbed another dozen accused -- taking the total to 20 so far. The NCB action in full media blitzkrieg has sparked off a huge political slugfest with the Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress calling the raids a politically motivated 'hoax' besides demanding an independent enquiry against the central agency and its officials.

However, the NCB has hit back, claiming no wrongdoings or irregularities and asserting that all due rules and procedures were followed in the raids and subsequent actions.

PUNE POLICE BUST SEX RACKET IN LONAVLA, RESCUE TWO WOMEN

Pune: The Lonavla rural police busted the racket after deploying the decoy customers and arrested the accused. Two women have also been rescued by cops.

The police in Pune district of Maharashtra have busted an alleged sex racket being operated from Lonavla area. One person has also been arrested in connection with the sex racket. The accused used to contact prospective customers through WhatsApp. Pune rural police have also rescued two women hailing from Delhi and Chhattisgarh. The accused has been identified as Dhananjay Katwaru Rajbhar, a resident of Chembur in Mumbai. The police acted on a specific tip-off and zeroed in on a suspect operating from Lonavla hill station. He used to lure customers by sending photos of women to customers on WhatsApp.

Police deployed a decoy customer and contacted the accused through WhatsApp. The police operation started on Friday night and went on till Saturday morning. The accused told the decoy customer that he would bring the woman to Varsoli in Lonavla. With this, the police laid a trap and waited for him who arrived in an SUV. After initial investigation, cops detained Rajbhar and two women.

Inspector Praveen More from Lonavla rural police station said they have arrested the accused and rescued the two women. The accused has been remanded to police custody after he was produced before a local court. The operation was jointly carried out by Lonavla rural police and Pune ATS.

COVID-19: Maharashtra records 1,736 new cases, 36 deaths, 3,033 recoveries on Monday

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Monday, October 11, recorded 1,736 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the number of active cases to 32,115. Besides, 36 COVID-19 deaths were reported in the day, taking the number of total fatalities to 1,39,578.

3,033 patients were discharged in the day, taking the tally to 64,04,320. The recovery rate in the state is 97.34%. The case fatality rate in the state is 2.12%. Currently, 2,38,474 people are in home quarantine and 1,163 people are in institutional quarantine. The Mumbai circle which consists of MCGM, Thane, TMC, Navi



Mumbai, KDMC, Ulhasnagar MC, Bhivandi Nijampur MC, Mira Bhayandar MC, Palghar, Vasai Virar MC, Raigad, Panvel MC recorded 731 new cases. The Nashik circle--which consists of Nashik, Nashik MC, Malegaon MC, Ahmednagar, Ahmednagar MC, Dhule, Dhule MC, Jalgaon, Jalgaon MC, Nandurbar reported 359 fresh COVID-19 cases. The Pune circle which includes Pune, PMC, PCMC, Solapur, Solapur MC, Satara recorded 482 new cases. The Kolhapur circle which includes Kolhapur, Kolhapur MC, Sangli, Sangli MC, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri report-

ed 81 new cases. The Aurangabad circle which consists of Aurangabad, Aurangabad MC, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Parbhani MC reported 14 fresh cases. The Latur circle which consists of Latur, Latur MC, Osmanabad, Beed, Nanded, Nanded MC recorded 63 fresh cases. The Akola circle which includes Akola, Akola MC, Amaravati, Amaravati MC, Yavatmal, Buldhana, Washim recorded 3 fresh cases. Nagpur circle which includes Nagpur, Nagpur MC, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur, Chandrapur MC, Gadchiroli reported 3 fresh cases.

CBI raids at premises of former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The on Monday conducted searches at the premises of former Home Minister at multiple locations in connection with the leak of confidential documents related to the preliminary enquiry against him on allegations of corruption, officials said Monday.

A team of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials reached the residence of Deshmukh in Nagpur and Mumbai this morning with necessary warrants, they said.

The CBI on September 2 had arrested Deshmukh's lawyer Anand Daga and its own sub-inspector Abhishek Tiwari for allegedly leaking confidential documents related to the preliminary enquiry

against Deshmukh, they said. The agency had started a PE on the orders of the Bombay High Court which had issued the directions while hearing a public interest litigation on allegations of corruption against Deshmukh.

The PE findings showed the Deputy SP probing the matter had purportedly opined that no cognisable offence was made out against Deshmukh but it was later converted into an FIR based on a contrasting opinion of the Deputy SP. The opinion mentioned in the FIR said that cognisable offence is made out against Deshmukh. The findings giving clean chit to Deshmukh got leaked to the media causing an embarrassment to the CBI after opposition parties accused

the agency of conducting a motivated probe against the then minister.

Soon after the leak, the CBI booked Tiwari and Daga on the allegations of leaking documents. It has been reliably learnt that Sub-Inspector Tiwari came in contact with Nagpur-based advocate Daga during the course of the inquiry, the FIR alleged. It said that Tiwari had been in regular contact with him, it alleged. The FIR alleged that Daga handed an iPhone 12 pro as illegal gratification to Tiwari for passing details of the enquiry and investigation pertaining to corruption allegations against Deshmukh.

The agency also alleged that Tiwari had been receiving illegal gratification from Daga at regular intervals.

Thunder, lightning hits Mumbai on Monday, moderate showers predicted for Tuesday

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The week began with rain spells coupled with thunder and lightning being witnessed in many parts of Mumbai city and suburbs on Monday evening.

Some adjoining areas namely Navi Mumbai and Thane saw intense down-pour for a brief period in the evening which gradually subsided.

For Tuesday, the IMD has forecast light to moderate with thundershowers being very likely, while from Wednesday till Friday, only light rains are expected.

The withdrawal of southwest monsoon was seen coming closer to the city as on Monday, it had started to recede from parts of Vidarbha. The withdrawal line is passing through Motihari, Gaya, Daltonganj, Ambikapur, Mandla, Indore, Gandhinagar, Rajkot and Porbandar. This year the



withdrawal of the southwest monsoon from the country commenced on October 6 against the normal date of September 17. Conditions are becoming favourable for further withdrawal of southwest monsoon from most parts of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and some more parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha and some parts of northeast India during next two days," stated the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Since October 1 this year, the rain recorded by the IMD Colaba and Santacruz observatory is 28.6mm and 9.6 mm respectively.

Mental health well-being programme launched for CISF personnel at Mumbai airport

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), in collaboration with a private health service provider, has launched a mental well-being programme for its personnel.

The pilot project, launched on Monday at the Mumbai airport, will cover around 4,000 CISF employees and their families, said a joint press statement issued by both parties.

To kick off the project, the launch was followed by a mental wellness workshop for CISF employees. Called 'Project Mann', the initiative involves sensitisation workshops to increase awareness levels and help-seeking behaviour among CISF personnel.

"The project will also entail capacity-building for mentors, one-on-one counselling support and an exclusive 24x7 toll-free confidential helpline support assuring mental health assistance to support CISF staff and their families," said the release issued by Mpower, the holistic mental health care initiative backed by the Aditya Birla Education Trust, which has collaborated with CISF for the said initiative.

On this occasion, Niraj Birla, Mpower founder and chairperson said, "The world is currently grappling with two



challenges - containing the Covid-19 pandemic and addressing the economic and mental health fallouts of this unprecedented phenomenon. Due to their presence in strategic locations and high-stakes involved in such working fields, essential staff experiences higher susceptibility to mental illness as compared with other professionals. To alleviate this, awareness activities, quality clinical support and training by experts will be provided by the mental health arm of our organization through 'Project Mann'." MA Ganapathy, IPS, DG, CISF

said: "Because of the inherent nature of the work and other external factors, the CISF teams experience different forms of stress, including physical and psychosocial, and the same is felt by their families too. And, it is quite human to feel this way. To combat these stressors, appropriate education concerning mental health and effective treatment is needed for our staff and their close ones. With 'Project Mann', we aim to bridge this gap and create awareness around the importance of seeking timely help."



EDITOR'S SPECS

Urban population leads the warming

A new study of more than 13,000 cities worldwide has found that the number of person-days in which inhabitants are exposed to extreme combinations of heat and humidity has tripled since the 1980s. To come up with a measure of person-days spent in such conditions of heat and humidity, the researchers matched up the weather data with statistics on the cities' populations over the same time period. The analysis revealed that the number of person-days in which city dwellers were exposed went from 40 billion per year in 1983 to 119 billion in 2016 -- a three-fold increase. By 2016, 1.7 billion people were being subjected to such conditions on multiple days. Over recent decades, hundreds of millions have moved from rural areas to cities, which now hold more than half the world's population. There, temperatures are generally higher than in the countryside, because of sparse vegetation and abundant concrete, asphalt and other impermeable surfaces that tend to trap and concentrate heat-the so-called urban heat island effect. The researchers combined infrared satellite imagery and readings from thousands of ground instruments to determine maximum daily heat and humidity readings in 13,115 cities, from 1983 to 2016. They defined extreme heat as 30 degrees Centigrade on the so-called "wet-bulb globe temperature" scale, a measurement that takes into account the multiplier effect of high humidity on human physiology. A wet-bulb reading of 30 is the rough equivalent of 106 degrees Fahrenheit on the so-called "real feel" heat index-the point at which even most healthy people find it hard to function outside for long, and the unhealthy might become very ill or even die. The study is not the first to document the dangers of excessive urban heat; among others, last year a separate Earth Institute team showed that combinations of heat and humidity literally beyond the limits of outdoor human survival have been briefly popping up around the world.

OF 'DIMINISHED' COMRADES AND CONGRESS

NIRENDRA DEV

India has sought quicker extradition of Kim Peter Davy alias Niels Holck, from Denmark. This happened on the diplomatic stage when Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen was in India and holding bilateral talks with her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi. She also hailed Modi as an 'inspiration' and both sides held significant parleys on green politics to Afghanistan.

The Kim Davy issue actually brings into focus the good old Congress-Communists relationship in India -- even till the mid-1990s. On December 17, 1995, a large consignment of illegal arms including AK-47 rifles and ammunition were dropped from an Antonov An-26 aircraft and was scattered in the Purulia district of West Bengal.

One need not go into the merits of the allegation that the Congress had conspired to oust the erstwhile Jyoti Basu government in West Bengal. The Marxists' forte was too strong and of course Basu was very powerful and also left to himself, a very popular leader in his state. But things have changed a lot since then. Now the Congress party's base has shrunk and Communists have, in an ironical turn of events, vanished from West Bengal.

For someone born in 1970 and having seen the herculean image of Basu, this journalist had never imagined that the CPI(M) could be ever a 'Zero-MLA' strong or weak party in Bengal ever. But this has happened. In 2021 assembly elections, both the CPI(M)-led Left Front and Congress strengths in the 294-member state legislature have been reduced to zero. Now, it is Mamata Banerjee all the way. Importantly, she is seen as 'more Left than the Left' and hence she thrives. Her outfit -- a splinter organisation from the mother' Congress is now trying to have its footprint in different parts of India, including in far off Goa.

In general, over the last few years, the Congress has lost its base across the country. But in the process, the grand old party of India has turned 'more Left'; and in more ways than one. It started with the JNU protest in 2015 and also on other issues Rahul Gandhi is trying to emulate the language of the comrades. Here comes the new challenge. Just as the two communities with the same 'historical and cultural' origins may not necessarily evolve in the same ways, the two political parties trying to fashion a 'modern pro-Communist' look cannot see the growth simultaneously either.

Historians often liken the Hindu civilisation for having shared 'affinities' at the very initial stage with Mesopotamia. But the respective journey and growth trajectories have been different. Hence as and when the Indian National Congress and Communist growths are discussed, we have to see why both have lost ground. This brings us to debate a very important chapter of Indian politics.

The shrinkage of bases of the Congress party and the Indian Communists have also largely created ground for the growth of Hindu fundamentalist forces, like the BJP. Even the rise of regionalist stars like Mamata Banerjee have a typical reasoning of poor performance by the Congress and the Communists. In the 2021 polls, the Trinamool Congress' 200-plus haul would not have been



possible had not Congress and Leftists lost all their seats. This downward slippery journey of Indian communists and Congress have also unnerved minorities such as Muslims and Christians.

The decline is not only electoral but also in exerting influence on the sociopolitical mindset.

In the regions where they are losing their grip, the pro-Hindu BJP has gained ground -- of course rising on the 'Moditva phenomenon'. The religious minorities could have been happy about atheism (the Communists) losing ground. But they are irked as a worse and more dangerous form of political ideology has gained power. The BJP with its commitment to make India a nation of 'Hindu hegemony' is now the major opponent of Mamata Banerjee in Bengal. It has 18 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats and three years back, it came to power in Tripura as well by ousting its Communist government in another red bastion.

There is yet another important lesson of politics. The BJP's 'growing support base' in Kerala also essentially means dwindling popularity of Kerala's two traditional political alliances -- UDF (led by the Congress) and the other LDF, led by Leftists. One need not be a bitter rival or detractor to point out that even in Kerala comrade Pinarayi Vijayan has tinted the Communists' red flag with the hues of saffron, the colour associated with Hindu forces. In other words, he is taking care not to 'offend' Hindu sentiment with the so-called progressive Communist ideas. The Leftists are good at giving a

spin to events and they may thus describe this appeasement of Hindu sentiment or religion as pragmatism.

What could happen if Kim Davy is extradited, would be debated another day. The Communists could be anti-religion, but they have long been the real custodians of a secular polity where nearly 80 per cent of its 1.3 billion people are Hindus.

The minorities see a protector in Communist leadership although in Kerala, the CPI(M) for long was also known as a pro-Hindu party. Then, you had the Muslim League and the Congress party with a good support base among Catholics.

The electoral data in the last 15 years or so shows that of the three national elections and some state assembly elections -- not only have the Communists weakened but there has been a steady rise of the BJP, including in West Bengal and Tripura. The trend has been modest in Kerala too. In other words, the weakening of Communists signals the rise of Hindutva-ridden macho nationalism.

But pragmatism, as they say, is often a good political substitute for naked opportunism. Thus, the Marxists in the southern state of Kerala have actually sparked off a 'power struggle' between Kerala's two dominant minorities - the Muslims and the Christians. Out of a population of 36 million, Muslims and Christians together constitute about 40 per cent in this state.

international

Talks with Taliban in Doha candid and professional: US

Washington | Agencies

Discussions between the US and Afghan Taliban officials in Doha, Qatar, were "candid and professional," the State Department said.

A US inter-agency delegation met with senior Taliban representatives in Doha over the weekend, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a readout on Sunday.

The American delegation in the talks focused on security and terrorism concerns, safe passage for US citizens, other foreign nationals, and Afghan partners, as well as human rights and humanitarian assistance issues, according to the readout.

Price noted that "the US delegation reiterating that the Taliban will be judged on its actions, not only its words".

Amir Khan Muttaqi, Afghanistan's Acting Foreign



Minister, said on Saturday that the two sides discussed opening a new chapter of bilateral relations, and the Taliban officials called on the US side to lift the ban on the frozen assets in the Afghan Central Bank.

The Taliban delegation also urged the US side to respect the sovereignty of Afghanistan's airspace and not to interfere in its affairs, he said, stressing the focus was on humanitarian aid and the implementation of all provisions of the Doha Agreement concluded between the two sides in February 2020.

The State Department said

on Friday that the meeting in Doha "is a continuation of the pragmatic engagements" between two sides but not "granting recognition or conferring legitimacy" to the Taliban, which took over Afghanistan in mid-August and announced an interim government in early September.

The meeting marked the first in-person gathering between the US and the Taliban since the American withdrawal from Afghanistan at the end of August and the first foreign visit by the Taliban government officials since they took over the South Asian nation.

Japan Minister vows to promote scrapping of Fukushima nuke plant

Tokyo | Agencies

Japan's Industry Minister Koichi Hagiuda has vowed to promote the decommissioning of the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant and recovery of the area as a top priority during his first visit to the northeastern prefecture since assuming office, local media reported on Monday.

During his visit, Hagiuda told Fukushima Governor Masao Uchibori and the mayors of municipalities hosting the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant that his Ministry would put full efforts to deal with the release of treated radioactive water from the facility damaged by the devastating earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, reports Xinhua news agency.

In the meeting, Uchibori requested the central government to handle issues such as the lifting of an evacuation order for residents near the damaged power plant. Futaba Mayor Shiro Izawa and Okuma Mayor Jun Yoshida together asked the state to take effective measures against the reputational damage associated with the controversial plan of discharging treated water. In addition, the mayors also warned Tokyo Electric Power Co., Ltd. (TEPCO), the operator of the plant, not to sloppily manage radioactive waste from power facilities. "The state,



instead of TEPCO, will lead the decommissioning of (Fukushima Daiichi) reactors," Hagiuda told reporters after the meetings.

Japan is planning to begin discharging the water into the sea from around the spring of 2023, stating that water pumped into the ruined reactors at the Fukushima plant to cool the melted fuel is treated

using an advanced liquid processing system, which could limit tritium to a low level in the water.

However, the decision has received strong criticism from neighbouring countries.

China has expressed serious concerns about Japan's decision to discharge contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear station, with Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian saying that Beijing urged the Japanese side to take a responsible attitude and treat the issue of nuclear waste disposal with caution. Meanwhile, South Korea has also voiced its "grave concerns", with Foreign Ministry spokesman Choi Young-sam saying "it will be difficult to accept if the Japanese side decides to release the contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant without sufficient consultations". Local fishermen have remained opposed to the planned discharge of treated water because it could destroy the reputation of Fukushima seafood.

TEPCO Chairman Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, who accompanied Hagiuda on his tour of the power plant, met with Uchibori on Monday.

Kobayashi told reporters after the meeting that he would hold further dialogue with locals to try to make them understand what he called the "safety steps".

INT'L COURT ASKS TO CLARIFY WHO REPRESENTS AFGHANISTAN

Kabul: The International Criminal Court (ICC) has asked the UN Secretary-General to clarify in identifying Afghanistan's representation in international bodies following the country's takeover by the Taliban, the media reported. ICC judges have said that the court was not being able to decide on starting an investigation into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan, until it knows who officially rules Afghanistan from the standpoint of international law, TOLO News reported. In a letter to the UN, the ICC said: "The request cannot be legally adjudicated without addressing the question of which entity actually constitutes the state authorities of Afghanistan since August 15, 2021." As the reports indicate, many Afghan families were affected by the war and the associated crimes.

small, a resident in Helmand, lost his father and brother six years ago after a rocket hit their house. He called the incident a war crime that requires investigation.

"A mortar hit our house. The previous government did not investigate our issue and this government has not started an investigation either," Ismail told TOLO News.

At the same time, a number of Afghan lawyers say that the investigation of war crimes is a significant step toward punishing people who have committed such crimes in the war-torn nation. Subhan Mesbah, a lawyer, said: "Not only foreigners but also Afghans committed such crimes and still continue to do so. Therefore, it is necessary for the ICC to know the status of the Taliban's recognition."

ICC judges had authorised an investigation last year to probe offenses allegedly committed by Afghan government forces, the Taliban, US troops and other involved parties.

S Korean provincial chief confirmed as ruling party's prez candidate

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea's ruling Democratic Party (DP) on Monday confirmed the nomination of Gyeonggi Governor Lee Jae-myung as its 2022 presidential candidate, adding that it was decided after runner-up, former Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon appealed the results.

Lee Jae-myung won 50.29 per cent of all votes cast in the course of the party's 11-round primary since last month, followed by Lee Nak-yeon with 39.14 per cent, reports Yonhap News Agency.

The Gyeonggi Governor needed a majority of the votes to avoid a runoff. "We announced Lee Jae-myung as the DP candidate for the 20th presidential election yesterday (Sunday)," Rep. Song Young-gil, chairman of the party, told reporters at the national cemetery in the central city of Daejeon accompanying the Governor.

Hours after Lee Jae-myung's victory, Lee Nak-yeon's camp officially filed an objection with the party headquarters, calling for a final runoff.

They argued that votes thrown in sup-



port of two candidates who dropped out midway through the primary, Chung Seok-yeon and Kim Doo-gwan, should have been counted toward the total ballots.

Lee Jae-myung pledged a powerful reform of the real estate market, saying in his acceptance speech that he will rid the country of the stigma of "a republic of unearned real estate income" through his reform.

The 56-year-old said the upcoming presidential election, scheduled for March 9 next year, will be an ultimate battle against the corrupt establishment, noting that people need to decide whether to go back to the dark past or start off as a new country of hope.

Seeing the present time as a grand

transformation era, Lee Jae-myung said he will push for a powerful state-dominated economic renaissance, eliminate unfairness and irrationality in every corner of the country, and root out unearned income.

The lawyer-turned-politician also vowed to adopt universal welfare programs on basic income, basic housing and basic finance, while enhancing investment in culture, science and technology. In the presidential vote, Lee Jae-myung is expected to be pitted against either former Prosecutor-General Yoon Seok-youl or five-term lawmaker Hong Joon-pyo, the leading candidates in the main opposition People Power Party's (PPP) presidential primary.

According to a joint survey by four pollsters published last week, Lee Jae-myung had 26 per cent of support.

Following him were PPP candidates Yoon and Hong with 17 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

In a hypothetical two-way race between Lee Jae-myung and Yoon, Lee Jae-myung had 44 per cent of support against Yoon's 33 per cent.

Western missions in Libya welcome plan to withdraw foreign forces

Tripoli | Agencies

Western Embassies in Libya have welcomed the comprehensive Action Plan signed two days ago by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) to withdraw foreign forces from the North African country. "The Embassies of France, Germany, Italy, the UK and the US in Libya join Special Envoy and Head of UNSMIL (UN Support Mission in Libya) Jan Kubis in welcoming the announcement made on October 8th 2021 by the 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC) of the signing of a comprehensive Action Plan for the withdrawal of mercenaries, foreign fighters and foreign forces from Libyan territory," Xinhua news agency reported on Monday citing a joint statement issued by missions as saying. They recalled in this regard that the United Nations Security Council

Resolution 2570 called on all Libyan and foreign parties to implement the ceasefire agreement made on October 23, 2020 in full, including through the withdrawal of all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya without further delay. The Embassies stressed their support for the Libyan Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism, under the leadership of the JMC and underlined the need for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of armed groups and all relevant non-state armed actors, for security sector reform and the establishment of an inclusive, accountable, civilian-led security architecture for Libya as a whole. We reaffirm the need to combat terrorism in Libya by all means in accordance with the UN Charter and international law and call on all parties to dissociate from UN-listed terrorist groups and individuals," the statement added.



The path of talented students will be made easy for getting selection in UPSC: CM

The petition filed by Sushil Singh Rajput, a resident of village Boriya of Katangi, states that his son Nilesh Singh was married to Jyoti Singh on May 6, 2017 Wednesday.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that we will make the way easy for talented students to be selected in the Union Public Service Commission examination. Arrangements will be made for whatever subject the children want to study. The goal is that more number of children from Madhya Pradesh should be selected for UPSC.

Chouhan was reviewing the preparations for the honor ceremony to be held on October 13 for the youth selected in UPSC in the Chief Minister's residence hall today. Students preparing for Public Service Commission and other competitive examinations will also be present in the function.

Chouhan said that 37 students selected in UPSC this year are a symbol of passion, hard work and strong determination. These students are inspirational to other youth as well. As there are all kinds of opportunities for UPSC as well as competitive exams, the state government will prepare the students for good institutions and important services.



Guidance will be provided to the students from expert teachers and trainers for competitive examinations in Bank, Army or other fields. When students get tips through experts, they will get success in fulfilling their expectations.

Chouhan said that after discussing with the students selected in the preliminary examination of UPSC, information should be obtained about what kind of training they want. Along with this, efforts should also be made that the students get finally selected in the examination. Necessary facilities should be made available for this.

Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Secretary to Chief Minister Chhavi Bhardwaj and Commissioner Public Relations Sudam Khade were present during this.

Make year wise action plan for achieving the GER

Opportunities in the new education policy should reach deprived sections: Governor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that universities should prepare year wise action plans to achieve the target of gross enrolment under the new education policy. He said that the universities should make effective efforts to provide the opportunities given under the policy to the deprived sections of the society.

Patel was addressing the fourth governing body meeting of the BR Ambedkar University of Social Sciences, Mhow at Raj Bhavan on Monday. Members of the Governing Body and Vice Chancellor of the University were present in the meeting.

Governor Patel said that development of all communities is necessary for the all round development of the state. He said that education is the basis of all round development. For those who have the responsibility of education, it is necessary to have positivity in their thinking and sensitivity in their heart. We all feel proud when a child from our state makes



an achievement. Efforts should be made to identify the talents and encourage them. He stressed the need to provide structural strength to the research activities in the University. He urged the university to take initiatives under Corporate Social Responsibility, in coordination with industries, to encourage meritorious students and to seek cooperation in research work.

The Governor was informed that the University had 5 schools at the time of its establishment. Today it has been upgraded to 11. D. Lit course has been started in the university from the year 2020-21 in subjects including Women's Studies, Education, Library Science, Management, Commerce, Social Sciences. At present 8 candidates are studying in D.Lit. The University has

9 Honorary Chairs. Along with this, two Peeths namely Babu Jagjivan Ram and Dr. Ambedkar have been established by the Central Government and two others Jannayak Tanta Bhill and Veerputra Maharana Pratap have been established by the state government. Intensive work is being done in 5 villages of Mhow region under Atmanirbhar Bharat. The university is active in 12 villages under Beti Bachao.

Among those present in the meeting were Principal Secretary to the Governor, DP Ahuja, Principal Secretary Higher Education Anupam Rajan, Principal Secretary Scheduled Castes Welfare Department of Tribal Affairs Pallavi Jain Govil, Finance Secretary Lokesh Kumar Jata, Secretary Law Legislative Affairs Department Umesh Pandav, Secretary Scheduled Castes Welfare Department Renu Tiwari, Vice Chancellor Asha Shukla, Registrar Ajay Verma, members of the Governing Body, and officers of Raj Bhavan.

CM to visit Panna on October 20

Will take part in Sharad Purnima Festival | Prannath Temple Trust requests to start medical college in Panna



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be on a visit to Panna on October 20. Chouhan will have a detailed discussion on the possibilities of religious tourism after having darshan of all the temples including Baldau Ju, Kishore Ju, Jagannath

Swami Ju of Panna. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan will also attend the Sharad Purnima festival after reaching Prannath Temple. Chouhan has been invited to visit Panna by the Chief Priest of Prannath Temple Shri Devkaran Gandhi Ji Maharaj who reached the Chief Minister's residence. General Manager of Shri 108

Prannath Ji Mandir Trust Panna DB Sharma, Secretary Chandra Kishan Tripathi, Trustees Tilak Raj Sharma and Saurabh Dubey were present on this occasion. Chouhan was requested by the trust to open a medical college in Panna. Chief Minister Chouhan has directed the concerned to submit a proposal in this regard immediately.

CM PLANTS GULMOHAR SAPLING



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Gulmohar sapling in Smart City Park today. Gulmohar is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Flowers blooming in large clusters amidst the shimmering fern-like leaves of Gulmohar give a distinct charm to this tree. In summer, the Gulmohar tree is full of flowers instead of leaves. It is also rich in medicinal properties.

Nauradehi Sanctuary becomes home of rare birds

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The presence of 165 different types of rare birds and 5 tigers in the Nauradehi Sanctuary, spread over three districts of the state, charms the tourists visiting here.

Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary is spread over an area of 1197.04 Sq. Km up to Sagar, Damoh and Narsinghpur districts. The entire sanctuary is situated on a plateau. In Damoh district it is towards Durgavati Sanctuary up to Bandhavgarh National Park in the east. This sanctuary is adjacent to Jabalpur Sagar Highway. It has 8 ranges. A large number of tourists come from far and wide to see countless wild animals in these ranges. Nauradehi has proved to be a corridor for Panna Tiger Reserve and is indirectly connected to Satpura Tiger Reserve. Due to its connectivity with Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve and Rani Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuary, it has become a home of birds. Overall, the Nauradehi Sanctuary is turning out to be an ideal habitat for birds. The heritage of nature in the sanctuary is captivating to everyone. In this, Garhi pahar, pokhar, Jamrasi talab, Chevela talab, Badhpani, Ampani, dense forest, vegetation and homes of birds delight the tourists a



lot. After completing the survey work, about 30 bird experts from different states not only found 165 rare birds but also recorded their pictures and voices. Birds like dusky eagle, owl, white-bellied minivet, Himalayan vulture, Eurasian fly catcher, white-throated kingfisher and the presence of wild boar, spotted deer attract tourists.

Nauradehi Sanctuary can be reached by covering a distance of 95 km from Jabalpur, 70 from Sagar, 70 from Damoh and 110 km from Narsinghpur. It is 95 kms from Sagar station and 160 kms from Jabalpur by rail route.

CM pays floral tributes to Nanaji Deshmukh

Homage to Nanaji, the architect of the path from Gramoday to Rashtroday, enlightened visionary devoted to service of nation said Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan



Jana Sangh. Nanaji established the Deendayal Research Institute in 1972 in order to embody the concept of Integral Humanism of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay. Throughout his life, he continued to work for the expansion of various projects running under the Deendayal Research Institute. During Atalji's tenure, the Government of India also awarded him Padma Vibhushan for his exemplary contribution in the fields of education, health and rural self-reliance. In 2019, he was awarded the Bharatiya

Nanaji was born on October 11, 1916 in a town called Kadoli in Hingoli district of Maharashtra. Nanaji devoted his entire life in the service of the nation. Nanaji Deshmukh breathed his last on February 27, 2010, at the age of 95 while staying in India's first rural university in Chitrakoot. Chitrakoot Rural University was established by Nanaji Deshmukh. Chouhan has tweeted that "Many schemes launched by Nana Ji Deshmukh for the empowerment of rural India are living testimony of his service to the nation. Service to the nation and upliftment of rural India will be the true tribute at the feet of Nanaji Deshmukh. Let us all contribute our bit in the new building of India by following his path.

"Mata ki pichhori" is second exhibit of the Week at IGRMS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the Latest and popular online series of Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) entitled 'Exhibit of the Week' the "MATA KI PICHHORI" (A painting depicting the story of Vishad Mata in a battle with Mahisasura) collected from 1998 is at display. The Community of Folk, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It's Measurement Length- 356 cm., Width - 168 cm. displayed in the audience as the second Exhibit of the month of October, 2021 through official website, Facebook, Instagram and twitter page of the IGRMS.

In this regard Praveen Kumar Mishra, Director, IGRMS said that This traditional painting on cloth known as 'Mata Ki Pichhori' has its popular connotation as Mata-ni-Pachhedhi or Mata-ni-Chandarva, from the area where it is originated. The term Mata-ni-Pachhedhi is derived from the Gujarati word "Mata" goddess "ni" belongs to and "Pachhedhi" behind. It is thought to have been origi-



nated from the semi-nomadic rural clans who developed their own cloth shrine of Mata Devi with paintings. This shrine-cloth characterises the presence of a bold central feature - an image of Mata while the surrounding spaces are filled with rows of miniatures depicting devotees, paraphernalia of the event and celebration, flowers, and animals. The most prominent image of the mother goddess is shown at the center in a sitting posture. The fierce form of the goddess overpowering the evil forces is illustrated with four heads on both sides, weapons in her hands, and

Simhas (Lions) roaring to kill the demons. The painting is considered to be a sacred art among the Vaghri/Vagadi community of Gujarat. The painting depicts the deity Vishad/Visat Mata (Symbol of Shakti with twenty hands) sitting on her vahana, the buffalo, holding different weapons in her hands, and two long hairs of demons (Mahisasur) in action. The goddess is accompanied by other deities, birds, animals, and other forms. According to a belief, Devi or Mata is personified as Shakti or universal energy. A conventional 'Mata-ni-pachhedhi' is used only in three colours, maroon - believed to be the color of the earth with curative power, black - toward the evil eye and strengthening divine energy, and white standing for purity.

One of the unique features of these paintings is the formation of four to five pieces of these hangings to form a shrine for the goddess. The nomadic community uses these hangings to portray the epic of the mother goddess and establish a temporary shrine for her.

MAN BEATS DAUGHTER TO DEATH FOR COMING HOME LATE FROM NAVRATRI PANDAL

Morena: A 10-year-old girl was beaten to death allegedly by her father, who was angry with her for coming home late after playing with other children at a Navratri pandal in Morena, police said on Monday. The incident occurred on Sunday night in the Uttampur area of Morena city and the accused has been arrested. Station Road Police Station in-charge Ashish Rajput said the accused, Rakesh Jatav, 40, in a drunken state repeatedly beat his daughter with a stick when she returned home at around 9 pm after playing with other children at a tableau set up on the occasion of Navratri, leading to her death. After getting information about the incident, the police reached the spot and arrested the accused under relevant provisions of the IPC, he said.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO LOK NAYAK JAIPRAKASH NARAYAN



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Lok Nayak Jaiprakash Narayan on his anniversary. Chouhan garlanded his portrait in the auditorium at his residence. Jaiprakash Narayan, popularly known as JP or 'Lok Nayak', was an Indian freedom fighter, social reformer and politician. Lok Nayak Jaiprakash Narayan was born on 11 October 1902 in Bihar's Sitab-Diyara. He is mainly known for leading the opposition against Indira Gandhi in 1970. The Government of India posthumously awarded him the country's highest civilian award 'Bharat Ratna' in 1998. In 1965, he was also honoured with the 'Raman Magsaysay' award for social service. Loknayak died on October 8, 1979 in Patna after a prolonged illness.

Union Ministers Kulaste and Patel inaugurate local product fair

"KODO-KUTKI TIHAR" IN VILLAGE PANCHAYAT MOCHA OF MANDLA DISTRICT

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Kodo-Kutki Tihar" based on the products of Kodo-Kutki identified from Mandla district and display of Gond painting and local products under the 'One District-One Product' scheme was launched in the Mocha Panchayat Bhawan complex of Kanha area. This product fair, which will run from October 10 to 17, was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State for Steel and Rural Development, Faggan Singh Kulaste, Union Minister of State for Food Processing and Jal Shakti, Prahlad Singh Patel.

On the occasion of the launch of Kodo-Kutki Tihar, Patel said that programmes like Kodo-Kutki Tihar are important to promote local products and provide market. He said that the food and lifestyle of our ancestors was environment based and pollution free. We all should adopt their food and lifestyle for a healthy life. Patel said that the food grains used by the ancestors, Kodo-Kutki and coarse grains are in great demand in the market today. The whole world is returning to India's lifestyle and food. We all should cherish and preserve the ancient traditions. "Kodo-Kutki Tihar" is a commendable step in this direction. Shri Patel gave detailed information about the planned efforts being made by the Central Government to improve the lives of common people. He also discussed about Swachh Bharat Mission, Jal-Jeevan Mission, electricity, Pradhan Mantri Awas and other public welfare schemes.

Patel said that the year 2023 is being celebrated as the year of coarse cereals. The concerned departments should prepare the farmers for the production of Kodo-Kutki and coarse grains. Also, give



training to the farmers from processing to marketing of these grains. There is a lot of possibility of getting good price for Kodo-Kutki and coarse grains in the coming years. For this, farmers need to prepare from now on. Patel said that while adopting traditional food grains,

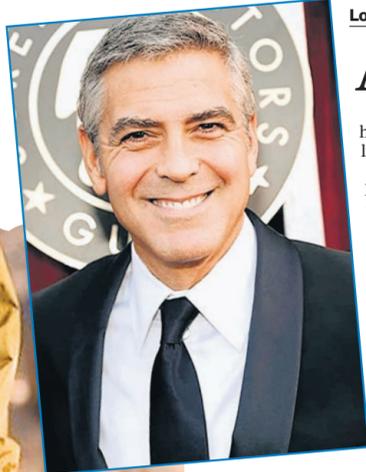
also explore possibilities for generating employment from them.

Kulaste said that tourists are being told about the local products and cuisines of Mandla district through Kodo-Kutki Tihar. He said that for promotion of local products including Kodo-Kutki, processing and marketing arrangements would have to be made through them by strengthening self-help groups. Local products should be promoted more and more. Kulaste appreciated the products of Mahua Laddu and Kodo-Kutki in Kodo-Kutki Tihar. He said that while preserving the culture, special work will have to be done to increase the resources of income through it. Minister of State Shri Kulaste informed about the subsidy being given by the Food Processing Department.

Rajya Sabha MP Sampatia Uikay said that the organisation of "Kodo-Kutki Tihar" is a unique effort of the district administration under "One District-One Product" for display of Kodo-Kutki products, Gond paintings and herbal drinks identified from Mandla district and to inform the general public about. She discussed about the nutrients present in Kodo-Kutki. Also, she talked about the possibility of removing malnutrition through Kodo-Kutki. MLA Bichhiya Narayan Patta said that it is a commendable effort to demonstrate the product of Kodo-Kutki, which is an integral part of the life of the tribes and to inform the general public about its nutritional value. He described the local cuisine and products provided in Kodo-Kutki Tihar as the hallmark of the tribal culture. Public representatives, officers and villagers were present in the programme.



George Clooney rules out political career



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor-filmmaker George Clooney has been linked with a political career for some time but he shared it isn't in his future plans.

Asked on 'The Andrew Marr Show' if he'd run for office, he said: "No, because I would actually like to have a nice life."

The 'Tender Bar' filmmaker, who has four-year-old twins Ella and Alexander with wife Amal, plans to scale back his work commitments while he is still healthy and can still "play basketball and do the things I love", reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He added: "I turned 60 this year and I had a conversation with my wife and we were working a lot, as we both do, and I said we have to think of these as the halcyon years." In 20 years, I will be 80 and that's a real number. Doesn't matter how much you work out, what you eat, you're 80 and so I said we have to make sure we enjoy and live these years in the best possible way."

After former President Donald Trump left office, Clooney insisted that the US still needs to do a lot of "healing" and people shouldn't be concerned about incumbent President Joe Biden's poll numbers dropping.

He said: "It's like taking a battered child and thinking everything's going to be OK his first day in school. There's a lot of things that have to be repaired, there's a lot of healing that has to happen, and its going to take time."

New York | Agencies

Madonna and Jon Batiste, bandleader and TV personality familiar to the viewers of 'The Late Show with Stephen Colbert', took to the streets of Harlem, New York

City, singing her 1989 pop-rock-gospel song "Like A Prayer" in the early hours of Saturday. Her impromptu sing-a-long happened after a performance at Ginny's Supper Club in the basement of celebrated Ethiopian-Swedish-American chef Marcus Samuelson's Red Rooster restaurant. As she walked down 126th Street, Madonna took the night owls of Harlem by surprise. Billboard.com called it as a "near-religious experience".

MADONNA TAKES TO HARLEM STREET SINGING 'LIKE A PRAYER'



Variety.com described it as a "New Orleans-style street party". "Travelling a few blocks down the street, the congregation ended outside a nearby church, where Madonna, framed by the ecclesiastical doors behind her, offered an invocation. 'The Lord is with all of us,' she said. 'Sometimes you just have to say a prayer,'" reports Variety.com. Before Madonna and Batiste appeared on the street armed with megaphones, she performed a selection of her classic hits -- "Dark Ballet", "La Isla Bonita" and the Portuguese Saudade -- and songs from her Billboard 200-topping "Madame X" album. Variety.com said the evening at Ginny's Supper Club was "impossibly intimate".

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor and musician Jared Leto's trip to Italy didn't go as he'd expected. Taking to his social media account, the 'House of Gucci' star shared that he got "tear gassed" in Rome after he was caught in a Covid-19 vaccine protest.

He shared his experience via Instagram Story. Posting a photo of police speaking to protestors, he wrote: "Got caught in a protest in Italy. From what I gather it was about vaccine mandates/green pass."

The vocalist of 30 Seconds to Mars further stated: "Got teargassed then called it a night."

He went on to note, "here are some images and video," before letting out footage of the chaotic demonstration, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Leto previously revealed that he found out about the Covid pandemic after returning home from a 12-day silent meditation in the desert.

Taking to Twitter and Instagram back in March 2020, he first penned: "Wow. 12 days ago I began a silent meditation in the desert. We were totally isolated. No phone, no communication etc. We had no idea what was happening outside the facility."

"Walked out yesterday into a very different world. One that's been changed forever. Mind blowing - to say the least. I'm getting messages from friends and family all around the globe and catching up on what's going on."

He added, before sharing a sweet message to his fans: "Hope you and yours are ok. Sending positive energy to all. Stay inside. Stay safe."

Jared Leto says he got 'tear gassed' In Italy

Timothee Chalamet shares his first look as Willy Wonka

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Timothee Chalamet has unveiled his first look as Willy Wonka, the fictional young inventor and chocolate genius in the upcoming film 'Wonka', which will be out in 2023.

Making its way out via his official social media page, the photo posted by the Academy Award-nominated actor on Sunday, features himself dressing in character as Willy Wonka on a snowy set. He donned a black top hat and burgundy jacket, with a colourful scarf.

Besides the first look at his character, Chalamet also shared a close-up shot of him touching a walking cane whose top resembles a purple present resting inside a flower.

"The suspense is terrible, I hope it will last... WONKA," he captioned the pictures, reports aceshowbiz.com.

'Wonka', the third feature film adaptation in the 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' franchise, is billed as a prequel movie.

Plot details are still kept under wraps, but it has been reported that the prequel movie will "focus on a young Willy Wonka and his adventures prior to opening the world's most famous chocolate factory". When Chalamet's casting was announced back in May, it was confirmed that he will sing and dance in the upcoming movie. The 25-year-old actor beat out Tom Holland who was reported to be in contention for the role, while Ryan Gosling, Donald Glover and Ezra Miller were among other actors previously linked to the movie.



'ENJOYING THE LIFE'

Kristin Cavallari reveals she would marry again but is in 'no rush' as she is 'enjoying being alone right now' amid ongoing divorce from ex Jay Cutler.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kristin Cavallari revealed how she feels about marriage, more than a year after filing for divorce from her estranged husband Jay Cutler last June.

While enjoying the single life for the first time in nearly a decade, the 34-year-old Uncommon James founder admitted she is 'really enjoying being alone right now' during an Instagram Q&A session on Sunday.

When asked by a fan if she would consider walking down the aisle again someday, she replied: "Yes. I know I will. I'm in no rush whatsoever though."

She also answered other questions about her love life, including 'how many times' she's been in love amid recent romance rumors with Chase Rice.

In response, the reality star answered three times with her high school boyfriend, when she was 19 and with Cutler. Cavallari noted she was dating in 'a general sense' but not with anyone 'serious though'.



Denis Villeneuve wants to make a James Bond film

Los Angeles | Agencies

Filmmaker Denis Villeneuve says it would be a dream come true to helm a movie in the long-running 'James Bond' franchise as he has had a "massive affection" for the character since he was a child. Asked about directing a 007 film by Josh Horowitz on the 'Happy Sad Confused' podcast, Villeneuve said: "Frankly - and I cannot believe I would say that - but the answer would be a massive yes. I would deeply love to one day make a James Bond movie." "It's a character that I've been with - like everybody - since my childhood. I have massive affection for Bond." Cary Joji Fukunaga has helmed the last movie to star Daniel Craig as the iconic spy, 'No Time To Die', and Villeneuve feels it will be "challenging" to reboot the series with a new lead star, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The 'Dune' director said: "It would be a big challenge for people to try and reboot it after what Daniel did. What Daniel Craig brought to Bond was so unique and strong and probably unmatched. He's the ultimate James Bond."

He said: "Just thinking about it, I'm tired. One thing at a time. It's really a massive privilege. I don't want to say I'm very arrogant or pretentious right now. It's true that it would be a dream to do 007."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Iris Law



IPL 2021:

SUNIL NARINE'S ALL-ROUND SHOW SENDS KOLKATA INTO QUALIFIER 2

Sharjan | Agencies

A match-defining all-round show from Sunil Narine helped Kolkata Knight Riders set up a Qualifier 2 clash with Delhi Capitals after beating Royal Challengers Bangalore by four wickets in a tight Eliminator match of IPL 2021 at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium here on Monday.

Narine first took 4/21 in his four overs, breaking the back of Bangalore's batting. With the bat, Narine slammed his first three balls for three sixes to effectively kill the chase, which Kolkata completed with two balls to spare. Kolkata delivering Bangalore a knockout punch also brought an end to Virat Kohli's stint as a captain in the IPL.

Chasing 139, Shubman Gill started off with a flick through square leg of Mohammed Siraj. In the next over, Venkatesh Iyer joined the party, pulling George Garton over backward square leg. Gill then tore into Garton in the third over with a hat-trick of boundaries. Harshal Patel, introduced in the final over of power-play, made the first strike for Bangalore as Gill was foxed by an off-cutter and holed to mid-on mov-

ing to his right.

Post power-play, Kolkata lost another wicket as Rahul Tripathi was struck plumb on the front pad by a Yuzvendra Chahal googly. Nitish Rana broke the shackles with reverse hits going for a six and four each off Glenn Maxwell in the tenth over, which also saw a running Shahbaz Ahmed spilling a catch of Iyer. But in the next over, Patel took out Iyer, gloving behind to keeper KS Bharat.

Sunil Narine's promotion to five paid off as he slammed three sixes off Daniel Christian over fine leg, square leg and long-off in the 12th over to simplify the equation. Chahal had his second wicket of the match in the 15th over as Nitish Rana mistimed slog-sweep to long-on. Narine had luck on his side as Devdutt Padikkal dropped the catch off Harshal Patel in the 17th over.

In the next over, Mohammed Siraj dismissed both Narine and Dinesh Karthik. With seven needed off the final over, Shakib Al Hasan walked across for a scoop over short fine leg off Christian before finishing off the chase with a quick single.

Earlier, Bangalore were off to a quick start with 53/1 in the power-play. Kohli got going with a sweep



off Shakib Al Hasan before slamming Shivam Mavi for back-to-back fours in the next over. Padikkal took two boundaries off Lockie Ferguson in the fourth over. But the New Zealander had the last laugh in his second over as Padikkal chopped one to his stumps.

Post power-play, Kolkata squeezed the run flow as 17 runs came off the next four overs, including Bharat's wicket, holding out to long-off Narine. That began a batting slide for Bangalore as three overs later, Narine had his second wicket of the match with Kohli set himself for a slog-sweep, only to be bowled through the gate.

Narine struck with his third wicket in the 15th over, getting the ball to just turn in and going between bat and pad to disturb the stumps of AB de Villiers. In his final over, Narine took out his fourth wicket as Maxwell sliced a slog-sweep to short third man. Christian and Shahbaz Ahmed fell in the last two overs but Bangalore just managed to cross the 130-mark, which wasn't sufficient to prevent their second straight eliminator loss in the IPL.

Brief scores

Royal Challengers Bangalore 138/7 in 20 overs (Virat Kohli 39, Devdutt Padikkal 21, Sunil Narine 4/21, Lockie Ferguson 2/30) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders (Shubman Gill 29, Sunil Narine 26, Yuzvendra Chahal 2/16, Harshal Patel 2/19, Mohammed Siraj 2/19) by four wickets

SAFF CHAMPIONSHIP

Chhetri scores as India overcome Nepal 1-0

Male (Maldives) | Agencies

An 82nd-minute strike by Sunil Chhetri handed India a 1-0 win over Nepal in the SAFF Championship 2021 Group Stage, at the National Stadium here.

With this win, India broke the sequence of draws and are now in the third spot on the group table with five points, one behind Maldives and Nepal, both of whom have six points apiece.

India started off on the front foot late on Sunday evening, winning their first corner of the match as early as in the third minute. The Nepal defence was up to the task though, as they cleared the ball that was swung in by Brandon Fernandes.

A keen battle ensued between the two captains -- Sunil Chhetri and Kiran Kumar Limbu -- in the opening exchanges. India constantly tried to feed the ball to Chhetri, but Limbu nipped the chances in time.

A little under the 20-minute mark, Chhetri managed to control an aerial ball inside the box, but he was herded into a tight angle by the defence and Limbu managed to parry it away.

India had their best chance of the first half in the 34th minute, when Suresh was fed through inside the box by Pritam Kotal. The midfielder flashed a low cross across goal to Chhetri, who was waiting unmarked at the far post. However, a slight touch by Limbu scuppered the chance, as the India captain's eventual shot went agonisingly wide.

With two minutes of regulation time in the



first half left, Chhetri created another chance, when he nodded a Suresh cross into the path of Manvir Singh, who tried to control the ball, but was muscled off it, as the two teams went into the break with the score still remaining 0-0. With eight minutes of regulation time left, captain Chhetri broke the deadlock. Substitute Farukh Choudhary headed an aerial through ball by Brandon onto Chhetri's path, as the India captain volleyed it home with his left foot. India will play their final group game against hosts Maldives on October 13.

India blank Netherlands 5-0 in Thomas Cup opener

Aarhus (Denmark) | Agencies

The Indian mens badminton team started its campaign in the Thomas Cup mens team competition with a commanding 5-0 win against the Netherlands in a Group C encounter.

With the team returning to full strength with the return of the top doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty and Kidambi Srikanth back to form following a few disappointments in the Sudirman Cup, India cruised to victory on Sunday night.

Kidambi Srikanth set the ball rolling by handing Joran Kwekel a 21-12, 21-14 defeat in the match played on Sunday night.

Rankireddy and Shetty then took to the court and made the score 2-0 with a 21-19, 21-12 win against Ruben Jille and Ties van der Lecq of the Netherlands.

B Sai Praneeth then sealed victory for India by beating Robin Mesman 21-4, 21-12.

India's second doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, which had a couple of good outings in the recent Sudirman Cup, made it 4-0 with a 21-12, 21-13 win against Andy Buijk and Brian Wassink of the Netherlands before Sameer Verma completed the clean sweep by beating Gijs Duijs 21-6, 21-11.

India are in Group C with China, the



Netherlands and Tahiti as their opponents. The top two teams will qualify for the knock-out rounds of the 16-team competition. China too had started with a 5-0 rout of Tahiti on Sunday night.

Messi praises 'improving' Argentina after 3-0 rout of Uruguay

Buenos Aires | Agencies

Argentina captain Lionel Messi hailed the performance of his team in their 3-0 World Cup Qualifier victory over Uruguay, saying the Albiceleste are relishing a possession-based style of play under manager Lionel Scaloni. It was a clinical performance by the hosts against Uruguay.

Messi gave the hosts the lead with a chipped effort that appeared to be an intended pass for the onrushing Nicolas Gonzalez. The Fiorentina forward failed to make contact with his outstretched left leg but succeeded in wrong-footing Uruguayan goalkeeper Fernando Muslera as the ball rolled into the far corner. It was his 80th international goal on Monday (IST).

De Paul doubled the lead just before halftime, pouncing on a loose ball to lash home from 10 yards after Lautaro Martinez fluffed an attempt to latch onto Messi's defense-splitting pass.

Atletico Madrid midfielder Rodrigo



de Paul scored one goal and set up another as Argentina edged closer to securing a place at next year's FIFA

World Cup. Despite having little possession, Uruguay were unlucky not to score as Luis Suarez was twice denied

by goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez and also saw a close-range effort rebound off the post, reports Xinhua.

Argentina continued to dominate after the interval, making it 3-0 when Martinez tapped in at the far post after De Paul's low cross from the left flank. Uruguay rarely threatened the Albiceleste defense in the second half and looked rudderless in the absence of suspended midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur and injured playmaker Giorgian de Arrascaeta.

Messi was very happy with Argentina's performance, reports Xinhua.

The result at El Monumental in Buenos Aires leaves Argentina with 22 points from 10 matches, six points behind leaders Brazil. Uruguay remain fourth with 16 points from 11 outings.

The top four teams will automatically qualify for next year's World Cup in Qatar while the fifth-ranked side will advance to an intercontinental playoff.

Colombia halt Brazil's run

Barranquilla (Colombia) | Agencies

Brazil's perfect 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifying record was ended as Colombia held the five-time world champions to a goalless draw here on Monday (IST).

The visitors had most of the early scoring chances with Lucas Paqueta shooting just wide after combining with Neymar and an unmarked Fred thumping an effort from 16 yards over the bar.

Colombia rallied after halftime, with Mateus Uribe forcing goalkeeper Alisson to make a finger-tip save with his shot from the edge of the 18-yard box after Radamel Falcao's back-heel.

Alisson again came to his team's rescue minutes later as he dived low to his right to keep out a rasping Juan Fernando Quintero drive from distance.

The hosts had David Ospina to thank for preventing a last-gasp Brazil victory,



with the Napoli goalkeeper showing rapid reflexes to deny Antony from six yards out, Xinhua reports. "We knew they were going to give us very little space to attack and that's exactly what happened, but even so we had our chances. Unfortunately, we weren't able

to finish them off," Brazil's Manchester United midfielder Fred said after the match. Brazil still lead the 10-team South American qualifying group with nine wins and a draw from their 10 matches so far. Colombia are fifth with 15 points from 11 games.

IBHA REVEALED AS MASCOT OF FIFA U-17 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP IN INDIA

New Delhi: The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) on Monday unveiled Ibha as the official mascot of FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 in India. Ibha, an Asiatic lioness, was unveiled on the day coinciding with the International Day of the Girl Child and exactly one year to go until the tournament kicks off. "Ibha is a really exciting and inspiring character, one that young fans across India and around the world will have huge fun enjoying and interacting with in the lead-up to the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in India next year.

T20 WORLD CUP

BCCI have five more days to make any changes to the squad

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Team India selectors have five more days to make any changes to the T20 World Cup squad as the International Cricket Council (ICC) has allowed all the Super 12 teams a window of one week till October 15.

It has been revealed that the widely-believed October 10 deadline was only for the teams who are slated to play in the qualifying round from October 17 onwards.

An ICC official confirmed to The Times of India, saying, "Teams can change their teams seven days prior to the start of their support period. India's support period starts with the Super 12 which begins on October 23. So, they have time to change the team till Oct 15 midnight."

Some former players have raised concerns over the snub to some top players like



Shikhar Dhawan and Yuzvendra Chahal. Especially after their performance during the UAE leg of IPL 2021.

The Indian squad has named Deepak Chahar and Shardul Thakur as reserves. Meanwhile, doubts remain over the services of all-rounder Hardik Pandya as he hasn't bowled during the second phase of IPL 2021.

A BCCI official had told reporter that there will be no change in the squad unless someone is injured. It is believed that the physios are keeping a close watch on Varun Chakravarthy and Pandya fitness.

From 'greatest finisher' to 'greatest finisher ever', Kohli praises MSD's knock

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After Chennai Super Kings' captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni finished off the match against Delhi Capitals with his explosive knock in the IPL 2021 Qualifier 1 in Dubai, his Royal Challengers counterpart, Virat Kohli took to Twitter to congratulate the legendary cricketer.

Dhoni played a stellar inning as his unbeaten six-ball 18 at a strike rate of exactly 300, including three boundaries and a maximum, helped CSK secure a place in the final.

Tagging MSD in a post, India captain Kohli first wrote, "Anddddd the king is back, the greatest finish-



er in the game. Made me jump Outta my seat once again tonight." However, he deleted this tweet calling Dhoni "the greatest finisher of the game" and added "the greatest finisher ever" to his post.

While a fan shared screenshots of both the tweets on the micro-blogging platform, several others noticed Kohli's fanboy moment.

Dhoni will be the mentor of the Indian team when they take the field for the T20 World Cup in Dubai later this month. Kohli's RCB might have a chance to face CSK in the final if they beat Kolkata Knight Riders in the Eliminator on Monday and Delhi Capitals in the second Qualifier on Wednesday.

Azarenka edges past Kvitova; Halep eliminated in Indian Wells

Indian Wells: World No. 32 Victoria Azarenka of Belarus got the better of world No. 11 Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic in a tight, 7-5, 6-4, match to reach the fourth round at the BNP Paribas Open on Monday (IST). In the latest chapter of a rivalry that dates back more than a decade, the two major champions traded breaks three times in the opening set, and Azarenka won the last three games to take it -- saving three break points to stave off a first-set tiebreak.

The second set proved much the same, as Kvitova won four straight games from 3-1 down to take the lead before Azarenka again won a trio of games to seal victory.

Sasnovich of Belarus continued her stellar run at the BNP Paribas Open, ousting 2015 Indian Wells champion and No.11 seed Simona Halep of Romania, 7-5, 6-4, to reach

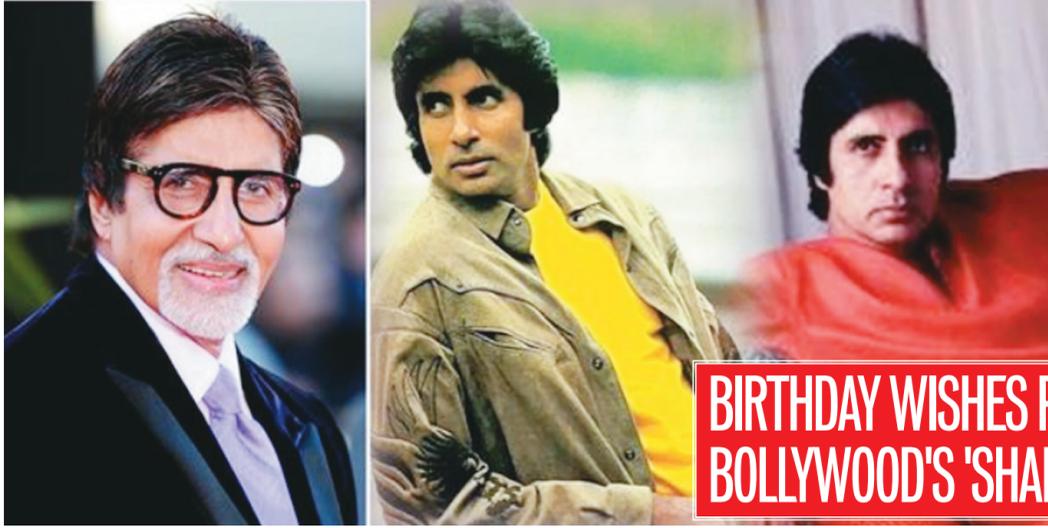


the round of 16. World No.100 Sasnovich has now notched consecutive straight-set wins over Grand Slam champions and top-25 players. In the second round, Sasnovich

eliminated reigning US Open champion Emma Raducanu of Great Britain, and now she has followed up with her 98-minute victory over two-time major titlist Halep.



BIG B TURNS 79



BIRTHDAY WISHES POUR IN ON BOLLYWOOD'S 'SHAHENSHAH'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A galaxy of stars from across India, from Mammootty, Prabhas, Ajay Devgn and Chiranjeevi Konidela to Rashmika Mandanna and Rakul Preet Singh, have wished Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who turned 79 on Monday.

To ring in his birthday, Big B shared a picture of himself, but he seemed to have got confused about his age and wrote: "Walking into the 80th."

His daughter Shweta Bachchan Nanda quickly took to the comment section and corrected him. She wrote: "79th (heart emoji)."

Since Monday morning, wishes have been pouring in for Amitabh on social media. Ajay Devgn, who will be seen sharing screen space with Big B in the upcoming film 'Mayday', tweeted: "Sir, looking at you through a different lens taught me what being a true artist is. Happy birthday dear Amitji."

Southern superstar Mammootty simply wrote:

"Happy Birthday Amitabh Sir @SrBachchan #AmitabhBachchan."

Prabhas, who will appear with Big B in the upcoming Nag Ashvin film, 'Project K', wrote: "Happy

Birthday to the legend of all times @amitabh-bachchan Sir!"

Suniel Shetty wrote, referencing Big B's famous dialogue from 'Kaalia': "All lines begin where you stand Mr Bachchan & you will always find me in that line. Stay blessed sir."

Actress Rakul Preet Singh wished the thespian 'Happy Birthday' and added: "Wishing you abundance of joy, great health and all things beautiful. You are such an inspiration and I'm so grateful to get an opportunity of working with you. Have the most amazing year @SrBachchan."

Big B's 'Chehre' co-star Emraan Hashmi wrote: "HAPPY 79 ?@SrBachchan?!! And still blazing ahead with passion and ferocity. Thank you sir for always inspiring me. Best wishes and have a good one!"

Actress Rashmika Mandanna and Big B will be seen together in 'Goodbye'. She called the cinema icon 'paapaji' and said that he is "truly the awesomest"

"Happy birthday my handsome paapajiiii @SrBachchan. You are truly the awesomest. We love you! Thank you for being the most amazing human being. We wish you all the love, health and happiness."

Actress Parineeti Chopra, who will be seen sharing screen space with Big B for the first time in the upcoming film 'Uunchai', penned a heart-warming note.

Sahil Shroff: 'Bigg Boss' seems easy from outside, but it is not so

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Sahil Shroff has become the first evicted contestant of 'Bigg Boss 15'. Though he has no regrets about it.

As he says: "I am feeling very good. I was missing my life and now I am back to my place. Taking a good sleep and relaxing, I entered 'Bigg Boss' without any expectation and so right now I am not disappointed."

During the 'Weekend Ka Vaar' episode of 'Bigg Boss 15', Salman Khan announced his eviction. Well, he appeared to be a silent contestant in the show. When asked what could be the possible reason for his eviction in one week, he adds: "There should be two weeks given and moreover 12 contestants were television personalities and they have a huge fan following. I have a different kind of following. Still, I performed all my tasks but though Bigg Boss looks easier from outside it is not that easy from inside. One has to go through a tough battle."

During the first week all the contestants including Karan Kundrra, Tejaswi Prakash, Umar Riaz, Vidhi Pandya, Donal Bisht, Vishal Kotian, Afsana Khan,

Simba Nagpal, Akasa Singh, Jay Bhanushali, Miesha Iyer, Sahil Shroff and Ishaan Sehgal had been nominated as a punishment because of Pratik Sehajpal destroying the Bigg Boss house property. Sahil feels if it had not happened, he could have continued: "Surprisingly when I started understanding the game and its strategies, this eviction happened that too without any given task. I feel if all 14 would not have been nominated, I would have continued. But I don't have any regrets. I did my bit and maybe my journey was to be here only."



Discrimination against girls holds us back as developed society: Ayushmann Khurrana

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On International Day of the Girl Child on Monday, actor Ayushmann Khurrana, who has been appointed as Unicef's celebrity advocate for their global campaign Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC), said that discrimination and violence against girls is unacceptable and holds back the society. Ayushmann, who has a daughter named Varushka, said: "As Unicef's Celebrity Advocate towards ending violence against children, I firmly believe that discrimination and violence against girls is unacceptable and holds us back as a developed and caring society." Covid-19 has added to the challenges faced by girls. With limited access to mobiles or the internet, girls have faced restrictions in accessing remote learning and in having their health, nutritional and social needs treated on par with the boys in their families.

"At the same time lockdowns for Covid prevention have increased incidence of gender-based violence. Latest data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows that child marriages have increased by as much as 50 per cent during the pandemic." Ayushmann said on the International Day of the Girl Child, attention needs to be drawn to the many challenges and discriminations girls face.

He said: "Promote girls' empowerment and ensure their human rights. We need to prioritize girls' education, treat their rights on par with those of boys, provide them with skills and livelihood opportunities and engage with boys and men to address patriarchal mindsets."



Arjun Kapoor to star in 'nerve-racking' thriller 'The Lady Killer'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Arjun Kapoor will be seen in the upcoming thriller 'The Lady Killer'. He says the film has thrill, romance, emotions and suspense. Arjun shared an intriguing poster on Instagram on Monday. On the poster, it is written "mistrust makes a snake bite it's on tail..." with a picture of the actor. "Isme Thrill hai. Romance Hai. Emotion Hai. Suspense Hai! Presenting to you, #TheLadykiller. A thrilling, nerve-racking love story and my most ambitious film yet. Thank you my director #AjayBahl for your belief in me. Produced by #BhushanKumar @ShaaileshRSingh #KrishanKumar," Arjun wrote as the caption. The film is directed by Ajay Bahl and is jointly produced by Bhushan Kumar, Shaailesh R. Singh and Krishnan Kumar.

IMPORTANT FOR MEN, WOMEN TO BE VOCAL ABOUT RIGHTS OF GIRLS: MANUSHI CHHILLAR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood debutante Manushi Chhillar, on International Day of the Girl Child on Monday, is using social media to create awareness about the need to be vocal about the rights of the girl child. Manushi said: "I feel it is important for men and women to be vocal about the rights of girls. It is a fact that women have to work harder to get to where they eventually reach."

She added: "Women have to take the power in their own hands and shape the perception of how a girl should view herself. It's a world full of opportunities and stereotypes only act as shackles for a better future and a better life. It is time to shatter those stereotypes."

Manushi is urging girls on the internet to freely express how they feel being a girl child and how they would like to be vocal for their rights.

She said: "I have always been vocal about equal rights for the girl child and on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child, I will be using the power of social media to bring as much attention to this issue. I want to collaborate with fellow creative people to show the world how we perceive equal rights, and how we, as women, want to be perceived."

Manushi, on the acting front, is gearing up for her big screen debut opposite superstar Akshay Kumar in the historical 'Prithviraj'.



Kanika Mann