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KERALA RECORDS INDIA'S FIRST MONKEYPOX CASE, CENTRE RUSHES TEAM

DOUBLE TROUBLE

The patient, who arrived from the UAE on July 12, was at his house in Kollam. When he developed the symptoms he was taken to a hospital at Kollam and from there he was shifted to the Trivandrum Medical College hospital where he is under close observation.

Team Absolute | Thiruvananthapuram/New Delhi

While India is still fighting with Covid - 19 pandemic, Kerala on Thursday recorded India's first case of monkeypox with state Health Minister Veena George saying that the suspected case has turned positive.

The results has come from the the laboratory of NIV, Pune, she said, adding that strict containment protocols have been followed and there is no need of concern.

George said his parents are also under observation and so are 11 passengers who might have come with close contact with him in the aircraft.

Meanwhile, the authorities have also identified the auto rickshaw and taxi drivers who have carried this patient in their vehicle.

The patient, was identified as a close contact of a person who tested positive for monkeypox, and had been kept under close surveillance since July 12.

The Union Health Ministry on Thursday rushed a high-level multi-disciplinary team to Kerala to collaborate with the state health authorities in instituting public health measures in view of the confirmed case of monkeypox.

The Central team includes experts from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), a doctor from RML Hospital, New Delhi, and a senior official from Ministry of Health & Family Welfare along with experts from its regional office.

The team will take a stock of on-ground situation and recommend necessary public health interventions. The state Health Department will work closely with the central team.

SYMPTOMS OF MONKEYPOX CAN INCLUDE:

- *Fever*
- *Headache*
- *Muscle aches and backache*
- *Swollen lymph nodes Chills*
- *Exhaustion*
- *A rash that can look like pimples or blisters that appear on the face, inside the mouth, and on other parts of the body, like the hands, feet, chest, genitals, or anus*

INDIA'S DAILY COVID CASES JUMP TO 20,139

New Delhi: *India reported 20,139 new Covid cases in last 24 hours, a considerable rise from the previous day's count of 16,906, said the Union Health Ministry on Thursday. In the same period, the country reported 38 more Covid deaths taking the nationwide toll to 5,25,557. The active caseload has also risen to 1,36,076 cases, accounting for 0.31 per cent of the country's total positive cases. The recovery of 16,482 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,30,28,356. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.49 per cent. Meanwhile, India's daily positivity rate has also increased to 5.10 per cent, while the weekly positivity rate currently stands at 4.37 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 3,94,774 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 86.81 crore.*

HEALTH MINISTRY RAISES ALARM; ISSUES GUIDELINES

New Delhi: *The Union Health Ministry on Thursday asked states to increase surveillance on monkeypox. In a letter to the states and UTs, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan reiterated that there should be a rigorous surveillance system at all points of entry to quickly identify and isolate suspected cases.The Centre, in the letter, has said that orientation and regular re-orientation of all key stakeholders including health screening teams at points of entry, disease surveillance teams, and doctors working in hospitals about common signs and symptoms, differential diagnosis, case definitions for suspects, probable or confirmed cases should be carried out. It has asked states to screen and test all suspect cases either through hospital-based surveillance or targeted surveillance under measles surveillance or intervention sites identified by the National AIDS Control Organisation for MSM (men having sex with men) and FSW (female sex worker) population groups. Intensive risk communication directed at healthcare workers, identified sites in health facilities (such as skin, paediatric OPDS, immunisation clinics, intervention sites identified by NACO, etc.) as well as the general public about simple preventive strategies and the need for prompt reporting of cases needs to be undertaken, he underlined.*

Lalit Modi dating Sushmita Sen, shares romantic pics on Twitter

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former IPL Chairman Lalit Modi on Thursday announced that he is dating Bollywood actress Sushmita Sen and intends to tie the knot with her soon soon.Earlier, Lait Modi had shared a series of pictures of the two on Twitter, calling the actress his better half' and describing it as a new beginning'."Just back in London after a whirling global tour #maldives #sardinia with the families - not to mention my #betterhalf @sushmitasen47 - a new beginning a new life finally. Over the moon," he wrote.Calling Sen his better half, Lalit Modi sent their fans into a frenzy with several discussing if the two were already married.

However, he cleared the air with another tweet, saying, "Just for clarity. Not married - just dating each other. That too it will happen one day. I JUST ANNOUNCED THAT WE ARE TOGETHER."

Lalit Modi has been in London since 2010, when he left India amid investigation into his alleged role in tax evasion and money-laundering. Sushmita Sen, who was crowned Miss Universe in 1994, made her Bollywood debut with the 1996 film 'Dastak'. The 46-year-old actress has two daughters -- Alisah and Renee.Mumbai: In a relief, the Maharashtra government has slashed VAT on petrol and diesel by Rs 5 per litre and Rs 3 per litre respectively, Chief Minister Eknath Shnde announced here on Thursday.

This would entail a burden of Rs 6,000 crore on the state exchequer but will lead to reducing the inflation, Shinde said, after a cabinet meeting.

Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said the move to cut petrol-diesel rates was in tune with the new government's commitment to public welfare and would directly benefit the masses.

Shinde added that after the reduction in the petrol-diesel prices by the Centre a few months ago, some state governments had extended similar reliefs, and now it has been given even in Maharashtra.

Maharashtra cuts petrol rate by Rs 5/litre, diesel Rs 3/litre

Team Absolute | Mumbai

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SUNAK ON TOP IN UK PM RACE

London: UK's former Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak still remained on top in the race to succeed Prime Minister Boris Johnson in the second round of voting among Conservative Party MPs on Thursday, but Indian-origin Attorney General Suella Braverman was knocked out.

Sunak, with 101 votes, maintained his lead over Trade Secretary Penny Mordaunt, who got 83 votes. In the first round on Wednesday, he had got 88 votes, with Mordaunt in second place with 67 votes.In Thursday's vote, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss still remained third with 64 votes, Equalities and Levelling Up Secretary Kemi Badenoch got 49 votes, and backbench MP Tom Tugendhat got 32 votes.

Necessary info on QR code compulsory on packaging of electronic goods

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on Thursday issued new rules for packaging of electronic goods making the QR code compulsory on the packaging with relevant information for products manufactured on or July 15 onwards, i.e. Friday.If not mentioned as QR code, the information should be part of the packaging, said the rules called the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) (Second Amendment) Rules, 2022, notified by the ministry. These shall come into force right away.Citing relevant clauses and sections, the ministry said, "Provided that in the case of an electronic product which is manufactured or packed or imported after July 15, the package of such product shall, for a period of one year from such date, declare the name of the manufacturer or packer or importer, as the case may be, on the package itself and such declaration shall also inform the consumers to scan the QR code for the address and other related information."

GOLD, 8 MORE ITEMS PUT UNDER CUSTOMS' CONTROLLED DELIVERY REGULATION

New Delhi: *The customs department has issued controlled delivery regulations authorising officers to track suspicious consignments of items, including gold, precious stones, drugs and cigarettes. The list of items under the regulation are narcotic drug and psychotropic substances; gold, silver in all forms, precious and semi-precious stones, liquor; currency; cigarettes, tobacco; wildlife products and antiques. As per the regulations, the customs officer can, if needed, install tracking devices to monitor the movement of suspect consignment.*

AMID 'UNPARLIAMENTARY' WORDS ROW, RULES COMMITTEE UNDER FOCUS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid the ongoing debate over the use of certain words during parliamentary proceedings, the focus is on the Rules Committee which frames the norms of the proceedings in the House that functions under the Speaker of the Lok Sabha as its ex-officio Chairperson. Clearing the air after an uproar over the Lok Sabha Secretariat's updated booklet allegedly listing certain words that will be considered unparliamentary, Speaker Om Prakash Birla said on Thursday that "no word has been banned" and that the members are free to express their views.

In Chapter 26 and under Rule 329 to 331, it is mentioned that, "there shall be a Committee on Rules to consider matters of procedure and conduct of business in the House and to recommend any amendments or additions to these rules".

The Rules Committee shall be nominated by the Speaker and shall consist of 15 members, including the Chairperson of the Committee. The Speaker shall be the ex-officio Chairperson of the committee.

The rules say that any notice given by a member of any amendment to the recommendations of the Committee shall stand referred to the Committee which shall consider it and make such changes in their recommendations as the Committee may deem fit.

The final report of the Committee after taking into consideration the amendments suggested by the members shall be laid on the table.

RAIDS IN PATNA DETECT PFI'S 'MISSION 2047', 3 ARRESTED

Patna: Three persons, including a retired police sub-inspector, were arrested after raids in the Phulwari Sharif area here which led to seizure of documents about the PFI's 'Mission 2047' for making India an Islamic state, a police officer said on Thursday. Patna Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Manavjeet Singh Dhillon said the arrested individuals were providing training to the youth on terror activities. "During the raid, we have seized the flags of banned outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) and Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), pamphlets, documents of making the India Islamic state till 2047 and other sensitive documents were recovered from the place," Dhillon said. Patna Police have registered FIR against 26 people and some of them were from Jharkhand, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu. In Bihar, some of the accused belong to Patna, Darbhanga and other places.

I2U2 of India, Israel, US, UAE launched to contribute to world in time of uncertainties

Arul Louis | New York

Launching the I2U2, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared on Thursday that working together, India, Israel, the US and the United Arab Emirates will make an important contribution at the global level in a time of uncertainties as it takes on an economic and humanitarian role.

The Middle East Quad, known as I2U2 derived from the initials of the four nations, took off at a summit in Jerusalem of Modi and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan participating remotely and Israel's Prime Minister Yair Lapid and US President Joe Biden in person.

"This truly is a meeting of strategic partners. We are all good friends as well, and there are a lot of similarities in our approach and in our interests," Modi said in his speech in Hindi.

The Israel Prime Minister's office said that the leaders decided to establish a $2 billion food corridor between India and the UAE using Israeli technology and capabilities and to start a $300 million 300-megawatt wind and solar energy storage project in India with Israeli, UAE, and American technologies.

Biden said: "India is a major, major food producer in the world. Think of the beneficial impacts this will have on India's farmers and the people suffering from hunger and malnutrition in the region."

By jointly using their technical expertise and mobilising private sector investment, they will help India reach its climate and energy goal of 500 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, he said.

Modi said the I2U2 summit has established a "positive agenda" and identified six areas for joint action: water, energy, transport, space, health, and food security.

La Nina conditions likely to prevail up to end of year, not likely to impact Indian monsoon

- *La Nina refers to large-scale cooling of ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, coupled with changes in the tropical atmospheric circulation, namely winds, pressure and rainfall.*
- *It usually has the opposite impacts on weather and climate as that of El Nino, which is the warm phase of the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO).*
- *ENSO has a major influence on weather and climate patterns such as heavy rains, floods and drought. For India, El Nino is associated with drought or weak monsoon while La Nina is associated with strong monsoon and above-average rains, and colder winters.*

Nivedita Khandekar | New Delhi

La Nina conditions prevailing over the equatorial Pacific region are likely to continue up to the end of the year, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Thursday even as experts said it may not be a cause of worry for the Indian monsoon.

The latest forecast by the Monsoon Mission Coupled Forecast System (MMCFS) of the IMD said that the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions, which is at present neutral with negative DMI index over the Indian Ocean, is likely to develop negative conditions during the upcoming season.DMI Index or Dipole Mode Index (DMI) means the difference between sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies in two regions of the tropical Indian Ocean."Other climate models are also indicating enhanced probability for La Nina conditions during the upcoming season," said the IMD forecast.Earlier on June 10, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) had said that there is high probability that the ongoing protracted La Nina event - which has affected temperature and precipitation patterns and exacerbated drought and flooding in different parts of the world - will continue until at least August and possibly to the northern hemisphere fall and start of winter.

MINOR GIRL FORCED TO SELL OOCYTES; TN GOVT ORDERS CLOSURE OF FOUR HOSPITALS

Chennai | Agencies

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian told mediapersons on Thursday that the state government has ordered the closure of four fertility hospitals after a minor girl from Erode was forced to donate her oocytes.

An oocyte is an immature egg (an immature ovum). Oocytes develop to maturity from within a follicle. During each reproductive cycle, several follicles begin to develop.

The minister said that six hospitals were involved in the crime of which four are located in Tamil Nadu, and one each in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. He said the hospitals in Tamil Nadu will be shut, while the state Health Secretary has been directed to write to his counterparts in the other states to initiate appropriate action. The hospitals which have directed to close down are located in Salem, Krishnagiri and Erode on charges of violating the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act and Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, based on an inquiry report which said the minor girl was forced to donate her oocytes.

Four persons, including the mother of the 16-year-old girl and her paramour, have been arrested on charges of forcing the girl to donate her Oocytes. The state health department had formed an inquiry committee headed by Viswanathan, Joint Director of Medical and Rural Health Services, and a final report was submitted on July 7.Inquiries were conducted at the hospitals in Salem, Erode, Krishnagiri and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala where the girl was taken forcibly.

The minister said that these hospitals have violated the provisions of law.Subramanian said, "Commercial donation was going on at these hospitals where there were no qualified counselors. Also, the pros and cons of oocyte donation were also not explained to the minor girl."

He said the girl was forced to donate oocytes several times and even her Aadhaar card was not verified. Also, the approval needed to be obtained from the spouse in such cases was taken from some other person.The minister said that according to the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, a donor aged between 21 and 35 years can donate oocytes once in her lifetime.He said the hospitals have been given 15 days' time to discharge all the patients who are admitted there.

As per the Act, the hospitals can be fined up to Rs 50 lakh and the concerned doctors and other management staff may be handed 10 years' imprisonment, Subramanian said.

'ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES': SC ON ISSUING DIRECTIONS FOR CBI PROBE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday said that the power of transfer an investigation must be used sparingly and only in exceptional circumstances, as it junked a plea by activist Himanshu Kumar demanding a CBI probe against the Chhattisgarh Police and central security forces for an alleged massacre of tribals in two separate places in Dantewada in 2009.

A bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and J.B. Pardiwala said: "It is now settled law that if a citizen, who is a de facto complainant in a criminal case alleging commission of cognizable offence affecting violation of his legal or fundamental rights against high government officials or influential persons, prays before a court for a direction of investigation of the said alleged offence by the CBI, such prayer should not be granted on mere asking." It said the principle of law that emerges from the precedents of this court is that the power to transfer an investigation must be used "sparingly" and only "in exceptional circumstances". The bench said in an appropriate case when the court feels that the investigation by the police authorities is not in a proper direction, and in order to do complete justice in the case and if high police officials are involved in the alleged crime, the court may be justified in such circumstances to hand over the investigation to an independent agency like the CBI. "By now, it is well-settled that even after the filing of the charge sheet, the court is empowered in an appropriate case to hand over the investigation to an independent agency like the CBI," it added.

"The extraordinary power of the constitutional courts under Articles 32 and 226, respectively, of the Constitution of India qua the issuance of directions to the CBI to conduct investigation must be exercised with great caution as underlined."

The bench said it is "conscious of the fact that though a satisfaction of want of proper, fair, impartial and effective investigation eroding its credence and reliability is the precondition for a direction for further investigation or reinvestigation, submission of the charge sheet ipso facto or the pendency of the trial can, by no means, be a prohibitive impediment".

India has to become 'aatma nirbhar' in fertilisers: Tomar

Bengaluru | Agencies

Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar Thursday said that the country needs to work towards self-reliance in fertilisers.

In his address at the inaugural of the National Conference of State Agriculture and Horticulture Ministers here, he, observing that the country has to depend on the import of fertilisers, said the Central government is incurring a subsidy of about Rs. 2.5 lakh crore rupees annually in the interest of farmers, so that the burden of rising prices internationally does not fall on them.

But there must be an end to this situation at sometime, he said. "So now in the field of fertilisers also, we need to be 'aatma nirbhar'... there is a need to 'Make in India'," said Tomar.

Describing the importance of nano fertilisers, he said that the role of the states is important in promoting it. Due to the hard work of the farmers, the skill of the scientists and the policies of the Centre and States, agriculture in the country has developed better and is becoming sustainable, he said, asking his state counterparts to do their best work during their tenure for faster progress of agriculture.

The conference, organized by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, is deliberating on key issues to ensure the development of agriculture and farmers in the country. Coinciding with the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', the conference being held after a two year gap brought about by the Covid pandemic. Union Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya and Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai also attended the event.

Andhra villages marooned as Godavari nears danger mark

Amaravati | Agencies

Several villages along Godavari River in Andhra Pradesh were marooned as the river continued to be in spate.

As the heavy inflows continued from upstream, the water level was rising. The third flood level warning is likely to be issued in Thursday night at Dowleswaram barrage.

Heavy inflows from upstream reservoirs in Telangana are leading to rise in Godavari level at Dowleswaram and Polavaram.

According to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority, the inflow and outflow at Dowleswaram barrage was 16.27 lakh cusecs.

If the river crosses the third flood level, it may impact 524 villages in 42 mandals of six districts.

About 40 villages along the banks of East Godavari, Konaseema and Kakinada districts were marooned and cut-off.

Indian Navy helicopters were conducting rescue and relief operations in marooned Villages in Eluru. The Indian Navy launched two medium-lift UH3H helicopters from INS Dega for rescue and relief operations.

The helicopters were sent to Koyada and Katukuru village in Velerupadu mandal of Eluru district.

People from some villages have moved to safe places by boats. Villagers in flood-affected villages were facing severe hardships due to shortage of food and drinking water.

Seven teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and five teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams have been deployed for disaster relief operations in affected areas.

About 12,000 people have been shifted to relief camps in affected districts.

Spices, potatoes, tomatoes, chilies production estimated lower this year

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Production of many important spices, potatoes, tomatoes and both red and green chillies is estimated to be less in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21, as per the data released on Thursday.

The second advance estimates of horticulture crop and area data shows that a general increase in production of fruits, vegetables and honey is expected while there will be a decrease in production of spices, flowers, aromatics and medicinal plants and plantation crops over previous year.

However, overall total horticulture production in 2021-22 is estimated to be 341.63 million tonnes (MT), an increase of about 7.03 MT or 2.10 per cent over the 2020-21 production, as per the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare data.

Onion production is estimated to be 31.70 MT against 26.64 MT in 2020-21, potato production is expected to be 53.58 MT compared to 56.17 MT in 2020-21, while tomato production is expected to be 20.34 MT compared to 21.18 MT in 2020-21, the data showed.For green chillies, it is expected to be 4.2 MT this year compared to 4.3 MT last year while production of red chillies (dried) is expected to be 1.8 MT versus 2 MT last year.

Asked if these estimates would have an impact on the market prices, Potato and Onion Merchants Association head, Rajendra Sharma said: "These are figures up to March 2022 that the government is releasing only now. People have finished consuming the produce from up to March. Whatever we now have in the market is from April, May and June, so it should not make a difference."

Sharma, who is also the former President of Federation of Fruit and Vegetables Trade Associations of Delhi, also added that the current produce in the market will be in use till October almost as the rain months bring almost nothing much from any of these to the market.

Overall, fruit production is estimated to be 107.10 MT compared to 102.48 MT in 2020-21 while the production of vegetables is estimated to be 204.61 MT, compared to 200.45 MT in 2020-21.

Among the spices, production of ajwain, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, cumin, nutmeg, and black pepper is estimated to be less than previous year. Production of all major plantation crops - arecanut, cashewnut and coconut - too is estimated to be less than previous year, the Agriculture Department data showed.

PMK wants Hindi words removed from classical Tamil institute's name board, website

Chennai | Agencies

The PMK, the political arm of the powerful Vanniyar community, on Thursday urged the Tamil Nadu government to immediately remove Hindi inscriptions on the name board of the Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT) in Perumbakkam.

PMK founder leader, Dr S. Ramadoss said that the board bears the name in Hindi along with Tamil and English.

"The focus of the institute is to conduct research into Tamil language and the board has Hindi inscriptions on the name board," he said in a statement, pointing out at the the new building of the institute was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and when it earlier operated from Taramani, the name board had only Tamil and English inscriptions.

The PMK leader also lashed out against the CICT website also having Hindi and said that it amounted to imposition.He said that even though CICT was a Central government institute, the majority of its functioning depends on state government activities and added that it was not acceptable for such an institution to have Hindi inscriptions on its board. Ramadoss called upon the Chief Minister to take special attention to the issue and asked whether the Chief Minister's nod was sought for having the Hindi name.

SC SETS ASIDE PATNA HIGH COURT ORDERS AGAINST BUSINESSMAN SUBRATA ROY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday set aside the orders of a judge of Patna High Court, who acted without jurisdiction, ordering the appearance of businessman Subrata Roy Sahara and also asked for a plan to return the money to the investors.

A bench comprising Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and J.B. Pardiwala said the high court should exercise caution in deciding matters and not decide on unrelated matters. "Here, the high court kept anticipatory bail pending and issued notice to third parties (to appear before court)...That in our opinion is impermissible and cannot be countenanced. The high court has exceeded its jurisdiction...," said the bench.

The top court emphasized that the high court should not have initiated recovery proceedings in an anticipatory bail application matter, as it set aside the high court orders.

The bench added that it has no doubt that enquiry must be limited to facts relevant to the concerned application, which has come before the court and no attempt should be made to inquire into matters relating to the third party, beyond the scope of complaint/FIR in question. "Such transgression is beyond the scope of the application...", noted the bench.

New rules for second marriage by govt employees in Bihar

Patna | Agencies

The employees of Bihar government intending to marry for a second time will now have to first inform their respective department and go ahead only after obtaining the necessary permission.

The state government has issued a fresh notification wherein it has directed every government official to inform about their marital status and be eligible for a second marriage only after obtaining the necessary permission.

The notification said that any male or female employee planning to marry for a second time must first take legal separation from his/her spouse and inform the same to the concerned department. In case the first wife/husband is having objection, the employee's second wife/husband will not be entitled to get government facilities.

If a government employee marries for a second time without taking permission from the concerned department and dies during the service period, his/her second wife/husband and their children will not be entitled to get jobs on compassionate grounds. The state government will give preference to the children of the first wife. The general administration has sent the notification to all the divisional commissioners, district magistrates, sub-divisional magistrates, DGP, DGP home guard, DGP prison, and every concerned officer to implement the same in their respective jurisdictions.

DALER MEHNDI ARRESTED IN 2003 HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASE, SENT TO JAIL

Chandigarh: A court in Punjab's Patiala on Thursday dismissed the plea of leading bhangra-pop singer Daler Mehndi against his two-year jail in a 19-year-old human trafficking case. He was subsequently arrested and sent to a local jail.He was convicted along with his brother in March 2018 and later released on bail. As his bail plea was dismissed by the court of Additional Sessions Judge H.S. Grewal, Daler Mehndi was taken into custody. Police had registered a case against the singer, his brother Shamsher Singh -- who died in October 2017 -- and two others, after it was alleged that the accused took money from people to the tune of Rs 1 crore on the pretext of taking them abroad.

Complainant, Bakhshish Singh, alleged that the deal never matur The case was registered in 2003 in Patiala. Daler Mehndi was subsequently arrested but released on bail after a few days.Police had earlier moved two petitions before the court saying that Daler Mehndi was not required in the case as he had nothing to do with the immigration fraud, called 'kabootarbaazi' -- literally flying of pigeons but referring to numerous youth in Punjab trying to use illegal means to settle abroad. The singer was arrested by the police in October 2003 along with his brother after the complainant said he was duped of a huge sum of money by the two, who had promised to take him abroad as part of their musical group and to leave him in some western country to settle there.

SHOULD INDIA HAVE A RUBBER-STAMP PRESIDENT, ASKS YASHWANT SINHA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Joint Opposition candidate for Presidential polls, Yashwant Sinha on Thursday questioned NDA nominee Draupadi Murmu's silence on issues concerning the tribal community in the country.

Addressing a press conference here at a hotel, Sinha called Murmu a 'silent' and 'rubber stamp' candidate for the Presidential election.

"I have great regards for Draupadi Murmu. However, so far, she has not broken her silence even on issues concerning the tribal communities in India. Hence, my question is to members of the electoral college, and also to the people of the county -- should India have a silent and rubber-stamp Rashtrapati?" Sinha said.

He further stated that there is nothing wrong if MLAs and MPs vote for a candidate

of his or her choice in the Presidential election.

"The makers of the constitution have devised the method of the secret ballot to underscore the fact that the members of the Electoral College should have freedom to heed the call of their conscience, and should not blindly follow the decision of their respective parties.

"Therefore, I too urge MPs and MLAs, regardless of their party affiliations, to vote for me.

But I strongly condemn the dirty tricks employed by the ruling party.... My fight is against anarchism and to protect the democracy of the country," he added.

"Apart from Madhya Pradesh, the BJP dislodged governments in Karnataka, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, and most recently in Maharashtra. In all this, I hear alarm bells for democracy in India," Sinha said.

Sinha arrived in Bhopal on Wednesday night to seek support of MPs and MLAs for the upcoming July 18 Presidential elections.

He has left for Delhi on Thursday noon.

Moong to be purchased at minimum support price of Rs 7,275 per quintal : CM

REGISTRATION FOR PURCHASE OF MOONG WILL START FROM JULY 18

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that farmers in Madhya Pradesh have produced summer moong with hard work. The price of moong in the market is much less than the support price. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the state government is making every effort for the betterment of farmers, this is the government of farmers. The Chief Minister said that it has been decided that we will give justice to our farmers and their moong will be purchased at the minimum support price of Rs 7 thousand 275 per quintal. CM Chouhan said that the state government is starting the registration for purchase of moong from July 18. CM Chouhan said this in a message issued to the media from the residence office.

BJP offering money for cross-voting in Presidential poll: Kamal Nath

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath on Thursday alleged that state's ruling BJP was trying to woo his party MLAs with offers of big money to vote for their candidate in the July 18 presidential polls. Addressing a press conference, along with opposition presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha, he said that a Congress MLA informed him about receiving phone calls to vote for NDA candidate Draupadi Murmu in return for money. Nath, however, assured that all Congress MLAs will vote for Sinha.

According to party sources, the MLA concerned is a former minister and prominent tribal MLA. Congress sources told IANS that at least three non-BJP MLAs have been offered money for cross-voting.

"They have (BJP) been already intimidating and luring our people in the Janpad and Zila Panchayat polls, but now they have not even spared the presidential elections," Nath said.

Nath's allegation came just a few hours after the state Home Minister Narottam Mishra had appealed to Congress lawmakers, including Nath and Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh to vote for the NDA presidential candidate. Denying Nath's allegations, Mishra said: "Why will we indulge in such acts, particularly when the entire country knows that the NDA candidate Draupadi Murmu is winning the election with a big margin."

BJP leaders becoming vocal against Shivraj government

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In Madhya Pradesh, the voices of the leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party are becoming vocal against their own government, while openly attacks are being spoken, while the Congress is taking a jibe. Former Chief Minister of the state Uma Bharti has been on the path of agitation for prohibition for a long time, where she threw stones at a liquor shop in the capital and dung at a liquor shop in Orchha. Now the Ken-Betwa link is questioning the project.

Uma Bharti's tweets regarding the Ken-Betwa link project are in the news. Through these tweets, he has put the state government in the dock. He has said that this scheme should land on the same ground. As in our time. I have an eye on this, I keep talking to Shivraj Singh Chouhan about this.

On the other hand, BJP MLA from Maihar Narayan Tripathi raised questions about the disturbances in the urban and panchayat elections. They say that elections should not be held now, the same system should be implemented as Ha's victory in the house. The officers and employees are promoting the special team. From small employees to big officers, they are seen getting votes for BJP. I am not opposed to BJP, I am MLA of BJP, but this situation is not good, it hurts, it should be closed.

Former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh has taken a jibe at this statement of Narayan Tripathi and said, come on, there is someone in BJP who dared to speak the truth, congratulations and thanks Narayan Tripathi, you have exposed the pain of thousands of contestants openly. The presiding officers have strangled democracy.

Apart from the harsh attitudes of Uma Bharti, the statement of Narayan Tripathi has been taken seriously by the people associated with the power and organization. Some leaders of the party have even now been instructed not to react to Uma Bharti's statement and not to have mail meetings with her.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO KAILASH JOSHI ON HIS ANNIVERSARY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to former Chief Minister Late Kailash Joshi on his anniversary. CM Chouhan paid floral tributes by garlanding his picture in the auditorium at his residence. Kailash Joshi was born on 14 July 1929 in Hatpipliya district Dewas. In the year 1977-78, he was the Chief Minister of the state, MLA 8 times, Lok Sabha member twice and member of Rajya Sabha once. Joshi was one of the founding members of the Jana Sangh. He was famous as a saint in the politics of Madhya Pradesh. He passed away on November 24, 2019.

Homage to Prof. Rajendra Singh : Chief Minister paid homage to Prof. Rajendra Singh (Rajju Bhaiya) on his death anniversary by garlanding in the auditorium at his residence. Prof. Rajendra Singh, the fourth Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was born on January 29, 1922. He was popularly known as Rajju Bhaiya.

CM CHOUHAN PLANTS PEEPAL, NEEM AND HARSINGAR SAPLINGS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Peepal, Neem and Harsingar saplings in Smart City Park. Sarvshi Ravish Shrivastava, Prabhdeep Singh, Shailendra Dubey, Vaishali Shrivastava and Nirmaljit Kaur of Bhopal Food Lovers planted saplings. More than 57 thousand members associated with this food group are working to make citizens aware against plastic and to connect the people of Bhopal settled in other countries. The group actively worked in providing food, medical aid etc. to the needy people during the difficult times of Covid.

Importance of plants : Peepal is a shady tree. It purifies the environment. It has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is known as the ultimate medicine. Harsingar has also medicinal properties. According to medical experts, it is used to cure many diseases.

Shivpuri ADM to faces action for his comment on voting

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An additional district magistrate (ADM) has drawn flak for his comment that the right to vote and democracy was the "biggest mistake" of the country, prompting the Madhya Pradesh government to order a disciplinary action against him.

A purported video of Shivpuri ADM Umesh Shukla making the comment went viral on social media before the last phase of polling for the local body elections in the state on Wednesday.

Taking a serious note of the remarks, state Home Minister and government spokesman Narottam Mishra on Thursday said, "This is a serious matter. We have given a notice for a disciplinary action against the ADM and have also written to the state election commission for his transfer." The poll body has given a nod for the official's removal and possibly, he will be removed from the post during the day, he said.

According to eyewitnesses, Shukla allegedly made the comments on Tuesday when a group of employees went to apprise him, a day before polling on Wednesday, that they were unable to vote because of shortage of ballot papers and requested him to ensure that they are able to exercise their right to franchise.

In the viral video, Shukla was heard saying, "If your name is not included in the voters' list, then how does it harm you? What have you got by voting so far? How many corrupt leaders have we produced? I think that the right to vote and democracy is the biggest mistake of the nation." Employees performing election duties are provided the facility of casting votes though postal ballots.

Despite repeated efforts, Shukla could not be reached for a comment on the issue.

Income tax raid on the premises of Congress MLA Sanjay Sharma

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Income Tax Department has taken major action in Madhya Pradesh on Thursday and raided several places of Congress MLA Sanjay Sharma from Tendukheda assembly constituency of Narsinghpur district. Sharma used to be a BJP MLA before the year 2018. Congress MLA Sharma has a business of sand and liquor, he is accused of tax evasion and due to this many teams of Income Tax Department have raided his places of Narsinghpur, Katni, Tendukheda and Jabalpur together, this action was taken on Thursday. It started at six in the morning.

It has been told that several teams of Income Tax reached Sanjay Sharma's places of Tendukheda, Katni, Narsinghpur together. The documents are being checked. There has been a stir in the political circles since the Income Tax Department's raid on the residences of the Congress MLA. It has been told that Sanjay Sharma used to be a BJP MLA before the year 2018, but just before the election, he changed his side after not getting a ticket and fielded as a Congress candidate, he won it.

Electricity towers built in the river in MP!

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Power Transmission Company of Madhya Pradesh has innovated to set up towers in the river. For the first time in the state, in the expansion of transmission network, ultra high pressure towers have been constructed on pile foundation. It has been told that the company has built these towers in the Tawa river passing through Mohasa village at a cost of about 31 crores. This line was energized last day. The company has successfully used pile foundation technology in the construction of four towers in the middle of 2.5 km length of 132 kV Budhni Mohasa (Bawai) DCDS (Double Circuit Double Stringing) line.

The construction of very high pressure lines by crossing rivers, ponds, drains etc. has always been challenging in front of the company. These were often constructed with long spans on either end of the river. This caused problems in construction as well as in maintenance. By adopting this new technology, now these towers have been constructed by making a pile foundation inside the river itself. Engineer Sanjay Kulshrestha, Chief Engineer, Planning and Designing Faculty of the company said that this technology being used by the company for the first time will prove to be a milestone for transmission line construction. For this, the company has prepared foundations of special designs. These techniques provide great flexibility to the construction work in the area with submerged and uneven geographical conditions, thereby making necessary changes in the construction of the lines and ease of subsequent maintenance.

CELL PHONE TO BE PROHIBITED DURING THE COUNTING OF VOTES FOR URBAN BODIES

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh has informed that during the counting of general and by-elections of urban bodies, the use of mobile phones hinders the counting work and there is a possibility of breach of confidentiality of counting work. The use of mobile cell phones in the counting hall and premises is strictly prohibited. This includes journalists as well. Observers appointed by the Commission for election supervision shall be free from this restriction, so that they may remain in constant touch with the Commission.

Singh has said that the contesting candidates and their election and polling agents will be checked during the entry at the counting place and will not be allowed to enter the counting place if they carry mobile. Instructions have been given to inform all the candidates and recognised political parties in this regard in advance.

Arrangements have already been made by the District Election Officer and the officers related to the counting of votes to set up a telephone in a room near the counting place for establishing contact with the commission.

EDITOR'S SPECS

BSP did not get donations above Rs 20K

The Bahujan Samaj Party has declared that it did not get any donations above Rs 20,000 during FY 2020-21. According to a report prepared by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) that focuses on donations received by the National political parties above Rs 20,000 during the financial year 2020-21, as submitted by the parties to the Election Commission of India (ECI), the BSP has made this declaration. It is only the BSP that submitted its contribution report on time. The total donations (above Rs 20,000) declared by the national parties for FY 2020-21 was Rs 593.748 crore from 3,753 donations. A total of Rs 477.545 crore from 2,206 donations was declared by the BJP followed by Rs 74.524 crore from 1,077 donations declared by Congress. The donations declared by the BJP are more than four times the aggregate declared by INC, NCP, CPI, CPM, NPEP and AITC for the same period. The ADR report further says that the total donations of the national parties during FY 2020-21 decreased by Rs 420.652 crore, a decrease of 41.49 per cent from the previous financial year 2019-20. Donations to BJP decreased from Rs 785.77 crore during FY 2019-20 to Rs 477.545 crore during FY 2020-21 (39.23 per cent decrease). Segregation of donations was made by ADR based on the addresses provided by the parties in their donations report to the ECI. The report further says that 1,398 donations to the national parties were made by corporate/business sectors amounting to Rs 480.655 crore (80.953 per cent of total donations) while 2258 individual donors donated Rs 111.65 crore (18.804 per cent of total donations) to the parties during FY 2020-21.

US CITES INDIA'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR QUAD AND I2U2

Yashwant Raj

US President Joe Biden's administration on Wednesday offered a full-throated justification for elevating ties with India, specially through multilateral platforms such as the newly launched I2U2 that the two countries form with Israel and the UAE, and the Quad with Japan and Australia, calling India the "most strategically consequential countries in the Indo-Pacific".

India's "longstanding" ties in West Asia and with Israel was cited as reason for the Biden administration involving India in the I2U2, which will hold its first-ever summit in a four-way virtual meeting later Wednesday with Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid joining from Israel, where the American leader is for the next few days on his first trip to the region.

US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters accompanying Biden on Wednesday that a "significant announcement" is expected to be made at the I2U2 summit on food security, which, he had said earlier, would be the focus of the first-ever summit of the new body.

Sullivan was more expansive about Biden administration's approach on India in response to a specific question about India's involvement in all of the President's recent foreign policy initiatives such as I2U2 and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity, which is designed to offer countries a sustainable alternative to China's predatory Belt and Road Initiative, and the Quad, which has had multiple summit-level meetings since Biden took office.

"First, India plays a critical role in the Indo-Pacific. And it's one of the largest, most significant, most strategically consequential countries in the Indo-Pacific, and so it should play a central role in our strategy, including through the Quad," he said.Citing India's "longstanding" ties to the West Asia region (called the Middle East by the rest of the world) and "a relationship over the years" with Israel, Sullivan went on to say, "just as the United States can play a critical and central role in helping deepen Israel's integration into the region, India has a role to play in that as well". Ties between India and Israel have improved rapidly with bipartisan support on body sides after the two countries established full diplomatic ties in 1980. India's ties with the Gulf region countries go a long way back, but it has made rapid progress with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar in recent years. The new Quad for the West Asia region is Biden's attempt to broaden US policy from its decades-long narrow focus on terrorism and wars. "Bringing together Israel, India, and the United Arab Emirates, especially around an issue where the four countries have unique capacities to bring to bear on agricultural technology, leading to greater food production, leading to an alleviation of the food security challenge -- this is the kind of thing that really fulfills the President's vision of a more integrated, more globally engaged Middle East across the board that isn't just focused on issues that have been top of mind for American foreign policymakers over the last 20 years -- terrorism and wars," the US National Security adviser said.

"This is a different kind of approach, and it's about expanding partnerships, expanding the geography rather than contracting or narrowing it." I2U2 can become "a feature of the broader region, just as the Quad has become a central pillar of the Indo-Pacific strategy of the United States", Sullivan said in conclusion.

Longings at Majnu Ka Tilla

Sukant Deepak

It was a chance meeting with the Dalai Lama and his suggestion that as a photographer she does something to bring awareness to the Tibetan cause. However, when she started working on the Tibetan exile story, photographer Serena Chopra, whose new photo book 'Majnu Ka Tilla Diaries' will be released on August 5, felt stuck and couldn't find a new photographic language that spelt what it felt like to be a displaced community in exile.

Her initial work with the Tibetan community in India did not express her feelings about the subject of displacement. She felt stymied and dropped the project for a brief period.

But then one day Chopra was inspired to visit Majnu Ka Tilla in Delhi, an old refugee colony haunt from her days as a Delhi university student more than two decades ago.

"I spent a day and a late night at the colony and I just knew that I had found the space to express myself. It was an intuitive sense of resonating with the environment. This had to happen for my ideas to flow and express themselves creatively," she tells correspondent.Majnu Ka Tilla harbours a Tibetan community torn away from its roots, now reinventing its life amidst the chaos and uncertainty of being in exile.

"The narrow alleyways, bustling with untold stories drew me closer. Every narrow lane morphed into the humdrum of a market with street vendors, crafts, restaurants, hotels and cafes sprouting in every nook and cranny. The temple square was the glue that bound every life here. It was not only a place to pray but a marketplace, a meeting place and a playground for the children in the evening. The old and infirm settled into the rhythm of time passing to the resonance of thumbs rolling over prayer beads. I was inexorably drawn to their courage and resilience," she adds.

Intentionally using the diary format in order to retain the intimacy and potency of a personal diary, she says the diary pages are the core and heart of the book. "The diary becomes a live object as it zooms in on the voice of the real person, unwittingly dragged into the whole situation of war and suffering."

Believing that black & white as an art form does not project reality the way we see it with the human eye, the photographer says, "I believe it allows me to transform reality in my own fashion."Interestingly, Chopra does not work with digital cameras at all and prefers the meditative, slow process of a manual camera that uses film. Her process starts when she feels passionate about a subject and wants to talk about it and express herself through photographs.

"When I work on a project, I like to read literary works. I also journal and jot down my thoughts and ideas on the project. Finally, a body of work encompasses all these factors -- gut, concern, depth of feeling, and yet it transcends them," she says.

Stressing that it would be a positive step to take photography forward along with other art forms and have more of it as an integral part of the school curriculum, she feels that with the advent of social media platforms like Instagram, photography has grown in a multidimensional realm.

"That's good. It provokes creativity and ease and is in sync with the modern need for speed and instant gratification. Whether these trends will find relevance or not is a moot point. Criteria limit artistic expression and excellence. It is more a question of expressing yourself with great individuality and originality," concludes Chopra who is currently shooting a story on ancient forests using a large format studio camera.

Staff-level agreement between Pakistan, IMF reached

Hamza Ameer | slamabad

Pakistan has finally reached a staff level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as it announced agreement on the completion of two outstanding programme reviews, along with an increase of total loan size from 6 billion dollars to 7 billion dollars.

"The IMF team has reached a staff level agreement with the Pakistani authorities for the conclusion of the combined seventh and eighth reviews of the Extended Fund Facility supported programme," read a statement issued by the IMF.

The statement also clarified that Pakistan needs to be ready to take more measures towards increasing its revenue.The IMF's agreement has come with a strict set of demands and targets set for Pakistan to achieve during the next fiscal year, in which, primary budget surplus targets of Rs 153 billion or 0.2 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which was set in the revised budget, has now been increased to a target of 0.4 per cent.

Experts say the government will have to either introduce more revenue measures or will have to cut its expenditure, which will be excluding the development budgets.

The IMF has also included Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau (NAB) review on its anti-corruption procedures in the country as part of its programme conditions.

"The agreement is subject to approval by the IMF's Executive Board and once approved by the board about $1.177bn worth of loan tranche will be released. This will bring total disbursements under the programme to about $4.2 billion," the IMF statement maintained.

In order to support programme implementation and meet the higher financing needs in the fiscal year 2022-23, as well as catalyse additional financing, IMF Board will consider an extension of the EFF under end-June 2023 and augmentation of access by SDR 720 million or 1 billion dollar. This will bring the total access under the EFF to about $7billion.

The staff level agreement with the IMF holds great importance for Pakistan as the deal will pave the way to other loan facilities from countries like the Saudi Arabia and global lenders like the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, whose approval was subjected to the outcome of the revival of the loan programme with the IMF.

However, the country has paid a heavy price for the IMF programme revival as a massive increase in fuel prices, electricity prices, energy prices, leading to a extra-ordinary increase in utility prices and increased taxes on salaried class as parts of the terms and condition put forward by the IMF for Pakistan to comply with first. The IMF programme revival has also stopped the surging value of USD against the Pakistani rupee as it fell by at least Rs 1.5 in the open market.

One dead, 84 injured in Sri Lanka protests

Colombo | Agencies

One person died and 84 others injured in anti-government protests in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo, media reports said.

The 26-year-old man died from breathing difficulties after police lobbed teargas at protesters to disperse them, BBC reported.The injured included protesters who were outside the prime minister's office as well as those who were outside parliament later in the evening on Wednesday.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe as acting President of the country, triggering further protests.

The government has imposed a curfew in Colombo district from 12 noon on July 14 (Thursday) to 5 a.m. on July 15 (Friday).

The island nation has been witnessing months of rotests over food and fuel shortage. Inflation in the crisis-hit country is more than 50 per cent.

Sri Lankan President leaves for Singapore

Male: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Thursday left for Singapore from the Maldives, media report said.President Rajapaksa is accompanied by his wife and two security officials who flew with him from Colombo on a Saudi Airlines plane, Daily Mirror reported. They were escorted to the plane by special forces of the Maldives Defence Force.President Rajapaksa had left crisis-hit Sri Lanka early Wednesday for the Maldives.He was scheduled to board a flight for Singapore on Wednesday night but could not due to security concerns.

UKRAINE, RUSSIA MAKE SOME PROGRESS IN TALKS ON GRAIN EXPORTS: ZELENSKY

Kiev: Ukraine and Russia have made some progress at the talks on grain exports in Istanbul that also involved representatives of Turkey and the United Nations, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said.

"The Ukrainian delegation informed me that there is some progress. We will agree on the details with the UN secretary-general in the coming days," Zelensky was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency.According to the presidential press service, the President on Wednesday said that Ukraine is making significant efforts to restore the supplies of food to the global market.

Earlier in the day, delegations from Ukraine, Russia and Turkey met with a UN delegation in Istanbul to find ways to export Ukrainian grain from Ukraine's Black Sea ports to the global market.

Hong Kong jails 66-year old activist for 8 months over pro-democracy protests

Hong Kong | Agencies

Hong Kong has jailed a 66-year-old activist known affectionately as Grandma Wong in relation to the pro-democracy protests that rocked the city three years ago, local media reported.

A city magistrate jailed Alexandra Wong for eight months on Wednesday over two counts of unlawful assembly during a protest on August 11, 2019. Wong, a familiar presence at the protests, was widely recognised for flying the British union jack, The Guardian reported.

Principal magistrate Ada Yim found Wong to have participated in two illegal assemblies, and cited her use of flags and slogans to encourage others to do the same.

From the dock, the bespectacled and grey-haired Wong struck a defiant note and criticised Hong Kong's government as an "authoritarian regime", The Guardian reported.She also reiterated an earlier claim that she had been interrogated and detained by security agents in the Chinese mainland for 45 days and prevented from returning to Hong Kong for nearly 14 months. She said she was forced to give written and filmed confessions.

Wong is no stranger to the courts, and has continued to stage one-woman protests outside the city's court buildings in support of other pro-democracy activists during their hearings, despite Hong Kong's punitive national security law. The activist has previously been convicted of a series of other protest-related charges, including a four-day sentence in January for refusing to show her ID card during another protest, and a one-month sentence for assault in July 2021 for pushing a court security guard.

CHINA ISSUES BLUE ALERT FOR RAINSTORMS

Beijing: China's national observatory on Thursday issued a blue alert for rainstorms in some regions of the country.Heavy rainfall and rainstorms are expected in parts of northwest China and some areas of Jiangsu and Anhui provinces from 8 a.m. Thursday to 8 a.m. Friday, according to the National Meteorological Centre.Some of these regions will experience up to 60 mm of hourly precipitation accompanied by thunderstorms and strong winds, Xinhua news agency reported quoting the centre. It advised local authorities to remain alert for possible flooding and called for protective measures in schools and kindergartens.China has a four-tier color-coded weather warning system, with red representing the most severe warning, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

Intermittent rains disturbed city's traffic

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Intermittent rains lashed Mumbai and its suburbs on Thursday, affecting road traffic in some areas of the city.

The weather observatories in Santacruz (western suburb) and Colaba (south Mumbai) recorded 95.2 mm and 62.6 mm of rainfall respectively in the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Thursday, an official from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Since morning, intermittent spells of intense showers were reported in various parts of the metropolis.Areas like Malvani, Kandivali, Dindoshi and Versova in the western suburbs and the eastern suburb of Vikhroli recorded over 20 mm rainfall from 8.30 am to 2 pm on Thursday, as per the IMD.Other areas of the city received moderate showers. The poor condition of roads at some places in Jogeshwari, Andheri and parts of Bhandup resulted in slow traffic movement in those areas.

Where is Governor when rains are wreaking havoc in state: Sanjay Raut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Thursday claimed there is no government existing in Maharashtra at present as the Eknath Shinde-led dispensation is "illegal", and asked where Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari is when rains are wreaking havoc in the state.

Talking to reporters, Raut said cholera has broken out in many parts of the state that has resulted in deaths.

"Maharashtra is again under a lockdown. Nearly 100 people have died due to floods," he said.

According to the state government figures, 83 people have died due to rain-related incidents between June 1 and July 10. These deaths were caused by incidents like floods, lightning strikes, landslides, falling of trees and collapse of structures, among others, the state disaster management authority had said in a report.

On Wednesday, the state health department said 181 people have been infected with cholera, of whom five have died.

"In such a situation, no government exists in the state. There is no government in the state because this is an illegal government," Raut said. "Where is our governor now? There is no government in the state, there is no cabinet," he said.The Shiv Sena insists that the new government has been illegally sworn in as the disqualification pleas of Shinde and the 39 rebel Sena MLAs are pending before the Supreme Court. The 40 MLAs had rebelled against the party leadership, leading to the collapse of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in the last week of June.

"Floods are wreaking havoc in the state. Where is the governor? He was guiding us till yesterday. Now where is he? His guidance is now needed for the state," Raut said. The Rajya Sabha member said many Sena MLAs, who have switched side, could be disqualified. The sword of disqualification is hanging over the rebel legislators, he said.

The cabinet expansion has not taken place so far as the Supreme Court is yet to decide on the disqualification pleas of the MLAs filed by the party, the Sena MP added."Administering oath to (rebel) MLAs is not according to the Constitution. This is political corruption. The governor should not do anything against the Constitution," he said.

Cannot force mother to choose between child and career: Bombay High Court

Team Absolute | Mumbai

There has never been anything quite so special as the love between a daughter and her father, but no court can refuse the career prospects of a woman, the Bombay High Court has held.

The court made this observation while allowing a woman, who is embroiled in a matrimonial dispute with her husband, to relocate to Poland along with her minor daughter.

A single bench of Justice Bharati Dangre in an order passed on July 8, a copy of which was made available on Wednesday, allowed the mother to take her nine-year-old daughter to Poland, but directed her to give physical and virtual access of the girl to her father.

The woman had approached the high court seeking permission to relocate and shift along with her daughter to Krakow in Poland, where she has got a job opportunity. The woman and her husband are embroiled in a matrimonial dispute.

The man opposed the plea claiming that if the child is moved away from him then he would not get to see her again and further said that the situation in Poland is volatile given the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine.

"There has never been, nor will there ever be, anything quite so special as the love between a daughter and her father," Justice Dangre noted.

The judge added that on the one hand is a father, who is pained with the idea of his daughter relocating, while on the other is a woman, who wants to take up a job to advance her career. The court noted that till date the custody of the girl was with the mother, who has single-handedly raised the child and considering the girl's age, it is important that she must accompany her mother.

"I do not think that the court can refuse the job prospects to a mother, who is inclined to take up the job and she cannot be deprived of this opportunity. Necessarily, a balance has to be drawn between the interests of both the mother and father and also look at the welfare of the child," Justice Dangre said.

The petitioner is the mother of the child and has been continuously with the child since her birth and though a working woman, has struck a balance between her work and care and affection of the child and ensured that she enjoys a healthy upbringing, the court said. The court also refused to accept the husband's contention that the girl would feel anxious if uprooted now to a foreign country. "It is not uncommon for children to shift along with their parents. It is also not uncommon for a working woman to leave her child in a day-care facility, on account of her responsibilities," Justice Dangre said. The court further said that in the present case, the woman's mother would also be shifting to take care of the child.

The bench directed the woman to bring the child to India during her holidays in school there in Poland and give physical access to her father and also virtual access daily.

UDDHAV FACTION MLAS, MPS TO SKIP MURMU MEET

Shiv Sena MLAs and MPs loyal to former Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray will not attend a meeting to be held in Mumbai on Thursday for the presidential poll campaign of National Democratic Alliance nominee Droupadi Murmu.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Thackeray on Tuesday announced his party's support for Murmu in the July 18 presidential election.

He had said the Sena was announcing support for Murmu without any pressure, while acknowledging that this is the first occasion wherein a tribal woman is getting the opportunity to become the country's president.

The Shiv Sena has 19 members in the Lok Sabha and three in the Rajya Sabha.

It has 55 MLAs in the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly, whose current strength is 287 due to the death of a legislator. Out of the 55 Sena MLAs, 15 are with Thackeray, while the others have joined the faction led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

Last month, a rebellion led by Shinde against the party leadership led to the collapse of the Thackeray-led tripartite government comprising the Sena, the Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress.

Murmu had earlier served as the governor of Jharkhand.

The Opposition has fielded former Union minister Yashwant Sinha against Murmu in the presidential election.

Bailable warrant against Raut cancelled in defamation case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A Mumbai court on Thursday canceled a bailable warrant issued against Shiv Sena Member of Parliament Sanjay Raut after he appeared before it in connection with a defamation complaint filed by BJP leader Kirit Somaiya's wife Medha Somaiya.

The Sewri metropolitan magistrate's court had last month issued a summon against Sanjay Raut, asking him to appear before it on July 4.

However, he did not turn up before the court after which a bailable warrant was issued against him.

On Thursday, Sanjay Raut along with his lawyers appeared before the magistrate and moved a plea for cancellation of the warrant, which the court allowed.

The court also accepted the Rajya Sabha member's bail plea and released him on a personal bond of ? 15,000.

Earlier, the court, while issuing summons, had held that documents and video clips produced on record prima facie revealed the accused made defamatory statements against Medha Somaiya so that it will be seen by the public at large and read by people in newspapers.

It was also prima-facie proved by the complainant that the words spoken by Sanjay Raut were such that it harmed the reputation of the Medha Somaiya, the court had said.

Medha Somaiya in her complaint alleged that Sanjay Raut had made baseless and defamatory allegations against her and her husband, accusing them of being involved in a scam worth ? 100 crore over the construction and maintenance of some public toilets under the jurisdiction of the Mira Bhayander Municipal Corporation.

She had urged the court to begin proceedings against Sanjay Raut on charges of defamation, as defined under sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code.

Municipal councils,Nagar panchayat elections stayed SEC

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra State Election Commission (SEC) on Thursday stayed the elections for municipal councils and nagar panchayats ahead of the next week's hearing on OBC reservations before the Supreme Court. The elections for 92 municipal councils and four nagar panchayats were stayed.

On July 12, the state OBC commission had submitted its report (containing data about Other Backward Classes) to the Supreme Court, and the next hearing in the case has been scheduled for July 19, the SEC said in a statement.

Last week, the SEC had announced that elections to these local government bodies will take place on August 18 without OBC reservation.

But both the Eknath Shinde-led government as well as opposition parties had said that elections should not be held until the OBC quota was issue was resolved.

Last year, the SC had set aside the OBC quota in local bodies in Maharashtra for want of empirical data about backward classes population in the state.

Two days ago, the SEC stayed lottery for deciding other reservations in 25 zilla parishads and 284 panchayat samitis.

ED arrests Chitra Ramkrishna in phone tapping case

New Delhi/**Mumbai** | Agencies

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested Chitra Ramkrishna, the former CEO cum MD of National Stock Exchange (NSE) in connection with a money laundering case pertaining to allegedly tapping the phones of NSE employees between 2009 and 2017 with the help of former Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey.

Ramkrishna is currently lodged behind the bars. The probe agency moved the court to seek permission to record her statement, and demand her custodial remand.

The ED said that her questioning was must as she had been named as an accused in the matter.

The court has allowed the ED plea and granted the anti-money laundering agency four days' custodial remand of Ramkrishna.

Earlier, the CBI had on last Friday recorded the statement of Sanjay Pandey in this connection.

Pandey's statement was recorded at CBI's Mumbai-based headquarters. After the questioning, he was allowed to go. CBI sources said that he, however, could be called again to join the investigation.

The case was lodged by the federal probe agency on the directions of Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The ED's case is on the basis of the case of the CBI.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had also conducted raids in Mumbai, Pune and in several other parts of the country in this connection.

"Pandey ran iSec Securities Pvt. Ltd. It has been alleged that Ramkrishna used this firm to tap the phone of NSE's employees. The phone calls made by NSE employees between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. were tapped and recorded by iSec Securities Pvt. Ltd. It has been alleged that Pandey helped in tapping the phone calls illegally," a source had said.

ANA DE ARMAS SAYS SHE LEFT LA AFTER SPLIT FROM BEN AFFLECK

Los Angeles | Agencies

Cuban-Spanish actress Ana de Armas has said her relationship with Hollywood star Ben Affleck helped her realise that Los Angeles isn't where she belongs.

Being the subject of a media storm when she was involved in a year-long romance with the Affleck, the 'Blonde' star admitted that she found the experience "horrible".

Actress told Elle magazine: "Yeah, which is good. That's one of the reasons why I left L.A." She continued: "Going through it (myself) confirmed my thoughts about, 'This is not the place for me to be.' It became a little bit too much. There's no escape. There's no way out."

de Armas, who now lives with her boyfriend Paul Boukadakis in New York City, says: "It's always the feeling of something that you don't have, something missing. It's a city that keeps you anxious."

The actress split with Ben in January 2021.

"This was a mutual decision. They both have a lot of love and respect for each other, but it was time for them to move on," the so-called inside source added.

Daniel Kaluuya not returning for 'Black Panther 2'

Los Angeles | Agencies

British actor Daniel Kaluuya will not reprise his role in Marvel and Disney's 'Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.

According to 'Variety', Kaluuya played W'Kabi in 'Black Panther' (2018), the best friend and confidant of T'Challa and the head of security for the Border Tribe.

Sources close to the project told Variety that Kaluuya was asked to return, but he had already committed to star in Jordan Peele's upcoming horror film 'Nope'.

Kaluuya was nominated for Oscar his starring role in Jordan Peele's 2017 hit 'Get Out'.

Production on 'Wakanda Forever', directed by Ryan Coogler, got over in March and the film is set to release on November 11.

Following the death of Boseman in 2020, Marvel decided not to recast the role of T'Challa.

The sequel will instead explore other characters from the world of 'Black Panther', while also honouring the legacy left behind by Boseman.

'Wakanda Forever' also stars Dominique Thorne as a genius inventor, and Michaela Coel and Tenoch Huerta in undisclosed roles. Kaluuya is currently gearing up for the release of 'Nope' on July 22.

Page has no problem with 'Bridgerton' makers recasting his character

Los Angeles | Agencies

English actor Rege-Jean Page, who had a breakout moment with the historical romance webseries 'Bridgerton' has no qualms in being recast for his role if the production takes the call.

Speaking at the premiere of his new espionage action film 'The Gray Man' which stars Ryan Gosling and Indian star Dhanush, Page told Variety: "They're free to do as they like. Shonda and I had a wonderful conversation at the end of Season 1. We were quite happy with how we stuck the landing on that one."

According to Variety, Page acknowledged the goodwill he's received for playing Simon Basset, the at-first callous suitor who goes on to wed Daphne Basset at the conclusion of the show's first season.

"We did so well on that redemptive arc that people forget that Simon was kind of horrific. He was the best example of a Regency fuckboy that any of us had come across," Page continued. "And so, because we came around full circle so well, because we stuck that landing, you're left with this great feeling. You really do have to be brave about ending stories like that."

David, Victoria Beckham docu series to be helmed by Fisher Stevens

Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winners Fisher Stevens and John Battsek have boarded Netflix's David Beckham documentary series. Variety first reported two years ago the soccer superstar and his Spice Girls wife Victoria Beckham were set to be the subject of a $20 million Netflix documentary.

Now it's been confirmed that 'The Cove' director Fisher Stevens will helm the project.

He will also produce alongside 'Searching for Sugarman' producer John Battsek.

Beckham's production studio Studio 99 will make the docu-series in association with Battsek's Ventureland.

The series is currently in production and will explore Beckham's "humble working class beginnings in East London, and the drive and determination that led him to become one of the most recognisable and scrutinised athletes of all time," according to the logline, reports Variety.

It also promises "never-before-seen personal archive footage from the last forty years" as well as interviews with Beckham's family, friends, and key figures in his life.

Their friends include Eva Longoria, Tom Cruise, Guy Ritchie and Elton John and the couple attended both Prince William and Prince Harry's weddings to Kate Middleton and Meghan Markle respectively.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Drew Sidora

Judge orders Britney Spears' father to depose, produce documents

Los Angeles | Agencies

A judge has ordered Britney Spears' father Jamie Spears to sit down for a deposition over his alleged behaviour as her conservator. The singer's lawyer Mathew Rosengart filed a motion to compel Jamie to sit for a deposition, in which he must answer questions under oath about his conduct as Britney's conservator, in May. Lawyer alleged Jamie had been dodging his deposition attempts for months. During a hearing at the Los Angeles Superior Court on Wednesday, Judge Brenda Penny ordered Jamie to be deposed within the next 30 days in Los Angeles. She also ordered Jamie to produce all the documents requested by lawyer, particularly those in relation to electronic surveillance. Jamie has been accused monitoring his daughter's phone and bugging her bedroom during the conservatorship, which ran from February 2008 until November 2021. Last month, Jamie's legal team filed a motion to force Britney to sit down for a deposition regarding the comments she has made on social media about her family and the conservatorship. On Wednesday, Judge Penny did not make a decision on that matter and asked both attorneys to present their arguments to the court about why the popstar should or should not be deposed. The next hearing in the matter is set for 27 July.

Ryan Gosling couldn't wait to become Ken in 'Barbie'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Ryan Gosling was just as excited as large swaths of the internet were when he was introduced to what he would look like playing Ken in the upcoming 'Barbie' film.

"Finally," he told Variety, at the premiere of his new action film 'The Gray Man', "Finally, it's happening. This has been coming my whole life."

Beyond Robbie and Gosling, the supporting cast includes a deep bench of talent, with America Ferrera, Simu Liu, Kate McKinnon, Alexandra Shipp, Emma Mackey, Kingsley Ben-Adir, Issa Rae and Michael Cera attached.

Sharing the spotlight with so many big names, Gosling jokes that his mission for the project was a matter of on-screen representation.

"I felt like I was seeing myself. I felt seen. I think a lot of Kens will feel seen when they see this," Gosling continued.

"Gotta do it for the Kens. Nobody plays with the Kens."

Gosling also took time to divulge his experience making 'The Gray Man', his new Netflix action film that sees the actor wrack up a high body count, leap from buildings and showdown with a mustachioed Chris Evans.

Gosling shared that he loved playing a super spy who's over it in the Russo brothers-directed production.

"It's like he doesn't even want to be in this movie. He just wants to be home watching Netflix like everyone else," Gosling said. "He doesn't want to be a spy and he has to be." On the matter of a potential sequel, Gosling stated that the film's reception will determine plans moving forward, but that he wants to see his character exit the espionage game for good.

"I want to see him get home. I'd like to see how it ends for him," Gosling said.

ENG v IND, 2nd ODI

REECE TOPLEY TAKES CAREER-BEST 6-24 AS ENGLAND DEFEAT INDIA BY 100 RUNS

London | Agencies

Tall left-arm quick Reece Topley picked up his career-best figures in ODI cricket as England defeated India by 100 runs in the second ODI at Lords on Thursday to level the three-match series at 1-1.

After the Indian bowlers, led by Yuzvendra Chahal (4-47) bowled out England for 246, Topley made use of favourable conditions and varied his pace to pick 6-24 in 9.5 overs, the best figures by any England bowler in ODI history as India crashed to 146 all out in 38.5 overs, taking the series to a winner-takes-it-all decider at Manchester on Sunday.

With England finding some nip off the pitch, they were able to keep Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan in check with maidens in the first two overs. Topley's show began by taking out Sharma for a ten-ball duck, getting one to come and hit the back pad.Virat Kohli, back in the team after a groin niggle kept him out of the first ODI, looked gorgeous while playing a straight drive, on drive and cover drive against Topley. But the tall left-arm quick came back strongly to take out a scratchy Dhawan, getting him to flick off his gloves and carried behind to Buttler. India continued to wither under pressure as Rishabh Pant smacked a Brydon Carse full toss straight to mid-on. In the next over, left-arm quick David Willey claimed the big scalp of Kohli as he tried to chase a wide ball away from his body and gave an easy catch to Buttler.

Suryakumar Yadav tried to get India's chase on track through a 42-run stand with Hardik Pandya. But Topley, coming back for his second spell, made an immediate impact, cramping a fluent Yadav for room and chopped onto his stumps.

Pandya then had a brief 28-run partnership with Ravindra Jadeja, which was snapped by Moeen Ali bowling a wide ball away from the former's hitting arc. By then, Pandya was into the sweep and holed out to square leg. Mohammed Shami played the long handle to perfection, hitting two fours and a majestic lofted six down the ground. But Topley, brought back for his third spell of the day, got Shami to miscue a fuller slower ball in the air and was caught by a charging mid-on. Liam Livingstone immediately struck with his part-time spin as Jadeja was clean-bowled while going for a flick. Topley claimed his five-fer by castling Yuzvendra Chahal and two balls later, got Prasidh Krishna to edge behind to Buttler to seal a resounding win for England after a ten-wicket thrashing in the first ODI.

Brief scores :
England 246 in 49 overs (Moeen Ali 47, David Willey 41; Yuzvendra Chahal 4-47, Hardik Pandya 2-28) beat India 146 in 38.5 overs (Hardik Pandya 29, Ravindra Jadeja 29; Reece Topley 6-24, Liam Livingstone 1-4) by 100 runs

SINGAPORE OPEN

Sindhu, Prannoy, Saina advance to quarterfinals

Singapore | Agencies

Top Indian shuttlers P.V. Sindhu, H.S. Prannoy and Saina Nehwal advanced to the quarterfinals of the Singapore Open 2022 after registering hard-fought wins in their second-round matches, here on Thursday.World No. 7 Sindhu came from a game down in her women's singles match to defeat world No 59 Thuy Linh Nguyen of Vietnam 19-21, 21-19, 21-18 in one hour and six minutes.Sindhu was caught off-guard by her lower-ranked opponent in the first game and was in a spot of bother, trailing 19-17 in the second game. However, she rallied to score four consecutive points and took the match into the decider. Riding the momentum, the two-time Olympic medallist took a 9-3 lead in the third game but Thuy Linh Nguyen cut it to 11-10 heading into the break. Both players contested fiercely for the remainder of the match and eventually, it was the experienced Sindhu who progressed to the quarterfinals of the BWF Super 500 badminton tournament. In the men's singles, India's Thomas Cup hero H.S. Prannoy, ranked 19th, also scripted a comeback to upset world No. 4 Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei 21-14, 20-22, 21-18 in one hour and nine minutes. The Indian shuttler went down in the first game but overcame a four-point deficit in the second to keep his quarterfinal chances alive. Trailing 11-6 at the break in the third game, Prannoy chipped away eight of the next 11 points to level the score at 14-all. The Indian shuttler kicked off from there on to storm into his fourth successive quarterfinals.On the other hand, London 2012 bronze medallist Saina Nehwal upset world No. 9 He Bing Jiao of China 21-19, 11-21, 21-17 in 58 minutes to make her first quarter-final of the year. The last time Saina progressed beyond the round of 16 was at the Orleans Masters back in March 2021. However, Mithun Manjunath, who beat world championships silver medallist Kidambi Srikanth on Wednesday, went down to Ireland's world No. 42 Nhat Nguyen 10-21, 21-18, 16-21. Ashmita Chaliha also bowed out after a 9-21, 13-21 loss to Chinese shuttler Han Yue.In men's doubles, India's M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila also made the final eight after beating Malaysian sixth seeds Nur Izzuddin and Goh Sze Fei 18-21, 24-22, 21-18 in a one hour and five-minute long match.However, the other two Indian pairs in action -- Nithin HV and S Ram Poorvisha -- in mixed doubles and Pooja Dandu and Arathi Sara Sunil in women's doubles also bowed out.

CHANGWON SHOOTING WORLD CUP

India climb on top of medal tally at half-way stage

New Delhi | Agencies

India climbed to the top of the medal tally at the half-way stage of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun stage in Changwon, Korea, picking up one gold and three silver medals on day five of competitions.

The day began on a golden note for India as the Men's 10m Air Rifle team beat Korea 17-15 in a nerve-wracking final. Arjun Babuta, Shahu Tushar Mane and Paarth Makhija combined effectively to ward off the Korean challenge after being down 11-15 at one stage. It was Arjun and Shahu's second gold of the competition. It was all silver after that as the Women's Rifle team of Elavenil Valarivan, Ramita and Mehuli Ghosh fought hard and were as close as 10-12 before the Koreans won the last two series of single shots to nail it 16-10 in their favour. It was the turn of the Pistol shooters next as Shiva Narwal, Naveen and Sagar Dangi fought tooth and nail with a determined Italian side to be level 15-15 before the final series. Paolo Monna, Alessio Torracchi and Luca Tesconi proved too experienced for the new look Indian team to clinch the deal 17-15 in the end.

India's third silver of the day came in the 10m Air Pistol Team Women event. Rhythm Sangwan, Yuvika Tomar and Palak, again a new look team, looked out of it at 2-10 against a quality Korean side comprising Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Kim Minjung.

It was then that coach Samaresh Jung called for a time-out and it brought about an admirable fight back from India as they closed in at 12-14. However, the Koreans stamped their class in the final series and pulled it off 16-12 for their third gold of the tournament.

Indian pairs in the Trap Mixed Team competition however finished outside the medals.

India now has a total of three gold, four silver and one bronze medal from the Changwon World Cup stage so far and there are 15 more gold medals on offer over the next six days of competition. Korea lies second with an equal number of golds but only an additional silver to show for their efforts thus far.

BOTSWANA'S OLYMPIC MEDALLIST NIGEL AMOS SUSPENDED FOR DOPING

Gaborone (Botswana): Nigel Amos, a Botswana Olympic medallist, has been provisionally suspended with immediate effect after tested positive for Metabolites of GW1516, according to a press release issued by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU). The suspension comes ahead of the World Championships next week. According to the press release, AIU collected the sample from Amos during an out-of-competition test on June 4, 2022, reports Xinhua.Amos, 28, won men's 800m silver at the 2012 London Olympic Games, which was Botswana's first Olympic medal.GW1516, classified as S4 substances hormone and metabolic modulators in WADA's Prohibited List, could be used to enhance endurance.

India announce squad for West Indies T20Is; Kohli, Bumrah miss out

Mumbai | Agencies

Indian cricket team on Thursday announced their squad for T20I series against West Indies with Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah missing out.

Kohli, who was out of the 1st ODI against England with a groin injury, has not been included for the West Indies's T20Is as well. However, BCCI in its official statement hasn't mentioned whether he has been rested or not picked due to injury. On the other hand, pacer Bumrah's name is also missing from the squad.Rohit Sharma will lead the side while KL Rahul and Kuldeep Yadav, who had missed the home series against South Africa due to respective injuries, have made their comeback. However, their inclusion in the squad is subject to fitness.

The five-match T20I series against the West Indies will start from July 29 and will go on till August 7. India's squad for 5 T20Is: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Ishan Kishan, KL Rahul*, Suryakumar Yadav, Deepak Hooda, Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, R Ashwin, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav*, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Avesh Khan, Harshal Patel, Arshdeep Singh.

International Yogasana Premier League to begin

Online registration will start very soon. Other countries will also participate. Awards will be given in lakhs and crores.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

This is very good news for Yogasana players, India is going to become the first country in the world to organize a Yogasana Premier League on the sport of yoga.

This is going to be the first championship league at the global level which is being hosted by Yogasan Premier League Pvt Ltd. Founder Dr. Kavinder Singh has given this information to our correspondent, said that the registration has been kept free for the players so that more and more Yogasana players can showcase their talent.

This Yogasana Premier League will have 6 age groups of Yogasanas and 2 age groups of Artistic Yogasana.

In which players above the age of 8 years will participate. In this, the age group of Yogasana players 8-11, 11-14 sub junior, 14-18 junior, 18 - 25, 25 -35 senior and those above 35 years of age have been kept in the super senior group. Similarly, the age group of Artistic Yogasana 8 to 18 Junior 18 to 35 Senior has been fixed in this group in which men and women can participate. This will happen in a total of six rounds.

Eight teams will participate

Yogasana Premier League competition will be held in 6 rounds. The first to third Round will be participated through online yogasana video and in the fourth round 12 league matches of all the eight teams will be held in different metro cities of the country. And the fifth stage will be the semi-finals and the sixth stage will be the final. Different teams will be formed by auctioning players. The player's base price will be fixed.

A team will consist of 16 players, men and women. Match fee will be given to each player of the team.In the era of Digital India, players will have their own modern dashboard profile on which they will be able to see the evaluation of their own Yogasana videos.

Along with the players, yogasana referee and yogasana coaches of the country and abroad will also get a chance.

Nordea Open: Andrey Rublev overcomes Federico Coria to reach quarters

Bastad (Sweden): Russia's Andrey Rublev defeated Federico Coria 7-5, 4-6, 7-6(2) to reach the quarterfinals at the Nordea Open, here on Thursday.

The second seed, who is making his debut in Bastad, was made to work hard against the resilient Coria in windy conditions.

In a topsy-turvy clash, Rublev recovered from squandering a 5-3 lead in the third set as he raised his intensity in the tie-break, hitting through the Argentine to advance after two hours and 36 minutes in their first ATP head-to-head meeting.

The 24-year-old will next face Laslo Djere after the Serbian defeated Swiss qualifier Marc-Andrea Huesler 7-5, 6-2 to advance to his third tour-level quarter-final of the season.

Rublev is aiming to capture his fourth tour-level title of the season this week at the clay-court event, having lifted trophies in Marseille, Dubai and Belgrade. Following his win over last yea's finalist Coria, the World No 8 now holds a 9-0 record at ATP 250 tournaments in 2022.

Spinners shine as Bangladesh clinch West Indies series in style

Guyana | Agencies

Spinners Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Nasum Ahmed combined for seven wickets as Bangladesh eased past West Indies to register a series victory in Guyana.

Bangladesh cruised to their biggest win away from home, making short work of the 109-run chase to close out the One-Day International series against the West Indies.

The clinical nine-wicket win gave the visitors an unassailable 2-0 lead with one game to play. Bangladesh have now won six of their last seven bilateral ODI series.

While this calendar year has been quite bleak for Bangladesh, their form in 50-over cricket has actually been very decent as they have now clinched three consecutive series victories.

Recent series triumphs over Afghanistan and South Africa showed Bangladesh fancy their chances against any opponent in 50-over cricket and their efforts against West Indies so far only further strengthen this argument.

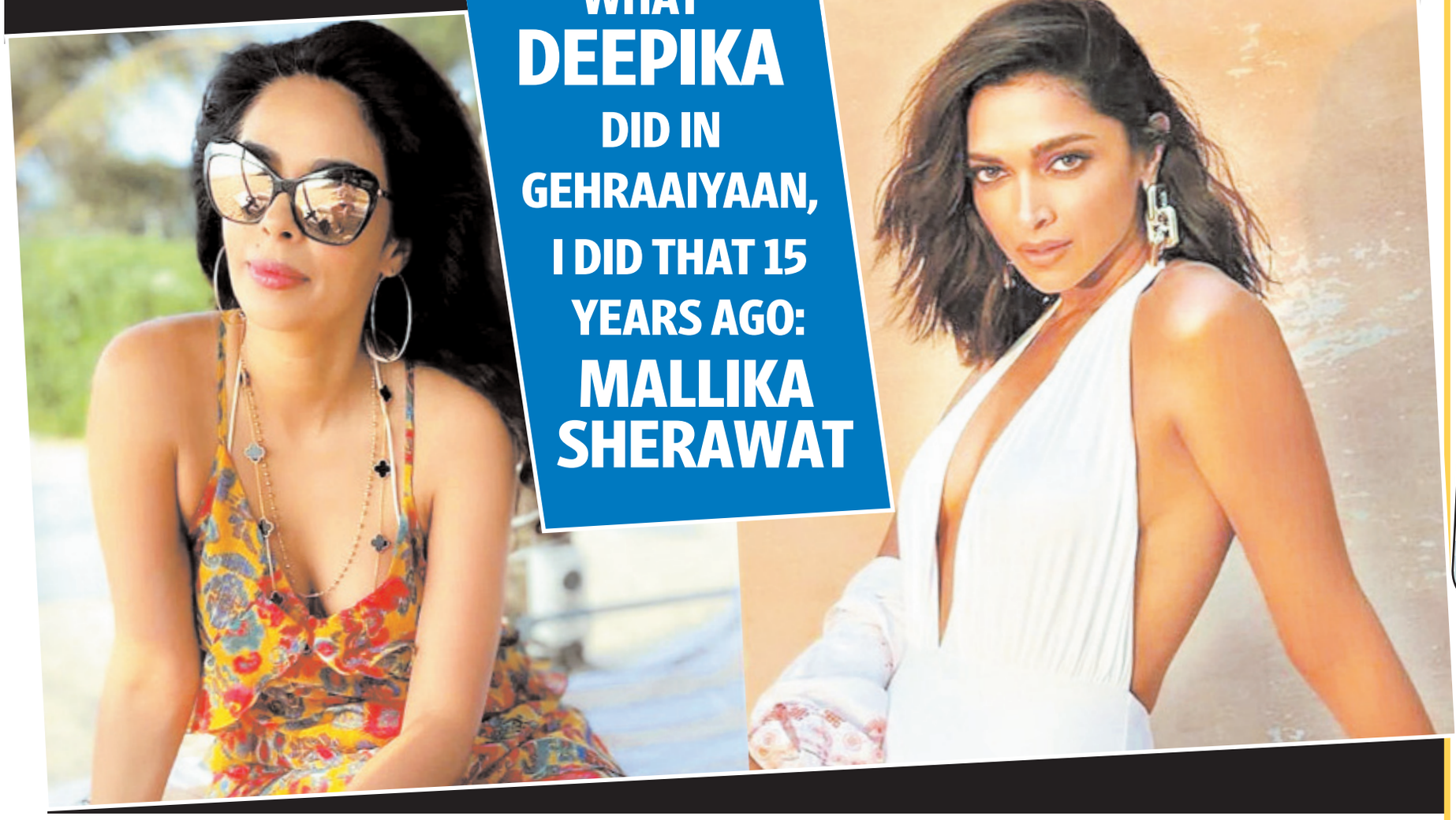
White-ball 50-over matches give Bangladesh's bevy of quality spinners the chance to shine and it was once again their slower bowlers that stood out during their crushing nine-wicket win against West Indies on Wednesday.

Despite the absence of veteran tweaker Shakib Al Hasan, spin duo Mehidy Hasan Miraz (4/29) and Nasum Ahmed (3/19) combined for seven wickets in Guyana to ensure West Indies could only muster a disappointing total of 108 after they were sent in to bat by Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal.

That victory target was never in doubt, with Tamim leading from the front in reply with a stylish half-century that allowed Bangladesh to cruise home with more than 29 overs to spare.

Brief scores :
West Indies108 in 35 overs (Keemo Paul 25 not out; Mehidy Hasan 4-29, Nasum Ahmed 3-19) lost to Bangladesh 112/1 in 20.4 overs (Tamim Iqbal 50 not out, Liton Das 32 not out) by 9 wickets.

WHAT DEEPIKA DID IN GEHRAAIYAAN, I DID THAT 15 YEARS AGO: MALLIKA SHERAWAT



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mallika Sherawat has drawn parallels between Murder and Gehraiyaan, claiming that she has never been recognised for her acting abilities and that people are always drawn to her body and glamour. Mallika in conversation with a news portal stated, "Earlier, the heroines were either too good, sati-savitri types who were too innocent to know anything, or they were the characterless vamps. These were the only two types of roles written for heroines. The change that we see now, shows women as humans. She can be happy or sad. She can make mistakes, she can falter, and you love them despite all of that." She added, "The heroines are more confident about their bodies as well. Such hue and cry was created when I did Murder. People said all kinds of things about the kiss and the bikini. What Deepika Padukone did in Gehraaiyaan, I did that 15 years ago, but people were too narrow-minded back then. I should tell you that a section of the industry and media was mentally torturing me. These people only talked about my body and glamour, not my acting. I worked in Dashavataram, Pyaar Ke Side Effects and Welcome but none talked about my acting."

Mallika Sherawat is currently promoting her film RK/RKay, which will be released in theaters on July 22.

Allu Arjun takes another vacation

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Telugu superstar Allu Arjun will next appear in Sukumar's highly anticipated sequel 'Pushpa: The Rule'. The 'Arya' actor was sighted at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport on Thursday morning, ahead of the film's official launch. Allu Arjun is taking another holiday after he just returned from a long vacation with his family in Africa. According to reports, the 'Pushpa' actor will visit US for a few days and it is expected that he will return to Hyderabad soon, as the 'Pushpa' crew is going to launch the franchise's second installment through an official ceremony. Pre-production on the film is now underway. Rashmika will play the female heroine, and many well-known actors are expected to star in the film.

I was offered Rs 25 Lakh to become a 'salaried wife': Neetu Chandra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Neetu Chandra, who has worked in films like Garam Masala and Oye Lucky Lucky Oye, has been missing from action for a while now.

Recently, the actress is making headlines for her shocking claim.

In an interview with a leading website, the actress opened up about an incident when a businessman told her 'to become his salaried wife'. She also recalled that despite working with '13 National award winners' she has neither money nor work.

Sharing her ordeal of not having work and facing financial struggles, Neetu Shared, "My story is a failure story of a successful actor. Having worked with 13 National award winners and in such big films, today I have no work. I was told by a big businessman that he will give me 25 lakh per month and that I have to become his salaried wife. I neither have money nor work. I've become worried, I feel unwanted here after doing so much work."

Actress also revealed that she often gets suicidal thoughts. She said, "Should I suffocate myself to death? Kya logon ke jaane ke baad hi unke kaam ko pehchana jaayega? Jo Sushant ne step uthaya, kitne saare log sochte hain..."

Neetu further talked about an incident when a casting director auditioned her for a role, and rejected her within an hour, saying that it wasn't working out. She said that such incidents break a person's confidence.

Aarushi on her entry into the industry

"I was in the right place at the right time."

Shachi Chaturvedi | Mumbai

The effervescent Aarushi Sharma is ready to stun audiences with her versatility in her upcoming project Jaadugar, after impressing fans with her sauve and graceful portrayal in Love Aaj Kal 2. Aarushi will be seen as Disha Chabbra, a doctor.

"It was a heartwarming experience for me to play Disha," Aarushi says. To begin with, playing a doctor is an honour. She is a down-home girl who adores her father and is ambitious in her career. As fate would have it, her paths crossed with Jeetu's, a magician's path, and her life took a huge leap forward. In fact, I can relate to Disha because, like her, my life took a major turn in the blink of an eye due to a seemingly random incident. When Imtiaz Ali was holding auditions for Tamasha, I was studying Engineering in Information Technology. He liked my work, and that's how I got the role of 'Sanyukta' opposite Ranbir in Tamasha, I was in the right place at the right time."

The actress continues, "Despite coming from an illustrious educational background in Shimla, where both of my parents are district judges, no one could have predicted my entry into Bollywood. But the overwhelmingly positive response to my first film reaffirmed my decision to work in film. I am truly grateful to my fans for supporting my work and encouraging me to do better. I just wanted to let them know that I do my best to read their messages and acknowledge their gratitude."

Aarushi on her on-screen chemistry with Jeetu, "I'm excited for my fans to see us together. Jitendra is a fantastic actor, and it was a pleasure to work with him. Everyone is going to adore Dimple and Jeetu. I couldn't have asked for a more perfect OTT debut!"

Jaadugar, Aarushi Sharma's upcoming project, is set to be released on July 15th.

I AM READY TO PLAY ANY CHARACTER : MANISH PAUL

Dinesh Zala | Mumbai

Renowned Bollywood actor and host Manish Paul received much appreciation for his portrayal of Gurpreet in "Jug Jug Jio" with a huge star cast. These days he is very busy shooting for his upcoming web series. He has hosted many TV reality shows and many big award shows. But he got the most popularity from the stage of 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa'. And now he has turned to act. Here are the highlights of the conversation we had during a recent interview with him:

In Jug Jug Jio, you worked with great actors like Anil Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor. How much did you enjoy this film?

It was a lot of fun working with Neetu Ji and Anil Ji. Both of them are senior artists. I got a chance to share the screen with him. I believe that it is my good fortune. I want to get a chance to work with such great artists in the future. We thoroughly enjoyed the film. People got to see the same things on the screen.

Many stars have got the tag of playing the same character, do you believe this?

I don't know, but yes, sometimes actors get tagged for playing the same type of character, whether they do comedy or serious work. But I am getting offers for different roles. And people want to see me in all kinds of roles. And I am ready for every character. Be it funny, serial, or any kind of character, I want to get into it.

You have shot a web show in Nainital. In which the audience will get to see your different avatar, tell us a little bit about this project? Yes, I am currently shooting in Nainital. My character in this is very different. People have never seen me in such a character before. But what is the character like, I can't tell right now? But people will get to see new and different things.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Aneri Vajani

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