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After Independence, many great personalities' contributions were erased: PM Modi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that it is unfortunate that after independence, along with the culture and tradition of the country, work was done to erase the contribution of many great personalities.

"The penance of lakhs of freedom fighters was sought to be diminished, but now these wrongs are being corrected.

"The freedom struggle involved the penance of lakhs of countrymen, but efforts were made to limit their history as well. But today, after decades of independence, the country is correcting those mistakes..." he said, after unveiling a hologram statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary.

Prime Minister Modi, who also gave the Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskars, said that 'Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav' resolved that India will revive its identity and inspirations.

"Netaji used to say, 'Never lose



faith in the dream of an independent India, there is no power in the world that can shake India'. Today we have a target to build a New India before we complete 100 years of independence in 2047."

About his visit to Bose's ancestral

house in Kolkata, he said: "It is my good fortune that last year, on this very day, I had the opportunity to visit Netaji's ancestral residence in Kolkata. The car in which he left Kolkata, the room in which he used to study, the stairs of his house, the

walls of his house, seeing him, that experience is beyond words.

"I cannot forget the moment when I unfurled the flag at Red Fort on October 21, 2018, the day when the Azad Hind Government completed 75 years. It was my good fortune that our government got the opportunity to declassify the files related to Netaji."

He said that the the hologram will be replaced by a granite statue. "The statue will not only remind us of our duties towards the nation but also inspire the generations to come," he said.

The Prime Minister also said: "We have made all-round efforts to make disaster management more effective. We have not only focused on relief, rescue, rehabilitation but on reforms as well. We strengthened the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). From space management to planning and management, we adopted best practices.

"We have seen a lot of joint military exercises in different countries... But for the first time, India has started the tradition of joint drill for disaster management."

WHO TO BRING GLOBAL SYSTEM TO UPDATE COVID SHOTS BASED ON FLU JAB

LONDON | Agencies

The World Health Organisation is working to devise a central system to update Covid vaccines, much like the current process used for flu jabs, the media reported. The strategy emulates a system currently used to decide on "strain updates" for flu shots, which are updated every six months, The Telegraph reported.

It is being worked together with experts from the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and other agencies including the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The plans for a global system are based on mounting concerns that a fragmented approach to future-proofing Covid shots would be counterproductive, reduce manufacturing capacity, exacerbate vaccine hesitancy, and worsen already vast imbalances in access to jabs worldwide, the report said.

Although scientists say it is not yet necessary to tweak existing jabs, yet they warn of the emergence of a vaccine-evading variant. Thus, developing a global mechanism to make decisions about how and when to introduce these next generation jabs will be "critical".

In line with this, the WHO has already formed the Technical Advisory Group on Covid-19 Vaccine Composition (Tag-Co-Vac) for this purpose.

"Tag-Co-Vac was set up basically to advise



WHO, and for WHO to advise the world, on when there will be a need for a change in vaccine composition -- and if so, what would be the strain that should be used," Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist at the WHO, told The Telegraph.

According to Swaminathan, there are three main approaches for next generation vaccines: a 'monovalent' vaccine which targets a single variant, a 'multivalent' vaccine which could protect against several strains at once, or a pan-coronavirus vaccine.

While a pan-coronavirus vaccine will be the most complicated to develop, it would be the "ideal", the report said.

"Not only would it protect people from current existing circulating variants, but from future variants -- and it would be broadly protective across beta coronaviruses (the family of pathogens that includes Covid, MERS and SARS-1)," said Swaminathan.

DELHI TURNS INTO FORTRESS AHEAD OF R-DAY, OVER 27K PERSONNEL DEPLOYED

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana on Sunday said that over 27,000 personnel have been deployed in the national capital in view of the Republic Day. "A total force of 27,723 personnel are deployed in Delhi," the Delhi Police chief said in a press conference. He further said that the total force includes 71 Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs), 213 ACPs, 713 Inspectors, Delhi Police Commandos, Armed Battalion officers and Jawans and 65 companies of the Central Armed Police Force. The Commissioner said that for the past two months, the Delhi Police have been taking intensified anti-terror measures in the national capital. "Delhi has always remained a target for anti-social elements. This year too we are on alert. For the past two months, we are taking intensified anti-terror measures in Delhi in coordination with other security agencies," Asthana said. Notably, Delhi is currently under a heavy security cover after the intelligence agencies received inputs of a possible terror attack in the city in wake of the Republic day. "In the past two months you may have seen several police blockades around the city, checking of vehicles, hotels, lodges and verification of servants, tenants and labourers," Asthana said, adding that vehicles are being thoroughly checked at all the entry and exit points of the national capital. The Commissioner informed that the police have also secured the air space with

'Counter Rogue Drone' technology in and around the area where the celebrations will take place. "For this we have also taken help from other agencies to completely secure the area," he said. Sharing more details about the security scenario, the top cop said that apart from Delhi Police's internal meetings for security arrangements, interstate coordination meetings were also held. "We also held meetings with DGPs, ADGs, CID Crime and ATS chiefs of other states to ensure full proof security," he said. As the social media remains a major tool for anti-social elements to spread misinformation, the Delhi Police chief said that their social media cell has been proactively monitoring all the activities. "Apart from awareness campaigns, we are also using social media to disseminate important and factual information so that no anti-social element is able to run a misinformation campaign," said the Commissioner.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi district) Deepak Yadav, while speaking to IANS, had informed that adequate arrangements have been made in and around the Rajpath for the Republic day parade. "Around 300 cameras with face-recognition facilities have been installed around the Rajpath to thwart any threat beforehand," Yadav said. As the usage of drone while carrying out terror attacks have risen in the recent past, the DCP said any flying object that breaches the security cordons in and around the area of Rajpath will be taken care of.

EC TRANSFERS 3 DMS, 2 SPS IN UP

Lucknow: In a major development the Election Commission of India (ECI) has transferred District Magistrates (DMs) of Firozabad, Bareilly and Kanpur Nagar and Superintendents of Police (SPs) in Firozabad and Kaushambi districts.

According to an official release, Suryapal Gangwar, the Managing Director of Madhyanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (MNVNL), will replace Chandra Vijay Singh as Firozabad DM. Singh was posted in Firozabad since 2019. During his tenure, eight men were killed in anti-CAA and NRC protests in December 2019. While in 2021, 68 people, including 51 children, died of 'dengue-like viral fever' outbreak which occurred in September 2021 in the district. Noida Additional Chief Executive Officer, Neha Sharma has also been transferred to Kanpur Nagar as DM. She replaces Vishak G Iyer. Meanwhile, Ashish Tiwari has been given the charge as Firozabad SP. He replaces Ashok Kumar Shukla, who has now been posted with DGP office.

Non-BJP state govts team up against proposed change in IAS cadre rules

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The non-BJP governments in four states have teamed up against the Centre's proposal to amend the IAS (Cadre) Rules, 1954. Chief Ministers of West Bengal, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh have written to the Prime Minister and urged him to roll back the decision, claiming that the change in the rules for central deputation of IAS officers will affect the states' administration.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has written two letters to the Centre. In her second letter she says, "I find the revised amendment proposal more draconian than the former, and indeed its very grain is against the foundations of our great federal polity and the basic structure of India's Constitutional scheme."

"The moot point of the further revised draft amendment proposal is that an officer, whom the Central government may choose to take out of a state to any part of the country without taking his/her consent and without the agreement of the state government under whom he or she is serving, may now stand released from his/her current assignment forthwith," Banerjee said.

The states say that the power proposed to be usurped by the Central gov-

ernment by resorting to over-centralisation of powers is going to destroy the morale and freedom of the All-India Service officers.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren too wrote to the Prime Minister expressing his concern. He said, "I have written to @PMOIndia expressing strong reser-

will broaden officers' perspectives and will



variations on the proposed All India Services cadre rule amendments by Govt of India. They promote 'unilateralism' rather than 'cooperative federalism'. I hope he will consider my request and bury the proposal at this stage itself."

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel have also written letters to the Prime Minister opposing the move.

The government has defended the move and has stated that working with the Centre and state governments both

advance the mission of the all-India services.

He stated that the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers cannot always be posted in states since it is inefficient for both the service and the officers. It has said that working with the Central government provides them with a unique viewpoint for the personal development of officers after serving in the states and then returning to the Centre.

Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu too have decided to oppose the changes.

NDRF Twitter handle hacked, will look into it: DG

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The National Disaster Response Force Director General Atul Karwal on Sunday said that the NDRF Twitter handle was hacked.

"Yes. Will get it looked into right away," Karwal further said.

The site was hacked on Saturday, he said. The hacking incident occurred a few days after the multi-disciplinary force NDRF celebrated its 17th Raising Day on January 19.

As of now the Twitter handle @NDRF has not been restored and it is neither showing any of its tweets posted so far, nor working as other Twitter handles.

Raised in January 19, 2006, the specialised task force responds to the natural calamity or man made disaster management for 'special response to a threatening disaster situation or a disaster'.

Started with eight battalions in 2006, it has 16 active battalions, each consisting



of 1149 personnel, the force has saved more than one lakh lives in its 3,100 operations. It has rescued and evacuated over 6.7 lakh people during disasters.

With a motto of 'Aapada Seva Sadaiv Sarvatra' (sustained disaster response service under all circumstances), NDRF is raised on the line of para-military forces and persons are sent to this force on deputation from the Central Armed Police Forces such as CRPF, BSE, ITBP, CISF, etc.

Each battalion in NDRF is also capable of providing 18 self-contained specialist search and rescue teams of 45 personnel each, including the technicians, engineers, dog squads, electricians, and medical/paramedics.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose birth anniversary: Prez, PM pay tributes

Team Absolute | New Delhi

President, Vice President and Prime Minister on Sunday paid tributes to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birth anniversary. President Ram Nath Kovind said, "India gratefully pays homage to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birth anniversary. The daring steps that he took to fulfil his fierce commitment to the idea of a free India -- Azad Hind -- make him a national icon. His ideals and sacrifice will forever inspire every Indian."

Paying tribute to Bose on his birth anniversary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "I bow to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his Jayanti. Every Indian is proud of his monumental contribution to our nation." Remembering Netaji, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu tweeted, "My respectful tributes to the



great nationalist, legendary freedom fighter and visionary leader, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his birth anniversary today. We commemorate this day as #ParakramDivas to honour Netaji's indomitable courage and selfless service to the nation."

"The nation is indebted

to the iconic leader for his monumental role in the freedom struggle," Naidu said. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, "Greetings to you on 'Parakram Divas'. I bow to the epitome of courage and valour, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on this occasion. He went to great

lengths while fighting for the freedom of his motherland. His contribution in India's freedom struggle continues to inspire us." Remembering Bose, Home Minister Amit Shah said that his unparalleled sacrifice and struggle for the motherland will always guide the country.

J&K SARPANCHES GIVEN MORE AUTHORITY

New Delhi: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has authorised Sarpanches to grant permission for the construction, reconstruction or alteration of the residential houses in Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.

According to the order issued on January 22 by the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj of the J&K government, the Sarpanch will be assisted by a committee as well. "In exercise of power conferred by Section 12, sub-section 2(iv) of Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act 1989, 1989 read with Rule 155 & 165 of J&K Panchayati Raj Rules, 1996, as amended from time to time. Sanction is hereby accorded to the designation of competent authority for grant of permission for construction/reconstruction/ alteration of residential/commercial buildings in rural areas of J&K," the notification issued on January 22 said, adding that a panel headed by Sarpanch of Panchayat will give permission in the rural areas. For permission to build residential buildings within the Panchayat jurisdiction, the Sarpanch of the Halqa Panchayat will grant permission and he will be assisted by the village level worker (Panchayat Secretary) and Patwari of the concerned Halqa. The order also issued permission for commercial building including shops in the rural areas, the authority has been given to a committee headed by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of the concerned area while the Tehsildar, town planning concerned, BDO concerned and the Sarpanch of the Halqa Panchayat will be the members of the committee. Similarly, for the construction or renovation of any other buildings, including the government buildings in the rural areas, the committee, headed by concerned SDM who will be the chairman, concerned Tehsildar, Town planning officer, BDO and Sarpanch of the Halqa Panchayat as members of the committee, will grant permission. The officials of the J&K government said that this order, which has come into effect, will help people in the rural areas in getting permission for the construction or renovation of the residential houses and they will not have to run around to various government offices.



CHINESE PLA SAYS LOCATED MISSING ARUNACHAL BOY, INDIAN ARMY VERIFYING

An Indian boy, who crossed over the Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh and went missing, has been located, Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) said on Sunday.

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In a communication with the Indian Army, Chinese PLA stated that the missing boy has been located and would be sent back after proper formalities.

The Indian Army is verifying the Chinese claim and trying to find out whether the boy is the same as reported missing.

The army had sought assistance of the PLA on Thursday to locate the missing boy, identified as Miram Taron, on their side and return him as per the established protocol.

The Indian Army had stated that when they received the information about Taron, it immediately contacted the PLA through the established mechanism of hotline informing that an individual, who was collecting herbs and hunting, has lost his way and cannot be found.

It was alleged that the Chinese PLA had abducted the boy. Arunachal Pradesh parliamentarian Tapir Gao in a tweet on Wednesday



had alleged: "Chinese PLA has abducted Sh Miram Taron, 17 years of Zido vill. yesterday

18th Jan 2022 from inside Indian territory, Lungta Jor area (China built 3-4 kms road inside India in 2018) under Siyungla area (Bishing village) of Upper Siang dist, Arunachal Pradesh."

It was found that Taron's friend Johnny Yaiying, who managed to escape, informed the authorities about the kidnapping by the PLA.

Gao said the incident took place near the place where Tsangpo river enters India in Arunachal Pradesh. Tsangpo is called as Siang in Arunachal Pradesh and Brahmaputra in Assam.

He had requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and others to ensure the early release of the abducted boy.

In the meantime, the Congress slammed the government for inaction in the entire episode.

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Thursday tweeted, "Just days ahead of Republic Day the Chinese have abducted an Indian citizen, we are with the family of Meeram Taron, and we will not lose hope and will not accept defeat. But Prime Minister's silence is his statement that it does not bother him."

India and China are engaged in a border dispute for the last 20 months and 14 rounds of military talks have taken place to resolve the border dispute.

PM Modi to interact with Bal Puraskar awardees on Monday

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually interact with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) awardees on Monday (January 24).

For the first time digital certificates will be conferred on the awardees for the year 2022 and 2021 using 'Blockchain Technology'. This technology is being used for the first time for giving certificates to awardees.

The Government of India has been conferring the PMRBP awards as the recognition to children residing in India, above the age of five years and not exceeding 18 years for their exceptional achievement in six categories, namely Innovation, Social Service, Scholastic, Sports, Art and Culture, and Bravery. These Awards are conferred by the President in a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan. The Prime Minister also interacts with these awardees every year. The



awardees of PMRBP also take part in the Republic Day parade every year. "However, in view of Covid-19 situation in the country, it has not been possible to organise the award ceremony at New Delhi this year.

"On the occasion of National Girl Child Day on January 24 and as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', Prime Minister Modi will interact virtually with the winners of PMRBP-2022," said the government.

The children along with their parents and concerned

District Magistrates of their respective districts would join the event from their district Headquarters.

This year, 29 children from across the country, under different categories of Bal Shakti Puraskar, have been selected for PMRBP-2022. The awardees also take part in the Republic Day parade every year. Each awardee of PMRBP is given a medal, a cash prize of Rs one lakh and certificate. The cash prize will be transferred to the respective accounts of PMRBP 2022 winners.

Vinod Rai being rewarded for maligning UPA: Congress

THE CONGRESS ON SATURDAY SLAMMED THE GOVERNMENT FOR APPOINTING FORMER CAG VINOD RAI, AS CHAIRMAN OF UNITY SMALL FINANCE BANK.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress Chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said: "First, as Chairman of Banking Recruitment Board,

Now, as Chairman of Unity Small Finance Bank! The reward for maligning the UPA is being paid back in full by Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

As per reports, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed former comptroller and auditor general (CAG) Vinod Rai as the independent chairman of the Unity Small Finance Bank (USFB).

Congress has accused Rai for maligning the UPA government and had sought an apology from him. Party leader Salman Khurshid had said in the past that Rai as the Chairman of the

Banking Services Recruitment Board, and did not utter a single word on the "huge banking scam" that was taking place in the country after the Narendra Modi government took over in 2014.

Rai as CAG had in his report held then Telecom Minister A. Raja responsible for causing the state exchequer a loss of Rs 1,76,379 crore by allocating 2G spectrum licences at throwaway prices. In 2017, a special CBI court had acquitted all the 18 accused, including A. Raja and K. Kanimozhi, in the 2G spectrum allocation case.

'JAPAN SHOULD RELEASE NETAJI'S ASHES TO HIS DAUGHTER'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The celebration of Subhas Bose's 125th birth anniversary is a hollow hologram commemoration. It is a pretence; having dishonoured his memory and soul by not bringing his mortal remains from Japan for 76 years and respecting these with a final disposal in the Indian traditions, says Ashis Ray.

Ray is an Academic Visitor at St Antony's College, Oxford. Ray said in an article that the Germany-based daughter of Subhas Bose, Professor Anita Pfaff, has been exceptionally - some would say needlessly - polite and respectful towards her extended family in India and the Indian government about bringing her father's mortal remains to India for the last rites.

"As Bose's only child, now his sole heir since his wife and Pfaff's mother Emilie Schenk is no more, complete legal and moral rights are vested in her regarding the remains", Ray said.

India, Bose's family, and followers have reason to be grateful to the Buddhist Renkoji Temple in Tokyo, where a succession of priests have piously preserved the remains ever since a memorial serv-



ice there on 18 September 1945, he added.

Bose died as a result of a plane crash at Taipei on August 18, 1945. Ray said New Delhi cannot lawfully take exception to the Japanese government handing over the remains to Pfaff. In 2006, the only official Indian investigation that provided an inconclusive verdict on Bos's death and remains was rejected by the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The succeeding Narendra Modi government has abided by this view.

Prime Minister Nehru in the 1950s and Prime

Minister PV Narasimha Rao in the 1990s made sincere efforts to bring the remains to India; but were thwarted by opposition from some members of Bose's extended family and a section of politicians and bureaucrats.

With Morarji Desai as the Janata Party prime minister influenced by MP Samar Guha into politicising a humanitarian matter, and Vajpayee later occupying the same office following suit, governments in India have increasingly lacked courage to take the bull by the horns. Neither the Indian nor Japanese government should in the eyes of the law be determining the fate of the ashes, as they have presumptuously been doing, Ray said. "Japan has held Bose in high esteem ever since their alliance in the Second World War. Indeed, the former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on one of his trips to India, visited the house in Kolkata where Bose lived and worked - now known as Netaji Bhawan. But the Nippon government continues to err on its policy towards his remains. The best tribute it can pay to Bose is by rectifying its mistake. This means inviting Professor Pfaff to take possession of the remains in accordance with her wishes", Ray said.

MHA announces Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

With an aim to recognize and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management, the Ministry of Home Affairs has selected Professor Vinod Sharma in the Individual category and Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management in the Institutional category for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2022 for their excellent work in Disaster Management.

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The MHA has instituted an annual award known as Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda

Prabandhan Puraskar which is announced every year on January 23 on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The award carries a cash prize of Rs 51 lakh and a certificate in case of an institution and Rs 5 lakh and a certificate in case of an individual.

For the award this year, nominations were solicited from July 1, 2021 onwards. The award scheme for the year 2022 was given wide publicity through print, electronic and social media. In response to the award scheme, 243 valid nominations were received from institutions and individuals.

They will be conferred with the Award, along with the awardees of the year 2019, 2020 and 2021, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the investiture ceremony which will be held on Sunday evening to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra

Bose.

Vinod Sharma, a senior professor at the Indian Institute of Public Administration and Vice-Chairman of the Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority, was the founder co-ordinator of the National Centre of Disaster Management, now known as the National Institute of Disaster Management.

He is known for working tirelessly towards bringing disaster risk reduction (DRR) to the forefront of the national agenda. His pioneering work in DRR in India gave him international recognition and he is a resource person to Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) and all Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) for disaster management. As Vice Chairman of the Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority, he has made Sikkim a model State in

implementing DRR, whilst initiating panchayat level preparedness plans, linking climate change and DRR.

The Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management (GIDM), established in 2012, has been working to enhance the disaster risk reduction (DRR) capacity of Gujarat. Through a series of strategically designed capacity building programs, GIDM has trained more than 12,000 professionals on diverse issues concerning multi-hazard risk management and reduction during the pandemic. Some recent key initiatives include the development of a user-friendly Gujarat Fire Safety Compliance Portal, and development of a Mobile App Technology based Advanced COVID-19 Syndromic Surveillance (ACSyS) system to complement the COVID-19 surveillance efforts of Integrated Disease Surveillance Project.

AIMIM slams SP for fielding candidate with RSS links

LUCKNOW | Agencies

India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi has accused the Samajwadi Party for fielding Mukhiya Gurjar, a candidate with RSS background from the Hasanpur constituency in Amroha.

He described the SP as a 'washing machine where RSS men become secular'.

He also attacked his rivals for terming him and his party as the "B team of BJP".

The SP spokesman said that Mukhiya Gurjar was with the SP in the past and had contested three elections on its ticket. Owaisi, whose party has already fielded around 30 candidates so far, took to Twitter to attack the SP by posting the photograph of Mukhiya Gurjar in RSS uniform.



"SP is a washing machine that transforms RSS people into secular leaders. Kalyan Singh, Hindu Yuva Vahini leader Sunil Singh, Sakshi Maharaj and now Swami

Prasad Maurya are examples. Hope Muslim SP leaders will welcome him with a bouquet and will sacrifice themselves for his 'commitment to social justice,'" he wrote.

Mamata urges Centre to announce Netaji's birthday as National Holiday

KOLKATA | Agencies

Paying tribute to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his 125th birthday, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee urged the central government to declare his birth anniversary, January 23, as National Holiday.

In a series of tweets, Banerjee wrote: "We again appeal to the Central Government that Netaji's birthday be declared National Holiday to allow the entire Nation to pay homage to the National Leader and celebrate #DeshNayakDibas in most befitting manner".

Earlier also the Chief Minister had made the same demand several times and this year again she made the request to allow the entire Nation to pay homage to the National Leader and celebrate #DeshNayakDibas in a most befitting manner.

"GoWB is celebrating his 125th Birth Anniversary as #DeshNayakDibas in a befitting manner all over the state following protocols," the chief minister wrote. "He is an epitome of patriotism, courage, leadership, unity and brotherhood. Netaji has been and will continue to be an inspiration for generations," she said.

Detailing out the series of initiatives taken by the state government to pay tribute to this national leader, the Chief Minister wrote, "Among some long-term initiatives to commemorate Netaji, a National University with international collaborations, Jai Hind University, is being set up with 100 per cent



state funding". "Drawing inspiration from Netaji's thoughts on the National Planning Commission, a Bengal Planning Commission will be set up to help the state in its planning initiatives," she added. The Chief Minister again raised the central government's controversial issue to exclude the tableau of West Bengal on Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose from the ensuing Republic Day Parade. She said, "This year a tableau will be displayed on the Republic Day Parade on 'Netaji' and will also feature other eminent freedom fighters from Bengal to commemorate the 75th year of Independence of our country." Banerjee had earlier written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi venting her displeasure at the exclusion of the tableau of West Bengal on Netaji Bose from the ensuing Republic Day Parade and alleged that it was a partisan attitude of the central government.

Mining allegations by Akali Dal leader frivolous: Punjab CM

CHANDIGARH | Agencies

Reacting strongly to the "baseless and frivolous" allegations levelled against him by Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Bikram Majithia, Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi dared him to present even a single proof that indicates his involvement in sand mining across the state.

"I have never denied my relationship with my nephew Bhupinder Singh Honey and being a relative he might be present at some of my functions. It is not a crime, if I get clicked with my relatives at my son's marriage or some other functions," Channi said in a statement, while categorically denying his any link in Honey's money laundering case investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Lashing out at Majithia for the slanderous and misleading campaign against him, Channi said the SAD leader is dancing on the tunes of the BJP government and is trying to take revenge from him for booking him in an NDPS case as earlier former Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, who is in cahoots with the SAD-BJP, had covered up his sins.



Lambasting Majithia, Channi said: "Let me remind Majithia that he was investigated by ED for his relations with drug peddlers and a drug kingpin named him for sheltering and facilitating smuggling of drugs." Majithia's photos were with them, does it mean he knew them and sheltering them?"

The Chief Minister asked Majithia, former Chief Minister Parkash Badal and his son Sukhbir Badal to clear their stand that what relationship they have with notorious drug peddlers, including Anwar Masih, Bittu Aulakh, Jagdish Bhola, Gurdeep Ranu and Satpreet Satta, with whom they usually shared political stages and had also

attended public functions with them.

Calling ED's raid and opposition scurrilous attacks a "political vendetta" ahead of the Vidhan Sabha elections, Channi said: "The BJP is using central agencies to take revenge from me after PM Modi's fiasco and opposition is now taking now playing politics over the issue in Punjab."

"Being a Chief Minister I get clicked with thousands of people every day, does it mean, I am linked to them?" he questioned Majithia, who is a brother-in-law of SAD chief Sukhbir Badal and being investigated for running drug peddling business and sheltering drug peddlers.

Majithia, who has annihilated the future of Punjab's youth during the SAD-BJP governance for 10 years, now questioning his integrity is amusing, the Chief Minister said.

Reacting to audio recordings of the Salapur village Sarpanch Iqbal Singh and his son Binder naming Chief Minister's name, Channi said if a person is taking his name being CM for personal gain, it doesn't mean that he is associated with them. "They all are afraid and annoyed of me for selfless working for four months and spending government funds on the welfare of people, which they want to utilize on building their multi-core empires," he added.



EOW RAIDS MP PWD EMPLOYEE TO PROBE GRAFT ALLEGATIONS

Bhopal: The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of Madhya Pradesh police on Sunday raided the premises of a state government employee in an alleged disproportionate assets case.

As per officials in MP police, the raid was conducted in the premises of a state government employee associated with the Public Works Department (PWD) in Rewa district to unearth disproportionate assets worth Rs 1.5 crore.

More assets are likely to be found as the raid and the estimated process was still underway, till 5 p.m. on Sunday, said a senior police official in EOW.

Police said the raid was conducted following a complaint about the assets disproportionate to the known sources of income of Pannalal Shukla, the PWD employee. Shukla, who is from Mada village, is posted at Hanumana under Rewa district.

Nine land registries, including those in the names of his son and wife, were seized from his possession in addition to one four-wheeler and four motorcycles, police claimed.

Shukla's house, in which he resides with the family, is spread over half-an-acre of land in Rewa. One of his houses is also located in Hanumana town where he was posted.

"Raid is underway and the exact value of total recoveries will be known once the process gets over," EOW said.

Real Time Monitoring of Poshan Abhiyan Being Done Through Smartphone

► CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN WILL VIRTUALLY DISTRIBUTE SMARTPHONES IN SEHORE DISTRICT ON JANUARY 25

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will virtually distribute smartphones to 1415 Anganwadi workers and 50 supervisors of Sehore district during the Poshan Abhiyan at 10 am on January 25. The Poshan Abhiyan is being conducted by the Women and Child Development Department from 97 thousand 135 Anganwadi and Mini Anganwadi centres approved in 453 Integrated Child Development Projects in all 52 districts of the state. Information and Communication Technology based real time monitor-

ing is done through mobile based nutrition tracker application. In the past, smartphones have been distributed to 27 thousand 817 Anganwadi workers of 16 districts and tablets to 972 supervisors. Smartphones are being purchased and distributed from district levels to 69 thousand 316 Anganwadi workers and 2,429 supervisors of the remaining 36 districts.

Daily information on services provided by Anganwadi workers at Anganwadi centres is entered using the nutrition tracker application from the smartphone. Monitoring of information is done daily at block, district and state level. With the use of the nutrition tracker on the smartphone by the Anganwadi workers, where the work of maintaining the registers will be less, through the same application, the Anganwadi workers will get ready information regarding the daily tasks about which beneficiaries have to be chosen for making home visits for vaccination and other services and which beneficiaries they have to counsel by visiting their homes.

Through the nutrition tracker, Anganwadi workers can see the list of all the beneficiaries registered in the

Anganwadi centre on their mobile anywhere at any time, which will make it easy to monitor the beneficiaries. Along with this, the growth monitoring of children in the age group of 0 to 5 years registered in the Anganwadi centre will also be easy. The level of malnutrition of the child will be reflected immediately after the Anganwadi worker records the weight and height of the children. Now Anganwadi worker will not have to fill the growth register. On registering a pregnant woman with a nutrition tracker, this information will also be available to the Anganwadi worker about which pregnant woman has to be checked daily or which pregnant woman has to be counselled through home visit.

Rs. 200 per month is being paid to all the Anganwadi workers of the entire state for the net connectivity for the operation of the nutrition tracker application. An amount of Rs.500 will be given to Anganwadi workers and Rs.250 to Anganwadi assistants as incentive on filling the information according to the prescribed parameters in the nutrition tracker application.

CM Planted Saplings in Smart Garden

Members of the Organisation "Zindagi the Hope of Change" Also Planted Saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Moulshree and Bija along with "Zindagi - The Hope of Change" organisation members Ashish Kumar Sharma, Rohit Upadhyay, Akshat Gupta in Smart Garden. The members of the organisation are active in providing free medical treatment to the poor and plantation works. More than 10 thousand saplings were planted by the organisation in Ankur Yojana. Free food was also provided to more than 25 thousand needy patients and their families in many hospitals during the Corona Curfew. Along with this, in the Post Covid Step Down Unit, poor and destitute elders were provided nutritious food by keeping them under the supervision of doctors for 15 days. The members of the organisation have donated blood to more than 1200 people this year. Warm clothes, blankets etc. are provided to the needy people in the organisation's campaign "Kare kapde dan banaye jeevan mahan" (Donate clothes, make life great). Moulshree planted today is also called Kesav in Sanskrit, Molsari or Bakool in Hindi. It is a tree of medicinal importance, which has been used in Ayurveda for centuries. The Bija tree is rich in medicinal properties along with being environmentally important.



CM Shivraj-Digvijay Singh met in the presence of Kamal Nath!

■ Sunday was a big day in the politics of Madhya Pradesh, because Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh met, the special thing of this meeting was that Kamal Nath was also present during the meeting of both the leaders.

Zafar Alam Khan | Bhopal
www.absoluteindianews.com

Sunday was a big day in the politics of Madhya Pradesh, because Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh met, the special thing of this meeting is that Kamal Nath was also present during the meeting of both the leaders.

At CM House, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan talked to Digvijay Singh and Kamal Nath for about 15 minutes. During this, talks between the two leaders were held regarding the problems of the farmers of the villages who were submerged under the Suthalia and Tame project.

Actually, there was a conversation between Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Digvijay Singh and Kamal

Nath for about 15 minutes. During this, Digvijay Singh placed the issues of the affected farmers of Guna, Rajgarh, Vidisha and Bhopal districts who were submerged under the Suthalia and Tame project in front of CM Shivraj. Apart from this, Digvijay Singh had also told about the problems faced during the Jan Jagran Yatra. Digvijay Singh told that even those who have leases have not been compensated. Digvijay Singh met former Chief Minister and State Congress President Kamal Nath before meeting the CM regarding the problems of these farmers. Both the former Chief Ministers reached CM House with farmer representatives from their residence. There the CM listened to the problems of the farmers and assured to investigate the whole matter.

Notably, Digvijay Singh had also given a sit-in on the same issue two days back. Digvijay Singh sat on a dharna in front of the Chief Minister's residence and said that he is not giving him time to meet the Chief Minister, so he will sit on the dharna in front of the Chief Minister's residence. Although the roads leading to the Chief Minister's residence were barricaded, Digvijay Singh held a sit-in near the CM House.

The special thing is that first Kamal Nath and CM Shivraj met even though it was by chance. Only after that CM

Shivraj gave meeting time to Digvijay Singh. During this too, Kamal Nath remained with him. Political experts believe that the coordination between Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Kamal Nath is better. There was a good understanding between the two even when Kamal Nath was the Chief Minister and Shivraj was in the opposition. Now this thing also got strength because CM Shivraj gave time to former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh for meeting only after Kamal Nath's meeting. Actually, some other political meaning has started coming out of this meeting. The question is arising in the corridors of politics that why did CM Shivraj not meet Digvijay Singh beforehand? When Kamal Nath had reached Digvijay's dharna, he had said while talking to the media that 'he did not know that this dharna is of Digvijay Singh! He had come to know from CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan that Digvijay was staging a sit-in at the state hangar. This statement of Kamal Nath had come into the limelight. It is believed that Digvijay Singh was earlier alone in dharna and seeking time to meet CM Shivraj on the issue of farmers.

But the way Kamal Nath's entry was made in this matter, he grabbed the whole issue! Political experts believe that Kamal Nath has tried to give such a message that at present he is the leader of MP Congress.

POST-WEDDING CELEBRATION TURNS INTO MOURNING

Bhopal: A post wedding celebration turned into a tragedy in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district when bridegroom's cousin collapsed while dancing and died. When the relatives and family members were celebrating the function, the 32-year-old man suddenly collapsed while he was dancing and died.

A video of the incident which went viral on social media shows that the person who was dancing collapsed all of a sudden. Friends and family members present there thought that he was acting and will get up soon. When the youth did not stand up for a while, his friends reached out to him and noticed that he was unconscious. He was rushed to a local hospital in Betul where the doctors declared him dead.

According to Dr Ashok Uike of Betul District Hospital, the youth was brought dead. "The exact reason of his death will be known only if the post-mortem is conducted, but sudden cardiac arrest could have possibly caused the death," Dr Uike said.

Indore's Khajrana temple committee plans to build cowshed, Bhakt Sadan

Team Absolute | Indore

The management committee of the Khajrana Ganesh temple in Madhya Pradesh's Indore is planning to build a huge cowshed and a multi-story building called 'Bhakt Sadan'.

While talking to IANS, a member of the management committee said the proposal has been passed and the design has been prepared by an Indore-based private construction firm. The committee has planned to setup a cowshed where at least 40-50 cows can be accommodated at one time.

It was told that setting up a cowshed here has been a long pending proposal which could not get materialised due to lack of adequate land portion; however, the committee has now decided to go ahead with the project. Similarly, building a Bhakt Sadan was initiated in 2019, which got delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"As number of devotees visit this temple from across India and overseas, therefore, providing them with a safe lodging place has been a need. The new multi-story building will be called Bhakt Sadan, which will have at least 50 rooms and a big size



gallery where 200-250 people can gather for prayer," a committee member said requesting not to be named.

The member claimed that the development will cost around Rs 6 crore (for Bhakt Sadan and cowshed) and a land portion of around 7,000 sqm will be required.

"The prabandhan samiti has decided to build both the cowshed and Bhakt Sadan with the money received from devotees as donation. Almost all preparations have been done, including necessary approval from the government authorities, but the

only hurdle is acquisition of land. Once the land acquisition is done, the construction process will start," the committee member said.

Khajrana Ganesh temple is considered one of the historical pilgrimages in northern part of India, which was built during the reign of Holkar dynasty. It is believed that the temple was built by Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar in 1735, who had retrieved the idol of Lord Ganesha from a well where it was hidden to keep it safe from Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

CM Pays Tribute to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his anniversary by garlanding Netaji's portrait in the auditorium of his residence office. Chouhan, while remembering Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, tweeted that - "Mahanayak Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose ignited a new flame of freedom in the hearts of every Indian by giving the slogan 'You give me blood, I will give you freedom.' Building a capable, educated, prosperous India would be our true tribute to him. Tremendous tributes on the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose ji, the brave son of the nation, who gave his entire life to break the shackles of subjugation."

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was the leading leader of India's freedom struggle. Netaji was born on January 23, 1897 in Cuttack, Odisha. To fight against the British, he had formed the Azad Hind Fauj. The slogan of 'Jai Hind' given by him became the national slogan of India. The countrymen address him by the name of Netaji. Netaji gave the slogan of "Delhi Chalo" to the army as 'Supreme Commander' in front of the Town Hall of Singapore on 5 July 1943 and fought the British and Commonwealth forces together in Imphal and Kohima including Burma. Subhash Chandra Bose formed the provisional government of independent India on October 21, 1943 as the supreme commander of the Azad Hind Fauj.

Workshops should be organized for quality improvement, marketing and branding training to farmers: CM

► CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN HAS SAID THAT MADHYA PRADESH IS NUMBER ONE IN THE PRODUCTION OF ORANGE, CORIANDER AND GARLIC IN THE COUNTRY. THE STATE RANKS SECOND IN THE COUNTRY IN THE PRODUCTION OF GINGER, CHILLY, GUAVA, PEAS AND ONIONS. IF THE FARMERS OPEN SMALL FOOD PROCESSING UNITS OF THIS PRODUCTION, PUBLIC WILL GET PURE MATERIAL, YOUTH WILL GET EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND FARMERS WILL GET THE RIGHT PRICE FOR THEIR PRODUCE.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Phase Minister Narendra Modi has taken a historic step by initiating the PM Micro Food Industry Upgradation Scheme. In this scheme, the incubation centers of Gwalior, Morena and Sehore will definitely prove to be milestones. With the blessings of PM Modi, these coordinated steps will usher in a new revolution in promoting the food processing industry in Madhya Pradesh.

Chouhan was virtually addressing the bhoomi-pujan and foundation laying programme organized at Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Agricultural University, Gwalior



for establishment of incubation centers in Agriculture College Gwalior, Krishi Vigyan Kendra Morena and Agriculture College, Sehore under PM Micro Food Industry Upgradation Scheme from the office at his residence. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, State Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel, Minister of State for Horticulture Bharat Singh Kushwaha also participated virtually in the programme.

Chouhan said that there is a need to organize workshops in the state on the method of food processing. Workshops should be organized to inform farmers about quality improvement, packaging, marketing, branding of their produce and their processes. Under the PM Micro Food Industries Upgradation Scheme, a subsidy of up to Rs 10 lakh will be given to the farmers. 40 percent of the subsidy will be borne by the state government. In order to expand the food processing industry, the state government will pro-

vide subsidy of up to Rs 2.5 crore for setting up large units.

Chouhan said that in the last 15 years, the state has made unprecedented growth in the field of agriculture. After making many plans, we decided with effort that we will bring the state forward in the field of agriculture. As a result of this, the state has received Krishi Karman Award many times. Madhya Pradesh has set records in agricultural production. A record has been set by purchasing more than 43 lakh metric tonnes of paddy in the state. Today Madhya Pradesh produces more wheat than Punjab. Madhya Pradesh is providing continuous support in fulfilling Prime Minister Shri Modi's resolve of Atmanirbhar Bharat, setting new records in the field of agriculture.

Chouhan said that agriculture is the backbone of the country's economy. The state government is working towards fulfilling Modi's resolve to double the

income of farmers by encouraging horticulture along with production of crops. Chief Minister said that there is a need for diversification of agriculture to increase the income of the farmer. There is a need to boost cultivation of fruits, flowers, vegetables, medicines and agro-forestry. The Chief Minister said that it is a matter of happiness that the area under horticulture in the state has exceeded 15 lakh hectares. Fruits, vegetables, spices etc. are being cultivated on a large scale in the state. Having a system for processing these products will definitely increase the income of the farmers.

Chouhan said that about 25 lakh units are functioning in the unorganized food processing sector in the country. About 66 percent of these units are in rural areas and about 80 percent of the enterprises are family based. These ventures are helpful in enhancing rural household livelihoods and reducing migration of villagers to urban areas. Therefore, there is need for availability of modern technology, equipment for food processing at village level, training, availability of institutional credit, information regarding quality control of products and necessary training and value addition regarding packaging, branding and marketing of ingredients. There is a need to empower the youth by providing the right guidance.

Rs. 9 crore 87 lakh 85 thousand has been approved by the Government of India for the establishment of three incubation centers at Sehore, Morena and Gwalior. An incubation center is being set up at Sehore for the processing of guava, fruits and vegetables. Juice, Pulp, Jam, Jelly, Vegetable Dehydration Line and Onion Processing Line will be established in the center along with food processing laboratory.



EDITOR'S SPECS

PROBLEM FOR BJP IN UP

Uttar Pradesh deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya faced opposition in his Assembly constituency, Sirathu, when he went there to campaign. A video of this incident, which happened on Saturday, is becoming viral on social media. In the video, slogans are being raised against Maurya. Women are seen closing the doors. Meanwhile, Keshav Prasad Maurya is also seen asking people to keep quiet. The BJP has called it a propaganda of the opposition. According to reports, Keshav Prasad Maurya reached his constituency for the first time after being declared a candidate from Sirathu seat. He faced protests from women in Ghulamipur village of Sirathu Assembly constituency. The women are reportedly angry at the disappearance of Rajiv Maurya, husband of Zilla Panchayat member in Sirathu, and the police inaction in this matter. Rajiv Maurya has been missing since last week. Keshav Prasad Maurya went to meet his family members on Saturday. The deputy chief minister has now instructed the police to set up a special team to find Rajiv at the earliest. The opposition claims that the protest is an "expression of displeasure of the people towards Keshav Prasad Maurya and the work of the Uttar Pradesh government". Raghuraj Singh, who holds a minister of rank status in the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh, has openly revolted against his own party BJP. Meanwhile, Thakur Raghuraj, who is often in the headlines due to his statements, told reporters that BJP is not the same as before. "I have been associated with the BJP since the time when no one was ready to hold the party's flag. I sincerely discharged many responsibilities from district to the state level. The person with whom I have been fighting for 20 years, has been given a ticket," he said.

INDIA-RUSSIA TIES IN TIMES OF TECTONIC GEOPOLITICAL FLUX

Sumit Kumar Singh

"If you ask anyone in India who is our country's greatest friend, every person, every child knows that it is Russia." These were the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to President Vladimir Putin during their maiden meeting at the BRICS Summit in Brazil in July 2014. It is no surprise then, that in December 2021, Putin broke precedence when he chose to visit India for the 21st Annual India-Russia Summit, and the inaugural round of 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue; he had earlier declined to leave Russia to attend the G-20 in Rome, followed by COP 26 in Glasgow citing the Covid pandemic.



Group (NSG). Both countries are also engaged in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as also in groups such as BRICS and RIC (Russia India China).

and foster stronger ties with Russia, while co-operating with the United States to foster a healthy balance of power relationship in Asia.

AND WHY NOT!

The two nations indeed share a special and privileged strategic partnership. Since the mid-1950s, Soviet socialist democracy has assisted the Indian economy; be it military cooperation, food aid, steel plants, trade delegations, or agricultural expertise, to name a few. India has also not forgotten the Soviet 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship' in August 1971, which offset China's plan to open a second front to support the 'evil empire' of Pakistan, when it started the Indo-Pak War in December 1971.

And then, the year 1991 shares the national memory of both India and the Russian Federation (RF); RF for the dissolution of USSR in December 1991, India, for its own glasnost (openness!) moment, the balance of payments crisis followed by the liberalisation of the economy. The RF has consistently supported India in its bid for a permanent seat at the UNSC, and membership of the Nuclear Suppliers

VLADIVOSTOK-CHENNAI MARITIME CORRIDOR (VCMC)

In September 2019, during his visit to Vladivostok, PM Modi unveiled India's 'ct Far East Policy' while at the same time both sides signed an agreement to develop a Vladivostok - Chennai sea route. This is a win-win paradigm for both nations. While becoming India's springboard in the East Asian market, this maritime corridor also provides Russia a much sought after 'Pivot to Asia'. A vibrant sea route between Chennai and Vladivostok will help upscale trade relations between the two nations. This will bolster bilateral maritime trade between India and Russia from the current \$11 billion to \$30 billion by 2025. For India, then, the VCMC corridor will demand what the American naval theorist Alfred Mahan said, "to secure commerce, by political measures, conducive to military, or naval, strength." And then to secure their national inter-

NUCLEAR COOPERATION

Russia was the first foreign country to engage in India's nuclear power industry including the evolution to exercise and operate nuclear submarines. On the civilian nuclear co-operation, over ten atomic plants are planned to be set-up in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu. On the military side, the lease of Chakra SSN for two successive cycles of 10 years each, assistance in operationalising the nuclear triad onboard the SSBN Arihant, and continuing support for India's indigenous SSN program are good examples of long-term relationship between the two countries. While France and the United States have emerged as prospective options to diversify India's nuclear engagement, it seems that in the near future, Russia will continue to be our strongest ally in terms of transfer of nuclear technology.

ests, the Indian Navy and Russian Navy will require establishing an increased maritime presence in the disputed waters of Western Pacific Ocean. This in the long run will balance China's rising maritime hegemony in Asia.

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its latest edition, in July 2021, Nav's frigate Tabar attended the 325th RuFN Day celebrations at St Petersburg by sailing across 8,000 nautical miles (approx 15,500 kilometers across the Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean and North Sea). The joint development of the Brahmos (Brahmaputra and Moscow) supersonic cruise missile (to be developed under the aegis of 'Make in India') is yet another classic example of strengthening ties between the two nations. In addition, India's only aircraft carrier, the Vikramaditya and its air wing, is the crown jewel testimony of vibrant India-Russia ties. Finally, as news is coming in (as recent as 14 Jan 2022), of Biden administration's decision to waive CAATSA sanctions against India for buying Russian S-400 air defence system, it is yet another proof of an emerging multi-polar world order.

THE WAY FORWARD

In times of tectonic geopolitical shift in the broader Indo-Pacific region, India and Russia have one fundamental common interest; the desire to evolve a multi-polar world order. This enduring interest will continue to drive close co-operation between the two largest nations in Eurasia. As natural allies, India must continue offering its resources and support to Russia; in return Russia provides the support of its power to India. The endeavour must be that while India and Russia are operating as individual instruments in an orchestra (with their distinct pieces of brilliance), both nations must obtain a wide-ranging set of "symphonies" that will establish and sustain cooperation in areas of mutual national interests.

CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Russia has been the most consistent and reliable partner for India's security interest in the region. Around 60-70 per cent of India's defence imports are from Russia. The 'Indra' (India and Russia) series of maritime exercises between Indian Navy and Russian Navy since 2003 has grown from strength to strength. In

international

AUS TO ESTABLISH EDNA RESEARCH CENTRE TO BOOST BIOSECURITY

Canberra | Agencies

The Australian government has announced a new environmental DNA (eDNA) research centre to boost biosecurity. The National eDNA Reference Centre will be set up at the University of Canberra in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, reports Xinhua news agency.

Researchers at the centre will be tasked with developing cutting-edge technology to detect pests at the Australian border.

The eDNA technology works by detecting skin, hair, urine, tissue and faecal matter shed by organisms in an environment such as a shipping container. It can also be used to detect ribonucleic acid (RNA) from a species.

Dianne Gleeson, a wildlife geneticist from the University of Canberra's Centre for Conservation and Ecology Genetics, said eDNA testing has transformed pest surveillance. "The work that we've been doing recently with the khapra beetle has been using dust samples from shipping containers where we suck up the dust, extract the DNA and we look for a sign of the species," she was



quoted by Nine Entertainment newspapers on Sunday. "Currently Australia is free of that species and it puts it in a very good market position internationally... Because otherwise, it's a massive pest and a massive problem for the grain industry so it could be really destructive if it arrives." The government has committed A\$7 million in funding for the new centre. Andrew Metcalfe, head of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, said eDNA detection was critical to safeguarding Australia's biodiversity.

"While the program will have the capacity for broad risk management application, our immediate focus is to address risks associated with khapra beetle and high-priority hitchhiker pests generally," he said.

IRAN VOWS STRONGER TIES, COOPERATION WITH TURKEY

Tehran | Agencies

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has vowed to strengthen ties and cooperation with Turkey for regional stability. "Iran has a long-term and comprehensive vision of relations and cooperation with Turkey, and we welcome planning for strategic cooperation with Turkey," Raisi said during a phone conversation with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Raisi also stressed the need of respecting countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity as the only way to long-term security and stability in the region, reports Xinhua news agency. Erdogan, for his part, said Turkey has prepared a list of diverse economic collaborations to strengthen relations with Iran, and expressed his hope to visit Tehran soon.

The Turkish President emphasized Iran's continuous supply of energy to Turkey, saying Ankara considered Iran a reliable energy supplier and sought to enhance cooperation with it. Erdogan also stressed the importance of his country's cooperation with Iran in ensuring regional security.



Iraq tightens security on border with Syria after IS militants' jailbreak

Baghdad | Agencies

Iraq has tightened security measures on the border with neighbouring Syria after a jailbreak by Islamic State (IS) terrorists in a Kurdish-controlled prison located in the latter country's Hasakah province.

On January 20, a group of IS militants escaped from the Sina'a prison in the Gweiran neighbourhood of Hasakah, followed by violent clashes between the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces and the terror group, reports Xinhua news agency.

"There are directives issued by the Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi forces to double the security measures on the Iraqi-Syrian border," Yahia Rasoul, spokesman of the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi forces, told the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) on Saturday. The Iraqi security forces are ready to confront any attempt by IS militants to infiltrate Iraqi territory, Rasoul was quoted as saying by INA.

According to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), the IS militants blew off the gate of the Sina'a prison with a booby-trapped car and an explosive-laden fuel tanker.

It said a number of inmates fled the prison



while many Kurdish security members were wounded. Captured IS militants have repeatedly tried to break free from the prison in Hasakah. A number of IS militants have been imprisoned by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) following the defeat of the terror group in Hasakah and parts of Deir al-Zour province.

"While the program will have the capacity for broad risk management application, our immediate focus is to address risks associated with khapra beetle and high-priority hitchhiker pests generally," he said.

5.8-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS CHINA

Beijing: A 5.8-magnitude earthquake jolted the city of Delingha in China's Qinghai province on Sunday, according to authorities.

The China Earthquake Networks Centre (CENC) the epicentre of the quake that occurred at 10.21 a.m. was monitored at 38.44 degrees north latitude and 97.37 degrees east longitude, reports Xinhua news agency.

The tremor struck at a depth of 8 km, the CENC said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, according to the Qinghai Earthquake Agency.

Manila: An offshore earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.3 hit Davao Oriental province in the Philippines on Sunday. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the quake, which occurred at 2.23 p.m., hit at a depth of 19 km, about 98 km southeast of the town of Manay, reports Xinhua news. The institute said the tectonic

5.3-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS PHILIPPINES

quake will trigger aftershocks but will not cause damage. The region was struck by magnitude 6.1 and 5.4 earthquakes on Saturday. No damages were reported.

The Philippines has frequent seismic activities due to its location along the Pacific Ring of Fire characterized by active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes.

Kuwait seeks to restore ties with Lebanon: FM

Beirut | Agencies

Visiting Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah said that his country seeks to restore ties with Lebanon.

"For this to happen, we call on Lebanon to distance itself from internal affairs of other countries and avoid being a platform for attacking Arab and Gulf countries," Xinhua news agency quoted Al-Sabah as saying following his meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati here on Saturday.

Al-Sabah said his two-day visit to Lebanon also aims to convey a message of solidarity with the Lebanese people and to encourage Lebanon to implement necessary reforms to restore its prosperity.

For his part, Mikati said Lebanon is looking forward to closer cooperation with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

"Lebanon will restore its strong ties with its Arab brothers," Mikati wel-



comed Al-Sabah's visit, adding the visit reflects "brotherly feelings and a long history of trust between Lebanon and Kuwait."

This is the first visit by a senior Gulf official to Lebanon since a diplomatic rift between the two sides last year.

GCC countries including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain expelled in October Lebanese diplomats and recalled their own envoys following a Lebanese Minister's controversial comments about the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen.

IRAN PAYS DELINQUENT UN MEMBERSHIP FEE WITH FUNDS FROZEN IN S.KOREA

Seoul: Iran has paid its dues to the UN with the country's funds frozen in South Korea in a move to immediately restore its voting power, Seoul's Finance Ministry said on Sunday.

Iran made an emergency request to South Korea on January 13 for the use of Tehran's funds in Seoul to pay its dues after being informed by the UN it would immediately lose its voting rights for the arrears, reports Yonhap News Agency.

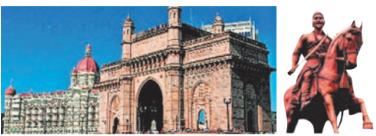
Iran has more than \$7 billion in funds for oil shipments frozen at two South Korean banks -- the Industrial Bank of Korea and Woori Bank -- due to U.S. sanctions.

The US reimposed the sanctions on Tehran in 2018 when former President Donald Trump pulled out of a 2015 landmark nuclear agreement with Iran and five major world powers.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance said \$18 million, part of the delinquent fees, was paid to the UN on Friday, using the Tehran assets frozen in South Korea after consultations with related organisations, including the US Office of Foreign Assets Control and the UN Secretariat.

"Iran's right to vote at the General Assembly is expected to be restored immediately with the payment," the Ministry said in a statement.

It marks the second time for Iran to use its funds held in South Korea to pay the UN fee following a similar case last year.



COVID-19:

COMPLETE THOUGHT GIVEN TO SCHOOL REOPENING DECISION : TOPE

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope also informed that 90 per cent of eligible beneficiaries in the state have taken the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine, while second dose coverage is in the 62-63 per cent range.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said the decision to reopen schools for primary classes to XII from Monday was taken after complete thought was given to the issue.

Schools were shut last month after a spike in COVID-19 cases across the state. Talking to reporters in Jalna on Sunday, Tope said opening of schools was necessary for the brain development of children and it

was not right to keep them at home for long.

The reopening of schools was a risk or middle path the state government decided upon to stop the spread of the virus as well as ensure children do not suffer.

"We have given a lot of flexibility and also stressed that following COVID-19 norms is a must," the minister said, adding that parents must send their wards to school. While COVID-19 cases have increased over the past few days, 90-95 per cent oxygen and ICU beds

are vacant, he said, adding that restrictions would be eased if the rate of hospitalisation remains low.

The minister also informed that 90 per cent of eligible beneficiaries in the state have taken the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine, while second dose coverage is in the 62-63 per cent range. He, however, said several people had skipped their second vaccine dose and health workers were trying their best to get this section to overcome hesitancy.

'GANDHI JI'S MURDERER' MAHARASHTRA CONGRESS CHIEF OPPOSES RELEASE OF MOVIE ON NATHURAM GODSE

Mumbai: Amid a controversy over a movie on Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse, Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole on Sunday that the grand old party will oppose its release.

"If you portray Gandhi's murderer as a hero, it's not acceptable. Our country is known through Gandhi and his ideology. He is celebrated worldwide. Congress will oppose it," ANI quoted Patole as saying.

The Maharashtra Congress chief further stated that he will request Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray not to allow the release of the movie titled 'Why I killed Gandhi' in the state.

'Why I killed Gandhi' which is set to release on Limelight OTT on January 30 - Gandhi ji's death anniversary.

Meanwhile, the All India Cine Workers Association (AICWA) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding a complete ban on the movie 'Why I Killed Gandhi' as the film glorifies Godse. "All Indian Cine Workers Association demands a complete ban on the movie Why I Killed Gandhi which is to be released on OTT Platform in India on January 30, 2022, as this movie glorifies Nathuram Godse the traitor and killer of the father of nation Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi is someone who is admired by entire INDIA and the world, Gandhi's Ideology is a symbol of Love and Sacrifice for each and every Indian," the letter reads.

Facing flak over his portrayal of Nathuram Godse, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) Lok Sabha MP and actor Amol Kolhe on Saturday asserted that he is a "firm believer" in Gandhian thoughts and maintained he took up the controversial role only to challenge himself as an artiste.

However, NCP chief Sharad Pawar has come out in support of the actor. Controversy over the actor's role has kicked off a month after the trailer of the movie was dropped online.

Lesson from NCP to Congress-put your house in order

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid sparring over alliance in Goa between Maharashtra MVA partners -- the NCP, Congress and Shiv Sena, NCP leader Majeed Memon has lessons for Congress and asked them to put their house in order. Memon Tweeted, "Congress must set its house in order soon by declaring a regular chief and reconciliation with G22 members, if it has to play a significant role in forming a strong all India opposition front to take on the NDA in 2024."

The unprecedented attack from the NCP leader comes in the wake of refusal by the Congress to ally with any party in Goa except with GFP. The three parties have formed Maha Vikas Aghadi in Maharashtra but in Goa the Congress is already in



alliance with Goa Forward Party. The Congress is not willing to go in alliance and sources say it thinks that the NCP and the Shiv Sena in the fray will split BJP votes.

The Shiv Sena leader in the past had met Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra for the same but things did not work out as Congress assessment is that people will vote for a change. NCP leader Praful Patel has said that his party will contest with Shiv Sena in the state.

The Congress has been attacked by the Trinamool Congress and its Vice President Pawan Varma had said on Friday, that top Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and P. Chidambaram, have not been able to "rise above their narrow silos" to respond to the political challenges.

Addressing a press conference here, Varma also cited Congress as the main impediment for parties like the Trinamool to take on the BJP. "The Congress is driven by the ambition of one leader whose inadequacy I do not need to explain. Since 2012, the Congress under this leadership has lost 90 per cent of the elections it has fought. If it could deliver, why would there be a need for change? You have seen the track record... 2014, 2019," Varma told reporters.

DOZENS OF INDIAN FLAPSHLL TURTLES FOUND DEAD, LOCALS SUSPECTED

It is suspected that locals killed the turtles to stop them from eating fish they were illegally breeding in the lake.

Mumbai: Deliberate poisoning is likely to blame for the death of dozens of turtles at a lake near Mumbai, Indian wildlife experts said on Sunday, January 23, 2022.

Conservation workers were alerted to the incident after a local politician asked them to investigate a foul smell around the body of water in Kalyan, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) east of India's entertainment capital.

Suhas Pawar of the Wild Animal and Reptile Rescue conservation group said 57 Indian flapshell turtles had been killed while another six were rescued.

He said that locals likely killed the reptiles to

stop them from eating fish they were illegally breeding in the lake. "Everything is being investigated now, a post-mortem and scientific analysis will reveal the exact cause of these deaths," Pawar said. He added that Covid-19 restrictions over the past two years had likely led to a surge in the local turtle population. "Restrictions on human activity likely increased the fish stocks at the lake and these turtles were now growing in numbers by feeding on them, which angered some locals," Pawar said. Indian flapshell turtles are not particularly rare but are a protected species under the Wildlife Protection Act.

After Covid, Omicron catapults to record high

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A day after Covid-19 cases scaled a new high above 48,000 mark, Omicron infections set a new record with Mumbai notching the maximum cases of the variant and deaths remained in double-digits, health officials said here on Saturday.

After the previous record high of 48,270 (January 21), the number of daily Covid infectees cooled and returned to the 46,000 level, 46,393 on Saturday -- a drop of 1,877 new cases compared with Friday.

As the spread continued in Pune, the Maharashtra government has dropped plans to reopen schools in the district from January 24, said Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. he fatalities also came down from 52 a day earlier to 48 on Saturday, and the mortality rate fell from 1.91 per cent to 1.09 per cent. After notching a peak of 238 Omicron cases (January 14) the state infections of the variant catapulted to a new

record from 144 a day earlier to a staggering 416 on Saturday. The government is continuing the intensive surveillance of passengers arriving at the three international airports - Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur - since December 1.

A total of 307,966 travellers have landed here, including 48,505 from the "high risk" countries from where 579 have tested positive and another 670 from other countries, with all their reports sent for genomic sequencing to confirm if they are afflicted by Omicron. Another staggering 6,090 positive samples from field surveys conducted since November 1 have been sent for genomic sequencing with the results of 103 are awaited, the officials said.

Omicron has spread extensively across several districts in the state, and out of the 2,759 cases till date, 1,225 have recovered.

Pune district remains at the top with 1,182 cases of the variant, 1,009 in Mumbai, 178 in Nagpur, 134 in Thane, 59 in Sangli, 31 in Amravati,

20 each in Raigad and Aurangabad, 19 in Kolhapur, 15 in Satara, 13 in Wardha, 11 each in Osmanabad and Akola, 7 in Palghar, 6 in Buldhana, 5 in Nashik, 4 in Ahmednagar, 3 each in Nanded, Latur, Jalna, Parbhani and Gondiya, 2 each in Gadchiroli, Nandurbar, Jalgaon and Bhandara, 1 in Beed, besides one from another state.

Of the 46,393 new Covid-19 cases on Saturday, Mumbai Metropolitan Region showed a decline from 10,493 a day earlier to 8,471 infections, while Mumbai city also fell sharply from 5,008 to 3,568 fresh cases. The next is Pune Circle's 18,729 infectees, Nagpur Circle 6,394, Nashik Circle 4,958, Aurangabad Circle 2,170, Latur 2,102, Kolhapur Circle 2,053, and Akola Circle's 1,516.

The number of people sent to home quarantine declined sharply - dropping from 23,87,593 on Friday to 21,86,124 now, and another 3,382 have been shunted to institutional quarantine.

Maharashtra's contrasting Covid trends:

Cases rise across the state, but decline in Mumbai



Team Absolute | Mumbai

There is a sharp contrast in the way Covid-19 cases counts are progressing in Maharashtra and its capital, Mumbai.

Saturday, Mumbai registered 3,568 cases, down from nearly 6,000 Monday. In the same period, the cases in the state rose to 46,393 from 31,111. Maharashtra's Friday figure of 48,270 was the highest so far in the third wave.

The test positivity rate the number of positive cases detected as compared to the total tests for Mumbai dropped to 7 per cent Saturday from 10 per cent the previous day. The test positivity for the whole state was 23.4 per cent Friday, up from 20 per cent Thursday.

When data for Mumbai was analysed, the total daily testing in the city in the week starting Monday (17 January) hovered in the range of 47,000-52,000, a drop from a range of 55,000-65,000 a week earlier. However, Additional Municipal Commissioner Dr Suresh Kakani said that the city wasn't cutting the number of daily tests but was aggressively contact-tracing positive patients.

"We tracked all the patients who came in contact with the positive patients and enforced home quarantine strictly through ward war rooms, because of which we could contain the spread," said Kakani.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) dash-

board, in the last two days, the total bed occupancy dropped to nearly 4,200 from over 5,000 and the active cases between 11 January and 21 January dropped to 14,000 from over 100,000. "We augmented all our resources like increasing the number of beds, oxygen, medical supply, manpower, and all this acted to keep the confidence in the system alive and helped manage the wave," said Kakani.

He also told that according to the BMC's initial analysis, 93 per cent of the cases were reported from high-rises while only 7 per cent came from densely populated areas in this third wave.

Herd immunity, vaccination and an increased emphasis on inoculating people living in slums helped contain the spread in those areas, Kakani said.

According to the BMC, about 90 per cent of the city is double-vaccinated, while "over 100 per cent" are vaccinated with one dose, since Mumbai also vaccinates the residents of neighbouring satellite towns. "The cases are

Happy Birthday Anugrah yogesh lakhani. A collage of photos showing a birthday celebration with a cake, family members, and a child.



JASMIN SAVOY BROWN: 'SCREAM 5' MONOLOGUE WAS 'EXCITING AND TERRIFYING'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jasmin Savoy Brown says performing her 'Scream 5' monologue was "exciting and terrifying", and she has expressed her love for the franchise's passionate fandom. Savoy Brown said: "It was exciting and terrifying. There's this feeling of, I don't want to let anyone down. I know that I'm representing an entire community in this monologue and that these words are true, and that people do feel this way about this film and other films."

The former 'Leftovers' star went on to insist that she has so much "love" for the 'Scream' fanbase and compared the "passion" of the community and the franchise itself to the love she herself feels for Broadway theatre, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She told Collider: "I have so much

love for that community of people who are so passionate. I'm a nerd for Broadway. I feel like I could apply the same thing as you might feel about horror films to Broadway and musicals and I just had to approach it as if I was talking about the revival of 'Company' or something.

"You know what I mean? Because I identify gutturally."

Savoy Brown's co-star Mason Gooding, who plays her brother Chad Meeks-Martin in the film, chimed in to heap praise on his on-screen sibling, noting that she had had to deliver the monologue several times in "many" different takes but that her "enthusiasm" never wavered.

He said: "I would like all attention pointed at how many times (Jasmin) had to do that monologue and how every single time it was done with the same amount of energy and enthusiasm."

Kanye West's documentary directors refuse to 'sugarcoat'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Directors of Kanye West's upcoming documentary have responded to his demand to have a say on the final version of the project. Stopping by IndieWire's Studio for an interview during the 2022 Sundance Studio on Friday, January 21, "jeen-yuhs: A Kanye Trilogy" co-directors Clarence 'Coodie' Simmons and Chike Ozah chose to stay "true to the story" instead of pleasing the rapper, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"We have to be true to the story. We can't sugarcoat nothing. Everybody is going

to have their own opinion," Coodie said.

Ozah, who directed Kanye's "Through the Wire" music video, added: "Every single time, the climaxes were right there. We just had to place them."

Previously, Kanye appeared to be fuming as he claimed on his Instagram post that he has been locked out of the editing room.

"I'm going to say this kindly for the last time," he wrote on Friday ahead of the premiere of the three-part documentary at the Sundance Film Festival on Sunday, January 23.

The rapper apparently wants to control the narrative in his own documentary as

adding, "I must get final edit and approval on this doc before it releases on Netflix. Open the edit room immediately so I can be in charge of my own image. Thank you in advance."

"Jeen-yuhs", a look at the life and career of Kanye with unseen footage spanning more than two decades, was acquired by Netflix last fall and is set to be released on the streamer on February 16. Review copies of the trilogy have already been sent to the media and they are labelled as a "Work in Progress".

In an interview with Variety, Coodie and Ozah revealed how they began following Kanye since early in his career.

Camila Cabello visits adult shop after Shawn Mendes split

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Camila Cabello was seen stepping into sex shop in Los Angeles, nearly three months after her break-up from longtime boyfriend and singer Shawn Mendes.

The "Havana" singer, 24, was photographed perusing the aisles at the adult store and apparently had some luck as she was spotted holding an item in her hand while waiting to check out with the store cashier, reports pagesix.com.

It was unclear what she purchased. Cabello, who was spotted out with her ex-boyfriend earlier this month, was seen exiting the sex

shop holding a book.

The former Fifth Harmony member appeared to be keeping a low profile as she popped into the sex shop. She wore a mask over her face to shield herself against Covid but also perhaps to hide her identity.

The singer was dressed in an all-black outfit, rocking a leather jacket over a graphic T-shirt, and black joggers. She finished off her stealth look with chunky black combat boots and a black crocodile embossed leather shoulder purse.

Cabello and Mendes broke up after more than three years of dating in November 2021. They started dating in July 2019.

Bradley Cooper: How I make a living has been changed by streaming

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Bradley Cooper says streaming has changed how he makes a living but he is grateful to Netflix for taking chances on movies that other companies wouldn't make.

Speaking to Kim Masters on her KCRW show 'The Business', he said: "On a personal level, how I can make a living has completely changed. The upside (with taking a smaller upfront payment in exchange for a cut of the profits), if it was successful, is that I would be paid a lot more. Those days are completely gone and there is repudiation I have with that. No question, no question."

However, Cooper is grateful to streaming services like Netflix for taking a chance on movies, which he thinks would previously not have been made, such as his upcoming Leonard Bernstein biopic 'Maestro' co-starring Jeremy Strong and Carey Mulligan, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He said: "I'm just so lucky that Netflix is going to pay for the movie. But that's just so the movie can get made but there's no back end. That's for the love of the game. That's why I'm doing that movie and I'm so grateful that they're allowing me to make it. Scott Stuber (head of original film at Netflix), thank the Lord."

"Netflix is the only place that would make that movie."

Cooper doesn't believe that where a movie is seen can affect how it is received.

He explained: "The thing that I always go back to, great content will hit you right between the eyes, no matter what it is, if it's an incredible haiku. It can stay with you for years and change your life."

"The movies that changed my life and inspired me to do what I do for a vocation were 'The Elephant Man', 'Godfather', 'Apocalypse Now', 'Shampoo', 'Coming Home' and 'Deer Hunter'. All of those movies I saw on a 16-inch television set."



Priyanka Chopra, Nick Jonas 'want more kids'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas and her American pop star husband Nick Jonas hope to have "at least two children".

The 39-year-old actress recently announced the arrival of their first child, via a surrogate, and the loved-up couple intend to have even more kids in the coming years, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

An insider told Us Weekly that friends of the celebrity duo are "excited" for the new parents, and the married couple are keen to have even more children in the future.

The actress, who married the pop star in 2018, recently took to Instagram to announce the birth of their new baby.

Priyanka said on the photo-sharing platform: "We are overjoyed to confirm that we have welcomed a baby via surrogate. We

respectfully ask for privacy during this special time as we focus on our family."

The Hollywood star has previously spoken about her ambition to have children.

Priyanka said she's "very fond of children" and that she planned to have kids within the next decade.

In 2018, she shared: "I am a very 'live in the today,' maximum 'live in the next two months' kind of person. But (in) 10 years, I definitely want to have kids. That is, it's going to happen in the next 10 years. Well, hopefully, earlier than that."

"I'm very fond of children and I want to be able to do that."

Priyanka and Nick were actually forced to spend much of 2021 apart, due to Covid travel restrictions.

The actress recently confessed that the situation was "tough" for them to deal with at the time.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kate McKinnon



3RD ODI:

Chahar's fifty in vain as South Africa beat India by 4 runs, complete 3-0 whitewash

Cape Town | Agencies

Deepak Chahar's fighting fifty (54 off 34 balls) went in vain as South Africa beat India by four runs in the third and final ODI to complete a 3-0 whitewash in the three-match series, here on Sunday.

A fantastic century by Quinton de Kock (124 off 130) helped South Africa post a challenging 287 in 49.5 overs. Apart from de Kock, Rassie van der Dussen (52 off 59) and David Miller (39 off 38) also played vital knocks for the Proteas.

Prasidh Krishna (3/59), Jasprit Bumrah (2/52), Deepak Chahar (2/53), and Yuzvendra Chahal (1/47) were the wicket-takers for India.

In reply, Shikhar Dhawan (61 off 73) and Virat Kohli (65 off 84) played important knocks but India were in



deep trouble at one point after losing quick wickets during middle overs. However, Deepak Chahar's knock under pressure ignited hopes and kept India in the game till the time he was at the crease.

Once Deepak got out in the first ball of the 48th over,

it was curtains for India as South Africa cleaned up the last two wickets too quickly to seal a 3-0 whitewash. In the end, the hosts were bowled out for 283 in 49.2 overs.

Andile Phehlukwayo 3/40 was the most successful bowler for South Africa.

Brief scores:

South Africa for 287 all out in 49.5 overs (Quinton de Kock 124, Rassie van der Dussen 52; Prasidh Krishna 3/59) beat India 283 all out in 49.2 overs (Virat Kohli 65, Shikhar Dhawan 61, Andile Phehlukwayo 3/40) by 4 runs

Women's Asian Cup: China thrash Iran 7-0 for another stylish win

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Eight-time champions China virtually sealed a place in the quarter-finals and underlined their AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 title credentials by cruising to a 7-0 win over Iran at Mumbai Football Arena here on Sunday.

Wang Shuang scored a birthday brace, Wang Shanshan too scored a double, Xiao Yuyi and Tang Jiali contributed a goal each while Iran's Fatemeh Adeli scored an own goal as Shui Qingxia's side continued their blistering start to the tournament and set their sights towards the latter stages of the competition.

The result leaves Iran's quarter-final ambitions hanging on Wednesday's clash against Chinese Taipei, which is likely to be pivotal to both sides' knock-out stage hopes.

As expected, China dominated the match, enjoying 80.4 percent possession, and attempted 23 shots and 12 of them on target, resulting in six goals. Iran could get only one shot on target.

The Steel Roses returned to the scene of Thursday's 4-0 win over Chinese Taipei eager to build on their fast start, and they quickly assumed control against a deep-lying Iranian defence.

Wang Shanshan forced a strong save from Zohreh Koudaei in the 10th minute, and the star goalkeeper got down low to deny the Chinese captain



once again five minutes later, continuing the form which saw her voted Player of the Match in Thursday's 0-0 draw against India.

It seemed that it would take something special to beat Iran's number one, and that's exactly what Wang Shuang provided in the 28th minute, picking out the bottom corner with a perfectly directed left-footed effort from the edge of the box to celebrate her 27th birthday in style. Coach Maryam Irandoost's Iran side was never easily broken down, but China produced a move that would have picked apart the very best defences just before halftime, with Zhang Xin's slide-rule pass setting up Xiao Yuyi, who duly caressed the ball into the net to make it 2-0 two minutes before half-time.

Iran's dynamic teenage striker Negin Zandi was introduced at half-time as they looked for a way back into the match, but their cause suffered a significant blow when Melika Motevalli clumsily fouled Chinese substitute Li Mengwen, with Wang Shuang easily beating Koudaei from the penalty spot to make the points all but safe in the 49th minute. The earlier intensity of the game now noticeably absent, Wang Shanshan extended the lead when she poked home Xiao Yuyi's cross in the 55th minute, and the same duo teamed up four minutes later to increase the tally to 5-0.

China's superior fitness and technique was evident throughout the second half, and they duly added a sixth through Tang Jiali 77th minute, with the Tottenham forward finding the net with the swerving effort 15 minutes after her introduction as a substitute, before adding a speculative second when her lobbed-pass was helped in by Fatemeh Adeli's touch. The Steel Roses won the AFC Women's Asian Cup a record seven consecutive teams between 1986 and 1999, but haven't added to their tally since lifting the 2006 title in Australia.

Going by their performance on Sunday, they are slowly warming up to the idea of challenging the likes of Japan and Australia for the title. They will need to be at their ultimate best to beat the higher-ranked teams.

UFC: Francis Ngannou regains heavyweight crown over Gane



Anaheim (USA) | Agencies

Francis Ngannou's win in UFC 270 over interim champ Ciryl Gane has put the organisers in a spot.

The heavyweight champion, who took on Gane in a five-round clash at the Honda Centre in Anaheim, California, has made it clear that he will not fight again unless he is given a considerable fee hike.

So far, UFC President Dana White has been reluctant to consider it. The fight was a literal and figurative clash of titans with both men standing at 6 feet 4 inches and weighing in well over 230 pounds.

Both fighters also share a considerable history having been long-time sparring partners and this was evident throughout the fight with Gane winning the first two rounds on the feet, nullifying the Cameroonian's scary knockout power, no doubt due to being used to it in the sparring sessions they have together.

But Ngannou showed that he too had learnt lessons from those sessions as he proceeded to turn around the fight in the next three rounds by repeatedly taking down the French kickboxer, leaving him helpless as he couldn't wrestle away from the Champion's consider-

able frame. The fight between the former training partners wasn't the only title clash on the card, however, with the co-main event being contested for the flyweight championship between incumbent champ Brandon Moreno and Deiveson Figueiredo.

This was the third battle for the title between the pair with the first two matches ending in a draw and a win for Moreno which saw him snatch away Figueiredo's crown.

This time the roles were reversed though with Brazilian Figueiredo just edging the Mexican on the scorecards in a fight that is already the candidate for being the fight of the year despite 2022 just starting with both men displaying high levels of grappling and striking at a lightning-fast speed.

Elsewhere on the main card, welterweight Michel Pereira defeated the debuting Andre Fialho via decision to extend his winning streak to four fights in a row in a match which no doubt saw Fialho gain a lot of fans for his grit as well as a willingness to trade strikes with such a dangerous and unorthodox fighter.

While Pereira improved his winning streak, Cody Stamman extended his streak in the opposite direction after losing to Dagestani Bantamweight Said Nurmagomedov convincingly, battered in the feet with spinning attacks before being submitted in only 47 seconds of the first rounds via guillotine choke to make it three losses in a row for the American. Finally, Brazilian welterweight Michael Morales made an amazing first impression on his UFC debut by defeating the experienced Trevin Giles via technical knockout in the first round after rocking him on the feet with a well-placed right hand and following it up with some brutal ground and pound to claim victory.

BEAUMONT NAMED WOMEN'S T20I CRICKETER OF THE YEAR AHEAD OF MANDHANA

Dubai: England opener Tammy Beaumont on Sunday was voted as the ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year for 2021. Tammy beat competition from fellow team-mate Nat Sciver, India's Smriti Mandhana and Ireland's Gaby Lewis to win the award.

Tammy was England's highest run-getter in the year 2021 in T20Is, and third-highest overall in the world with 303 runs in nine matches at an average of 33.66, including three half-centuries. "It's a huge privilege to win the ICC Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year Award. I've worked incredibly hard on my T20 game in the last few years. My T20I career has had its ups and downs and I don't think I've always been known for my T20 abilities, so this award gives me a huge amount of confidence," said Tammy.

In a low-scoring series against New Zealand away from home, Tammy was the top run-scorer and was awarded the 'Player of the Series' for amassing 102 runs in three matches. Her 53-ball 63 in the second match put England in a winning position after they lost two wickets in the Powerplay. She scored a brilliant fifty against India, though it went in vain after a lower-order collapse. Tammy continued to make merry against New Zealand, this time when they visited England for a limited-overs tour. She once again finished as the highest run-getter in the series with 113, which included a stunning 97 in the opening game of the series. Her dominating 97 off just 65 balls in the series opener against New Zealand at Chelmsford propelled England to 184/4, their highest T20I total in 2021. Tammy took the attack to the New Zealand bowlers from the word go, smashing two boundaries in the very first over of the innings. "As a team we had a great year in terms of T20I results and it feels great to have contributed to team wins."



PV Sindhu clinches Syed Modi International title, beats Malvika Bansod

Lucknow | Agencies

Ac Indian shuttler PV Sindhu clinched the 2022 Syed Modi International title after beating young Malvika Bansod in the women's singles final at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium, here on Sunday.

The 26-year old Sindhu beat Malvika 21-13, 21-16 in just 35 minutes to win her second title at the Super 300 event. She had won the tournament in 2017 as well.

It was also Sindhu's first BWF title since winning the BWF World Championships in 2019, after losing twice in the finals last year -- at the Swiss Open and the BWF World Tour Finals.

The two-time Olympic medalist raced to a 7-0 lead inside the first three minutes and kept the charge on to pocket the game quite comfortably in 14 minutes.

The second game saw a similar pattern with the world No 7 leading 11-4 at the mid-game interval. Bansod, the world No. 84, mounted a comeback and reduced the lead at 17-12 but the experienced Sindhu went on to seal the match in straight games.

Notably, this was the first meeting between the 20-year-old Malvika Bansod and



PV Sindhu at the international circuit. Bansod, who clinched the All-India Senior Ranking Championships in December, had beaten the London 2012 Olympic bronze medalist Saina Nehwal at the India Open, earlier this month.

Meanwhile, the mixed doubles title went to seventh seeds Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto, who defeated compatriots Nagendra Babu and Srivedya Gurazada 21-16, 21-12 in the 29 minutes final to claim their first Super 300 crown.

The pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Pullela won the women's doubles title after

beating Anna Cheong Xing Yik and Teoh Mei Xing.

Earlier, the men's singles final between Frenchman Arnaud Merkle and Lucas Claerbout was declared a 'no match'. One of the finalists tested positive for Covid-19 while the other was deemed a close contact and was also withdrawn.

The Syed Modi International 2022 was the second tournament in this year's BWF calendar after the India Open. The Odisha Open Super 100, will be the next tournament, scheduled to be held in Cuttack from January 25 to 30.

Australian Open: Shapovalov gets past No. 3 Zverev; sets up Rafa clash in quarters

Melbourne | Agencies

Canadian star Denis Shapovalov remained calm and composed as he booked his Australian Open quarterfinal berth with a 6-3, 7-6(5), 6-3 victory over world No. 3 and Tokyo Olympic Games gold medalist Alexander Zverev of Germany at the Melbourne Park on Sunday.

Shapovalov has now set up a quarterfinal showdown with Spanish stalwart Rafael Nadal, who is aiming for his second Australian Open crown after the title triumph in 2009.

The searing Melbourne heat could not stop Shapovalov from extinguishing the hopes Zverev in the duo's first meeting at a major. The 14th-seeded Canadian had to take an ice bath after his gruelling five-setter against world No. 54 Soonwoo Kwon of South Korea in the second-round, but he kept a cool head throughout the tough encounter to brush past an inconsistent Zverev in the fourth round. "It's probably the one I least expected to finish in three (sets)," Shapovalov was quoted as saying by atptour.com on Sunday. "I'm very happy with my performance, definitely happy with where my game is at."

With his returns sharp as ever, Shapovalov broke Zverev early for a 3-1 lead, the German dropping just his third service game of the tournament on the way to also losing his first set in Melbourne this year.

Zverev looked frustrated as



Shapovalov broke the German again immediately in the second. But seven double faults in the set from the Canadian helped Zverev claw back. Serving for the set at 5-3, Zverev's inconsistency again came to the fore at crucial moments and Shapovalov forced a tie-break. The Canadian looked more comfortable of the two, winning 7/5. "I think off the ground I was playing really well, really feeling my shots off both wings," said Shapovalov. "I played pretty smart today, it felt like things were going my way early on. I lost a lit-

tle bit of momentum mid-way in the second set but fought well to come back and just kind of rolled with it after." Shapovalov's opponent in the quarterfinals will be Nadal, after the sixth-seed defeated Adrian Mannarino of France 7-6(14), 6-2, 6-2. Nadal holds a 3-1 lead in the ATP head-to-head against Shapovalov. "It's always an honour to go up against a guy like Rafa," said Shapovalov. "It's always going to be a battle against him. It's going to be a tough one and I'm definitely going to enjoy it."

Janneman Malan and Fatima Sana named as ICC's Emerging Players of the Year for 2021

Tokyo | Agencies

South Africa opener Janneman Malan and Pakistan pacer Fatima Sana on Sunday were adjudged as the ICC emerging players of the year for 2021 in men's and women's sections respectively.

Malan, named in ICC's ODI eleven of the year, had a stunning run in 2021 with the bat, making 715 runs in 17 international matches at 47.66 Average and 101.85 strike-rate, including two centuries and three fifties. He played a total of eight ODIs and nine T20Is in the year, but it was the 50-over format where he showed his real potential.

His voyage started with the T20I series in Pakistan, followed by another ODI and T20I series against the same side at home. At the end of those two series, he had already shown the world his ability with two excellent knocks of 70 and 55 in Centurion. But his moment of fame arrived when he smashed an unbeaten 177, the fourth-highest score by a South African in ODIs, against Ireland in Dublin. He followed that up with another excellent knock of 121 against Sri Lanka in Colombo and thus ended the year on a good note.

Malan's most memorable knock was an unbeaten 177 against Ireland. He looked absolutely on a song that day and played numerous exquisite shots around the ground. Whether it was a spinner or a pacer, he treated them with equal disdain.



His innings consisted of a total of 16 fours and 6 massive sixes, which sums up how the bowlers suffered in that match. The 25-year-old also built a terrific 225-run opening stand with Quinton de Kock, who scored a century in that match as well.

In the women's category, 20-year-old Fatima Sana impressed one and all with her all-round efforts, picking 24 wickets at an average of 23.95 and scoring 165 runs at 16.50 in 16 international matches. She became an integral part of Pakistan's ODI and T20I side owing to her wicket-taking ability as a bowler, and ability to add

handy runs down the order at the same time. Apart from playing at home, Sana toured Bangladesh, West Indies, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, delivering impressive all-round performances. In fact, 18 of her 24 wickets in the year came in the 11 matches she played against the West Indies.

Fatima showed a lot of heart against the attacking West Indies batters and succeeded in keeping them at bay. Batting at No.8, she registered unbeaten scores of 28, 22 and 17 against strong sides like West Indies, South Africa and Zimbabwe respectively.



Rashmika Mandanna unveils teaser of Priyamani's next film

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Rashmika Mandanna, who was recently seen on the big screen essaying the role of Srivalli in the multi-lingual superhit, "Pushpa: The Rise", unveiled the teaser of "Bhamakalapa" on Sunday.

The delicious home-cooked thriller, directed by Abhimanyu Tadimeti, will premiere on the Telugu OTT platform aha on February 11. Filmmaker Bharat Kamma, known for "Dear Comrade", is the showrunner.

"It felt so funny the moment I saw the teaser," Rasmika said. "There's a lot of interesting ideas. It's a sweet story but shot in a very funny, interesting way. I wish Priyamani garu, who's play-

ing the role of Anupama, loads of love."

The teaser is set amid an old apartment, revolving around a homemaker, Anupama, who runs a YouTube cookery channel and is also notorious for being a gossip and poking her nose into the matters of other families. She even says it's great fun to know what's going on in other people's lives. In the middle of a rainy night, the focus shifts to a cold-blooded murder in the apartment. There's a lot of mystery surrounding the crime scene, with a few characters expressing their worry about something. From goons to guns and chases, it's apparent that an anxious Anupama is in some trouble and is a key link to the murder. Composer Justin Prabhakaran (known for scoring the music of "Radhe Shyam" and "Dear Comrade") has done it again; Deepak Kumar has cranked the camera and Viprav is in charge of the edits.

TIGER

SHROFF RECALLS ROMANCING THE MIC WITH HIS FIRST SINGLE 'UNBELIEVABLE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood action star Tiger Shroff recalled the first time he crooned the number "Unbelievable" on social media. Tiger on Sunday posted an old video of him singing the track on Instagram.

In the caption, he wrote: "Trying to romance a mike for my first single #throwback #unbelievable"

On the work front, Tiger, who is known for his perfect dance moves and martial art skills, will be next seen in "Heropanti 2" and "Ganapath".

"Heropanti 2" is the sequel of Tiger's debut film where he was seen opposite another debutante back then, Kriti Sanon.

As for "Heropanti 2", the film, written by Rajat Arora and produced by Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, is being helmed by choreographer actor Ahmed Khan and also stars Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Tara Sutaria.

"Ganapath", is a dystopian thriller directed by Vikas Bahl ("Queen", 2014), which also stars Kriti and boasts of high-octane action sequences choreographed by international stunt directors.

The film, produced by Vasu Bhagnani, Vikas Bahl, Deepshikha Deshmukh, and Jacky Bhagnani, has almost reached the finishing line in London after an extensive schedule.



SUSSANNE KHAN JOINS EX-HUSBAND HRITHIK FOR HIS SISTER'S BIRTHDAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan posed alongside his former wife Sussanne Khan, who joined him for his sister Sunaina Roshan's birthday.

Sussanne shared a picture of herself posing with Sunaina and Hrithik. Alongside the picture she wrote: "Some bonds are eternal same darling Nikoo.. Happiness and big smiles surround you ALWAYS. @Sunainaroshan @Hrithikroshan."

Hrithik and Sussanne got married in 2004. Ten years later, in 2014 the couple separated. They have two sons together -- Hridhaan and Hrehaan Roshan.

Sussanne has been in the news for her rumoured relationship with Arslan Goni.

Hrithik will next be seen in 'Vikram Vedha'. The film also stars Saif Ali Khan in lead role, with Radhika Apte in a crucial part. Pushkar and



Gayatri, the original writers and directors, are donning the director's hats for the Hindi remake as well.

A cult film in its own right 'Vikram Vedha' is a neo-noir action crime thriller film. Based on the Indian meta-folk tale 'Vikram aur Betaal', the film tells the story of a tough police officer who sets out to track down and kill an equally tough gangster. This original Tamil blockbuster starred R. Madhavan and Vijay Sethupathi. He also has 'Fighter' with Deepika Padukone in the pipeline.

'PEACE, POISE, AND PRACTICE': MUGDHA TALKS ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF 3 'PS'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Mugdha Godse, who is known for her work in films such as 'Fashion', 'All The Best: Fun Begins' and 'Heroine' among many others, has talked about the importance of three P's - 'Peace, Poise, and Practice' in her life.

"For me, the 3P's mean a lot. They stand for Peace, Poise, and

Practice. I yearn for 'Peace' (born out of practice) and that's the ultimate thing in my life. No amount of name, fame, or anything compares to the peace that We can find," she said. "Poise is born out of this peace helps me lead a graceful life, My aim is to respond to a situation not react, That's Poise! And Practice is 'Sadhana' Whatever I do turns into peace and joy! every action becomes a meditation on being aware.

"A huge gratitude to my guru Master 'Tarneiv' Ji for all his Grace and blessings! A master Grace can move mountains and do the unthinkable! We should all have some purpose and lead a beautiful life for ourselves!! Love and light to all. Take care of one another and stay safe," she added.

Mugdha is a former model, one of the semi-finalists of Femina Miss India 2004 and is also known for her performance in films like 'Jail' and 'Thani Oruvan', among others.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Kangan Nangia

BIGG BOSS 15:

SALMAN TEASES RAKHI SAWANT BY CALLING MIKA SINGH HER 'FAVOURITE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan in an episode of 'Bigg Boss 15' was seen teasing contestant Rakhi Sawant by calling singer Mika Singh, who entered the show as a guest, as her 'favourite'.

Mika entered the show with much pomp as he performed some of his most popular numbers such as 'Saawan main lag gayi aag' and 'Gabru'. He even made Salman play the dhol.

Later, he was seen making Salman say "chak de phatte", a Punjabi phrase of encouragement. The 'Dabangg' star, who is hosting the show, introduces Mika to Rakhi.

A shocked Rakhi said: "Oh my God!" To which said: "Tumhara favourite aa gaya hai (Your favourite is here)."

Salman then teased Rakhi if it was her birthday, to which Mika jokingly replied it was his birthday.

To which Salman quipped: "Birthday kiss toh

banta hai (a birthday kiss should be given)."

Mika and Rakhi then exchange flying kisses. For the unversed, it was on Mika's birthday in 2006, where the singer kissed Rakhi without consent.

He said that he asked everyone not to put cake on his face but when she did it anyway, he decided to "teach her a lesson" by forcibly kissing her. The 44-year-old singer was then arrested on molestation charges and later released on bail.

