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NATION

> 02

Hindu Mahasabha seeks 'purification' of Shahi Idgah...



HOLLYWOOD

> 06

Joe Alwyn shares how it was to work with Lenny Abrahamson...



SPORTS

> 07

Australian Titmus breaks 400m freestyle world record...



MODI PARTICIPATES IN EVENT TO LAUNCH INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR PROSPERITY

FOR ECONOMIC BOOST

The event was also attended by US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, as well as the virtually by leaders of Australia, Brunei, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The IPEF seeks to strengthen economic partnership amongst participating countries with the objective of enhancing resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Visiting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday participated in an event in Tokyo to launch the Indo-Pacific Economic

Framework for Prosperity (IPEF).

At the occasion, a joint statement was issued which highlights the key elements envisaged within the IPEF.

In his comments during the launch ceremony, Modi said that the IPEF is a declaration of a collective desire to make the Indo-Pacific region an engine of global economic growth.

He further called for finding common and creative solutions to tackle economic challenges of the Indo-Pacific region.

Expressing India's commitment towards working with all Indo-Pacific countries for an IPEF which is both inclusive and flexible, he further said that the foundation of resilient supply chains must be 3T's: Trust, Transparency and Timeliness.

Noting that India is committed to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and believes that deepening economic engagement among partners is crucial for continued growth, peace, and prosperity, Modi also said that India is keen to collaborate with partner countries under the IPEF and work towards advancing regional economic connectivity, integration and boosting trade and investment within the region.



PM CHAIRS BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE IN TOKYO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday chaired a roundtable in Tokyo with Japanese business leaders, including top executives and CEOs of 34 companies which have investments and operations in India.

The companies represented diverse sectors including automobiles, electronics, semiconductors, steel, technology, trading and banking and finance.

Stressing that India and Japan are natural partners, he lauded the business community as brand ambassadors of the immense potential of bilateral ties.

With Monday's launch, partner countries will begin discussions focusing on strengthening economic

cooperation and achieving shared goals, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

MODI INVITES BUSINESS TYCOONS TO INVEST IN INDIA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi first met Nobuhiro Endo, the Chairman of NEC Corporation.

The Prime Minister lauded the NEC's role in India's telecommunication sector. During the meeting, they discussed various reforms being undertaken to enable ease of doing business in India including in industrial development, taxation and labour. They also discussed opportunities in India in new and emerging technologies.

According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Endo spoke about opportunities in India in areas such as smart cities, emerging technologies and an innovative effort to encourage learning of Japanese in India.

Modi arrived in Tokyo on Monday morning on a two-day visit at the invitation of his Japanese counterpart.

He will participate in the third Quad Leaders' Summit in Tokyo on Tuesday along with President Biden, Kishida and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

Modi and Kishida will also hold a bilateral meeting on Tuesday.

DRDO report finds serious battery defects in EVs that caught fire



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) that was tasked with investigating into EV fire incidents by the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry, has found serious defects in the batteries, including designs of the battery packs and modules. The Centre for Fire, Explosive and Environment Safety (CFEES) at the DRDO has submitted its fact-finding report to the Ministry, as first reported by Business Standard. According to the sources, the ministry has now summoned representatives of these EV manufacturers, asking them to submit an explanation on the DRDO report findings. Earlier this month, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), which comes under the Union Consumer Affairs Ministry, sent notices to Pure EV and Boom Motors after their e-scooters exploded in April. The consumer watchdog is also

examining more cases of e-scooter fires and will serve similar notices to other EV makers too.

Pure EV and Boom Motors along with Ola Electric, Jitendra EV, and Okinawa Autotech, Pure EV, Jitendra Electric Vehicles, Ola Electric and Boom Motors may have used "lower-grade materials to cut costs".

The preliminary findings from the government-constituted probe committee on EV fires have already identified issues with battery cells or design in nearly all of the electric two-wheeler fire incidents in the country.

The committee was constituted in the wake of EV fires and battery blasts in e-scooters. The experts found defects in battery cells as well as battery design in nearly all EV fires.

The government is now working on new quality-centric guidelines for EVs that will be unveiled soon. At least 12 electric two-wheelers have exploded till now and several EV makers have recalled the faulty batches amid the growing pressure from the government.

USE OF VIOLENCE NOT AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION TO INVOKE PROVISIONS OF MCOC: SUPREME COURT

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has observed that the actual use of violence is not an essential condition to invoke provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOC).

A bench comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Anirudh Bose said: "Actual use of violence is not always a sine qua non for an activity falling within the mischief of organised crime, when undertaken by an individual singly or jointly as part of organised crime syndicate or on behalf of such syndicate."

The bench added that threat of violence or even intimidation or even coercion would fall within the mischief, and this apart, use of other unlawful means would also fall within the same mischief.

The bench noted that clause (e) of Section 2(1) of MCOC makes it clear that 'organised crime' means any unlawful activity by an individual singly or jointly, either as a member of organised crime syndicate or on behalf of such syndicate, by use of violence or threat of violence or intimidation or coercion or other unlawful means.

The bench said the suggestions on behalf of the appellant to limit the activity only to the use of violence is obviously incorrect when it omits to mention the wide-ranging activities contemplated by clause (e) of Section 2(1) of MCOC, i.e., threat or violence or intimidation or coercion or other unlawful means.

Zomato's consolidated loss triples to Rs 360 cr as expenses mount

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Online food delivery platform Zomato on Monday reported net loss of Rs 360 crore during the first quarter (Q1) this year -- nearly triple from Rs 134.2 crore net loss in the same quarter last year.

The company's expenses almost doubled to Rs 1,701.7 crore in the March quarter, compared with Rs 885 crore a year ago, according to the company's regulatory filing.

"Yes, we did see a low QoQ growth in Q3FY22 as dining-out and travel opened up post Covid. We believe that was a one-time correction of our growth trajectory on the back of two strong quarters," Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal said.

Zomato's revenue from operations during the March quarter reached Rs 1,211.8 crore, a jump of 75.01 per cent as against Rs 692.4 crore in the



same period last year.

The company's adjusted revenue grew 8 per cent quarter-over-quarter (QoQ) and 67 per cent year-over-year to Rs 15.4 billion in Q4FY22.

Adjusted EBITDA loss reduced to Rs 2.2 billion (-15 per cent of adjusted revenue) in Q4FY22 as compared to Rs 2.7 billion (-19 per cent of Adjusted Revenue) in Q3FY22.

For the full financial year, Zomato's loss stood at Rs 1,222.5 crore in 2021-22, compared with Rs 816.4 crore in the previous year.

Nitish reportedly to have asked all his MLAs to stay put in Patna

IN 2017, NITISH KUMAR, WHO WAS THE CHIEF MINISTER AT THE HEAD OF THE MAHAGATHBANDHAN, HAD GONE TO RAJGIR. WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE STATE CAPITAL, HE BROKE THE ALLIANCE WITH THE RJD AND CONGRESS AND FORMED THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE HELP OF BJP IN BIHAR.

NOW, HE IS AGAIN GOING TO RAJGIR AT A TIME WHEN HIS POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SAFFRON PARTY IS EXTREMELY SOUR. POLITICAL EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT HE MIGHT SHIFT THE GOAL POST AGAIN.

JD-U CURRENTLY HAS 46 MLAS IN THE 243-MEMBER ASSEMBLY AFTER THE MERGER OF A LOK JANSHAKTI PARTY MLA. BESIDES, IT HAS THE SUPPORT OF AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE AS WELL.

Patna | Agencies

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has reportedly asked all MLAs of his JD-U to stay in

Patna for the next 72 hours, sources said on Monday.

While there was no official confirmation of the move from the Janata Dal-United leadership but sources have said that such a direction came directly from the Chief Minister.

The MLAs have also been asked to avoid sharing any information before the media.

The JD-U source has said that the physical presence of MLAs will be needed during the nomination of Rajya Sabha candidates.

More interestingly, Nitish Kumar is going to Rajgir on Tuesday. These two developments have increased the political temperature of Bihar with speculations rife that a major decision would be taken by the Chief Minister.

Earlier, Nitish Kumar had called for an all-party meeting on May 27 to discuss the issue of caste-based census. This has also indicated that something may happen in the next 72 hours in Bihar.

VARANASI COURT RESERVES ORDER IN GYANVAPI CASE

Varanasi: The Varanasi district judge has reserved the ruling in the Gyanvapi mosque dispute case.

The verdict is expected to come on Tuesday.

The Hindu side has sought permission for daily worship of Shringar Gauri in Gyanvapi complex and also permission for worship of 'Shivling' found in 'wuzukhana' of the mosque. They have also sought removal of debris in the passage leading to the room under 'Shivling'. The Muslim side has opposed sealing of the wuzukhana area and seeks considering Gyanvapi survey and case with reference to the Places of Worship Act, 1991.

World Health Organization honours ASHA workers

ASHA, which means "hope" in Hindi, are among the six recipients of Global Health Leaders Award at the ongoing 75th World Health Assembly.

ASHAs "play a critical role in India's primary healthcare system, including during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing essential health services to millions of people. In Hindi, ASHA means hope. And that is exactly what the ASHAs deliver."

WHO's statement



In a tweet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that he is "delighted that the entire team of ASHA workers have been conferred the WHO Director General's Global Health Leaders Award".

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has also extended his greetings to all the ASHA workers.

The Global Health Leaders Awards recognises outstanding contributions to advancing global health, demonstrated leadership and commitment

to regional health issues.

The award also recognised late Dr. Paul Farmer, former Chair of Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, for his contribution towards providing direct healthcare services, research and advocacy for those who are ailing and living in poverty; Dr. Ahmed Hankir, British-Lebanese psychiatrist, for his anti-stigma programme that blends in the power of performing arts and story-telling with psychiatry, he is Senior Research fellow at the Centre for Mental Health Research in association with Cambridge University; volleyball player Ludmila Sofia Oliveira Varela for facilitating access to sports as an alternative to risky behaviour in youth; and Yohei Sasakawa, WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination, for his global fight against leprosy and the associated stigma and social discrimination.

The other recipients include eight volunteer polio workers who were shot and killed by armed gunmen in Afghanistan in February this year.

The WHO said that the "volunteer polio workers performed their life-saving work despite extraordinary challenges and risks".

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, "At a time when the world is facing an unprecedented convergence of inequity, conflict, food insecurity, the climate crisis and a pandemic, this award recognises those who have made an outstanding contribution to protecting and promoting health around the world. These awardees embody lifelong dedication, relentless advocacy, a commitment to equity, and selfless service of humanity."

DELHI DOCTORS REMOVE OVER 23 KG BREAST TISSUE THROUGH SURGERY

New Delhi: A team of doctors at Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital has successfully removed over 23 kg of breast tissue from a young woman who was suffering from Gigantomastia.

The surgery was performed last week by a team of doctors comprising Manoj Jha and Sameek.

Talking to IANS, Jha, HoD of plastic surgery at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, said that the woman, 22, was suffering from a rare breast disorder called Gigantomastia. It is a rare condition that causes excessive growth of the female breasts.

"The young woman was suffering from severe pain in the neck and was facing difficulty in routine procedures," Jha said. He also informed that the woman was bedridden for the last six months as she was unable to walk.

"We kept her under observation for a day and successfully performed the surgery the next day to remove around 23.78 kg of breast tissue," said Jha.





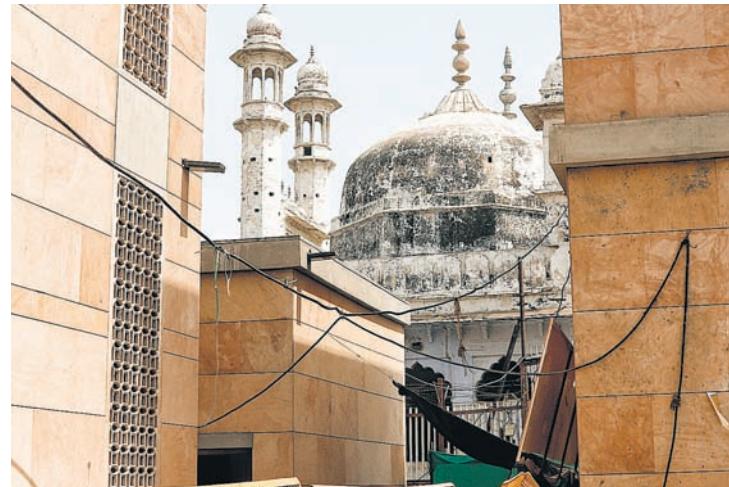
HINDU MAHASABHA SEEKS 'PURIFICATION' OF SHAHI IDGAH MOSQUE IN MATHURA, FILES PLEA

Team Absolute | Mathura

Amid legal battle over Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi, another land dispute of Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi and Shahi Idgah Masjid is unfolding in Mathura with Hindu Mahasabha on Monday filing a plea in the civil court to seek the 'purification' of the Shahi Idgah mosque. The plea will be heard on July 1.

The Shahi Idgah Masjid stands next to the Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi.

Dinesh Sharma, treasurer of Hindu Mahasabha, has claimed in the plea that the Idgah mosque is built on the sanctum sanctorum of Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi. He has asked permission to enter the Shahi Idgah mosque to perform 'Abhishek' (purification) and worship of Lord Krishna at the disputed site of the ancient temple.



Dinesh Sharma said, "They first attacked our temples by the might of the swords, but now we will take back the ancient heritage. We want the mosque to be removed and Hindus' self-respect to be restored."

Earlier, the court admitted the petition of Shri Krishna Virajman in Mathura. The matter will be heard in the lower court on May 26. The peti-

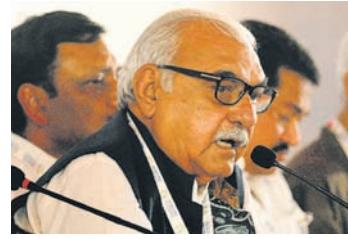
tion has demanded the release of 2.37 acres of land on which Shahi Idgah mosque exists.

The dispute essentially involves ownership of 13.37 acres of land which, the petitioners claim belongs to the deity Lord Shri Krishna. The Shahi Idgah Masjid is built on 2.37 acres of the total 13.37 acres of land.

Tanveer Ahmed, secretary of the Shahi Idgah Masjid Committee, said, "When the matter comes up for hearing, we will put up our side. The civil court is not assessing the Places of Worship Act, 1991 or is not able to take a view. The law of the country is the same for everyone."

"There can't be a more harmonious sight in Mathura, that on one side is the Idgah and on the other side is the Shri Krishna temple. Hindus worship in the temple, while Muslims offer namaz in the mosque. There is no problem to anyone," he said.

Eight former MLAs join Congress in Haryana



Team Absolute | Chandigarh

The Congress got a major shot in the arm on Monday as eight former MLAs and ex-ministers joined the party under the leadership of former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda. His son and Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda played a major role in getting these leaders into the party.

They are Sharda Rathore, Ram Niwas Ghodela, Naresh Selwal, Parminder Singh Dhul, Jile Ram Sharma, Rakesh Kambaj, Rajkumar Valmiki and Subhash Chaudhary.

Mamata Banerjee demands total autonomy for all central agencies

Kolkata | Agencies

West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo, Mamata Banerjee, on Monday, demanded total autonomy for all the central probe agencies to free them from political influences.

"The manner in which the central probe agencies are utilised by the Union government and the ruling party against opposition leaders for political vendetta is against the democratic nature of the country. So, I demand that total autonomy should be given to all central probe agencies and free them from the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Office or the office of the Union Home Minister. Only the salary for the staff should be paid by the Union government as it happens in case of autonomous bodies," she told media persons here.

Banerjee claimed that never in the past



have central agencies have been misused so much as is done by the current Union government, and Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad Yadav is the latest victim of this trend.

3 LeT militants, associate arrested for J&K sarpanch's murder

Srinagar | Agencies

Three LeT militants and their associate were on Monday arrested for the murder of a sarpanch in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district last month, police said.

Manzoor Ahmad Bangoo, the sarpanch of Goshugh village in Pattihs tehsil of Baramulla, was killed by militants on April 15.

"During investigation in the case of killing of sarpanch of Goshugh, Manzoor Ahmad Bangoo, three suspects, namely Noor Mohammad Yattoo, Mohammad Rafiq Paray, and Ashiq Hussain Paray, all residents of Goshugh Pattihs, were arrested after receiving information from reliable sources about their involvement in militancy-related activities," a police official said.

The arrested persons revealed that they were in contact with Mohammad Afzal Lone, an OGW of Lashkar-e-Toiba militant outfit, presently in judicial custody.

"Lone had directed his close aide Yattoo to motivate two persons from his area to join the militant ranks and he, in turn, contacted Mohammad Rafiq Paray and Ashiq Hussain Paray, both residents of Goshugh, and motivated them to join militant ranks," the official said.

Yattoo had directed the duo, along with his brother-in-law Mehraj-ud-din Dar, to meet Lone personally.

"All the three met Lone who motivated them and set targets. He also gave different assignments to them.

"After few days, Lone sent arms and ammunition (two pistols, two hand grenades and two magazines with live bullets) to Yattoo through

India raises concern over WHO's claim of excess mortality

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In his address to the 75th session of the World Health Assembly in Geneva on Monday, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya raised concern over WHO's recent claim of all-cause excess mortality.

"It is with a sense of dismay and concern that India notes WHO's recent exercise on all-cause excess mortality where our country specific authentic data published by the statutory authority has not been taken into account," said Mandaviya.

The Health Minister conveyed the collective disappointment of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare, a representative body of health ministers from all states of India, as they passed a unanimous resolution regarding the approach and methodology of WHO on excess mortality reports.

Mandaviya also exhorted India's commitment to build a more resilient global health security architecture.

Underscoring the need to strengthen the WHO, Mandaviya said, "As highlighted by the Prime Minister of India, there is a need to build a resilient global supply chain to enable equitable access to vaccines and medicines, streamlining WHO's approval process for vac-



cines and therapeutics and strengthen WHO to build a more resilient global health security architecture."

As a responsible member of the global community, India is ready to play a key role in these efforts, he added.

"India believes that this year's theme linking peace and health is timely and pertinent because there can be no sustainable development and universal health and wellbeing without peace," Mandaviya said.

8 LABOURERS KILLED AFTER TRUCK OVERTURNS IN BIHAR'S PURNEA



Patna: Eight labourers died and eight others were injured after a truck laden with pipes overturned in Bihar's Purnea district on Monday morning. The accident occurred at the Kali temple under the Jalgarh police station on the Siliguri-Delhi four lane National Highway 57 at 3.30 a.m. Surendra Kumar Saroj, SDPO of Purnea (Sadar) told reporter that all the 16 victims are natives of Rajasthan and eight of them died on the spot. "The goods truck laden with pipes was on the way from Siliguri to Jammu & Kashmir. The labourers were also boarded on the truck. When they reached the Kali temple on four lanes, the truck overturned. The pipes fell on them. Eight of them died as they were trapped under the pipes," Saroj said. "We have immediately initiated a rescue operation at the accident place and recovered the dead bodies. We have also rescued the injured persons and sent them to primary health centers. Their condition is stable now," Saroj said. "After the accident, the driver and helper managed to flee from the spot. Efforts are on to nab them," Saroj said.



Dar for Rafiq Paray and Ashiq Paray with the directions to kill political affiliated persons, especially sarpanches, of the Pattihs area,"

HOUSE OWNER RAPES STUDENT FROM BENGAL IN K'TAKA; ARRESTED

Bengaluru: A house owner was arrested on the charge of raping a student (his tenant) by threatening her with a pistol here, police said on Monday.

Arif Ravishankar Prasad from Bihar has been arrested. The victim, who hailed from West Bengal, was staying on a rented accommodation since March and studied in a private college. The accused, who is into tiles business, often objected to the victim's friends visiting her leading to frequent arguments between the two.

One day, Prasad noticed that a male friend of the girl had stayed the night and locked his bike. He then sent the boy away threatening to lodge a police case against him.

Irked by this, the girl warned him that she would complain about him to her parents.

The accused, who had gone to her house on the pretext of discussing the issue, took out a pistol he was carrying and placed it on her head. He then assaulted her sexually on April 11. The victim finally opened up about the incident with her parents recently. The parents, who had come down from Bengal, pacified their daughter and lodged a complaint with Ashoknagar police here on Sunday.

DELHI HC NOTICE TO AMARNATH BOARD ON PLEA ALLEGING CHOPPER BOOKING BLACK MARKETING

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought the response of the Amarnath Shrine Board on a plea alleging loopholes in its helicopter ticketing system and "black marketing" by agents, thus creating huge inconvenience and problems to the pilgrims to the Himalayan cave shrine.

The Public Interest Litigation (PIL), filed through advocate Avadhi Bihari Kaushik, contended that the plea was filed for the benefit of the old, ailing and disabled pilgrims from across the country going on Amarnath Yatra.

Issuing notice in the matter, a division bench of Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Sachin Datta asked the shrine board to file an affidavit in the matter by May 31, in the next hearing.

The petitioner claimed that the online ticket system will be directed to the web-



sites maintained by the helicopter companies which are hired by agents.

During the course of the hearing, the court asked why a transparent process in online booking for helicopter services are not being put in place like by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. In the plea, the petitioner stated

that to help and assist the old, ailing, and disabled pilgrims undertaking Mata Vaishno Devi Yatra, its helicopter service's tickets were sold through authorised travel agents by quota system.

"However, as the said system due to inherent loop-holes and scope for misuse, led to hording of tickets and

its black-marketing by the unscrupulous dishonest and greedy agents, by forming a cartel with the hoteliers and therefore, the same had to be discontinued and all the tickets were made available through online process, which is a transparent process accessible to all and sundry," it read.

SEVERAL TRAINS CANCELLED, DIVERTED ON PATNA-KOLKATA ROUTE AFTER PROTESTS ON TRACKS IN BIHAR

Patna: Train services were affected on the Patna-Kolkata route of the East Central Railway (ECR) zone due to an agitation at the Barhi railway station in Bihar, officials said on Monday.

A large number of people have squatted on the tracks at the station, about 120 km from Patna. They are demanding stoppage for the Patliputra Express and a few other trains at the Barhi railway station. They have blocked both up and down railway lines and are not allowing any train to pass through.

Due to the protest ECR has cancelled over one dozen trains and diverted more than two dozen trains bound to Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati and other parts of north Bihar and Jharkhand.

Sources said that the agitators and officials of ECR sat on the table for talks, but they failed. An official of ECR claimed that the department is ready for the stoppage of Patliputra Express train, but the agitators are demanding for the stoppage of some more trains. The agitators have stopped Patliputra Express train for more than 20 hours at Barhi railway station.

Virendra Kumar, PRO of ECR said: "Due to Dharna and protest at Barhi railway station we have cancelled and diverted some trains. The negotiations with the protesters are currently underway."

Due to the protest, ECR has diverted Howrah - New Delhi Poorva Express and Howrah - New Delhi Duronto Express from Asansol, Dhanbad, Gaya and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction to go further toward New Delhi. These two trains from the down side New Delhi to Howrah will also use the same route.

ENSURE DAILY SUPPLY OF DRINKING WATER: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that it is necessary to ensure that people get drinking water every day. Whether water is supplied by tap, tanker, tube well or has to be transported, make whatever arrangements are necessary and ensure daily drinking water supply. Chouhan gave these instructions during the virtual review of Raigarh and Barwani districts from the residence office at 6:30 am.

Chouhan appreciated the activities conducted under "Mission Ummed" to encourage people to bring pregnant women to the health centres for institutional delivery in Barwani, "Pahunch Abhiyan" (Outreach Campaign) to complete all the necessary documents of villagers and Ankur Abhiyan for tree plantation. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that "Mission Ummed" and "Pahunch Abhiyan" should be implemented effectively in other districts also.

Chouhan directed to conduct special activities on priority to improve the status of all the 6 indices in the aspirational districts. Chouhan said that along with increasing the basic facilities in Anganwadis and health centres, public awareness campaigns should be conducted with people's participation to remove malnutrition. Chief Minister said that there is a need to run a campaign by taking officers-employees, public representatives and people of the society along. We have to develop the feeling that improving the nutritional level of children is the responsibility of the society along with the government. Chouhan said that he himself would go out on May 24 in Bhopal for the purpose of collecting material for the children of



Anganwadis. People's representatives in the districts should also come forward. This type of campaign will have a positive impact in the operation of Anganwadis.

During the review of ration distribution, Chief Minister directed that the food grains of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan and Mukhyamantri Annapurna Yojana should be distributed to the beneficiaries simultaneously. The Chief Minister also directed for necessary amendments in the rules in this regard. Chouhan said that it will not be tolerated if someone else consumes the ration of the poor. If irregularities are found in the distribution of ration, the services of the concerned officer-employee should be terminated.

Chouhan said that arrangements should be made at the district level to provide construction materials at the right prices to the beneficiaries

whose houses have been approved under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. By purchasing materials like cement-iron together, the material can be made available to the beneficiaries at comparatively low cost. The Chief Minister said that the list of people to whom houses have been allotted should be put up in the Panchayats. Along with this, information should be given to all the allottees about the approval regarding the allotment of houses through a letter on their behalf. Chouhan said that a system should be established to bring on social media the reactions of the beneficiaries to whom the allocations have been made and the first installment released under the housing scheme.

Chouhan said that it is necessary to encourage Panchayat Secretaries and Rozgar Sahayaks (Employment Assistants) for better work. This feeling has to be developed in the field staff that they are doing virtuous works by helping the poor to get houses built. Our aim is that the houses built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas, Awas Plus etc. schemes should be of quality and the construction of the houses of the beneficiaries should be completed without any difficulty.

Chouhan said that the Amrit Sarovars, which are being built during the Amrit period of independence, should be developed ideally. Special attention should be paid to their beautification, tree plantation and development of water harvesting system. Flag hoisting programmes should be organised on the occasions like 15th August and 26th January near the Amrit Sarovars being built as a result of the wonderful imagination of Prime Minister Modi. Chief Minister also directed to take the cooperation of public representatives in the development of Amrit Sarovars.

Tankha slams 'bulldozer culture'; says judiciary is there to punish offenders

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In an attack on the BJP, Congress MP Vivek Tankha has said the "bulldozer culture currently prevailing parts of the country" is undemocratic, and asked that if action was being taken against alleged offenders by razing their properties, then what was the use of the judicial system.

The Rajya Sabha member also alleged that issues like the Gyanvapi mosque were being raked up to divert people's attention from the problems like the rising inflation and unemployment.

"I am totally against this bulldozer culture that is prevailing in various parts of the country to deal with the law offenders, which does not give them any opportunity (to defend themselves) as per the law of the land. It can't be approved in a democratic country like ours. I totally disapprove of it as it is undemocratic," Tankha said while interacting with reporters. He was replying to a question



Even if it is an encroachment, it is not the right way to deal with it, he said and asked why the authorities allow encroachments to take place. "By demolishing the house of a person, you are not just punishing the offender, but his innocent family as well," he said. Slamming the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government in MP over the "poor" law and order situation, Tankha also blamed it for the "politicisation" of the police force, which he said was not good in democracy.

On the issue of Supreme Court granting permission to conduct local bodies elections with OBC reservation in Madhya Pradesh, Tankha had demolished the houses of several persons accused of being involved in the violence that had broken out in Khargone city during a Ram Navami procession on April 10. "The administration serves notices, then take a decision on it and demolishes the properties without giving any opportunity. What is the use of the judicial system in the country then?" he asked.

CM EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER FIRE ACCIDENT

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the untimely demise of two persons in a fire accident in a chemical factory in Pachama Industrial Area of Sehore. Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to their families to bear this loss. Chouhan said that financial assistance of Rs. 4 lakh each would be provided by the state government to the families affected in the fire accident. Instructions have been given in this regard.

Representatives of THINK gas call on CM

- Green Energy Park will be developed on 500 acres of land
- 200 people will get employment
- Hydrogen and ammonia along with biogas, organic manure, solar power will also be produced

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was today called on by President of ThinkGas, Manmohan Ahuja, Bharat Saxena, Vice President



Maheshwaran and DS Durgesh. THINKGas will develop Green Energy Park on 500 acres of land in Bhopal and Raigarh districts. In this, biogas plant, organic manure of 15 ton per day capacity, 20 metric ton per day capacity carbon-dioxide capture plant and 10 MW capacity captive solar power plant will be set up. It will also produce hydrogen and ammonia gas. THINK Gas

plans to invest Rs 250 crore in the state. These activities will generate employment opportunities for about 200 persons in the state. It may be noted that environment friendly THINK Gas is working in the field of clean fuel since the year 2018, which supplies natural gas to the consumers of domestic, commercial, industrial and automotive sectors in 5 states of the country.

COMPLETE THE FLC OF EVMS IN TIME-LIMIT: SEC

Bhopal: State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh has directed all the Collectors and District Election Officers to complete the FLC (First Level Checking) of EVMs for urban body elections within the time limit. Engineers have been sent to all the districts for this work. Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh has informed that FLC of EVMs has been started in all the districts from May 20. Instructions have been given to complete this work in 7 days without any leave. FLC of a total of 53 thousand 982 control units and one lakh 62 thousand 745 ballot units is to be done in the districts. For FLC, 387 engineers of Electronic Corporation of India Limited (ECIL) have been sent to the districts. In addition, 10 divisional level and one state level co-ordinator have been made.

CONTROL ROOM SET UP IN STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

Bhopal: A control room has been set up in the State Election Commission for exchange of important information related to election work from the districts. Deputy Secretary Rajkumar Khatri has been made in-charge of the control room. Surendra Singh Raghuwanshi has been made assistant of control room. Their mobile number is- 8839181327. The telephone number of the control room is 0755-2551076. Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh has directed all the Collectors and District Election Officers to update all the election related information on the website of the Commission. Along with this, make sure to provide the information desired by the state level control room in time-limit.

In poll season, an epic battle starring Kamal Nath as Ram and Chouhan as Ravan

- Morphed videos of political leaders as mythological characters or superheroes have been doing the rounds as the state heads into local body polls

Team Absolute | Bhopal

It's war alright. And as epic battles go, this one ends with a victor and a vanquished - both with bobbing heads morphed into a 45-second-long video, purportedly of the Ramayana's climactic battle scene. The video, featuring Kamal Nath as Ram and Shivraj Singh Chouhan as Ravan, is the latest weapon in the social media arsenal of political parties to be pressed into service as Madhya Pradesh heads into local body elections and with a year left for the Assembly polls.

In the video, Kamal Nath as 'Ram' pulls out one arrow after another from his quiver and directs them at Chouhan as 'Ravan', each of his 10 heads representing farmer suicide, crime against women, atrocities on tribals, inflation, unemployment, corruption and so on. With the 10 heads felled, 'Ram' pulls out his ultimate weapon, the Brahmastra, and directs it at the hapless 'Ravan', who meets his end. The video, set to a soaring "nirnay ki ghadi aayi hai (it's time to decide)" score, ends with a message: 'Kamal Nath Returns 2023' While the Congress has denied its hand in the video, it



comes at a time when both the BJP and the Congress are heading towards local body polls after some heated politics over reservation for the OBC community. With the Supreme Court recently giving its nod to OBC reservation, the State Election Commission is all set to notify local body elections.

That makes the setting just right for morphed videos such as this one, with politicians featured as mythological warriors - predictably, for a state steeped in Hindutva politics - or gun-toting superstars.

Last month, a video of Kamal Nath as Rajnikant had gone



4 injured in fresh communal violence in Ratlam

■ At least four people were injured after two groups indulged in violence and pelted stones at each other in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district. The incident took place due to the playing of DJ at a marriage procession to which the other group objected which resulted in violence, local police said on Monday.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

At least four people were injured after two groups indulged in violence and pelted stones at each other in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district. The incident took place due to the playing of DJ at a marriage procession to which the other group objected which resulted in violence, local police said on Monday.

As per the police, on Sunday night, a Muslim family was carrying out a ritual process after marriage. Some of them were dancing to the

sides and the situation was brought under control.

However, to avoid any further untoward incident, security has been beefed up in the area," said Ratlam SP Abhishek Tiwari. Tiwari further informed that an FIR has been lodged and nine people have been booked for indulging in violence. "Four injured have been admitted to the government hospital for treatment. Further investigation is underway," Tiwari added.

Incidentally on Monday morning, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan held a meeting with district administration and the police of Raigarh district where two incidents of violence occurred in the last one week. During the meeting, Chouhan appealed to local MLAs and MPs to meet people in their respective areas and have conversation with them.

ed the victim's home for installing the stove.

The woman had met Thapak at the shop while buying the stove. Finding the woman alone at home, the accused grabbed her put a sharp edged weapon on her neck and gang-raped her. They also recored the act.

Later, the accused later started blackmailing her, threatening to share the video on social media and extorted Rs two lakh. The woman claimed that she was raped by the accused several times since then.

When the accused demanded money from the victim and threatened to kill her children, she shared her ordeal with husband, who suggested lodging a complaint. Subsequently, she along with her husband, reached a local police station in Gwalior district and lodged a complaint on Sunday.

"An FIR has been registered against Govind Thapak on the basis of the victim's complaint. Further investigation in the matter is underway," a senior police official posted in Murar police station told IANS on Monday.

CM Planted Coconut Sapling



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a coconut sapling in the residence premises along with wife Sadhna Singh and son Kunal on the birthday of his elder son Kartikeya today.

Chouhan wished Kartikeya a long and successful life. Chouhan has appealed to the people of the state to plant saplings on the birthdays of their children. Coconut is considered auspicious and propitious in Indian civilization. Coconut is called 'Shrisha' in Sanskrit, Shri means Lakshmi. Coconut water contains a good amount of electrolytes, which gives freshness in fatigue and weakness. Chouhan planted peepal and neem saplings along with representatives of Sahyog Sanstha and social worker Pankaj Chaturvedi and his family in Smart City Garden on Monday. Ashutosh Gupta, Umesh Soni, Adarsh Mishra, Abhishek Jackie and Abhilash Thakur of the organisation participated in the plantation. While remaining active in social work, the organisation played an important role in arranging food, medicine, medical aid, oxygen and blood to the needy people during the difficult times of Corona. Chouhan received information about the activities of the organisation and motivated the members to remain active in the field of environment-protection, cleanliness, health and education. Peepal planted today is a shady tree. It purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Rich in antibiotic elements, neem is known as the supreme medicine.

viral, with the 'superhero' taking on villains in the form of inflation, crime against women and children, and unemployment, among others. The video ends with a declaration that Madhya Pradesh needs to be saved from the "jungle raj" of Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Almost six months before the 2018 Assembly elections, dozens of such morphed videos had created a buzz in the state. In 2018, soon after Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the BJP's foot in MP was as strongly planted as that of the vanara king Angad, a video depicting Shivraj Singh Chouhan as Angad and Kamal Nath as Ravan had done the rounds on social media. The video also featured Jyotiraditya Scindia, who was then in the Congress, and Congress leader Jitu Patwari as 'Ravan's' family members. Shivraj Singh Dabi, the BJP's IT cell head in MP, had shared the video on his social media accounts, prompting the Congress to register a case. On the latest video, Patwari, the state Congress working president, said, "The party has nothing to do with these videos, but they depict public sentiment. The BJP has failed on every front. To hide its failures on several fronts, including agriculture and employment generation, and distract people, the government has used communal riots and bulldozers. The BJP will get a befitting reply in the upcoming polls." While commenting on the videos, BJP state media in-charge Lokendra Parasher said, "Every party, irrespective of their ideology, must practise politics in a respectable manner."

Tikait brothers in trouble

After facing a split in the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU), the Tikait brothers are now facing a probe on allegations of grabbing government land. Rahul Mukhiya, one of the residents of Sisauli village in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district, has alleged that BKU chief Naresh and his brother Rakesh Tikait have "illegally occupied" government land.

According to him The land parcel was allotted by the government to build a pond in Sisauli a decade ago.

However, Tikait brothers have filled the pond with soil and illegally constructed residential properties on it. I had informed the district level officers about the issue in writing and the Union Minister of State Dr Sanjeev Baliyan was also apprised of the situation but no action was taken. Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Budhana area, Arun Kumar said that the The investigation will be conducted accordingly in case as complaint has been filed. We will investigate the matter and take action accordingly. Rahul Mukhiya also warned that if no action is taken by the district administration in this matter, he will go to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to plead for justice. Meanwhile, Naresh Tikait said that the allegations were "baseless" and he was "ready for any inquiry". "I don't know why these people are accusing us. We didn't capture any government land, all allegations are baseless," he said.

absolute edit



TRADE FOCUSED QUAD

Asad Mirza

The first in-person meeting of the leaders of the US, Australia, Japan and India, termed Quad, will be held in Tokyo on Tuesday. This is the first in-person summit of these leaders after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war, worsening Sri Lankan economic crisis, and Australia getting a new Prime Minister.

The security situation in the Indo-Pacific region has changed significantly in the last decade and in the post-pandemic world, it becomes imperative for these partners to further commit to an open, inclusive and resilient region. The primary focus of this alliance is to thwart the increasing Chinese hegemony in the region and globally, both

The Modi-Biden meeting in Tokyo will be the second face-to-face meeting of both the leaders within a year; they met last in September 2021. The meeting assumes increased importance, as it will be the first time the two leaders meet in the midst of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis. The leaders are likely to focus on trade and defence opportunities in partnership with other countries in the Indo-Pacific, in the backdrop of the increasing Chinese belligerence; however, this time around Biden may focus more on trade than defence.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework-IPF

The new plan unveiled by Biden called the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework-IPF, which his aides refer to IPF, is not a trade agreement in the traditional sense. Though, it includes one 'pillar' related to trade, besides incorporating other key areas like forging more resilient supply chains, an initiative becoming rather the most important one after witnessing the chaos in the global supply chains

during the Covid-pandemic, besides promoting clean energy and combating corruption and cyber security.

By focussing on the new framework, Biden has made clear his intention of not re-joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership-TPP, an Obama-era deal, which was not supported by a large number of US lawmakers. Since then the US has been without a defined plan to engage with the south Asian region economically. And in the meanwhile, China has secured several trade agreements with its neighbours, and has sought to wield its economic influence globally through its Belt and Road Initiative.

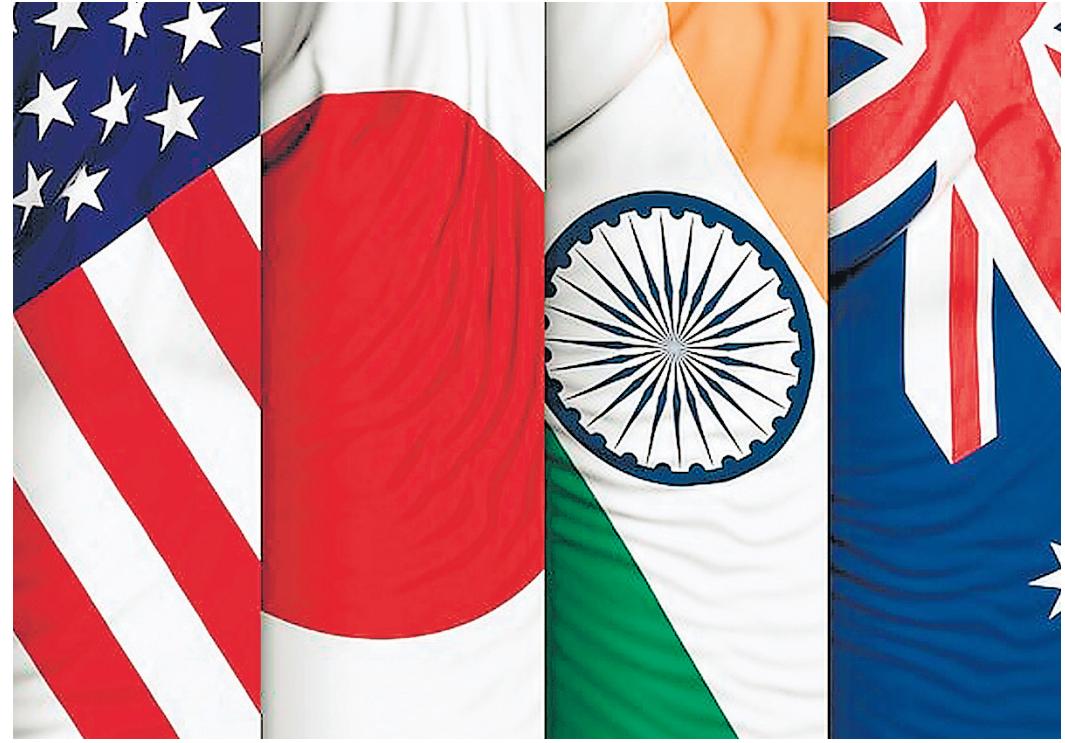
However, this may require delicately persuading countries to join, not only staunch partners like Japan and South Korea but smaller nations, particularly in Southeast Asia, who aren't as closely aligned with the US.

The IPF rollout is expected to send across a strong signal that the US is focused on pushing forward a strong economic policy for the Indo-Pacific to counter China's aggressive strategy on trade in the region. The Indian stand on the new initiative has not been made clear, but there are strong indications that India may join it along with Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Singapore and the Philippines.

Chinese response

The US-led Indo-Pacific strategy is causing more and more strife and concern not just globally, but especially among the countries in the Asia-Pacific region, said Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Sunday.

He said, the Indo-Pacific Strategy concocted by the US is called "freedom and openness", but is keen on forming cliques; and aims to "change China's surrounding environment" in an attempt to contain China. Facts will prove that the so-called Indo-Pacific strategy



is in essence a strategy to create division, to incite confrontation and to undermine peace, he added.

He stressed that like other countries in the region, China welcomes initiatives that are conducive to strengthening regional cooperation, but opposes attempts to create division and confrontation.

Which category does the US Indo-Pacific Economic Framework fall into, he questioned, saying further that in line with WTO rules, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement (RCEP) was launched, a regional cooperation platform with ASEAN at the centre, and it has greatly promoted regional trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation.

Indo-Japan ties

Modi held separate meetings on Monday with a number of leading Japanese corporate honchos, besides a roundtable with Japanese

business leaders and an interaction with the Indian community.

Modi's pre-departure statement stressed focussing on issues, regional like China and global like on going Russia-Ukraine war. It will be first time that both leaders will be able to discuss the Ukrainian crisis in person. Modi will also hold separate bilateral meetings with his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida and newly-elected Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

Modi penned an op-ed on the vibrant relations between India and Japan, coinciding with his Japan visit. He wrote: "Ours is a partnership for peace, stability and prosperity. I trace the journey of our special friendship which completes 70 glorious years. Closer India-Japan cooperation is vital in the post-Covid world. Our nations are firmly committed to democrat-

ic values. Together, we are key pillars of a stable and secure Indo-Pacific region. I am equally glad that we are working closely in various multilateral forums as well."

The meeting with Kishida will provide an opportunity for the two leaders to carry forward their conversations from the 14th India-Japan Annual Summit held in March, when the Prime Minister visited India.

Though the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the Biden administration, released in February, is widely believed to intend to build a wall of containment around China, but this time around it may focus more on trade issues.

(Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs)

international

SAUDI ARABIA BANS CITIZENS FROM TRAVELLING TO 16 NATIONS, INCLUDING INDIA

Riyadh | Agencies

Saudi Arabia has banned citizens from travelling to 16 countries, including India, over the Covid-19 situation in those nations, the media reported

The General Directorate of Passports said that the list of countries comprised Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Yemen, Somalia, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Indonesia, Vietnam, Armenia, Belarus, and Venezuela, The Express Tribune reported.

The Directorate emphasised that the validity of the passport of Saudis who intend to travel to non-Arab countries must be more than six months.

Further, the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia has assured the public that there were no monkeypox cases detected in the country so far.

Abdullah Asiri, Deputy Minister of Health, has said that the Kingdom has the capability to monitor and discover any suspected monkeypox cases and



also to fight against the infection if any new case emerges. The Express Tribune reported.

"Until now, cases of transmission between humans are very limited, and therefore the possibility of any outbreaks occurring from it, even in coun-

tries that have detected cases, are very low," he added.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization said it expects to identify more cases of monkeypox as it expands surveillance in countries where the disease is not typically found.

JORDAN CONDEMNS ISRAELI DECISION ALLOWING 'EXTREMISTS' TO PRAY AT AL-AQSA MOSQUE



Amman: Jordan has condemned an Israeli court decision allowing "extremists" to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem.

Jordan's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Haitham Abu Al-Foul said that the decision is null and void, which "lacks legal status under international law that does not recognise Israeli jurisdiction on territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem", Xinhua news agency reported.

Abu Al-Foul stressed that the decision is considered a blatant breach of international legitimacy resolutions related to Jerusalem, including the UN Security Council resolutions that urge all to maintain the status quo of the holy city.

He also stressed that the Al-Aqsa Mosque is "a place of worship for Muslims only", and the Jordan-run Department of the Jerusalem Awqaf and Al-Aqsa Mosque Affairs is the only institution for administering the affairs of the mosque.

8 MORE MINISTERS SWORN INTO SL'S NEW CABINET

Colombo: Eight more ministers were sworn in to Sri Lanka's new Cabinet on Monday as a fresh government is being formed amid weeks of political instability and the ongoing economic crisis.

According to the President's Media Division, the eight ministers took oath at the President's House in Colombo and later assumed duties in their respective ministries, reports Xinhua news agency.

Douglas Devananda was sworn in as the minister of fisheries, Keheliya Rambukwella as the minister of water supply, Mahinda Amaraweera as the minister of agriculture, wildlife and forest conservation and Ramesh Pathirana as the industries minister. Thirteen cabinet ministers had been appointed on two previous occasions following the appointment of Ranil Wickremesinghe as the Prime Minister on May 12. Sri Lanka has seen weeks of public protests due to a shortage in essential supplies including food and medicines.

Anthony Albanese sworn in as Australia's 31st PM

Canberra | Agencies

Anthony Albanese, leader of Australia's Labor Party, was sworn in on Monday as the country's 31st Prime Minister following his victory in the May 21 federal election.

Albanese, joined by members of his leadership team, on Monday morning visited the Government House in Canberra where Governor-General David Hurley officially swore him in as the Prime Minister, reports Xinhua news agency. Albanese's Labor Party defeated former Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his coalition in the federal election, ending the coalition's hold on power for nearly nine years.

Richard Marles was sworn in as the Minister for Employment and Deputy Prime Minister, Penny Wong as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jim Chalmers as the Treasurer and Katy Gallagher as the Minister for Finance and Minister for Women and Attorney-General. Albanese fast-tracked the swearing-in ceremony to allow himself and Wong to fly to Tokyo later on Monday to meet the leaders of the US, Japan and India as well as their foreign



ministers, and join the Quad) summit with on Tuesday.

In a statement, Albanese said: "The Quad Leaders' Summit brings together four leaders of great liberal democracies - Australia, Japan, India, and the United States of America - in support of a free, open and resilient Indo-Pacific."

Marles will serve as the Acting Prime Minister until Albanese's return.

This is Australia's first Labor government in almost a decade.

The party has won 72 lower house seats but counting continues to determine whether they can get the 76 needed to form a majority.

Pakistan govt decides to complete term instead of early polls

Islamabad | Agencies

After much deliberation, the coalition partners in Pakistan have decided that the incumbent government will go ahead with the completion of its term instead of holding early elections, sources said on Monday.

The sources have said the government has also decided to take tough decisions in a bid to steer the country out of an economic crisis, Geo News reported. As Finance Minister Miftah Ismail has left for Doha for talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the tough measures will reportedly be taken in a couple of days.

The decision comes after a meeting of the heads of the ruling alliance on Monday.



The allied parties' heads met to discuss the unstable political situation in the country after the announcement of a long march towards Islamabad by ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan. The meeting of the party chiefs was convened to finalise the strategy to deal with Khan's protest call, Geo News reported.

The government is reportedly considering accommodating PTI for the long march if the party intends to hold a rally and go back. However, if PTI plans to stage a sit-in and try to paralyse the system, the govern-

ment will turn towards legal options to stop it, the sources said. On Sunday, Khan announced an Azadi March to Islamabad on Wednesday to seek an election date and dissolution of the National Assembly.

He asked the military to adhere to its promise of "neutrality." The government is in a fix as Pakistan's economic situation gets worse due to rising fears that the country might go bankrupt if the IMF bailout programme is not revived, Geo News reported. The Fund has demanded the government remove subsidies on petroleum products which is likely to increase inflation and the ruling parties are having parleys on the matter because it has a high political cost.

POLICE TO QUESTION S KOREAN FIRST LADY ON ALLEGATIONS OF FALSE ACADEMIC RECORDS

Seoul: Police in South Korea plan to question First Lady Kim Keon-hee about allegations of false academic records, a top official said here Monday.

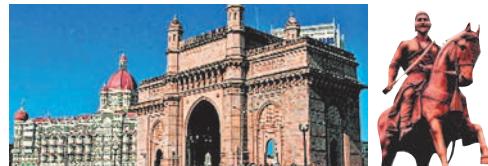


Choi Gwan-ho, commissioner of the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency, told reporters that the written investigation planned for Kim is not necessarily an implicit assumption of her acquittal and the final decision will be made after her answers are accepted, reports Yonhap News Agency.

The People's Livelihood Economy Research Institute and many civic groups filed a complaint against Kim with police last December, accusing her of submitting false records of academic and career background on job applications sent to local universities between 2013 and 2014.

Choi said police have sent a questionnaire to Kim as part of the written investigation stage after investigating the positions of the concerned university officials.

"We've not made the decision (on a written investigation) too hastily. Please understand that we've done it in consideration of various circumstances," he said.



TOPE DISMISSES POSSIBILITY OF 4TH WAVE OF COVID

Asked if the booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine was mandatory for everyone, Tope said there is no compulsion, but health and frontline workers, essential service employees and senior citizens were being given the booster shots as per the central government's guidelines

Team Absolute | Nagpur

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Monday said there is no possibility of a fourth wave of COVID-19 looking at the current situation.

Talking to reporters here, Tope said nearly 200 to 250 cases were being reported in the state everyday and there was not much increase in these numbers. "The COVID-19 recovery rate is very good and Maharashtra has seen very good vaccination results. Hence, I feel that in the present situation, there is no possibility of a fourth wave (of the viral



infection)," the minister said.

On Sunday, Maharashtra reported 326 COVID-19 cases, taking the state's tally to 78,82,802, while the death toll stood at 1,47,856 as no fresh fatality was recorded.

As per the state health department, 251 patients were discharged on Sunday, leaving the state with 1,903 active COVID-19 cases.

Asked if the booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine was mandatory

for everyone, Tope said there is no compulsion, but health and frontline workers, essential service employees and senior citizens were being given the booster shots as per the central government's guidelines.

"However, we have not made the booster dose mandatory for everyone as there are no such guidelines from the central government," he said. To a query on supporting Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati for the

upcoming Rajya Sabha polls to six seats in Maharashtra, Tope said, "We respect Sambhajiraje, and a final decision on supporting him will be taken together by Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, NCP president Sharad Pawar and senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat."

The tenure of six Rajya Sabha members from Maharashtra - Piyush Goyal, Vinay Sahasrabuddhe and Vikas Mahatme (all three from the BJP), P Chidambaram (Congress), Praful Patel (NCP) and Sanjay Raut (Shiv Sena) ends on July 4.

The polls are scheduled on June 10. The BJP can win two Rajya Sabha seats with the number of MLAs it has, while the ruling allies Shiv Sena, Congress and NCP in Maharashtra can win a seat each.

The contest will, therefore, be for the sixth seat. Sambhajiraje, a member of the Kolhapur royal family and descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, was earlier a President-nominated member of the Upper House of Parliament.

He recently announced that he would contest the next election to the Rajya Sabha as an independent candidate, and appealed to all parties to back him.

I'm not running your Twitter account, Musk tells Pune techie

Elon Musk may not wish to launch Tesla in India owing to high customs duty but he is fond of replying regularly to Pranay Pathole, a Pune-based Indian working as a software developer for Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), on Twitter.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Elon Musk may not wish to launch Tesla in India owing to high customs duty but he is fond of replying regularly to Pranay Pathole, a Pune-based Indian working as a software developer for Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), on Twitter.

On Monday, Musk said that he is not running Pathole's Twitter account.

Pathole, who has more than 1.6 lakh followers, tweeted: "Many people think that @elonmusk runs my Twitter account. And it's TRUE. He's a super busy guy, building rockets, making life multiplanetary, building futuristic electric vehicles, digging tunnels.

And somehow he finds time to run multiple Twitter accounts. YES."



Musk replied: "Haha I don't even have a burner twitter account! I do have a cheesy secret Instagram account, so I can click on links that friends send me."

exchange of words continues.

They now talk back and forth through Direct Messages (DMs) on Twitter.

Pathole's GitHub profile describes him as a machine learning (ML) engineer and "Nerding out about Space and Rockets on Twitter."

He aspires to meet Musk and get an opportunity to work with him.

NAVNEET RANA TO PRESENT HER CASE BEFORE PRIVILEGE COMMITTEE

Amravati MP Navneet Rana will on Monday present before Privilege Committee of the Lok Sabha, her charges against Maharashtra Police for "illegally arresting" and "manhandling" her over the Hanuman Chalisa row.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amravati MP Navneet Rana will on Monday present before Privilege Committee of the Lok Sabha, her charges against Maharashtra Police for "illegally arresting" and "manhandling" her over the Hanuman Chalisa row.



Navneet, along with her MLA husband Ravi Rana, was arrested after she announced to recite Hanuman Chalisa in front of Matoshree, the residence of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

In a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, she had accused the Maharashtra government and the state police of misbehaviour.

On May 4, the Mumbai Court granted conditional bail to the couple.

After being released on bail, Navneet Rana came to Delhi and met the Speaker of Lok Sabha on 9 May and briefed him about

SHIV SENAS 'NO' TO INDEPENDENTS IN RS POLLS

Effectively shutting the door on Yuvraj Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, the Shiv Sena on Monday made it clear that it would not support any independent candidate in the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Effectively shutting the door on Yuvraj Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, the Shiv Sena on Monday made it clear that it would not support any independent candidate in the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections. Sena's Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut said that the party will put up two candidates and expressed confidence that both will win.

Raut's reference was to former President-nominated MP Sambhajiraje's announcement last week that he would contest the RS elections solo and seek the support of various parties. "We have nothing against



Sambhajiraje... If he has said he will contest independently, then he must have arranged for his 42 votes," Raut retorted, and reiterated the Sena stance on the issue.

Since the past couple of days there has been political speculation that the Sena would be prepared to field Sambhajiraje provided he joined the party and was reportedly given a 'deadline' till 12 noon Monday (May 23) to decide.

However, Sambhajiraje has not commented on the matter so far and is firm on going solo in the RS polls.

Raut confirmed that the Sena had invited Sambhajiraje to join the party and become its candidate, and now the decision was left to him. Reaffirming that both the seats belong to the Sena, Raut said the party is keen to increase its tally in the Upper House of Parliament and hence there was no question

of backing any independent candidate.

The RS elections are being held to fill up the vacancies by six retiring members -- one each from ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies, Shiv Sena (Sanjay Raut), Nationalist Congress Party (Praful Patel) and Congress (P. Chidambaram), and three from the Bharatiya Janata Party Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Piyush Goyal and Dr. Vikas Mahatme.

However, as per indications, BJP may repeat Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, the Sena will field its fiery Chief Spokesperson Raut and NCP may retain its general secretary Patel, who is a close confidante of party President Sharad Pawar, but the fate of Congress' Chidambaram is uncertain with the recent CBI action against his family.

This time, given the realignment of the legislature after the 2019 Assembly elections, the BJP can comfortably win two seats of the three it holds, and the MVA

can win their three seats, and is toying with a fourth candidate to bag the third seat held by the BJP.

Staking a unilateral claim to the sixth seat is Sambhajiraje, the 13th direct descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who plans to dive into the RS polls as an independent.

The electoral college comprises the 288 MLAs and a candidate must get 42 votes to win a seat in the Upper House of Parliament.

The MVA has 170 MLAs -- Shiv Sena 55 (one MLA Ramesh Latke died in Dubai last week), NCP 53, Congress 44, smaller parties/groups 2 and 5 Independents.

Sambhajiraje explained that in these circumstances, the BJP can get only two seats, and the Sena-NCP-Congress one each, so he would contest that 'extra' sixth seat independently with the support of various major and smaller parties.

MAHARASHTRA POLICE ARREST TUITION TEACHER FROM FARIDABAD

The girl, a resident of Kalyan township in Thane, went missing on May 1. Later her family members filed a police complaint.



Mumbai: Maharashtra police have arrested a tuition teacher from Faridabad in Haryana for allegedly kidnapping a 13-year-old girl from near her house here, an official said on Monday. The girl, a resident of Kalyan township in Thane, went missing on May 1. Later her family members filed a police complaint. During a probe into the case, the police learnt that a private tuition teacher from the same locality was also missing since the same day, the official said. The police tracked his mobile number to Faridabad. They got in touch with the Faridabad police and forwarded details of the accused along with his picture to them. The police there spotted the accused and the girl, the official said. A police team from here subsequently reached Faridabad on Saturday. They rescued the girl and arrested the accused, he added.

MAN KILLS MOTHER-IN-LAW, ARRESTED

Kisan Pardhi's wife had left home some days ago due to his alcohol addiction and he had gone to her maternal house to get her back. His wife refused to come back, which infuriated Pardhi, who attacked her with a sharp weapon. When his 55-year-old mother-in-law tried to intervene, Pardhi attacked her

Nashik: A 42-year-old man was arrested for allegedly killing his mother-in-law in Jharwad village in Maharashtra's Nashik district during a domestic quarrel, a police official said on Monday. Kisan Pardhi's wife had left home some days ago due to his alcohol addiction and he had gone to her maternal house to get her back, the official said. "His wife refused to come back, which infuriated Pardhi, who attacked her with a sharp weapon. When his 55-year-old mother-in-law tried to intervene, Pardhi attacked her and killed her instantly. Neighbours pinned down Pardhi," said the Ghoti police station official. Pardhi was arrested and charged with murder, he added.

Maharashtra Police In Prague To Extradite Man Wanted In 19-Year-Old Murder Case



said. A Thane sessions court had acquitted the duo in 2003 in the case of murder of US model Leona Swiderski (33).

Desai and Swiderski were apparently in a relationship and were to get married in May 2003.

On February 7, 2003, soon after the duo arrived at the airport in neighbouring Mumbai, the model had gone missing. Her body was found the next day on a highway in Kashimira area of Thane district, the official

said. Police then alleged that Desai had taken the help of his friend Patel to kill the model to claim her insurance sum of USD one million. It was also then alleged that Patel had hired two men to kill the model when she got into a cab at the airport. The body was later dumped on the highway. While Desai was arrested from Vadodara in Gujarat earlier this year, the police were searching for Patel, and the Interpol had also issued a Red Corner Notice against the latter, the official said. The police coordinated with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Interpol and then left for Prague to get the accused. They are likely to return later this week, the official added.

MAHARASHTRA FYJC ADMISSION PROCESS TO BEGIN WITH ONLINE REGISTRATION ON MAY 30

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The mock round of the process aimed at providing candidates with a practice began on Monday and will continue till May 29. The centralised admission process for the first year of junior college (FYJC) in Maharashtra will begin in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Nashik, Amravati and Nagpur on May 30 with the online registration stage. From this day, students seeking FYJC (class 11) admissions will be able to begin their online registration process which is part-I of the form and part-II of the form will be opened after the declaration of class 10 results. This will be to complete the FYJC admissions of the batch currently awaiting their class 10 results, for the academic year 2022-23. The mock round of the process aimed at providing candidates with a practice finally began on Monday and will continue till May 29. Students can log on to 11th admission.org.in and select the city where

they seek admission.

In the mock round process, a demo-login system will be made available for candidates. From May 30, however, the demo-login data will be erased and students will be able to start the process afresh. The FYJC admissions in selected cities in Maharashtra are done through the centralised admission process rounds which are held online. After registering for the process, students have to provide a preference list of colleges of their choice where they wish to take admission. A minimum of one and a maximum of 10 colleges can be filled in this preference form. Students are allotted seats in those colleges as per merit. The FYJC admissions process has not been immune to criticism this year as well as the timetable was delayed. It was discussed earlier that the mock round will start on May 17 but it was put on hold. Now, the students' registration process will begin on May 30 and the second part of the form will be opened after class 10 results. The admission schedule thereafter will be declared later.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra has got its Pavilion at the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos. The state is participating as part of Team India at the summit, representing Maharashtra's role in building a five trillion dollar economy for India.

The Maharashtra government delegation is led by state environment minister Aaditya Thackeray, industries minister Subhash Desai and energy minister Dr Nitin Raut. The ministers have been accompanied by Ashish Kumar Singh, the



additional chief secretary to Maharashtra chief minister, additional chief secretary (Industries) Baldev Singh, Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited managing director Vijay Singh and other top officials of the state government, the government statement said. The Maharashtra delegation has a series of meetings lined up with CEOs of Fortune 500 com-

panies and it is eyeing on mobilising huge investments in the state. Some of the key investors which the delegation met on Sunday include global beverage company Suntory and multinational chemical firm UPL which is investing in 20 acres of land in Raigad district.

The Maharashtra government also signed an MoU with the Global Plastic Action Partnership ("GPAP") and initiated the Maharashtra Plastic Action Partnership (Maharashtra PAP), which will serve as a roadmap for sustainable development in the state. Maharashtra was the first

Joe Alwyn shares how it was to work with Lenny Abrahamson

Los Angeles | Agencies

Joe Alwyn will be seen in the television adaptation of Sally Rooney's debut novel *Conversations With Friends*. The actor has opened up about working with director Lenny Abrahamson and said *'Conversations With Friends'* is full of all different themes, but at the heart of it, it's about love, intimacy, desire and relationships.

It is based on the book, the series takes us

through the journey of Frances (Alison Oliver), an observant, bright and sharp girl who performs spoken word poetry in Dublin together with her ex-girlfriend Bobbi (Sasha Lane).

Joe said: This is full of all different themes, but at the heart of it, it's about love, intimacy, desire and relationships. It's about how we can love and find happiness both within social constructs that we're more used to whether that be within friendships, families or relationships - but also outside of those things,

and how we're able to find other ways of loving and growing outside of more conventional constructs."

He added: "The writers have done a fantastic job bringing the book to life. There are definitely bits and pieces they've maybe reduced a little or veered away from, but also bits they've lent heavily into for the sake of the story and narrative."

"But, by and large, it's all quite consistent and that goes for the characters and Nick too. When you're playing someone, you're also bringing yourself to it, so there's me in it too. But in terms of Nick from the book, it's the Nick I felt when reading the

scripts."

"When talking about the experience of working with the ace director Lenny, Joe said: "Firstly, Lenny is absolutely brilliant. He's so special both as a director and as a person. In terms of his direction, he's so detailed, intelligent and emotionally intelligent as well, and tuned in to what he wants and what should be there without being overbearing. He's put so much thought into this, he's just a genius."

"He's also incredibly funny and that makes a big difference on set, particularly when every scene is quite intense."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hip-hop star Saweetie's father is African-American and her mother is Filipina-Chinese, and she says she saw racism first hand while she was growing up.

In an interview with 'Glamour' magazine, Saweetie, explains she saw her dad being cowed by cops when he was ordered out of his car, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said: "It's something that I've witnessed since I was a kid. I watched my dad get pulled over for no reason, get out of the car and him having to appear less of a man."

"He's Superman to me, but when the cops come and pull him over, he has to confine to a certain type of submissiveness."

She added: "It's always angered me, experiencing that, watching the videos. But I'm actually thankful that we have phones now, because now the world is witnessing what Black and Asian communities go through behind the scenes."

Saweetie recalls her horror at seeing her father being targeted by racists



Millie Bobby Brown on the character growth of Eleven from 'Stranger Things'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Millie Bobby Brown, who plays the role of Eleven in the popular Netflix series 'Stranger Things', says the 4th season of the sci-fi adventure show starts to answer all of the questions one has about her character's past and her storyline.

Talking about how it feels to return to this story and character after such a long break, Brown said: "Well, we came back in early 2020 but, due to COVID, we had to shut down production. I had a solid eight months off. It felt really nice to get back to work. I'd been inside and not really doing much. It was nice to be able to get back

to work and get back to a schedule, and to reconnect with Eleven again."

"We left off at Hopper suspiciously disappearing into thin air. We also left off with Billy sacrificing himself to the Mind Flayer, and Eleven losing her powers. And then, ultimately, the Byers boys and Eleven left Hawkins to go somewhere else. There's a lot left unexplained, and we definitely get into that in Season Four."

She gives a walk through about her character Eleven's evolution from Season 3 to the fourth season.

"Eleven starts off in Lenora Hills, California. She's very much dealing with the loss of Hopper - or so she thinks - and she's also dealing with

regular life and being at school, where she's being bullied, and has to try and understand how to be a normal person. She grew up in a laboratory - she grew up very sheltered, and was told what to do."

"This season is about showing her freedom, and about her understanding her own growth, and not just having other people tell her how to do things. So we start off in Lenora - with Will and Jonathan, and Jonathan's new friend Argyle - and then Mike comes to town for a visit. That's when the ball really gets rolling."

Brown shared that Eleven's superpowers always overshadowed her as a person. "I really appreciate the Duffers taking this away, her most valued quality, on which she is so dependent. Where does taking her superpowers away lead her? Who is she, really? This season really dives into her emotional well-being, instead of her simply being a sort of extraterrestrial. We get to find out who she is deep down as a person."

What can we expect from Eleven's journey this season, as we get a deeper look into her past and origins?

"This season is the season of explanations. This season really starts to answer all of the questions you have about Eleven's past and her storyline, which was needed, and has been executed beautifully," she shared.



Tomorrow X Together debuts at No. 4 on Billboard 200

Seoul | Agencies

K-Pop boy band Tomorrow X Together, which comprises of Soobin, Yeonjun, Beomgyu, Taehyun, and Hueningkai, have made it to the fourth position on the Billboard 200.

According to an article by Billboard, Tomorrow X Together have charted their

4th EP, 'minisode 2: Thursday's Child', at Number four on the Billboard 200, as well as Number 1 on Billboard's Top Album Sales chart with the third-largest sales week of any album in 2022.

'minisode 2: Thursday's Child' marks Tomorrow X Together's sixth entry into the Billboard 200 and second consecutive entry into the chart's Top 5.

The band's debut album, 'The Dream

Chapter: Star', charted at No.140; the third EP, 'minisode 1: Blue Hour', charted at No.25; the Japanese first studio album, 'Still Dreamin'', charted at No.173; the second studio album, 'The Chaos Chapter: FREEZE', charted at No.5; the Japanese first EP, 'Chaotic Wonderland' charted at No.177; and the newest 4th EP, 'minisode 2: Thursday's Child', charted at No.4.

Noah has been crowned as the winner of 'American Idol Season 20'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Noah Thompson has been crowned as the winner of 'American Idol Season 20' as he closed the episode out with a performance of his song, 'One Day Tonight' as his loved ones rushed the stage to celebrate the momentous occasion, reports 'Deadline'. Thompson and runner-up HunterGirl, who was a good sport and helped Thompson celebrate his big win, will appear together on Monday on 'Good Morning, America'. As per 'Deadline' Thompson will follow that up with a performance on 'Live With Kelly and Ryan'. The ABC series took the season out on a high note with a variety of performances from top talent in collaboration with contestants. After a stellar performance from Flo Rida and friends, the finale was set into action with a round entirely devoted to heartland rocker Bruce Springsteen. Performances of the finalists' official singles followed soon after the homage. The first elimination came midway through Sunday night, preceding several all-star duets, including an unforgettable rendition of 'Smile' courtesy of Michael Bublé and Christian Guardino.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kat Graham


IPL WOMEN'S T20

SUPERNOVAS BEAT TRAILBLAZERS BY 49 RUNS

Team Absolute | Pune

Seamer Pooja Vastrakar claimed 4/12 after Deandra Dottin (32 off 17), Harleen Deol (35 off 19) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (37 off 29) had scored some quick-fire runs as Supernovas defeated Trailblazers by 49 runs to open their campaign in the Women's T20 Challenge on a winning note here on Monday.

After setting Trailblazers a target of 163 to win, the Supernovas came back strongly to restrict them to 11/9 in 20 overs and registered a comfortable win at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium here.

Openers Priya Punia (22) and Deandra Dottin (32) raised 50-runs for the opening wicket in 29 balls after Supernovas won the toss and elected to bat first. Harleen Deol (35) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (37) boosted the innings with handy contributions as Supernovas posted 163 all out in 20 overs.

In response, the Trailblazers' skipper Smriti Mandana scored 34 runs off 23 deliveries and raised 39 runs for the opening wicket with West Indies all-rounder Hayley



Matthews (18). Hayley was out in the fifth over, caught by keeper Taniya Bhatia as she tried to work one away by shuffling to leg-side, only managing to nick behind off Vastrakar.

Smriti was out soon, with the score 63, caught by Priya Punia off Vastrakar, trying to clear mid-off but failing to get the elevation as Priya brought off a superb diving catch. Jemimah Rodrigues scored 24 off 21 deliveries.

Pooja Vastrakar claimed two more wickets as did Sophie Ecclestone (2/19) and Alana King (2/30) claimed two wickets each as Trailblazers lost their way from 63/2 to lose seven wickets for 51 runs.

Only Renuka Singh managed to reach double figures as the middle order collapsed with three batters getting out for zeroes and two others in single digits.

Earlier, Priya and Deandra came out firing on all cylinders as they

took Supernovas past 50 in 29 balls but Deandra was run out on the same score, going for a tight run as her partner sent her back. Her 32 runs came off 17 balls, hitting five fours and a six.

Harleen Deol and Harmanpreet Kaur added 37 runs for the third wicket before Harleen (35 off 18) was out, trapped lbw by Salma Khatun as she went for a sweep shot and missed it. She reviewed the decision but could not get it overturned.

Harmanpreet was the second of the three Supernovas batters to get run out, going for a second run trying to retain the strike in the 19th over, reduced to 160/7 on the last ball of the 19th over. Her 29-ball 37 was studded with four boundaries.

Brief scores:

Supernovas 163 all out in 20 overs (Priya Punia 22, Deandra Dottin 32, Harleen Deol 35, Harmanpreet Kaur 37; Hayley Matthews 3/29, Salma Khatun 2/30) beat Trailblazers 114/9 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandana 34, Jemimah Rodrigues 24; Pooja Vastrakar 4/12, Sophie Ecclestone 2/19, Alana King 2/30) by 49 runs.

AUSTRALIAN TITMUS BREAKS 400M FREESTYLE WORLD RECORD



Canberra: Australian swimming superstar Ariarne Titmus has broken the women's 400m freestyle world record at the national championships, according to Swimming Australia. Titmus, the reigning Olympic champion over 200 and 400m, on Sunday night finished the 400m freestyle in 3:56.40, breaking the previous world record set by American Katie Ledecky in 2016 by 0.06 seconds.

Titmus's world record is the latest chapter in her burgeoning rivalry with Ledecky, whom she beat in the 400m final at the Tokyo Olympics. With the conclusion of the Australian Swimming Championships, which was held in Adelaide from last Wednesday to Sunday, Swimming Australia announced that Tokyo gold medallists Kaylee McKeown and Zac Stubblety-Cook are among a host of Australian swimming stars set to headline the team for the upcoming FINA World Championships. The governing body selected a team of 39 for next month's meet in Budapest, among them, 11 are going to make their national team debut.

PREMIER LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

Man City claim title with 3-2 win at Aston Villa

Manchester | Agencies

Ilkay Gundogan contributed a brace as Manchester City staged another incredible final day fightback, scoring three goals in five second-half minutes to dramatically beat Aston Villa 3-2 and retain the Premier League title at a spellbound Etihad.

Having gone 2-0 down midway through the second half Pep Guardiola's side looked to be in danger of losing the crown to Liverpool, who beat Wolves 3-1.

However, in amazing scenes reminiscent of their first Premier League triumph 10 years ago, with the same uncanny scoreline, City staged the most unbelievable of comebacks to seize the crown, as a brace from substitute Ilkay Gundogan and a Rodrigo strike lifted the lid off the Etihad. It was a fightback full of grit and character and one worthy of any title-winning side.

And it meant Manchester City retained the crown, secured a fourth title



in five years under Pep Guardiola, and handed departing Club captain Fernandinho the perfect emotional send-off, said a report on the club's official website. It was their eighth Premier League title overall.

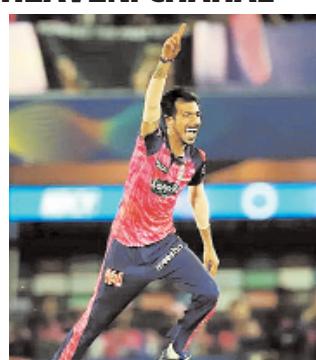
As thousands of fans filled the stadium, City made a nervous start as they

sought the win that would confirm a fourth Premier League title in five years.

And Villa sent a stark reminder that they hadn't merely come to make up the numbers, a timely early intervention from Fernandinho denying Brazilian compatriot Philippe Coutinho a clear header on goal.

FEEL LIKE SHANE WARNE IS WATCHING ME FROM HEAVEN: CHAHAL

Kolkata: Rajasthan Royals' leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal on Monday credited his success in IPL 2022 to the closely knit group and said playing for the franchise has made him feel that legendary leg-spinner Shane Warne, who had led the team in the inaugural season to winning the trophy and died unexpectedly in March this year, has been watching him bowl from heaven. In the league stages of IPL 2022, Chahal has picked 26 wickets at an average of 16.53 and economy rate of 7.67, leading the bowling charts in the tournament. He has a chance to add more to his tally when Rajasthan face Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1 at the Eden Gardens on Tuesday.



"I know it's just the first season here (at Royals) for me, but it feels like I've been playing here for many years. It's like a family already. I'm really relaxed here mentally, and I believe the credit goes to the people here, who take really good care of me. It's not just within the playing team and support staff, but also the management, which is something I really value," said Chahal in an official release of the franchise. "The way they respect and love me, it has really made me connect with the franchise at a different level. On the other hand, it's also special for me because Warne sir played for RR and was the first-ever Royal, and I think his blessings are with me. I feel like he's been watching me from above," added the 31-year-old.

SPANISH GP: FINISHING 5TH GIVES ME HOPE

Barcelona: The seventh-time champion Lewis Hamilton, who has struggled with his car in the opening five races, said that he has revitalised his racing season with an "amazing" comeback drive at the Spanish Grand Prix here on Sunday.



Hamilton impressively fought back, after a puncture on the first lap saw him drop to 19th, to finish fifth in the Spanish Grand Prix. The Mercedes driver, who was one of the fastest drivers on track on his way back to contention, felt that finishing at 5th is better than a win. "Without my start, I would have been fighting the two Red Bulls. That gives me great hope that at some stage we'll be fighting for the win," he said.

IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME FOR THE FEELING OF GETTING SELECTED IN INDIA SQUAD TO SET IN: ARSHDEEP

Mumbai: Punjab Kings pace bowler Arshdeep Singh has said that it will take some time for the feeling of getting selected in the India T20 squad for the series against South Africa to set in, adding that it is the dream of every cricketer to play for the country. The 23-year-old Arshdeep finished the IPL 2022 season with 10 wickets from 14 matches, with his best being 3/37, and an economy rate of 7.70. He was rewarded for his consistent performance in the domestic season and the IPL by being included in the squad to face the Proteas in the five-match series beginning in New Delhi on June 9. "(I) Feel really happy that I've been selected in the India team. (I) Came to know about it just before the match against SRH (at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday). In fact, I came to know about it in the team bus. Yes, it is a pretty exciting feeling. While the match was on, I didn't feel it that much, but when I wake up in the morning (on Monday), I will realise that it is a very special moment," said Arshdeep, who plays domestic cricket for Punjab. "Anyone who starts playing the game, wants to represent the country and I feel quite lucky and grateful about that. I want to keep performing to the best of my ability in the future," he added.



FRENCH OPEN

Paris | Agencies

The French Open campaign of four-time Grand Slam champion Naoki Osaka ended in the first round on Monday as she went down to American No.27 seed Amanda Anisimova while World No.1 and top seed Iga Swiatek progressed without breaking a sweat at the Roland Garros courts here.

Swiatek needed just 54 minutes to get past her opening round opponent on Day 2 of the competition, beating Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko 6-2, 6-0 under the roof at the Court Philippe-Chatrier.

The 2020 Roland-Garros champion extended her current streak to 29 match wins in a row and is searching for a sixth consecutive title this fortnight. Tsurenko now falls to 0-7 lifetime against reigning world No.1.

SWIATEK CRUISES TO SECOND ROUND, OSAKA OUSTED BY ANISIMOVA

Things however were not so easy for Japan's Osaka as she went down to Anisimova for a second consecutive major. Osaka's Australian Open title defence earlier this year ended at the hands of Anisimova, and the four-time major champion suffered the same fate in Paris on Monday, falling 7-5, 6-4 to the big-hitting American.

After a hard-fought first set, the first three games of the contest went against serve before Anisimova consolidated her advantage for a 3-1 lead. The Japanese star broke back though, drawing level two games later and the pair remained neck and neck until Anisimova broke to edge ahead 6-5. The 20-year-old American wrapped up the set 7-5 on the 46-minute mark, said the official website of the competition.

Anisimova made her move in game seven of the second set, and despite

seeing two match points slip as she was serving for the win, she fired a signature down-the-line backhand to secure her passage to round two. He will next qualifier Danka Kovinic.

Two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka, the No.15 seed, is down a set but up a break in the second on Court 14 battling Romanian Ana Bogdan, while double Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova, the No.32 seed, took out Hungarian Anna Bondar 7-6(0), 6-1. Former US Open champion Bianca Andreescu is on Court 7, facing Belgian qualifier Alison Van Uytvanck.

After leading 2-0 in the first set, Andreescu fell behind 3-6, 0-2 to the



left-handed

Bonaventure,

who came into

the match

battle-

tested with three qualifying wins under her belt. Andreescu clawed her way back into the contest and took the second set 7-5. She opened up a 3-0 lead in the decider before play was interrupted due to rain.

ABHISHEK BACHCHAN RETURNS FROM CANNES 2022 TO A SAD NEWS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Abhishek Bachchan attended the 75th Cannes film festival with Aishwarya Rai and Aaradhy. However, the actor is back in the bay and was papped at the airport two days ago. Well, taking to his social media handle, Abhishek Bachchan has now revealed that he returned home to the news of his friend- stylist Akbar Shahpurwala's demise.

In his post, Abhishek also mentioned that Akbar had stitched his first-ever suit when he was a child.

Mourning the demise of Akbar Shahpurwala, Abhishek wrote, "Returned home to very sad news. Akbar Shahpurwala a bona fide legend of the film world passed away. I knew him as Akki uncle."

He made my father's costumes and most of his suits from as far back as I can remember and many of my films too. He personally cut and stitched my first ever suit as a baby (I still have it) to the tux I wore to Refugee's premiere. If your costumes and suits were made by Kachins and then Gabana then you had arrived as a star. That was his influence and standing. If he personally cut your suit, then he truly loved you."

The actor then recalled a few more memories with the stylist and wrote, "He always said to me that " cutting a suit is not just tailoring, it's an emotion. When you wear my suits, each stitch is made with love and filled with my blessings ". To me he was the best suit maker in the



world! I will wear one of your enumerable suits that you made for me tonight, Akki uncle, and feel blessed! Rest in peace."

Bollywood celebrities, such as Karan Johar and ace designer Manish Malhotra also paid their last respects by commenting on Abhishek's emotional note.

Rakhi Sawant face betrayal yet again

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rakhi Sawant has been in the spotlight after announcing her divorce from estranged spouse Ritesh Singh. She soon found love again and introduced Adil Khan Durrani, her new partner. Everyone was taken aback by this news. She affectionately refers to him as "sweetheart" and has spoken to the press about him.

Reportedly, Adil proposed to her after a month of their first encounter, she claimed. He used the examples of Priyanka Chopra-Nick Jonas and Malaika Arora-Arjun Kapoor, who also have an age difference, to persuade Rakhi to accept their relationship. Rakhi's happiness, however, appears to be fleeting.

According to news reports, Rakhi Sawant received a call from a girl who described herself as Roshina Delavarai from Mysore. Adil is also from Mysore. Rakhi was taken aback, but she listened to her. Roshina claimed that Adil had been in love with her for four years. Roshina went on to tell Rakhi about her interactions with Adil. The call was to urge Rakhi to avoid Adil. According to reports, Rakhi discussed it with Adil. He told her Roshina was his ex-girlfriend.



Roshina's Instagram page also included photos of her with Adil. Roshina was also questioned about Adil and if she had contacted Rakhi Sawant. She, however, declined to remark on it. Rakhi Sawant, on the same stated, "Roshina's

call to me holds no water. She did call me, but Adil sirf mera hai. She is his ex-girlfriend. And, Adil and I are going to get married." This appears to be rather complex. It will be fascinating to see if Rakhi marries Adil or not.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular TV actor Karan Kundra recently opened up on his marriage plans with Tejasswi Prakash and shared that the latter is the one who is delaying their wedding as she is too busy. He also said that their parents often meet with each other.

Karan and Tejasswi are the most loved couples post their stint in 'Bigg Boss 15'. Their fans call them TejRan and the duo keep posting their reels on social media.

During a media interview, Karan said that they don't hide anything and go with natural progression.

"When it comes to marriage, 'Madam ke pass time kahan hai' Karan said, adding that Tejasswi keeps blaming him in her interviews for the delay and now he is doing the same.

In another interview to media he also shared that they both were destined to meet on 'Bigg Boss 15' and that was the reason both agreed to do the show together despite the fact they were being approached for years.

KARAN SAYS TEJASSWI IS DELAYING THEIR WEDDING AS SHE'S OCCUPIED



Renee hosted party for her mother 'Sushmita Sen'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former beauty queen Sushmita Sen's elder daughter Renee hosted a get party for her mother to celebrate 28 years of her winning the Miss Universe crown. The actress was joined by her former beau Rohman Shawla and niece Ziana.

Sushmita became Miss Universe in 1994 and made her film debut few years later. The actress posted a motley of pictures from the same along with notes of gratitude.

Sharing some adorable pictures with Ziana sitting on her shoulders, Sushmita wrote on Instagram: "#buakijaan #VIPMehamaan Ziana Sen comes home to wish her Sexy' a happy 28 yrs of Miss Universe!!! I promise you this romance has only just begun @asopacharu

@rajeevsn9. Thank you all for the warmest, most loving wishes... I celebrated the day with family, friends & all of you!!! #blessed."

Sushmita shared a group picture from the reunion of friends and family members as well. It shows Sushmita in a black dress, seated on the couch along with sister-in-law Charu and other friends. Rohman is seen in front, smiling for the camera.

Well despite all the fights Remo found Lizzelle very caring and possessive also.

"While traveling to a shoot, I discovered that she is very caring. I was sleeping without a pillow. She offered her lap to put my head on, and she started caressing my hair, and that changed everything," he shared in a conversation with a media portal.

Remo added: "She is more possessive and short tempered too. If I'm on the phone for a longer time, she starts losing her cool and questions me, like a typical wife, about who is on the line."

Lizzelle D'Souza and Remo D'Souza have tied the knot three times. The third one in a Christian style in 2019 as they completed 20 years of marriage.



Remo D'Souza on his love story with Lizzelle

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Well known choreographer Remo D'Souza shares about his meeting with model-dancer Lizzelle D'Souza. Remo opens up about his love story and how they both were opposite to each other. He said in a media interview:

"I met my better half during a shoot in 1999-2000. For one song, she was a model, and I was a dancer."

While sharing about his initial reaction when he saw her, he said: "The bells tolling at first sight, et al only happens in films. After she became a part of Ahmed Khan's dance group, I was the one who would make her rehearse."

"She was always late, so we fought like cats and dogs. But they say opposites attract, and that's exactly what happened with us. One day we realised that despite our fights, there is love between us."

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Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Kriti Sanon, who started her Bollywood journey with 'Heropanti', has clocked eight years in the Hindi film industry. On the occasion, the actress made an announcement about embarking upon a new journey as an entrepreneur.

Kriti will soon be launching a fitness app called 'The Tribe' after discovering her passion for fitness during the filming of her project, 'Mim' where she had to undergo a physical transformation in order to look the part of a pregnant woman.

The actress took to her Instagram as she shared a picture with her team. She wrote in the caption, "They say Your Vibe Attracts Your Tribe. I have always been someone who believes in pushing people I truly believe in and today stands for exactly that."

She continued in her caption, "8 years ago, I started my journey as an actor in the Hindi film industry with the help of people who believed in me and gave me wings to fly! Today, 8 yrs later, exactly on the same day, I am thrilled to announce my journey as an Entrepreneur with my three amazingly talented Co-founders Anushka Nandani, Karan Sawhney and Robin Behl as we launch our Passion Project 'The Tribe'."

Sharing how fitness became a major part of her lifestyle and how it opened up new avenues for her, Kriti wrote, "I discovered my personal fitness journey post MIMI when I had to shed the 15 kilos I had put on for the film and we hit a lockdown where gyms were shut. Robin, Karan and Anushka became a huge part of this journey of mine and made me realise that to stay fit."

Following a strict fitness regime is all about motivation and the right company. As Kriti states in her social media post, "All you need is motivation, the right guidance and someone who can make workouts fun for you no matter where you are. We at The Tribe believe in motivating you to become the best and the fittest version of yourself -- Be it with in-studio, group/personal or virtual sessions with some of the coolest, youngest & fittest trainers who will not only push your limits but also make workouts super fun."

Kriti Sanon turns entrepreneur as she completed 8 years in BW



Sara Ali Khan