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ENSURE PEOPLE IN MASS GATHERINGS ASYMPTOMATIC, FULLY VACCINATED, STATES TOLD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Tuesday asked states and Union Territories to ensure that people taking part in mass gatherings and pilgrimages are asymptomatic and preferably fully vaccinated against Covid-19. Amid rising Covid cases in the country, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan will chair a review meeting with states on Tuesday.

"All states/UTs, where such mass gatherings/yatras are proposed to be held should widely publicise that all individuals planning to participate in such gatherings/events are asymptomatic and preferably fully vaccinated against Covid-19," Bhushan in a letter to the states and UTs.

He said if needed, a special drive for primary vaccination and precaution dose administration to all eligible people may be taken by the administration at least a fortnight in advance for those planning to join. Further adequate publicity and arrangement for testing (RTPCR & RAT) shall be done across multiple locations, he added.

While the trajectory of Covid-19 cases has declined significantly from levels that were observed in earlier part of this year, a few states and UTs across the country are witnessing a sustained upswing in the cases currently, he said in the letter.

The Centre has underlined need to enhance focus on five-fold strategy of test-track-treat-vaccination and adherence to Covid-19 appropriate behaviour.

"During many such events/yatras, lakhs of individuals undertake intra- and inter-state journey spanning hundreds of kilometres with halting points arranged by volunteers and community-based social/religious organisations. Such congregations may potentially facilitate transmission of infectious diseases, including Covid-19," Bhushan said.The Centre has said that in the events like religious yatras, where en-route congregation points are expected, state governments concerned shall identify major routes expected to be taken by individuals and organise requisite health facilities on these routes.

CENTRE REVIEWS COVID SITUATION WITH 14 STATES REPORTING SURGING CASES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Tuesday reviewed the status of Covid situation with 14 such states that are reporting high number of cases on a week-to-week basis, along with increased case positivity, combined with low numbers of COVID tests and below average Covid vaccination.

In the review meeting held over video-conferencing, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan advised states reporting surge in cases to focus on sentinel surveillance, caution, and continuous alertness for early detection and reporting of cases.

NITI Aayog's Member, Health, Dr VK Paul, who was also present at the review meeting, advised states reporting spike in the infection to be watchful of the emerging pandemic situation."The major action point is to focus on strengthening proactive surveillance as per the Revised Surveillance Strategy issued by Union Health Ministry on June 9," he said, adding that the routine surveillance constitutes the steel frame of Covid

response and management strategy and needs continuous and unstinted attention.

The four-fold strategy highlights surveillance of incoming international travellers, community-based surveillance, sentinel site surveillance (health facility-based surveillance and lab-based surveillance), and whole genome sequencing, he said.

States were advised to scan for and report all SARI and ILI cases from all district hospitals, major private hospitals and medical colleges across the districts, and keep a close watch on those geographies where these clusters are emerging.

They were also strongly advised to strictly monitor epidemiological profile of admitted Covid patients and report the clinical manifestation to the Health Ministry, rather than a random or anecdotal reporting which will help to identify at an early stage any out-of-the-ordinary or different clinical presentation of the patients.

Noting that the uptake in second and precaution doses in many states reporting the present surge was low, they were advised to rapidly accelerate the vaccination coverage especially of the 60+ elderly population, and second dose among 12-17 population group.

Dr Paul and the Union Health Secretary both highlighted the low level of Covid testing across the states, and drop in RT-PCR share. Instead of a thin and wide testing spectrum, states were advised to focus on strategic testing of patients coming to fever clinics, SARI and ILI patients, along with new clusters and geographies in all districts reporting higher positivity.

TAILOR HACKED TO DEATH FOR SUPPORTING NUPUR SHARMA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Udaipur | Agencies

In a gruesome incident, a tailor was hacked to death in broad daylight inside his shop on a crowded street in Udaipur for supporting now-suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on social media over her controversial remarks on Prophet Muhammed. Two men have been arrested in the case.

The attackers entered his shop and stabbed him multiple times with daggers and also slit his throat. A video of the incident where the accused have claimed responsibility for the murder has gone viral on social media.

The shops in Hathipol, Ghantaghar, Ashwani Bazar, Dehli Gate and Maldas Street in Udaipur have pulled down their shutters in protest against the incident.

The body of the victim was still lying outside the shop till the time of filing this report. The family members of the deceased have demanded Rs 50 lakh and a government job as compensation.

The victim has been identified as Kanhaiyalal Teli (40), a tailor who ran a shop by the name of Supreme Tailors in Dhanmandi.

At around 2.30 pm on Tuesday, the two miscreants entered his shop on the pretext of giving their measurements for cloth stitching.

By the time Kanhaiyalal could understand anything, the miscreants attacked him multiple times with daggers, resulting in his death.

Top police officers and an FSL team are on the spot collecting evidence.

Meanwhile, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has appealed to the people to maintain peace.

"I condemn the heinous murder in Udaipur. Strict action will be taken against all those involved in the crime and the police will go to the bottom of the case. I appeal to all the parties to maintain peace. Strictest punishment will be given to those involved in such a heinous crime," he said.

Kanhaiyalal was a resident of Govardhan Vilas area. Ten days back, he had put up a social media post in favour of Nupur Sharma. Since then, people from a particular community were threatening to kill him.

Troubled by the constant threats, Kanhaiyalal did not even open his shop for six days besides filing a police complaint in this matter. The police asked him to remain careful for a few days.

4 dead as Pawan Hans chopper ditches in Arabian Sea, 5 saved

At least four persons perished after a Pawan Hans helicopter ditched into the Arabian Sea near the ONGC's Sagar Kiran oil-rig, off Mumbai High Fields, around 175 kms off the country's commercial capital, official sources said on Tuesday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

At least four persons perished after a Pawan Hans helicopter ditched into the Arabian Sea near the ONGC's Sagar Kiran oil-rig, off Mumbai High Fields, around 175 kms off the country's commercial capital, official sources said on Tuesday.

The chopper was carrying nine people - seven passengers, reportedly ONGC staffers, and two pilots - and a major operation comprising the ONGC, the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard, and offshore supply vessels, was launched to rescue them.

By 2 pm, all the nine were taken out, but four, who were unconscious after rescue and flown to a Mumbai hospital, were pronounced dead later, said officials.

"All 9 persons on board the helicopter were rescued. nfortunately, four of them, brought unconscious to the Mumbai base and taken to the hospital, lost the battle of life. ONGC deeply mourns this loss," said the ONGC in a tweet this evening.Further details of the fatalities, the cause of death, their identities, etc are awaited.

The rescue operation comprised the ONGC's offshore supply vessel Malviya-16 and a boat from oil rig Sagar Kiran, while the Indian Coast Guard deployed its helicopters to drop rafts near the ditched chopper, and the Indian Navy sent an ALH and a Sea King chopper.

The cause of the emergency landing on water, whether related to weather or technical issues, is not immediately clear, according to ONGC officials in Mumbai and New Delhi.

RAJ GOVT PREPARES FOR 100% QUOTA IN JOBS FOR LOCALS

The Rajasthan government on Tuesday said it is working on a plan to give 100 per cent reservation to the local youths of the state in government jobs. The state government is presently studying the legal aspect related to it.

Jaipur: The Rajasthan government on Tuesday said it is working on a plan to give 100 per cent reservation to the local youths of the state in government jobs. The state government is presently studying the legal aspect related to it.

He, however, said that this measure goes against the spirit of the Supreme Court.

Speaking at the foundation stone laying ceremony of Youth Excellence Centre on Tuesday, Gehlot said, "For the last few days, there has been a demand for reservation in government jobs for local youths of the state. However, according to the spirit of the Supreme Court, it is not right. I am studying the legal aspect of it. If this becomes reality, then Rajasthan will be the first state in the country where local youths will get full reservation," he said.

"I am saying this because the Supreme Court says that you cannot do this. However, one or two states have decided on this aspect. I am studying it and will further make a promise to you (to work on this front) as I want to do such a work that you will remember it forever," he added.

Listing out his achievements on the employment front, Gehlot said, "After the formation of the government in Rajasthan, over 1.25 lakh youths have been given employment. One lakh jobs are under process. While one lakh more recruitment will be made. In such a situation, employment will be given to the youth on 3 lakh posts. Yet the youths protest which is completely wrong," he added.

ZUBAIR WILL BE TAKEN TO B'LURU TO RECOVER HIS ELECTRONIC DEVICES

New Delhi: The Special Cell of Delhi Police will take Alt News co-founder Mohammed Zubair to Bengaluru to recover his laptop which he used to tweet and upload various contents on different social media sites. "Zubair was deliberately using religion to outrage a religious group. He was doing this to gain popularity," the police have alleged.

The Special Cell has said that he was evasive and was not cooperating with the officials. After recovering the laptop, the police will try to access the hard disk memory to check the edited materials which were allegedly posted by him. The laptop will be sent for the forensic examinations at CFSL, Rohini.

"My laptop and my phone storage are my personal things. They want my laptop only to harass me, only because I have been challenging what certain people have been saying, and some of those people are in power," Zubair has said through his counsel Vrinda Grover.

Now as the police has got the four days custodial remand, they are all set to take Zubair to Bengaluru on Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning. Zubair has been allowed to meet his lawyer even in Bengaluru.As per the FIR, accused Zubair had used a screengrab of an old Hindi movie which showed an image of a hotel, with its board reading 'Hanuman hotel' instead of 'Honeymoon hotel'.

In his tweet, Zubair had written, "BEFORE 2014: Honeymoon Hotel. After 2014: Hanuman Hotel."

The complainant tagging Delhi Police had written, "Linking our God Hanuman Ji with Honeymoon is a direct insult of Hindus because he is a brahmachari.

MAHARASHTRA CRISIS:

CM Thackeray offers olive branch but rebels spurn it

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In an apparent softening of stance, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who is also the Shiv Sena President, on Tuesday appealed to the rebel group camping in Guwahati to return and hold discussions, but rebel leader and state minister Eknath Shinde indirectly spurned the latest overtures.

"Many of you are in contact with us and are still emotionally connected with the Shiv Sena. The families of many have also got in touch with us and conveyed your sentiments to us," said Thackeray.He assured that as the head of the Sena family, he respected their views and made it clear from his heart that till date "nobody is out of the party" though the (rebels) are stuck in Guwahati with all kinds of speculation.

"I appeal to you all Come before me, let's remove all the misconceptions in the minds of the people and the Shiv Sainiks," Thackeray appealed.

The CM said if they all sit together, they can definitely come up with a solution to the political imbroglio even as he cautioned them against falling prey to any kind of wrong measures, hinting at a possible tie-up with the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party.He made it clear that the respect and dignity the Shiv Sena accorded to them, they can never get that privilege anywhere else."Come in front of me and present your views, let's work out a solution. I am still worried about you," concluded Thackeray, as the worsening crisis threatened the survival of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government of Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress.

Hours later, Shinde hit back at Thackeray, his son Aditya Thackeray and the party's chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut in a sharp tweet.

"On one hand your son (state minister Aditya Thackeray) and spokesperson (MP Sanjay Raut) called the revered Balasaheb Thackeray's Shiv Sainiks pigs, guttermuck, dogs, cattle, morons, zombies, and even brought in their fathers, and on the other hand, they are making a call to save the anti-Hindutva MVA by trying to get back the very same MLAs. What does this mean," Shinde asked.

This was the third direct appeal made by the CM to the rebels since the party's crisis exploded on the night of June 21-22.

On previous calls for rapprochement from the Sena side, Shinde has categorically demanded that first the CM should quit the MVA alliance and join a BJP-led government in the interest of the people of the state, Hindutva and safeguarding the future of the Sena threatened by the NCP-Congress partnership.

The rebuttal came in response to Aditya Thackeray and Raut's repeated assertions that around 20 MLAs who went to the 48-strong rebel camp are in contact with them and would vote for the Sena upon return.

BJP exploring ways to bring no-confidence motion

Amid the ongoing political crisis in Maharashtra, the BJP is exploring possibilities of bringing a 'no-confidence' motion against Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

New Delhi: Amid the ongoing political crisis in Maharashtra, the BJP is exploring possibilities of bringing a 'no-confidence' motion against Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

Sources said that a decision to bring a no-confidence motion is under consideration and a final decision will be taken soon."Party leadership is discussing to move the motion by own, independent supporting rebels and Shiv Sena or together," sources said.Rebel Sena leader Eknath Shinde expected to reach Mumbai from Guwahati. A party insider said that a final decision will be taken at the earliest.Earlier in the day, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis met BJP chief J.P. Nadda and discussed the unfolding political situation in the state.

It is also learnt that Fadnavis is flying back to Mumbai to execute the plan decided in the meeting with the party central leadership.

"Future of Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government is hanging in balance and there is complete uncertainty over continuity of the government. Current political situation is the agenda of the meeting between Nadda and Fadnavis and party's future course of action is also discussed," sources said."Fadnavis also discussed party's future course of action," sources said.

As uncertainty continues to haunt the ruling MVA government, the BJP is closely following the political developments and adopting wait and watch policy.On Monday, Maharashtra BJP State Core Committee meeting was held in Mumbai to discuss all aspects in details.

"So far we have not got any proposal from anybody in this matter... Whenever it is received, we shall consider it and call another core committee meeting if needed," senior Maharashtra leader Sudhir Mungantiwar had said, reiterating the party's known stance.

A political crisis hit the Maha Vikas Agadhi government last week when Shiv Sena MLAs, including Minister Eknath Shinde revolted against the party leadership.A BJP insider said that party is treading cautiously amid the changing political situation in Maharashtra to avoid repeat of 2019 misadventure when Devendra Fadnavis was sworn in as the chief minister of Maharashtra and later resigned due to lack of numbers.

CONGRESS TO OPPOSE SALE OF PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Tuesday said that it will not allow the reckless selling of Public Sector Banks (PSBs). The party alleged that the Modi government is now all set to completely exit from public sector banks, which is an "ill thought out strategy with dangerous repercussions."

Addressing a press conference, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate said: "The Congress will oppose this reckless sale of strategic profit making assets including the complete exit from Public Sector Banks which are being sold. We will tell them to sell those assets which have been built in 8 years."

The party said that banks were nationalised in 1969 which did not just break the monopoly of a few private lenders but ensured that banking reaches the last mile. State owned banks do priority lending to sectors like agriculture and small industries that private banks shy away from.

They have helped in the development of backward areas and have opened branches in far flung regions of the country where no private banks would venture. PSBs are not just financial institutions, they are actually agents of social empowerment.

"But this fire sale of strategic and profit making assets built over the last 75 years raises some serious questions. What is the explanation for the disastrous IPO of LIC with losses of over $18 billion, almost one third of its valuation," Shrinate said.

The party pointed out that the Modi government forced to halt reckless PSU sale in the last 2 months alone, the government has been forced to halt its privatisation spree. The BPCL sale has been called off after 2 of 3 investors withdrew, deterred by faulty fuel pricing policies and various uncertainties. The sale of Pawan Hans Ltd is now on hold after 51 per cent stake was sold to a company that had failed to honour a previous bid for an insolvent company, and the NCLT Kolkata had ruled against it. PHL plays a strategic role in offshore oil platforms, commercial operations in border areas.

Central Electronics Ltd is a Ministry of Science and Technology PSU that provides critical materials and services for strategic sectors such as defence, railways and energy. It was severely undervalued and 100 per cent equity was sold to a financial company with no scientific background that had links to BJP politicians --now on hold after the two bidders turned out to be related parties, the Congress said.

Sale of Container Corporation of India (Concor), a unit of the Indian Railways, was put on hold over Congress party's charges of how the government was using backdoor arrangement to hand over railway land acquired from farmers at a concessional rate or free of cost to a private party for commercial use.

Shrinate alleged that the privatisation of three PSUs has been delayed because of issues over the valuation of land. CONCOR has land around railway stations, Shipping Corporation of India has land in Maharashtra especially Mumbai) while Bharat Earth Movers has land in West Bengal and Karnataka.

"It is clear the single minded objective is to hand over these ventures and the lakhs of acres of land they hold to Modi's chosen few crony capitalist friends," she added.

Mamata alleges indirect pressure to give Agniveers jobs after 4 years

KOLKATA | Agencies

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday alleged there is indirect pressure on her to appoint Agniveers on state government jobs after they complete four years of service in the armed forces under the Agnipath scheme.

According to her, such appeals have come to her from a section of the defence personnel. "Recently, I received a letter from a colonel on this count. He said that he will forward names of Agniveers from a panel which might be recruited in the state government," she said.

However, Banerjee asserted that under no circumstances, she would take any step in this regard.

"The youths from West Bengal are my priority in state government jobs. This is a dustbin created by the BJP. Why I will have to clean that? BJP will have to clean its own dustbin," she said while addressing a rally at the industrial township of Asansol in West Burdwan district.

Describing the Agnipath scheme as just an "eyewash" before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Chief Minister once again raised the demand for fixing the retirement age in armed forces to 60 years.

She also claimed that the Agnipath scheme is just a ploy by the BJP to create its own force of armed cadres. "Only four out of 100 recruits under the Agnipath scheme will be from common youths and the remaining recruits will be from the different wings of BJP," she alleged.

Banerjee also said that in four years, only 60,000 youths will be recruited in two phases. "... This means that not even 1,000 people will be recruited from one state. On one hand, the Union government is coming out with such eyewash schemes and on the other hand, it is abolishing 80,000 posts in the railways. All Central government undertakings have stopped fresh recruitments though several posts are lying vacant. The Union government's only aim is to sell out these public sector undertakings," she alleged.

Brutality in name of religion cannot be tolerated: Rahul on Udaipur killing

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said that brutality in the name of religion cannot be tolerated.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said that brutality in the name of religion cannot be tolerated.

"I am deeply shocked by the heinous murder in Udaipur. Brutality in the name of religion cannot be tolerated. Those who spread terror by this cruelty should be punished immediately," tweeted Rahul Gandhi reacting to the Udaipur incident.

Appealing to maintain the peace, he wrote in the same tweet in Hindi, "We all have to defeat hate together. I appeal to all, please maintain peace and brotherhood."

A tailor was beheaded in broad daylight in Rajasthan's Udaipur on Tuesday by two persons for allegedly supporting suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on social media.The two attackers also recorded the incident on camera and said in another video post that they avenged an insult to Islam. They were later arrested by the police.

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi also condemned the gruesome incident. She said that condemnation is not enough for this incident.

"Whatever the condemnation be for this violent incident is less. The culprits should get the hardest of the punishment. The designs that spread hatred and violence in the name of religion are fatal for our country and society," she tweeted in Hindi. "Together we have to strengthen efforts for peace and non-violence," she added.

NIA CONDUCTS SEARCHES AT TWO LOCATIONS IN UP IN JMB CASE

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday conducted searches at two locations in Deoband, Uttar Pradesh in JMB Case of Bhopal.

The case relates to arrest of six active cadres, belonging to proscribed organization JMB, including three Bangladeshi illegal immigrants, from Bhopal.

They were involved in propagating the ideology of JMB and motivating the youth to perform Jihad against India. The case was initially registered on March 14, 2022 and later the NIA re-registered the case on April 4. "During the searches conducted at the premises of suspects today, digital devices, documents and various other incriminating materials have been seized," the NIA official said. Further investigations in the matter is on.

Lakhanpur Corridor turned into Facilitation Centre for Amarnath pilgrims

THE LAKHANPUR CORRIDOR, THE TOUCHDOWN POINT FOR AMARNATH YATRIS ENTERING JAMMU AND KASHMIR VIA ROAD, HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A MAJOR FACILITATION CENTRE, OFFICIALS SAID ON TUESDAY..

JAMMU | Agencies

The Lakhanpur Corridor, the touchdown point for Amarnath Yatris entering Jammu and Kashmir via road, has been turned into a Major Facilitation Centre, officials said on Tuesday. The gateway of Jammu and Kashmir has been revamped into a multi-facility centre for smooth transit of Amarnath Yatris for their next phase of journey towards Jammu base camp.

A reception centre has been set up for providing point to point information to the Yatris, who can also have food, drinking water, and resting facilities besides availing toilet facilities at Lakhanpur Corridor. A data centre has been established for proper record of the Yatris, who are already registered and need to undergo mandatory eKYC for issuance of RFID tags.

An arcade of stalls of government departments depicting local art and craft of Jammu and Kashmir, besides exhibits of AYUSH, Horticulture, Agriculture, NRLM SHGs have also been displayed for sale. Food stalls of different types are also established where devotees can get a taste of local delicacies.

Digital screens, installed by the Tourism Department to portray the complete tourism profile of Jammu and Kashmir, are catching the attention of visitors.

Also, a Cultural stall by the Information Department is witnessing huge participation of enthusiastic devotees who are enjoying the popular devotional numbers.

A 24x7 Information help desk has also been set up to provide proper Yatra related information to the visitors. A dedicated Health Centre has been established at Lakhanpur equipped with emergency medical services along with Covid testing facilities to meet up any contingencies.

Moosewala murder: Special Cell arrests Lawrence Bishnoi aide in fresh case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Special Cell of the Delhi Police arrested Naresh Kumar, a close aide of gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Kala Jathedi, in a fresh case on Monday in connection with supplying arms to the accused held in the Sidhu Moosewala murder case, sources told IANS.

His arrest has been shown in a different case lodged against him. Kumar was brought on transit remand from a Punjab jail and was produced before a Patiala House Court. The Special Cell sought fourteen days police custody. The police move was opposed by advocate Deepak Tyagi who appeared for Kumar. The court after hearing the arguments allowed the police request and sent him to police custody.

Sources said that he was involved in the murders of rival gang members and hence his custodial interrogation was required.

"He provided hideouts for absconding gang members. He used to supply sophisticated arms to his accomplices and others on the instructions of Lawrence Bishnoi, Sampat Nehra, Canada based gangster Goldy Brar and Anmol Bishnoi. We will confront him with his aides who are in our custody now. We want to know about the entire plot of killing Sidhu Moosewala," said the source.

The source said that the police want to know about the funding of the entire syndicate. Kumar was looking after the gang's operations in Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab.

The court after hearing the arguments allowed seven days police remand of Kumar. The police will now try to find out who funded the killing of Moosewala and how many persons were involved in it.

FLOOD THREAT EMERGES IN NORTH BIHAR, SEEMANCHAL AREAS

Patna: Several districts in north Bihar and the Seemanchal area were facing floods as a number of rivers in the region rose above the danger mark on Tuesday.

Several villages in Araria, Purnea, Kishanganj, Katihar in Seemanchal, as well as East Champaran, West Champaran, Gopalganj, Supaul and other districts were affected due to flooding.

In Araria, the water level of Nuna river rose on Tuesday and flooded several villages after washing away the embankment at Sikti block. The section of road connecting Sikti to Singhiya was also damaged by flood water. Children were seen playing in flood water.

Beside Nuna river, Lohandra river was also flowing above the danger mark and flood water entered everal villages coming under the Kursakanta block. The Parman and Bakrav rivers were 10 centimetres above the danger mark in Jokihat block. The water level of the Gandak, Burhi Gandak, Kosi, and Kamla Balan river have also crossed danger level in several places, due to continuous rainfall in Nepal.

Assembly polls: BJP's Gujarat vs AAP's Delhi model

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Upcoming assembly polls in Gujarat are turning out to be a fight between BJP's 'Gujarat Model' versus Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) 'Delhi Model'.

To expose Arvind Kejriwal's Delhi Model, which he is regularly talking about during his visit to poll bound states, a 17-member Gujarat BJP delegation landed in the national capital on Tuesday to conduct a reality check of the AAP government's claims of improved quality education and health facilities in Delhi.

In his regular trip to Gujarat, Kejriwal highlights the Delhi model which he claims has changed the city's education and health facilities in the last seven years.

Gujarat BJP media convener and head of delegation Yagneshbhai Dave told IANS that a 17-member delegation which includes former ministers, educationists, spokespersons and even political analysts are in the national capital to visit government schools and Mohalla clinics. "Our delegation will collect the visual evidence by visiting schools and Mohalla clinics. After collecting the evidence of the failed governance model of Kejriwal, we will show it to the people of Gujarat and expose him among people," Dave said. Dave claimed that Gujarat education model is much better than the Delhi model in every parameters.

"There is no comparison between our education and Delhi model either in number of students and per cent of vacant posts. We have better student enrolment number than Delhi," Dave said. As the news about the arrival of Gujarat BJP spread, Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia tweeted that Delhi government has formed a team of five MLAs to guide and help the BJP delegation. Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta claimed that whenever someone comes from abroad to see Kejriwal's education system, the chief minister shows them only two to four buildings whose walls are painted.

CHANGE OF DOB

I Madhuri Wife Service Number 14645226L Rank Nayak Mohite Somnath Sargerao Address is Village Mandvad, Tehsil Nandgaon, District Nashik, State Maharashtra. As per my husband's service record my date of birth is 18.03.1993 which is wrong. My date of birth as per aadhar and pan card is 18.03.1995 which is correct and true Affidavit No.YY 210301 Dated 19/04/2022

CHANGE OF NAME

I DEEPAK B SUTAGATTI is legally son of No. JC 820284X Rank SUB BALAPPA BASAPPA SUTAGATTI presently residing at H.No. 392/14 Vill - Panthnagar Post- Bale Kundri (B.K) Dist- Belagavi, State- Karnataka Pin - 591103 have changed my name from DEEPAK S to DEEPAK B SUTAGATTI vide affitdavit No. AZ 147229.

CHANGE OF NAME

I DIXITA BALAPPA SUTAGATTI is legally daughter of No. JC 820284X Rank SUB BALAPPA BASAPPA SUTAGATTI presently residing at H.No. 392/14 Vill - Panthnagar Post- Bale Kundri (B.K) Dist- Belagavi, State- Karnataka Pin - 591103 have changed my name from DIXITA to DIXITA BALAPPA SUTAGATTI vide affitdavit No. AZ 147228.

Father hacks son to death over petty issue in Gujarat

NAVSARI | Agencies

On Tuesday morning, when the world woke up, a father in cold blood hacked his 19-year-old son to death with an axe over some petty issues. Father suspected that his son had stolen money from his pocket.

Chanchalben Patel in her complaint with the Khergam police station in the Navsari district said, "Around 6 a.m. I was cooking in the kitchen, though my husband Bhagubhai had woken up, but he was lying in the bed. Our 19-year-old son Sahil was sleeping, when I heard big bang noise and rushed out to find that my husband was standing with an axe. He had hit on my son's neck with the axe two to three times. Sahil was lying in a pool of blood."

"After hitting my son, my husband sat on the floor and did not reply to any of my questions," she added. She rushed out and sought help. "Neighbours called an emergency ambulance, and doctors declared my son dead, so police were informed," she stated in her statement.She told the police that when she asked her husband why he killed our son, Bhagubhai told her that on Monday night, Sahil had slapped him twice, because he was caught urinating in a tub and he also suspected that he had stolen money from his pocket. Bhagubhai is a daily wage earner, though Sahil was tenth pass, he was jobless.

Police Sub Inspector SS Mal said that the accused Bhagubhai has been arrested and Sahil's body has been sent for the post-mortem. The accused has been arrested for murder.

Woman kills 6-year-old son in Gujarat's Vadodara

Vadodara | Agencies

A woman and her paramour were detained by the Vadodara police on Tuesday for allegedly killing the six-year-old son of the woman.

The crime took place in Pasva village of Savli taluka in Central Gujarat. Complainant Mukesh Parmar stated that his wife Sumitra had been in a relationship with one Kisan Rawal for more than a year.

"On Sunday, I had gone to market to buy groceries when Rawal came to my house. The neighbours caught him red handed with my wife," he stated.

Mukesh said that he had also called his parents, in-laws and informed them about his wife's illicit relationship. "Elders from both sides convinced her to break all ties with Rawal and live with me. After which Rawal left the village," he said.

On Monday morning, he left for work leaving behind his son Prince, daughter Riya and Sumitra. In the afternoon, he received a call from his relatives who told him that his son's dead body was lying on the floor. After rushing back home, he found strangulation marks around his son's neck.

The complainant said that his nephew had seen Sumitra carrying the body on her shoulder and going towards the canal.

When neighbours saw Sumitra carrying Prince's body, she told them that she is going to kill her daughter Riya too so that she can live with Rawal, the complainant said.

Savli police (Vadodara rural) have registered the complaint against Sumitra and her paramour for murder, destroying evidence, and criminal intimidation. Police Sub Inspector Alpesh Mahida said both the accused had been picked up on Tuesday morning and once their corona test is negative, they will be arrested.

OUR GOVERNMENT WILL WORK LIKE A VISION, NOT A TELEVISION: KAMAL NATH

IN THE URBAN BODY ELECTIONS, FORMER CM AND PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS IN MADHYA PRADESH KAMAL NATH ATTACKED THE BJP GOVERNMENT AND SAID THAT OUR GOVERNMENT WORKS FOR THE VISION, NOT FOR THE TELEVISION LIKE BJP.

Team Absolute | Ujjain

Preparations are in full swing for Panchayat and civic elections across the state. All the political parties are campaigning at their own level and making claims of victory. Kamal Nath arrived on Tuesday to appeal for votes for Mayor candidate Mahesh Parmar and Congress councillor candidates in 54 wards.

Former CM Kamal Nath targeted the BJP and after 15 months again claimed to be the Congress government. He said that CM Shivraj made 20 thousand announcements in 15 years and all are false. Our government works for vision, not television like BJP.

Kamal Nath said that I myself have chosen Mahesh Parmar to contest the elections. Chosen with the belief that it is less political, more social service. Our biggest power is spiritual power and the biggest symbol of this is Ujjain. I feel sad seeing the condition of Ujjain. BJP remembers Ujjain Singh and on special occasions because they will get an opportunity for corruption.

BJP only does politics of announcements. The development of Ujjain will not be decided by the politics of drama and gimmicks. Kamal Nath again reiterated that the Congress government will be formed in 15 months.

Explaining the difference between economic activity and GDP, Kamal Nath said that those who have grocery and small shops, they generate economic activity, not GDP. My intention is to decide the plan of economic activities for the beginning and strengthen the agriculture sector. Speaking on employment, Kamal Nath said that today's youth want employment opportunities. Now only urbanization is taking place because employment is not available. I had prepared the vision keeping all these things in mind. Keeping all these things in mind, because in these conditions of employment, now both the village and the city are missing. Targeting the law and order situation of the state, Kamal Nath said that today every section of the state is troubled. Madhya Pradesh is number one in women atrocities and child atrocities. Today every section of the state is troubled. In the agriculture sector, the farmer is wandering for edible seeds. CM Shivraj is lying on lies.

We need the politics of vision. The plants BJP is growing is a threat to the future. When I was the CM, I held a meeting for several hours for the vision of Ujjain. Ujjain will develop through vision, not television, Shivraj ji.Ujjain is growing. The population is increasing but we do not have any plan. We have to make a vision after 10 years as compared to before and today. BJP ruled for 18 years. Mayor's rule was for 10 years. Shivraj has given death from house to house in alcohol and corona. I remember that during the Kovid period, there was no shortage of oxygen and injection in Chhindwara for even an hour. This election will develop your city. This election will decide the culture of the country. We connect hearts, we make relationships. CM Shivraj says that I am maternal uncle and son of a farmer, but the farmer is the most troubled in the state. Such a government of Congress was handed over to me in which the state was number 1 in killing and there was a challenge in the agriculture sector. Which sin did I commit that in 15 months by raising 100 units in electricity bill for Rs 100 and waiving off farmer loans. Today's youth does not want contract and commission but wants employment. I waged a war against the mafia. War has been campaigned for the pure. These flags, banners and speeches will no longer be there on the 4th.

Mishra Demands Withdrawal Of Teesta Setalvad's Padma Award

The Centre had in 2007 honoured Setalvad with the Padma Shri, one of the highest civilian awards in the country to recognise people's contribution in various

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra today demanded withdrawal of the 'Padma Shri' award bestowed on social activist Teesta Setalvad, who was arrested by the Gujarat police recently in a case of fabricating evidence to frame innocent persons in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots.

The Centre had in 2007 honoured Ms Setalvad with the Padma Shri, one of the highest civilian awards in the country to recognise people's contribution in various spheres.Talking to reporters today, Mr Mishra accused the previous Congress government of giving the award to Ms Setalvad for the appeasement of minorities.

"She was a member of the 'award vapsi' gang (those threatening to return awards). The award should be taken back from people like Teesta Javed Setalvad, in the wake of the Supreme Court's remarks against such people, whose conduct becomes questionable and have been arrested," said the minister, who is also the state government's spokesperson.

The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad had on Saturday picked up Ms Setalvad from her Mumbai home. She was later taken to Ahmedabad and handed over to the crime branch there.

A court in Ahmedabad on Sunday remanded Ms Setalvad in police custody till July 2 in the case of fabricating evidence to frame innocent persons in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots.

On Friday, the Supreme Supreme Court dismissed a petition challenging the clean chit given by a special investigation team (SIT) to then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and others in 2002 post-Godhra riots cases.Setalvad and her NGO were co-petitioner with Zakia Jafri (wife of Congress leader Ehsan Jafri who was killed in the riots) in the plea filed against Narendra Modi and others in the Supreme Court.

Chief Minister plants Neem, Banyan and Moulshree saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Moulshree, Banyan and Neem saplings along with the representatives of Jeevan Deepti Charitable Society in the Smart City Garden. Anil Khare, Suresh Rai, Shrikant Vale, Leeladhar Batham, Sunil Mahurkar, Sarita Sharma and Mamta Nigam of the society participated in the plantation.

The society is engaged in various activities. Along with serving people it motivates the public for environment-protection activities, provide them with the necessary resources and believes that "service to people as service to God."

Moulshree is called Kesava in Sanskrit and Molsari in Hindi. It is a medicinal tree, which has been used in Ayurveda for centuries. Banyan has religious significance and according to Ayurveda, it is the means to cure numerous diseases. Similarly, Neem abounding in antibiotic elements is known for its medicinal qualities.

State Election Commission should be locked; Congress' big allegation

Congress has demanded to send Central Observer to Madhya Pradesh. The banquet of public representatives unopposed at the CM's official residence is a violation of the Model Code of Conduct. It is alleged that BJP leaders are pressurizing the administration to win the election by doing anything.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In the midst of campaigning for the urban body elections, the Congress has made a big allegation on the State Election Commission (SEC). The Congress has alleged that the State Election Commission is working as a subsidiary organization of the BJP. Madhya Pradesh Congress's media department president KK Mishra has made these allegations.

Congress leader KK Mishra expressed doubts that the Congress is suspicious of not having a fair election. Congress said that the State Election Commission should be locked. Congress has demanded to send Central Observer to Madhya Pradesh. The banquet of public representatives

unopposed at the CM's official residence is a violation of the Model Code of Conduct. It is alleged that BJP leaders are pressurizing the administration to win the election by doing anything.Meanwhile, BJP has retaliated on the Congress's allegation on the State Election Commission. BJP's State General Secretary Rajnish Agarwal has said that when the Congress starts raising questions on the machinery, then understand that the Congress is losing. Congress does not have faith in judiciary, does not believe in Supreme Court, does not believe in ED, Congress is raising questions on Election Commission too.

The BJP leader said that when the Congress starts losing elections, it raises similar questions. The BJP's flag is waving in the urban body elections and the Congress is scared of it.

State helicopter sold to scrap dealer

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The helicopter, Bel 430 VT MPS, was purchased by the state government in 1998. The state aviation department was looking for a buyer for the past 10 years.

After seven failed attempts at auctioning a helicopter worth Rs 33 crores, the Madhya Pradesh government has sold the chopper to an aircraft scrap dealer for Rs 2.57 crore, officials said.

The helicopter, Bel 430 VT MPS, was purchased by the state government in 1998. The state aviation department was looking for a buyer for the past 10 years.

In an auction which was opened on May 31, a company, FA Enterprises, owned by aviation scrap dealer and aircraft maintenance engineer Naim Raza, won the bid against the offset price of Rs 2.24 crore, aviation department director Bharat Yadav said. The helicopter had met with an accident in 2003 when popular singer Anuradha Paudwal was on her way to attend an event. Paudwal and Rajendra Singh Raghuvanshi, personal assistant to the then chief minister Digvijaya Singh, were injured in the incident.

Since the aircraft was not insured, the government did not receive any claim. It was subsequently repaired and in 2012, kept on sale as its manufacturer, Rolls Royce, had stopped producing its parts, the officials cited above said.

"We don't see the qualification of the buyer. Two buyers made the bid and FA Enterprises won it. Had we failed this time too, it could have caused heavy loss to the government," Yadav said.

Naim Raza had purchased aircraft engines and other parts earlier too. He said the aircraft will be repaired and used for flying again. "My friend will get it repaired by the experts," Raza added.

PAK-RETURNED GEETA FOUND HER FAMILY AFTER 6 YEARS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Geeta was found at Karachi Railway Station in the year 2000 when she was 8. Geeta hails from Parbhadi, Maharashtra.

Radha wandered out of the house and reached the nearest station by the Sachkhand express, then she sat to the Samjhauta express running between India and Pakistan. Likewise, she reached Pakistan unintentionally, her mother Meena Pandare said.

She was raised by Edhi Welfare trust, a Pakistan-based NGO, and was named Fatima but when the trust perceived that she was Hindu she was renamed, Geeta.

In her language, Geeta said that "I did not study since my childhood, first I lived in Karachi, Pakistan then came to Lahore. I like India, I Went to Pakistan by mistake. In the future, I want to become a teacher of the dumb and deaf."

She had also built a temple in Karachi with her request, she added.

"This girl had gone to Pakistan by mistake through Samjhauta Express, she told us that her name was related to Lord Krishna, after great difficulty, it was found that her real name was Radha," Bhopal Railway IG Mahendra Singh Sikarwar said.

Geeta expressed her gratitude towards the Madhya Pradesh GRP and Anand service Society, Indore, where she was taken care of till her parents were located. She said that the Former External Affairs Minister Late Sushma Swaraj helped her at most.

Approval granted for setting up 23 new ITIs

IN-PRINCIPLE APPROVAL GIVEN FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO NEW MEDICAL COLLEGES

Cabinet meeting held under chairmanship of Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the Cabinet on Tuesday approved to increase the annual limit fixed for the Chief Minister's Discretionary grant from Rs.150 crore to Rs.200 crore for the financial year 2022-23 and the coming financial years.

The Cabinet has decided to increase the MLA Area Development Fund Scheme (Capital) of Rs 1 crore 85 lakh by Rs 65 lakh in under MLA fund making it Rs 2 crore 50 lakh and Rs 35 lakh in MLA Discretionary grant of Rs 15 lakh making it Rs 50 lakhs.

The Cabinet has decided to sanction a special ex-gratia amount of Rs. one crore to the heirs of Sub-Inspector Late. Rajkumar Jatav, Acting Head Constable Late. Neeraj Bhargava and Constable Late Santram Meena Aron police station, Guna district.The Cabinet has granted in-principle approval to establish medical college with 100 MBBS seats admission capacity and 500-bed affiliated hospital, besides setting up of a nursing college of 60 seat admission capacity for nursing courses and a paramedical college of 60 seat admission capacity for paramedical courses in Budni Tehsil located in Sehore district.

Similarly, the Cabinet gave in-principle consent with the purpose of increasing the 100 seats of undergraduate courses for setting up a new medical college in Ujjain. With the establishment of a medical college, medical facilities are available to the people of the area, along with 100 more MBBS seats in the medical field for students of the state. Approval was given for the establishment of 23 new ITIs in development blocks of the state without ITIs, creation of 437 instructor posts and 253 administrative posts proposed for the year 2022-23 and ratified the financial provision of expected non-recurring expenditure of about Rs.32 thousand 499 lakh and recurring expenditure for five years is about Rs.9,890 lakh. At present, 238 government ITIs are operating in 213 development blocks in 52 districts in the state, with an admission capacity of 44 thousand 552.The Cabinet has approved to allocate land Khasra number 44, total area 5.115 hectares and Khasra number 45 allot 6.073 hectares (15 acres) out of total area of 6.082 hectares government land located at Berkheda Bondar village, Huzur tehsil, Bhopal district, to the university at free premium and one rupee as annual land rent under the conditions of the gov-

ernment for the establishment of the 'National Forensic Science University (NFSU) Gandhi Nagar campus. The entire responsibility of developing the campus of NFSU will be with the University.The Cabinet gave its approval for setting up of Rural Technology Park at Morena. Approval was given to create posts for the operation of Rural Technology Park. Decision was also taken to approve Rs 50 lakh 88 thousand for the payment of salary and allowances for the operation of the park and expenditure of Rs. 1 crore 10 lakh 46 thousand for recurring / training expenses, making provision in the head available for allied organizations / training institutes of the department.The Cabinet has given revised approval of 25 group water supply schemes worth Rs 11 thousand 100 crore 72 lakh in different districts of the state under Jal Jeevan Mission. Through these water supply schemes of the mission, arrangements will be made to provide tap water to the rural population of 6223 villages at their homes.The cabinet has extended the effectiveness period of the scheme from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2022 for the units starting commercial production from 1st April 2018 to 3rd June 2022 in the provisions issued by the departmental order for the benefit of Investment Promotion Assistance Scheme. The units, which will invest 75 percent of their proposed investment by the last date i.e. June 30, 2022, were given time till March 31, 2023 to start commercial production and avail the benefits of the proposed assistance.The cabinet approved the decision to increase the collection rate of tendu leaves to Rs 3 thousand per standard sack for the year 2022 and till further orders. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan had announced to increase the collection rate of tendu leaves from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 3,000 per standard bag in the conference of forest committees on April 22, 2022. A target of collecting 16 lakh 29 thousand standard bags of tendu leaves has been set for the year 2022, due to which the collectors will get an additional remuneration of Rs.89 crore.

On the recommendation of the Kundu Task Force Committee, it was decided by the Council of Ministers to constitute the State Statistical Commission. The Kundu Task Force was constituted to submit recommendations for the strengthening of the statistical system in the state. Its recommendations include a proposal to constitute a State Statistical Commission on the lines of the National Statistical Commission. The Commission will be headed by an eminent statistical expert having 20 years of experience in this field. In the Commission, 1 member will be nominated by the State Government and maximum 6 members will be special invitees as subject experts. The Council of Ministers has decided that proceedings of the contract / registry would be done by the District Collector for parcel number 01 and 02 located in Vinod Mill Asset Sheet No. 1738, the total area is 19 thousand 69 square meter and 17 thousand 529 square meter respectively. Among the tenders invited by the Revenue Department for the disposal of parcels the financial bid amount of the tenderers and their bid in the e-auction was found to be highest. Therefore the H-One tenderer's highest bid amount of Rs.25 crore 41 lakh 20 thousand for Parcel-1, which is more than the reserve price amount of Rs.16 crore 76 lakh and the highest tender amount of 24 crore 61 lakh 68 thousand rupees for Parcel-2, which is more than the reserve price amount of 15 crore 43 lakh rupees, were sanctioned and it was decided that the district collector would take action for their contract/registry for their sale after 100 percent bid amount is deposited by H-One tenderer.

EDITOR'S SPECS

BJP an undefeatable challenge to Opposition

The outcomes in three Lok Sabha constituencies, one in Punjab and two in Uttar Pradesh, make significant political points, unusual for such routine by-polls. AAP faced a major setback in Punjab as it lost its bastion Sangrur, which was vacated by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann who had won it in 2014 and 2019. As it turned out, the Opposition the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), SAD (Amritsar), the Congress and the BJP all fighting separately, made the point on the gap between AAP's promise and delivery; and between its claims and capacity. In Punjab, a State with its finances in a shambles and its bureaucracy and the police a law unto themselves, the inexperienced band of activists that came to power is caught in a bind. Mann also faces the charge of being remote-controlled from Delhi by party chief Arvind Kejriwal. In UP, the BJP's victories in Rampur and Azamgarh prove the continuing potency of the party in the heartland. Azamgarh was vacated by SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, who chose to retain the Assembly seat that he won while the party lost a second consecutive time. Rampur was vacated by senior party leader Azam Khan, who will retain his Assembly seat. That such strongholds have slipped out of its hands is further proof that the SP's hopes of a return in UP may be unrealistic, and its style, character and personnel are unacceptable to large sections of the voters. In the Atmakur Assembly segment in Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRCP scored an impressive victory, while a victory each in Tripura and Jharkhand made the day for the Congress. The CPI(M) continued to sink in Tripura, its former stronghold. In Delhi, AAP retained the Rajinder Nagar Assembly seat, but that is little solace for the party that lost its representation in the Lok Sabha entirely. Overall, the bypoll outcomes underscore the continuing dominance of the BJP, and the continuing inability of the Opposition to rise to the challenge.

'Instrument of Last Resort' marches on 'Agnipath': How can it lead to better operational effectiveness?

Strategic Scenario

India faces an unique strategic scenario in which it has unsettled borders with two nuclear neighbours, both of which are illegally occupying some of its territory, as well as an ongoing border standoff with one and a proxy war with the other. Chinese incremental infrastructure development along borders, as well as upcoming villages along the LAC, are leading to LoCization of the LAC, necessitating a large standing army and increased deployment in high altitude areas.

Professional militaries prepare for next war and can't fight it like last war; hence, force modernisation, inculcating cutting edge niche technology and capacity building in all domains and instruments of warfare is an inescapable requirement for which Indian Military has to transform. 'Agnipath' is one such transformational scheme related to recruiting pattern, but big enough to revisit the implications on strong fabric of Indian Military. The Agnipath Scheme has merits to be tried, tested and improved. It shouldn't be applauded/condemned prematurely nor the concerns can be side-lined, but it deserves a fair chance for implementation and improvement, to arrive at a tested improved model.

Prognosis of Agnipath

Agnipath, like all major transformational decisions, has some degree of uncertainty. Change management is equally important, and too many changes simultaneously reduce acceptability and chances of mitigating the disadvantages of the change. Agnipath seeks to implement four changes concurrently: recruitment pattern, rightsizing of the Indian military, transition to an All India All Class (AIAC) system from a regimental class-based system and reduction in training period. It is preferable to modify the model to prioritise changes and to take fewer steps at a time with adequate scope for mid-course correction.

Operational Issues

The details of the Agnipath Scheme are in the open domain since June 14, and there have been varied views and responses for over two weeks. In comparison to the old recruitment system, the scheme has the advantage of lowering the average age profile of soldiers by about six years (which is relevant due to unprecedented strength in super high altitude terrain necessitating a younger profile) and providing an opportunity for deep selection among Agniveers after four years (a period within which an Agniveer would have been observed in two postings). These advantages come at a high cost in terms of a reduction in the critical attribute of adequate experience, which will become more apparent after a few years of adoption, if the announced model of 25% retention is not mitigated. Going by VCOAS statement of having 50 per cent Agniveers by 2032, if statistically modelled will amount to approximately one trained soldier for three inadequately trained Agniveers, which is operationally unsustainable and must not be compromised. While many may argue that Emergency Commission officers with three months of training and Short Service Commission officers with nine month training and uncertainty of job, when employed in war gave good results, but the population of such officers amidst experienced lot was too less; hence inexperience could be carried through. In my opinion, the retention percentage should be reversed to 75 per cent Agniveers to be retained and 25 per cent be diverted to other avenues of national contribution after skilling and empowering with military ethos.

Human Resource (HR) Issues

The HR concerns seems to have taken away the attention from major transformation issues in last two weeks, with some motivated elements instigating violent protests and political hijacking of the issue. Agnipath being a voluntary scheme unlike conscription in other countries, offers a viable option to a young man with decent financial package to opt for it or otherwise. From candidates point of view, the scheme is most attractive for youngest candidates, who can join at 17-18 years, even if not absorbed in military, can leave at a age when they are eligible for any other competition/job, for which they can have an edge over their counterparts who did not join military, in job market, in terms of qualifications, experience, and finances. As the entry age grows the attractiveness of the package reduces; hence Military can hope to get better recruits by 'catch them young principle'. The fact that for every vacancy of Agniveer in IAF, more than 20 candidates registered in first few days indicates the availability of adequate volunteers.

The HR viability of the scheme is still untested and will be determined by gauging the type of candidates opting for it in the coming months and actual placements after four years. Agnipath recruitment has to compete with other options for youth offering permanency of job, therefore many concessions have been announced by the Government, public and private sectors, the apprehensions against which will get tested, when the first batch is demobilised. From a military standpoint, the scheme must be appealing enough that it selects Best out of Best rather than Best out of Leftovers. Many more teething problems in HR and legal issues will arise as a result of system change, many of which will have to be experienced and mitigated as they arise. The changes to AIAC require further consideration and should not be grouped with Agnipath, as the strategic and security environment

in India is too volatile to depart from time-tested regimental ethos, and should not be compared to other militaries, as no one has the diversity of the kind that the Indian Military has.

Rightsizing/Downsizing: A Misnomer!

It is understandable that in developing economy there is competing demand for financial resources and a need for get more 'Bang for the Buck' through modernisation and capacity building in all instruments and dimensions of contact and non-contact warfare. Rightsizing is necessary for optimisation of resources. Rightsizing, does not necessarily means downsizing in Indian scenario wherein the security situation at LC, LAC with proxy and Hybrid war demands enough boots on ground. The Agnipath Scheme is based on the simultaneous downsizing of forces by over one lakh people due to non-recruitment in the last two years and less recruitment in the future. Why is India considering reducing military numbers when the threat is increasing and modernization is insufficient to compensate for the loss of numbers in terms of comprehensive combat power?

For a viable National Security architecture, a 'Whole of Nation Approach' is required; thus, the mindset of seeking funds for modernization through military downsizing must be extended to other government bodies such as the PMF, defence civilians, and so on. Identifying existing and future military deficiencies as rightsizing may result in serious voids. If rising pension costs are a concern, MPs' and MLAs' multiple pensions provide no justification. Can India afford over 5,79,000 VIPs when no other country has more than 450? It may not be appropriate to grossly downsize 'Instrument of Last Resort' for fundraising for modernisation in an era, when war is a national effort, undertaken through nation's Comprehensive National Power (CNP). The contribution to skilled manpower to reap demographic dividend is welcome step, but it will add to CNP only by maintaining the right balance of operational effectiveness of Indian Military.

international

NATO to put 300,000 troops on high alert in response to Russia threat

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said this weeks Madrid summit will agree the alliances most significant transformation for a generation, putting 300,000 troops at high readiness in response to Russias invasion of Ukraine.

Madrid | Agencies

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said this weeks Madrid summit will agree the alliances most significant transformation for a generation, putting 300,000 troops at high readiness in response to Russias invasion of Ukraine.

Stoltenberg said the military alliance's forces in the Baltic states and five other front-line countries would be increased "up to brigade levels", doubled or trebled to between 3,000 and 5,000 troops, the Guardian reported.That would amount to "the biggest overhaul of our collective defence and deterrence since the cold war", he said before the meeting of the 30-country alliance, which runs from Tuesday to Thursday this week.The rapid-reaction Nato Response Force currently numbers up to 40,000, and the proposed change amounts to a broad revision in response to Russian militarisation.Under the plans, Nato will also move stocks of munitions and other supplies farther east, a transition due to be completed in 2023, the Guardian reported.

The Secretary General conceded he could not make any promises about the progress of applications by Sweden and Finland to join Nato, because objections raised by Turkey to their membership remained unresolved. Stoltenberg said Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, had agreed to meet Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, and Finland's president Sauli Niinisto on Tuesday in Madrid to try to resolve the issue.But he played down hopes of a breakthrough at the meeting on the margins of the nato event."It's too early to say what kind of progress you can make by the summit," he told a press conference.

Health condition of Israeli captive in Gaza deteriorates: Hamas

Gaza: Hamas, the militant organisation ruling the Gaza Strip, said the health condition of an Israeli captive in the besieged enclave has deteriorated.

Taking to Twitter, Abu Obeida, the spokesman of Al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas' armed wing, only said that the health of one of their Israeli hostages has deteriorated, without providing any further details.

He however, said that evidence would be published in the coming hours.

On Monday night, the Israeli Prime Minister's office blamed Hamas for the state of the captured civilians, saying the Jewish state will "continue its efforts, mediated by Egypt, to bring home the captives and the missing, with responsibility and determination".

An Israeli security official told local media that Hamas' announcement "appears to be an attempt to pressure Israel within the framework of negotiations for a prisoner swap deal". Israel believes that Hamas holds the remains of Oron Shaul and Hadar Goldin, two soldiers that were killed in Gaza during the country's military offensive in 2014, as well as two civilians who are believed to be alive, Avera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed.

In 2016, Al-Qassam Brigades announced for the first time that it keeps four Israeli soldiers in its captivity, without specifying their fate. Hamas has sought to trade the prisoners in exchange for relief in the blockade on Gaza that Israel has imposed since 2007. Israel maintains it will not lift the blockade until the prisoners are freed and the Gaza Strip is demilitarized.

UK bill rewriting Northern Ireland Protocol passes 1rst parliamentary hurdle

London | Agencies

A bill that overrides parts of the Northern Ireland Protocol, a Brexit trade deal between the UK and the European Union (EU), passed the first hurdle in the House of Commons, the lower house of the British Parliament.

The bill, which contains measures to remove checks on goods moving to Northern Ireland from Great Britain, was passed 295 to 221 late Monday night, reports Xinhua news agency.

It must now go through line-by-line in-depth scrutiny by lawmakers and a further Commons vote and then pass to the House of Lords, the upper house, before becoming a law.

The Protocol is a trade solution agreed by London and Brussels to prevent a hard border between Northern Ireland and the neighbouring Republic of Ireland.

Under it, Northern Ireland is part of the UK's customs territory but is subject to the EU's customs code, value-added tax (VAT) rules and single market rules for goods. However, a de facto Irish Sea border was thus created between the British mainland and Northern Ireland, meaning goods transported to and from Northern Ireland are subject to border controls.

Recently, the need to solve the disputes over the protocol has been made even more urgent after Sinn Fein, the Irish nationalist party, was in early May declared winner in elections for the devolved assembly in Northern Ireland.

Coming second in the elections, the pro-Brexit Democratic Unionist Party has said it would not sit in the Assembly, citing its opposition to the protocol.

Speaking at the G7 summit in Bavaria, Germany, ahead of the vote, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson expected the bill would come into force by the end of the year if the parliament cooperates.

"You've got one community that feels things really aren't working in a way they like or understand, you've got unnecessary barriers to trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland," Johnson said.

"All we are saying is you can get rid of those whilst not in any way endangering the EU single market," he told reporters.

The Conservative government's efforts to rewrite the Northern Ireland Protocol have attracted opposition from not only the EU but within its own party.

Joao Vale de Almeida, EU's ambassador to the UK, said the bill is both "illegal" and "unrealistic".

"It is illegal because it is a breach of international law, a breach of EU law, UK law and international law," he said.

"We also believe it is unrealistic because it does not provide a real alternative to the protocol," he added.

Sudan to file complaint to UN against Ethiopia

Khartoum | Agencies

Sudan has decided to file a formal complaint to the UN Security Council (UNSC) against Ethiopia over "the killing of seven Sudanese soldiers and a citizen held as captives".

The Foreign Ministry here also decided to immediately recall its ambassador to Ethiopia for consultations, and to summon the Ambassador in Khartoum to inform him of Sudan's condemnation, reports Xinhua news agency.

In a statement, the Ministry said it condemns "in the strongest terms the heinous crime committed by the Ethiopian army, which violates all principles of international humanitarian law, by killing seven Sudanese soldiers and a civilian after they were kidnapped from inside the Sudanese territory".

"The Ministry embarked on filing a formal complaint to the UN Security Council and the concerned international and regional organizations."

On Sunday, the Sudanese Armed Forces said the Ethiopian army "executed" seven soldiers and a citizen who were held captive, which Ethiopia has denied.

The Ethiopian Foreign Ministry said that the incident taking place on the "common border" with Sudan on June 22 was a "tragedy", adding it was the result of skirmishes between the army and "a local militia."

Since September 2020, the Sudan-Ethiopia border has been witnessing rising tensions and deadly skirmishes between the two sides.

Sudan has accused the Ethiopian military of backing the farmers' seizure of Sudanese lands at the disputed Fashaga district on the border.

Ukrainian, Moldovan Presidents discuss EU integration

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his visiting Moldovan counterpart Maia Sandu discussed bilateral cooperation and the two countries' integration into the European Union (EU).

Kiev | Agencies

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his visiting Moldovan counterpart Maia Sandu discussed bilateral cooperation and the two countries' integration into the European Union (EU).

At a news conference after the talks on Monday, Zelensky said that Ukraine and Moldova have all opportunities to deepen their partnership in the humanitarian sphere, economy, politics, and cross-border cooperation, reports Xinhua news agency.

The two sides also discussed the partnership in the transport sector, in particular Ukraine's assistance in the reconstruction of the Moldovan railway, as well as strengthening energy cooperation.

Zelensky also urged Sandu to deepen security cooperation between Ukraine and Moldova.

For her part, Sandu said that obtaining the status of candidates for EU membership is a historic event for Ukraine and Moldova.

She added that her country is ready to assist Ukraine in the post-conflict reconstruction and in transiting goods.Sandu arrived in Kiev earlier in the day for her first visit to Ukraine since the start of the war.

Ukraine applied for EU membership shortly after the conflict began, and was granted, along with Moldova, the status of candidate for EU membership last week.

PLEA IN HIGH COURT SEEKS CASE AGAINST THACKERAYS, SANJAY RAUT FOR SEDITION

The petition requested the HC to restrain the trio from making any further statements against Eknath Shinde, who is leading the dissident MLAs.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A public interest litigation (PIL) seeking the registration of an FIR against Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, minister Aaditya Thackeray and Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut for sedition and breach of public peace was filed in the Bombay High Court on Tuesday amid a standoff between the MVA government and the rebel Sena MLAs.

The petition, filed by Pune-based social worker Hemant Patil, requested the HC to restrain the trio from making any further statements against Eknath Shinde, who is leading the dissident MLAs.

The petition claimed that pursuant to the rebellion by several MLAs of Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, protests have been held at various districts in Maharashtra and verbal attacks have been made against them.

"The Shiv Sena MLAs, who are rebelling, are camped in Assam because of the threats given by respondents 5 to 7 (Uddhav Thackeray, Aaditya Thackeray and Sanjay Raut)."Respondent No. 7 (Raut) has given a threat to all of the 40 MLAs stating that their bodies will come from Assam and will be sent directly to the morgue for postmortem. In this way all of them are creating the situation of riot and violence in the State of Maharashtra," it said.

The PIL will come up for hearing in due course of time.

Sena 'family head' Thackeray softens, urges rebels to return for talks

In an apparent softening of stance, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray who is also Shiv Sena President on Tuesday appealed to the rebel group camping in Guwahati to return and hold discussions.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In an apparent softening of stance, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray who is also Shiv Sena President on Tuesday appealed to the rebel group camping in Guwahati to return and hold discussions.

"Many of you are in contact with us and are still emotionally connected with the Shiv Sena. The families of several have also got in touch with us and conveyed your sentiments to us," said Thackeray.

He assured that as the head of the Sena family, he respected their views and made it clear from his heart that till date "nobody is out of the party" though the (rebels) are stuck in Guwahati with all kinds of speculations.

"I appeal to you all. Come before me. Let's remove all the misconceptions among the minds of the people and the Shiv Sainiks," Thackeray appealed.

The CM said if they all sit together, they can definitely come up with a solution to the political imbroglio and cautioned them against falling prey to any kinds of wrong measures.

He made it clear that the respect and dignity the Shiv Sena accorded them, they can never get that privilege anywhere else."Come in front of me and present your views, let's work out a solution. I am still worried about you," concluded Thackeray.

This is at least the third direct appeal made by the Chief Minister to the rebels since the party crisis exploded on the night of June 21-22. The ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi was plunged into turmoil, when that night around 39 Sena MLAs and 11 others sneaked out to Gujarat and then to Assam to join the rebel faction headed by Minister Eknath Shinde.

I'LL BE IN MUMBAI SOON; 50 MLAS ARE WITH US: EKNATH SHINDE

Guwahati: Rebel Shiv Sena MLA Eknath Shinde said on Tuesday that he will be in Mumbai soon, adding that he is accompanied by 50 MLAs who have come on their own.

Speaking to mediapersons outside the Radisson Blu hotel in Guwahati, Shinde said, "We are with the Shiv Sena and I'll be in Mumbai soon."

Shinde added, "50 MLAs are here on their own. No MLA is suppressed here, and everyone is happy. The MLAs are with us at the Guwahati hotel."

He also said that if the Shiv Sena in Mumbai claims that it is in touch with the MLAs present in Guwahati, it should reveal their names too."We are in Shiv Sena and will take the party ahead. We are taking forward Balasaheb Thackeray's Hindutva and there should be no doubt about this," he said.Shinde added: "Deepak Kesarkar is our spokesperson and he will give you the updates about our stand. We will let you know our further course of action."

Meanwhile, rebel Sena MLA Sada Sarvankar also confirmed with the media that Shinde is expected to meet Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari soon, adding that a floor test might take place this week only.

Maha crisis: Cautious BJP remains on 'wait and watch' mode

As uncertainty haunts the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it is following the political developments closely and continues in a 'wait and watch' mode.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As uncertainty haunts the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it is following the political developments closely and continues in a 'wait and watch' mode.

Senior leader Sudhir Mungantiwar said the issue figured in the BJP State Core Committee meeting Monday night when all aspects were discussed in detail by the party's top leadership here.

"So far we have not got any proposal from anybody in this matter... Whenever it is received, we shall consider it and call another core committee meeting if needed," said Mungantiwar, reiterating the party's known stance.

He added that the MVA government of Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress should brainstorm and decide whether it commands the majority or has been reduced to a minority regime now. Dismissing the contentions of the rebels and the BJP, Sena leader Anil Desai said that "at least 20 MLAs" are in touch with the parent party (Shiv Sena) and have assured full support to the MVA during the legislature proceedings.

A similar statement had been made earlier by Minister Aaditya Thackeray and Sena Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut, MP in the past couple of days, as it remains optimistic of weathering the current upheaval. Rebels group spokesperson Deepak Kesarkar rubbished the Sena claims and termed them as lies and deceptive, intended to defame the supporters of Minister Eknath Shinde currently camping in Guwahati with his flock. "If they are so confident that these 20 MLAs are on their side, then why don't they call them back to Mumbai... What's stopping them? They (Shiv Sena) are simply making false and misleading statements," Kesarkar said sharply.

Amid Maha drama, Nadda meets Fadnavis

- **NOT MORE THAN FIVE PEOPLE WILL BE ALLOWED TO GATHER AT A PLACE IN MUMBAI FOR GANESH CHATURTHI**
- **MUMBAI CIVIC BODY HAS BANNED PHYSICAL DARSHAN FOR DEVOTEES AT PUBLIC PANDALS**

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid the ongoing political crisis in Maharashtra, BJP chief JP Nadda discussed the situation in a meeting with former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at his residence here.

Sources said the agenda of the meeting was the current political situation. "Future of Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government hangs in balance and there is complete uncertainty over continuity of government. Current political situation is agenda of meeting between Nadda and Fadnavis, and also the party's future course of action," sources said.

Bharatiya Janata Party's national general secretary Arun Singh has also reached Nadda's residence. It is learnt that Fadnavis will also meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss the Maharashtra situation.

Earlier in the afternoon, Fadnavis reached the national capital to meet the BJP central leadership.

Sources said that Fadnavis will brief the central leadership about the political situation in Maharashtra.

"Fadnavis will also discuss the party's future course of action," sources said.

As uncertainty continues to haunt the MVA government the BJP is closely following the political developments and has adopted a wait and watch policy. On Monday, the Maharashtra BJP State Core Committee meeting was held in Mumbai to discuss all the aspects in detail."So far we have not got any proposal from anybody in this matter... Whenever it is received, we shall consider it and call another core committee meeting if needed," senior Maharashtra leader Sudhir Mungantiwar had said, reiterating the party's known stance. A political crisis hit the Maha Vikas Agadhi government last week when Shiv Sena MLAs, including Minister Eknath Shinde revolted against the party leadership. A BJP insider said the party is treading cautiously amid the changing political situation in Maharashtra to avoid a repeat of the 2019 misadventure when Devendra Fadnavis was sworn in as the chief minister of Maharashtra and later resigned due to lack of numbers.

Rebel Sena MLAs playing indoor games in Guwahati hotel

- **THE DISSIDENT SHIV SENA MLAS, WHO ARE CAMPING AT THE LUXURY RADISSON BLU HOTEL IN GUWAHATI FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS ARE PASSING THEIR TIME BY PLAYING VARIOUS INDOOR GAMES INCLUDING CHESS AND LUDO.MUMBAI.**

Guwahati | Agencies

The dissident Shiv Sena MLAs, who are camping at the luxury Radisson Blu hotel in Guwahati for the past few days are passing their time by playing various indoor games including chess and ludo.

"Other than a couple of meetings within themselves, they have no other serious activity in Guwahati. To pass their time, they are playing various indoor games including chess and ludo to keep themselves engaged," a source close to the MLAs told the media on condition of anonymity.

The rebel legislators led by disgruntled Maharashtra Minister Eknath Shinde are not allowed to go outside the hotel. Initially, the MLAs booked rooms of the hotel for about a week. Assam BJP MLAs, leaders and ministers are occasionally visiting the hotel, and briefly talking with the Maharashtra lawmakers. Assam police commandos led by senior officials are closely looking after the security of the MLAs, and from time to time, also reviewing the hotel security.The hotel authorities refused fresh booking of common boarders except the passengers from airlines, with which the hotel has long term arrangements.

Assam's ruling BJP has been maintaining that it has nothing to do with the Maharashtra political crisis and camping of the MLAs in Guwahati.Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma claimed that these people are guests and have chosen Guwahati for their stay on their own.Shiv Sena leaders from Manipur led by state President M. Tombi Singh came to the hotel on Monday to meet Eknath Shinde. However, they were not allowed to meet.The main opposition Congress in Assam earlier asked the dissident Maharashtra MLAs to leave the state at the earliest in the greater interest of the state.

Since last Wednesday morning, dissident MLAs of Shiv Sena, Independents and others have been camping at the hotel posing a threat to the Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray-led coalition government in Maharashtra.

Rebel Sena vs NCP: Poster war in Guwahati over 'Hindu pride' and 'traitors'

A poster war broke out between the rebel Shiv Sena MLAs, who are staying put in a luxury Guwahati hotel, and the local NCP leaders here on Tuesday.

Guwahati | Agencies

A poster war broke out between the rebel Shiv Sena MLAs, who are staying put in a luxury Guwahati hotel, and the local NCP leaders here on Tuesday.

A poster put up near the Radisson Blu hotel here has the pictures of Eknath Shinde, Anand Dighe and Balasaheb Thackeray. And it reads, "Garv se kaho hum Hindu hain" (Say with pride, we are Hindus) and "Shinde sahab hum aapke saath hain" (Shinde saheb, we are with you). In response to the rebel Sena posters, the NCP also put up a counter poster near the hotel that read "Gaddar" (traitors) in bold letters. Later security guards removed the poster. Earlier in the day, MLA Eknath Shinde was seen in the premises of Radisson Blu hotel talking on his phone. He greeted the journalists waiting for him there by waving his hands but did not answer any of their questions.He said that Deepak Kesarkar is the spokesperson who will speak to the journalists later and will give information about the floor test and the time of their return to Mumbai.

TOLL IN MUMBAI RESIDENTIAL BUILDING CRASH MOUNTS TO 10, 13 INJURED

Mumbai: The toll in the Mumbai building crash has risen to 10 and at least 13 others, including a woman, were injured, the BMC Disaster Control said on Tuesday.

According to officials, the entire wing of the ground-plus-three floor Naik Nagar Building in Kurla east suburb of north-east Mumbai crashed minutes before midnight, trapping many persons living there. Earlier this afternoon, the rescuers had extricated 17 (all adult males) persons trapped under the debris, and recovered four bodies.

The injured were rushed to Rajawadi Hospital in Ghatkopar and LTMG Hospital in Sion. As work continues amid intermittent showers to clear the mound of rubble, six more bodies were recovered and another 6 injured survivors were pulled out and rushed to hospital. The rescue teams of Mumbai Fire Brigade and other agencies besides local volunteers, who joined the rescue efforts there have expressed a potential risk to the adjoining second wing of the same building which could also collapse anytime.

IANS-CVoter National Mood Tracker:

Indians divided about the winner in Thackeray-Shinde political battle

The political situation in Maharashtra continues to be fluid since the rebellion in Shiv Sena led by the senior party leader Eknath Shinde.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The political situation in Maharashtra continues to be fluid since the rebellion in Shiv Sena led by the senior party leader Eknath Shinde.

The rebellion in the party has brought the ruling Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, headed by Sena chief Udhav Thackeray, on the brink.

Shinde has been claiming that around 40 Shiv Sena MLAs have joined his camp. Reportedly, Shinde and his rebel camp, currently camped in Guwahati has several independent legislators as well. The political crisis in Maharashtra reached the Supreme Court after Shinde filed a petition in the apex court against Shiv Sena's move to disqualify him and 15 other rebel MLAs. The top court of the country extended the deadline given to the lawmakers to file their responses to the disqualification notices against them till July 11. The Shiv Sena having 55 MLAs heads the MVA government in the state. Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) with 53 legislators and the Congress party having 44 MLAs are the alliance partners in the MVA government. Maharashtra legislative Assembly has a strength of 288 members. As the fate of the MVA government has been put in jeopardy with the rebellion in Shiv Sena, C-Voter-IndiaTracker conducted a countrywide survey on behalf of IANS to know people's views on the issue. The survey intended to understand who, according to people, will emerge as winner between Thacekray and Shinde in this fight for political hegemony of the party. Interestingly, during the survey, while the opinion of respondents was divided on the issue, a larger proportion of them - 53 per cent asserted that Shinde will be the winner in this political battle, 47 per cent opined in favour of Thackeray.

During the survey, while the majority of NDA voters - 66 per cent believed that Shinde will emerge victorious in this fight to claim leadership of Shiv Sena, a large proportion of opposition voters - 57 per cent said that Thackeray will continue to hold reins of the party.

During the survey, different social groups shared different opinions on the issue. According to the survey data, majority of Upper Caste Hindus (UCH) - 60 per cent and large proportion of Other Backward Classes (OBC) - 59 per cent opined that Shinde will replace Thackeray as the leader of Shiv Sena.

The views of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) were divided on the issue. As per the survey data, while 52 per cent ST respondents believe that Thackeray will continue as undisputed leader of Shiv Sena, 48 per cent ST voters spoke in favour of Shinde. At the same time, while 52 per cent SC respondents think that Shinde will be the winner in this battle for political supremacy over Shiv Sena, 48 per cent SC voters did not share the sentiment and believe that Thackeray will have the last laugh. Notably, a whopping majority of Muslim respondents - 72 per cent asserted that the incumbent chief minister will emerge winner in this political fight.

DHFL-YES BANK CASE: PUNE BIZMAN BHOSALE IN ED CUSTODY

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday took Pune-based businessman Avinash Bhosale into custody from Arthur Road Jail in an alleged corruption case pertaining to Yes Bank and Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL).

He will be produced before a court later in the day. Bhosale, 61, was earlier arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and on May 26. The CBI had taken him to Delhi for further interrogation and he was in its custody till June 8.

He was then sent back to Arthur jail custody. The ED had asked Bhosale to empty his Pune-based residential property which was attached last year.

Bhosale has been accused for allegedly routing ill-gotten money through his Maharashtra based real estate companies.

In 2018, Bhosale had received around Rs 68.82 crore from DHFL. It was said that it was consultancy charges received by him. The probe agency has claimed that Bhosale didn't provide any consultancy service to DHFL and the money received by him was nothing but alleged proceed of crime.

BEN AFFLECK'S 10-YR-OLD SON RAMS LAMBORGHINI INTO PARKED BMW

Los Angeles | Agencies

On a recent outing to a car rental dealership, actor-director-writer Ben Affleck's 10-year-old son Samuel Garner Affleck reversed and backed a yellow Lamborghini Urus into a BMW, reports the onlline tabloid 'TMZ'.

Along with actress-singer Jennifer Lopez and his son Samuel, Ben Affleck recently went to 777 Exotics, a Beverly Hills luxury car rental dealership. They were all looking at various cars when Ben let Samuel hop into the driver's seat of a yellow Lambo. Acc. to 'TMZ', it appears that Samuel or someone else had the engine running, so when the boy put the Lambo in reverse, the supercar rammed into the stationary white BMW. Apparently, the rear bumper on the passenger side of the Lambo made contact with the BMW's front wheel and possibly the fender.

'TMZ' further states that an employee at 777 Exotics said that there was no accident and the cars were just parked really close together.

Samuel is Ben Affleck's youngest son from his marriage with Jennifer Garner.

Chris Hemsworth fanboys over co-star Russell Crowe

Los Angeles | Agencies

Chris Hemsworth, who is set to headline the upcoming superhero film 'Thor: Love and Thunder', recently expressed his happiness on co-starring with Academy and Golden Globe award winning actor Russell Crowe in the film, who happens to be the latest addition to the MCU.

Speaking of acting alongside Crowe, Chris Hemsworth who plays the titular role of Thor in the franchise, said, "I never thought I'd see the day where Russell would appear on-screen with hints at 'Gladiator' imagery, yet with a wink, totally self-deprecating. He didn't hold back."

In his own words, Hemsworth fanboyed over Crowe, who is former's childhood idol. "I'm such a fan. I have been since I first started acting. There's such a weight and a seriousness to his performances and to him, as an individual, from afar. But meeting him, he has a great sense of humour and did whatever Taika asked on set, which was mind-blowing", Hemsworth added.

Russell Crowe will be seen playing Greek God, Zeus in the Chris Hemsworth-Natalie Portman-Christian Bale starrer, 'Thor: Love and Thunder' which will release in Indian cinemas on July 7 in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

Selena Gomez is 'just not happy' with US Supreme Court's abortion ruling

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Selena Gomez has voiced her opinion on the recent overturning of the landmark Roe v. Wade by the US Supreme Court, reports 'Variety'.

Selena, who attended the red carpet premiere of her upcoming second season of the mystery comedy series 'Only Murders in the Building', took a moment during the event to speak out against the Supreme Court's recent decision. Selena told 'Variety', "It's about voting. It's about getting men - men needing to stand up and also speak against this issue."

"It's also the amount of women that are hurting. I'm just not happy and I hope that we can do everything in our power to do something to change that", she added.

'Variety' further states that Gomez also pointed others to a recent post she shared on Twitter, in which she shared a link to Planned Parenthood's website, explaining it as a valuable resource on what people can do next to help defend abortion access on a state level.Earlier, Gomez had written on her Twitter, "Watching a Constitutional right be stripped away is horrific. A woman should have the right to CHOOSE what she wants to do with her own body. End of story."

Kanye West makes surprise appearance at BET Awards

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Kanye West made a surprise appearance some three hours into the BET Awards on Sunday night to pay tribute to Sean 'Diddy' Combs, the show's recipient of the Lifetime Achievement award.His speech followed an elaborate performance that spanned Combs' entire career, featuring cameos by Mary J. Blige, Jodeci, Nas, Lil' Kim, Busta Rhymes, the Lox, Bryson Tiller, Faith Evans, the Maverick City Choir - and Diddy himself, who dedicated the first half of his hit 1997 'I'll Be Missing You', to his longtime partner, actress Kim Porter, who died of a lung infection in 2018, via video footage that played while he performed; the second half of the song featured a video tribute to its original subject, Notorious B.I.G.

Next came a powerful video speech from Jay-Z and an amusing one from Babyface - who recalled Diddy haltingly but successfully teaching himself to ski.

According to 'Variety', West took the stage, wearing a grey leather Hood by Air jacket, a matching baseball cap, shades and a full black-stocking facial mask, similar to ones he wore in appearances and performances last year. In his speech, West identified with the desire to change one's name: Over the years, Combs has called himself Puff Daddy, P. Diddy, just Diddy and most recently, simply Love; last year West legally changed his name to 'Ye'.He also spoke movingly of Combs' influence on him, stressing that he considers him an artist - and it is easy the influence of Combs viewing his entire creative and business output as part of a whole.

PAUL MCCARTNEY FEATURES JOHNNY DEPP FOOTAGE AT GLASTONBURY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Paul McCartney played a clip of Hollywood star Johnny Depp in an old music video as part of his headliner set at Glastonbury Festival on Saturday.

Depp featured in the original video for McCartney's song 'My Valentine' and was seen alongside actress Natalie Portman in the clip projected onto huge screens around the stage, while McCartney performed on piano, reports 'Deadline'.

The musician has been using the same footage on his recent US tour, which coincided with Depp's high-profile court case with ex-wife Amber Heard.

According to Deadline, the actor's appearance on screen at Glastonbury divided opinion on social media among viewers of the concert.

McCartney's appearance on Saturday night made him the oldest-ever headliner at Glastonbury Festival, a day after Billie Eilish became the youngest.

While Dave Grohl and Bruce Springsteen both joined him in person on stage, the largest cheers came when he was reunited through technology with his old Beatles bandmate John Lennon, who was seen on screen singing along with McCartney to 'I Got a Feeling'.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Christina Milian

VIRAT, PANT OR BUMRAH: WITH QUESTION MARK OVER ROHIT'S AVAILABILITY, INDIA STARE AT CAPTAINCY PUZZLE

London | Agencies

With a question mark hanging over skipper Rohit Sharma's availability for the rescheduled fifth Test against England starting at Edgbaston on July 1 as the charismatic batter continues his recovery from Covid-19, India have a captaincy puzzle to contend with ahead of high-stakes contest.

India lead the five-match Test series 2-1, and a win or even a draw will help them clinch the series, but a loss would certainly not do their morale any good given the busy season ahead and the crucial World Test Championship (WTC) points at stake.

Sharma had tested positive for Covid-19 during the warm-up game against Leicestershire, missing the second innings of the match. There is hope in the Indian team management that he will recover in time for the Test, but should he fail to do so, India will be in a piquant situation as vice-captain KL Rahul too has been ruled out due to a groin injury.

On Monday, India had to fly opener Mayank Agarwal to join the squad in Birmingham as cover for Sharma. While the India squad still has a few members in the side who can step up to fill the void, it remains to be seen how things pan out in the next couple of days.Among the leading contenders for the role of captain should Sharma continue his process of recovery, is pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah. It will be a historic moment for Indian cricket as the talismanic bowler will become the first quick since the legendary Kapil Dev to lead an Indian Test side after nearly three decades, according to ICC.On the other hand, India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant is a rising star and is being groomed as a future captain. Having received guidance from none other than former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting in the Indian Premier League and having led Delhi Capitals for two seasons, Pant has enough captaincy experience under his belt to lead the side if the need arises.

While former skipper Virat Kohli has an outside chance of being asked to lead the side, but given the fact that it was under him that India took the 2-1 lead against England last year, it would be befitting for him to complete the unfinished task.

Kohli gave up the captaincy in the longest format after a 2-1 series loss in South Africa. But there is no questioning his credentials as a leader. Under him, India scaled the peak of Test cricket, becoming the No.1 ranked side in the world and reaching the final of the World Test Championship, losing to New Zealand. Kohli is India's most successful captain in the longest format, with India winning 40 out of the 68 matches under his leadership -- a win percentage of 58.82, according to ICC.

Whether Kohli remains keen on donning the captaincy role again remains to be seen.

Deepak Punia wins bronze in U23 Asian wrestling championships 2022

TOKYO OLYMPIAN DEEPAK PUNIA WON A BRONZE MEDAL AFTER DEFEATING MAKSAT SATYBALDY IN THE 86KG FREESTYLE WEIGHT CATEGORY AT THE U23 ASIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022 IN BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN.

Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) | Agencies

Tokyo Olympian Deepak Punia won a bronze medal after defeating Maksat Satybaldy in the 86kg freestyle weight category at the U23 Asian wrestling championships 2022 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Despite a win, it was an unimpressive result from him as the Indian contingent was expecting a better outing from the world championships silver medallist in the tournament.

In the opening two rounds, the 23-year-old Punia lost to eventual gold medallist Azizbek Fayzullaev of Uzbekistan and Nurtilek Karypbaev of Kyrgyzstan. However, he overpowered Satybaldy of Kazakhstan to settle for the bronze, according to an Olympics.com report.

Last month, Deepak Punia was included in the Indian wrestling team for the Commonwealth Games 2022 with Tokyo 2020 medallists Bajrang Punia and Ravi Kumar Dahiya.

India won 25 medals in all in the U23 meet in the event, including 10 gold medals. The eight-day continental championship concluded on Sunday.

West Indies complete formalities; whitewash Bangladesh in two-Test series

WEST INDIES SKIPPER KRAIGG BRATHWAITE AND OPENER JOHN CAMPBELL COMPLETED THE FORMALITIES, SCORING THE REQUIRED 13 RUNS FOR VICTORY ON THE FOURTH DAY OF THE MATCH TO MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP OF THE TWO-TEST SERIES AGAINST BANGLADESH AT THE DAREN SAMMY NATIONAL CRICKET STADIUM HERE.

Gros Islet (St Lucia) | Agencies

West Indies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite and opener John Campbell completed the formalities, scoring the required 13 runs for victory on the fourth day of the match to make a clean sweep of the two-Test series against Bangladesh at the Daren Sammy National Cricket Stadium here.

There was no miracle on the fourth day in Saint Lucia on Monday as the hosts first bundled out Bangladesh for just 186 runs in the second innings and then wrapped up an easy 10-wicket victory.

Earlier, Alzarri Joseph (3/57) got the ball rolling by dismissing Mehidy Hasan Miraz for 4, before Jayden Seales (3/21) got in on the act with two quick wickets as the end of the Test loomed for the visitors.

Wicketkeeper Nurul Hasan (60 not out) hit out to at least ensure West Indies had to bat again, but they only had to chase down 13 to clinch the Test and they did that in less than three overs.

While Kemar Roach took most of the plaudits for picking up his 250th Test wicket during the clash, it was Kyle Mayers who was awarded the 'Player of the Match' award.

Not only did Mayers set up the victory with his magnificent 146 during West Indies' first innings, but he also made a strong contribution with the ball with two Bangladesh scalps on the opening day of the Test.

The 29-year-old all-rounder trapped the dangerous Najmul Hossain Shanto during a vital stage of Bangladesh's first innings and then returned later to send Mehidy packing to finish with decent figures of 2/35.

The 2-0 series sweep keeps West Indies in the hunt for next year's World Test Championship final, with the Caribbean side holding on to sixth place on the standings.

West Indies have a 50 per cent winning percentage having now won four Test matches in the current World Test Championship period and will get the chance to move further up the standings when they travel Down Under later in the year to face the all-conquering Australia line-up.

Brief scores: Bangladesh 234 and 186 (Najmul Hossain Shanto 42, Nurul Hasan 60 not out; Kemar Roach 3/54, Alzarri Joseph 3/57, Jayden Seales 3/21) lost to West Indies 408 and 13 for no loss by 10 wickets.

Athapaththu's blazing knock gives Sri Lanka a consolation win

Captain Chamari Athapaththu's brilliant 48-ball unbeaten 80 helped Sri Lanka beat India by seven wickets in the third match of the T20I series here on Monday.

Dambulla (Sri Lanka) | Agencies

Captain Chamari Athapaththu's brilliant 48-ball unbeaten 80 helped Sri Lanka beat India by seven wickets in the third match of the T20I series here on Monday.

Sri Lanka, who had already conceded the series and never beaten India in a home game, chased down the target of 139 in the 17th over.

After losing twelve T20I matches on the trot against India, Sri Lanka managed to salvage pride after conceding the series with back-to-back defeats. Athapaththu averages 22.57 in T20Is, but when she captained Sri Lanka to victory, she averages 42.61 and strikes at 142.41. Her best version was on show on Monday.

The Sri Lanka skipper showed her class and quality with an inside-out stroke over covers off Deepti Sharma in the fourth over. She followed it up with a sweep while facing Radha Yadav in the very next over. Her partnership with Harshitha Madavi, who also started on a good note made it easy for the hosts. However, Madavi was dismissed by Radha, caught at deep midwicket.

After the departure of Madavi, the experienced Nilakshi de Silva (30) joined forces with her captain to help the team inch closer to the target.

Athapaththu was again the mainstay of the game-changing 77-run alliance and reached her fifty in style with a cut stroke off Simran Bahadur.

At the other end, Nilakshi was also authoritative with her pulls and lofts. She was happy to play her strokes as well, hitting Pooja Vastrakar down the ground before swiping Simran Dil Bahadur over the onside. Eventually, on the back of a good throw from Simran, Nilakshi was run out in the 15th over. Athapaththu and Nilakshi added 77 in just 57 balls -- the highest third-wicket stand for Sri Lanka in the format -- before de Silva was run out.

After that, it was Athapaththu who remained in the middle to ensure Sri Lanka's consolation win.

Earlier, India's batters failed against a formidable bowling attack from Sri Lanka and were restricted to 138, which eventually was not enough.

Smriti Mandhana found the going tough in scoring 22 off 21, and fell to Oshadi Ranasinghe for the second time in three games.Captain Harmanpreet Kaur compiled an unbeaten 39 off 33 balls to pilot her side to a competitive total while Jemimah Rodrigues, who has been in fine form in this series, also made a useful contribution (33 off 30 balls) and stitched a partnership of 64 with Harmanpreet for the fourth wicket. Apart from this, there was nothing that worked for the visitors in the match.

Brief scores :

India Women 138/5 in 20 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 39; Oshadi Ranasinghe 1-13) lost to Sri Lanka Women 141/3 in 17 overs (Chamari Athapaththu 80 not out; Renuka Singh 1-27) by seven wickets.

All-India snooker: Rayaan Razmi, Sourav Kothari make winning starts

Double Junior National champion Rayaan Razmi of Maharashtra and West Bengal's Sourav Kothari made strong statements by quickly winning their respective group matches by identical 4-0 margins on the opening day of the National Sports Club of India (NSCI) All India Snooker Open 'Baulkline' 2022.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

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The 20-year-old Mumbai-based Razmi, who had won both the billiards and snooker crowns in Bhopal last December, quickly got into a rhythm and struck the ball well, while compatriot Vishal Gehani was unable to settle down and caved in without a fight in their Group-D match played at the NSCI billiards hall on Monday.

Razmi immediately got down to business and after taking the first frame, hit breaks of 33, 45 and 37 in the next three frames to complete a 4-0 (70-30, 85-12, 79-41, and 81-8) victory.

Meanwhile, in a Group-E match, the 37-year-old experienced Kothari gave a superb demonstration of excellent shot selection, accurate potting, and shrewd tactical play against 19-year-old Digvijay Kadian of Haryana, who was unable to match his senior opponent.

Kothari, who recently won both the snooker and billiards titles in the Pacific International Championship in Melbourne, started by winning a tight first frame and then comfortably pocketed the second to take a 2-0 lead.In the third, Kadian potted much better and with only two colours remaining gained a 58-42 lead. But, he missed a difficult pink and the crafty Kothari cleverly snookered Kadian and the youngster fouled giving away six points, which narrowed the lead.

Thereafter, both attempted a safety approach before Kadian sold the pink in the centre and KOthari grabbed the chance, sinking the last two balls to clinch the frame. In the fourth Kadian hardly got a look in as Kothari fired in a break of 58 and a couple of visits later rolled in a clearance of 67 to seal a 4-0 (65-58, 75-31, 61-58, and 125-0) win.In a Group-G all-Railway contest, India No. 6 Pushpender Singh staged a great recovery to put it across Nitesh Madan winning seven well-contested frames at 4-3 (59-71, 41-77, 91-13, 80-39, 58-65, 50-28, and 59-10).

Later, Uttar Pradesh's Vishwajeet Mohan got the better of Maharashtra's Abhishek Bajaj by a 4-2 (63-21, 57-43, 63(32)-54, 81-45, 29-70, 80-39) win.

Results:

Group-A: Sparsh Pherwani (MAH) bt Mahaesh Jagdale (MAH) 4-3 (01-0, 01-0 (forfeited the first 2 frames for reporting late), 21-70, 64-66, 71(67)-32, 9-80, 49-36).

Group-D: Rayaan Razmi (MAH) bt Vishal Gehani (MAH) 4-0 (70-30, 85(33)-12, 79(45)-41, 81(37)-8).

Group-E: Sourav Kothari (WB) bt Digvijay Kadian (HAR) 4-0 (65-58, 75-31, 61-58, 125(58,67)-0); P. Vijay (TN) bt K. Venkatesham (RLYS) 4-1 (75-23, 29-68, 53-37, 80(39)-23, 62(47)-7).

Group-G: Pushpender Singh (RLYS) bt Nitesh Madan (RLYS) 4-3 (59-71, 41-77, 91-13, 80-39, 58-65, 50-28, 59-10); Vishwajeet Mohan (UP) bt Abhishek Bajaj (MAH) 4-2 (63-21, 57-43, 63(32)-54, 81-45, 29-70, 80-39.

3rd Test: Root, Bairstow help England complete series clean sweep

Joe Root remained unbeaten on 86 and Jonny Bairstow blasted a 44-ball 71 as England romped home to a seven-wicket victory against New Zealand on the fifth and final day of the third and final Test here to complete a series whitewash.

Leeds | Agencies

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With this victory, England overtook New Zealand in the World Test Championships (WTC) standings, with a win percentage of 28.89. New Zealand now occupy the penultimate spot on the table, just above Bangladesh, with a win percentage of 25.93.Root was batting on 55 overnight with Ollie Pope on 81 as England resumed their second innings at 183/2, chasing a target of 296 for victory.

Those expecting an early end to proceedings on the final day were left frustrated early on as rain prevailed at Headingley. With the rain falling to relent, the match officials decided to call an early lunch on day five, leaving the two sides waiting to force through a result.

Needing another 113 runs for a victory, there was an early setback for England as they lost the in-form Pope. The young batter was bowled on 82 by Tim Southee.

But Jonny Bairstow and Joe Root were in a hurry to wrap up the contest, with the former continuing his dominant streak in the series. While Root rotated the strike, Bairstow was in an aggressive mood, hitting boundaries for fun. He brought up his half-century in only 30 deliveries - England's second-fastest fifty in men's Tests -- as they marched on towards the target. Bairstow remained unbeaten on a 44-ball 71, while Root scored 86 not out as England reached 296/3 in 54.3 overs for a dominant seven-wicket victory.

Brief scores

New Zealand 329 (Daryl Mitchell 109; Jack Leach 5/100) & 326 (Tom Blundell 88 not out; Jack Leach 5/66) lost to England 360 (Jonny Bairstow 162; Trent Boult 4/104) & 296/3 (Joe Root 86 not out, Ollie Pope 82) by 7 wickets

20 YEARS SINCE PRABHAS FACED THE CAMERA FOR THE FIRST TIME

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Prabhas, also known as Prabhas Raju Uppalapati, is currently one of the most popular stars in the nation as June 28, 2022, marks 20 years of Prabhas in the movie industry.

Prabhas is known as the "Darling" of Telugu cinema because of his acting talent and humble demeanour.

Prabhas' debut film 'Eeswar' was formally released on June 28, 2002. Krishnama Raju, his uncle and the "Rebel Star" of Telugu cinema, introduced Prabhas at a formal muhurat occasion.

'Eeswar' was directed by Jayanth Paranji, starring actress Sridevi as the female lead opposite Prabhas. The 'Radhe Shyam' actor, sure made a huge impact with his very first movie and managed to grab many more blockbusters soon after his debut. Prabhas went on to star in such films as 'Baahubali,' 'Chatrapati,' 'Mirchi,' and others.

'Darling' actor Prabhas' colourful journey is celebrated by his admirers 20 years after the actor first appeared in front of the camera.

Prabhas will be next seen in Om Raut's 'Adi Purush' and Prashanth Neel's 'Salaar' while he has upcoming many projects in his portfolio.

AAMIR KHAN MEETS RAM CHARAN AT HIS HYDERABAD HOME

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan met 'RRR' actor Ram Charan and his wife Upasana at their Hyderabad residence.Charan was earlier clicked with actors Salman Khan, Pooja Hegde, and Venkatesh Daggubati.

Earlier on Tuesday, Charan's wife Upasana shared a sweet photo of the two of them posing with the 'Lagaan' actor on her Instagram.

Rhyme, Ram Charan and Upasana's favourite pet dog, appears to be the focus of attention as Upasana also mentions him in her piece.

As she uploaded a photo from their celebration with Aamir Khan and another photo with Salman Khan, Pooja Hegde, and Venkatesh Daggubati, Upasana added a caption, "Our darling Rhymeeee is getting too much love. we thoroughly enjoyed both evenings".

On the work front, Ram Charan will be next seen in Shankar Shanmugham's next movie.

Kangana Ranaut to appear in court on 4th July

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Kangana Ranaut's tryst with legal battle looks never-ending. The actress is once again grabbing attention for defamation case against her by well-known lyricist Javed Akhtar.

Back in 2020 after SSR's death,Kangana in an interview claimed Javed Akhtar to be a part suicide gang of Bollywood. After which, the lyricist filed a defamation suit against her. The actress challenged the allegations against her but her appeals were rejected by various Mumbai courts. In the recent development about the case, Kangana Ranaut on Monday sought an exemption from appearing in the hearing against her before the Andheri Magistrate Court. Akhtar's lawyer then urged that a non-bailable warrant to be issued against Kangana for not appearing in court on multiple occasions. However, the actress' advocate Rizwan Siddiquee appeared for her in court and reportedly stated that she would be appearing before the court on July 4.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kangana Ranaut will be next seen in 'Tejas'. She also has Emergency and Manikarnika 2 in pipeline. Apart from it, Kangana is also coming up with 'Tiku Weds Sheru', which stars Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Avneet Kaur in the lead roles.

ANUPAM KHER COMMENCES SHOOT OF HIS 526TH MOVIE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-author Anupam Kher has become an institution in himself with several iconic films in Indian cinema.

The actor recently announced his 526th film Kaagaz 2 with dear friend Satish Kaushik.

To note, actor-filmmaker Satish Kaushik has bought the rights to the Malayalam movie Nirnnayakam (2015), which he will remake as the sequel to his last directorial venture Kaagaz (2021).

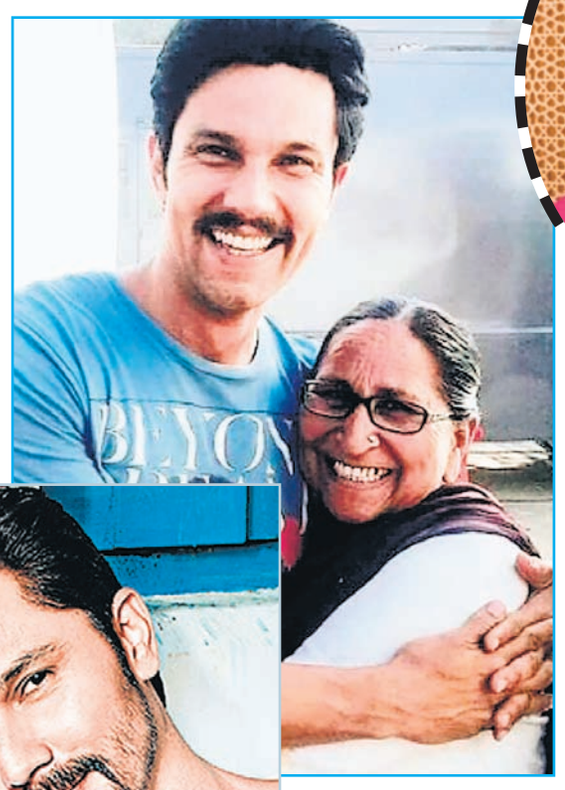
The first part of the film starred another versatile star Pankaj Tripathi and the film centred around the struggle of a common man who was mistakenly declared dead by the government. Anupam, who will be seen playing a pivotal role in the sequel, took to Twitter and shared a video with the clapperboard and wrote, "Friends! Today I am going to start my 526th film #Kaagaz2. Keep your love and blessings as always. I will need them for life. A message for the people coming from small towns. Keep up the hard work, dedication and honesty! No power in the world can stop you!"

On the work front, actor wrapped up shooting of 'Uunchai' with legendary actors Amitabh Bachchan, Boman Irani and Neena Gupta. Apart from this, he also announced the title for his upcoming flix, 'The Signature' alongside Mahima Chaudhry.

Urvashi chuffed to be compared with the evergreen Rekha

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Urvashi Rautela recently performed in front of a massive audience at the Umang Awards 2022 after which she is being compared to evergreen actress Rekha.She performed on 'Mere Dholna' from 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2'.She says: "I feel literally blessed and thankful to my audience who are encouraging me compared to my favourite actress Rekha. I feel so glad."Rautela is a trained Kathak and Bharatanatyam dancer. Urvashi also shared her backstage rehearsal clip on her social media. She opted for a vibrantly colourful sari with a pleated stitched cloth. For the accessories and makeup, she opted for 'Temple Jewellery', such as bangles, earrings, necklaces, and wristlets. The bun and the plait of her hair were decorated with flowers.



Randeep Hooda keeps his promise, performs last rites of Sarabjit's sister

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Hooda, who essayed the titular role of Sarabjit Singh in the 2016 biopic 'Sarbjit', recently performed the last rites of Sarabjit Singh's sister Dalbir Kaur, as a promise that he had made during the shoot of the biopic.

Dalbir Kaur suffered a heart attack at her native village Bhikhiwind near Amritsar in Punjab. The actor rushed from Mumbai for her last rites. Dalbir had reportedly requested Randeep Hooda to give her a 'kandha' during her final rites and the actor stuck to his promise.

Randeep later took to his Instagram as he penned a long emotional note for the departed soul along with an old picture of himself with Dalbir. He wrote, "'(please do visit home) was the last thing she said. I went, only she had left. Not in the wildest dream could one imagine that Dalbir Kaur ji would leave us so soon. A fighter, child like, sharp and devoted to all that she touched."

He further wrote, "She fought a system, a country, it's people and her own to try save her beloved brother Sarbjit. I was so fortunate to have her love and blessings and never to be missed Rakhi in this lifetime. Ironically the last time we met was when I was shooting in the fields of Punjab where we had created an Indo-Pak border."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Pooja Hegde

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