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'DISCUSS, DEBATE & DECIDE'

CJI says no meaning in hiding problems in judiciary

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana said the judiciary needs to flag issues which hinder its functioning and there is no meaning in camouflaging or hiding the problems, and also if matters of pressing concern are not addressed, then the system will cripple. The CJI made the remarks while speaking at the All India District Legal Services Authorities Meet, which had Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the chief guest.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Chief Justice said the reality is that, today, only a small percentage of population can approach the justice delivery system, when in need and majority of the people suffer in silence, lacking awareness and necessary means.

"Modern India was built around the goal of removing the disparities in the society. Project democracy is about providing a space for participation of all. Participation will not be possible without social emancipation. Access to justice is a tool for social emancipation."

CJI Ramana pointed out that the district judiciary is the backbone of the justice delivery system in the world's largest democracy and public opinion about the judiciary is primarily based on their experiences with the district judiciary. "This casts a great responsibility on your shoulders. You must undertake multifaceted tasks and roles. You are best placed to understand people's problems and social issues. Strengthening the district judiciary is the need of the hour."



He added that Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 was enacted with the objective of reaching the persons at the bottom of the pyramid. The fact that it is aimed at offering free legal aid to 70 per cent of our population, makes National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) the largest legal aid provider in the world, he said.

"I know, the challenges before you are enormous. The issues of conditions of service, remunerations and infrastructure deserve immediate attention. The Supreme Court this week tried to address some of these issues by way of direction for implementation of revised pay benefits."

LIKE BUSINESS AND LIVING, EASE OF JUSTICE IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT: PM

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said ease of justice is as important as ease of doing business, and also underscored the issue of several undertrials languishing in jail for want of legal aid and urged the district legal services authority to expedite their release.

The PM highlighted the place of legal aid in the directive principles of the state policy and added this importance is reflected in the faith of the citizens in the judiciary of the country. He said: "As important as access to the judicial system is for any society, justice delivery is equally important. The judicial infrastructure also has an important contribution to this. In the last eight years, work has been done at a fast pace to strengthen the judicial infrastructure of the country."

India's first medal in Commonwealth Games 2022

Sanket Mahadev Sargar wins silver in weightlifting

Birmingham | Agencies

Indian weightlifter Sanket Mahadev Sargar on Saturday won a silver medal in men's 55kg category at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. The 21-year-old managed a total lift of 248kg (113kg in snatch and 135kg in clean & jerk) to open India's account in the ongoing multi-nation event.

Malaysia's Bin Kasdan Mohamad Aniq won the gold medal with a total lift of 249kg (107 + 142, a Games record in clean & jerk), while Sri Lanka's Dilanka Isuru Kumara Yodage took the bronze medal with an overall lift of 225kg (105 + 120) in the competition.

At the first hall of the National Exhibition Centre, Sargar began with a 107kg lift in his first attempt in the snatch phase of the competition. He later improved that with a 111kg



lift and ended with a 113kg lift, which put him in an advantageous position through a six kg lead at the end of snatch lifts.

ARATI KADAV GETS BEST DIRECTOR AWARD FOR SCI-FI SHORT AT FANTASIA

Mumbai: Filmmaker Arati Kadav is over the moon with her best director award win for "The Astronaut and His Parrot" at the Fantasia International Short Film Competition which just concluded in Montreal. The sci-fi film stars Ali Fazal in the lead role.

The film is about a space explorer who, due to an accident, has been adrift in the void with a low supply of oxygen. In his final moments in space, he tries to desperately send messages to his daughter via signals but these are received by a gaudy parrot in a fortune teller's stall.

Being pleasantly surprised after receiving this news, Arati said: "I am thankful to the amazing Ali Fazal, who agreed to give his hundred per cent to the film. Our goal has always been to make a convincing sci-fi film with maximum on-camera effects and use VFX with precision and intelligence and my team gave their time for solid prep."

She added: "I am doing the festival run and is in talks with a few platforms including one that distributes film in the US. I am keen to have a solid pipeline for well-made short films that people might enjoy watching."

Arati, a trained computer science engineer, worked as a software developer in the US before deciding to switch profession. Her debut feature, "Cargo", which was released in 2019, received positive response from cinephiles. The film starring Vikrant Massey and Shweta Tripathi Sharma is also a sci-fi drama.

Police take responsibility of 4 children who lost their father in hooch tragedy

Ahmedabad | Agencies

Forty-year-old Kanubhai Sekhalia died at Devvana village in Barnala taluka in Botad's hooch tragedy that has claimed the lives of more than 40 people as of Wednesday afternoon. With his death, his four children have lost their father and a shelter too. The children became orphans as his wife was not staying with them.

After the hooch tragedy, officials including Karanraj Vaghela, SP of Botad district, reached Devvana village. The police spoke to the people of the village and adopted all the four orphaned children. They announced that the Botad police will bear the responsibility of the four children including their studies.



After the death of Kanubhai, the four children are living with his elder brother.

Botad district SP Karanraj Vaghela appealed to the people who have complaints of vomiting, blackouts, or dizziness to come forward. The police said that even those who have not shown any

symptoms after consuming the toxic brew should come forward and the police will get them treated.

The police said that more people have been affected in Barwala and Ranpur in Botad. At present five police teams are working in Barwala and five teams in Ranpur.

The police have stationed ambulances outside all the villages. The police said that any person who does not come to work for two or three days should be reported to the police so that if that person has been affected by drinking toxic liquor, he can be shifted to the hospital for

Rural India with 351 mn users pips urban centres in Internet usage

- There are 692 million active Internet users in India, and much of the growth continues to be driven by rural India (351 million users with 37 per cent).
- The urban centres now have 341 million users with 69 per cent penetration, according to the report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and data and analytics company Kantar.
- However, around 762 million Indians have not adopted the Internet yet, out of which 63 per cent are rural Indians.

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Rural population is now driving Internet growth in India as urban India appears to have hit a plateau, a new report showed on Thursday.

"Difficulty to understand the Internet" continues to be the primary deterrent



along with lack of awareness, especially in rural India, the report mentioned.

According to it, nearly 346 million Indians are engaged in actual online transactions such as e-commerce and digital payments, a number which is greater than the total US population

estimated at 331 million.

The global pandemic witnessed a record 51 per cent increase in digital transactions in just two years from 230 million in 2019 in India.

"In terms of gender break-up, there are more male internet users in India than female users, with almost similar gender ratios across both urban and rural users," the findings showed.

In terms of user cases, entertainment, communications and social media are the top three activities engaged in by internet users across the country.

The penetration of OTT services in rural India is at par with that in urban India, however, the penetration of other digital services such as online gaming, digital commerce and digital payments is still skewed in favour of urban users.

"This reflects a large headroom for growth of such services among the rural population," said the report.

In terms of states, Goa has the maximum Internet penetration while Bihar has the lowest.

Army intensifies modernisation drive with focus on surveillance, night fighting

- As per the latest figures, as many as 93 modernisation projects of the Army are at various stages with procurement worth Rs 1.37 lakh crore (\$18.4 billion) under progress.
- Further with the emphasis on indigenisation, 19 out of 22 new procurements in the current financial year are made from indigenous suppliers.
- Ongoing plans include a large incorporation of artillery guns, advanced Pinaka rocket regiments, long-range BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles as well as loitering munition systems, runway-independent remotely piloted aircraft systems and high-volume firepower with enhanced surveillance and weapons detection capability, the sources said.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian Army, in its modernisation drive, is focusing on long-range weapons, night fighting capabilities, multi-capacity drones, and early detection and targeting systems.

"The objective (of the modernisation) was to address operational deficiencies, even as the rebalancing of additional forces and infrastructure upgrades on the northern borders were fast-tracked to counter the Chinese threat," a source said.

The Army plans to order another 200 K-9 'Vajra' self-propelled howitzers after inducting 100 of them under the joint project of L&T and South Korean Hanwha Defense. With a 28-38 km keystone range, the Army has deployed some of these 155 mm/52-caliber guns in Ladakh, sources added. The Army has also equipped the two regiments with the 'Sharang' artillery system, an improved version of the old Soviet-origin 130 mm guns,



with another in the way. DRDO has set up five Young Scientist Laboratories to enhance strategic capabilities and develop advanced technology product. Another focus

area for the military is "future-ready mechanised platforms", with advanced weapons, night fighting and cross-country capabilities from desert to mountainous terrain.

Huge demand of national flags after Har Ghar Tiranga campaign

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Textile traders in Surat, the country's largest textile market have received orders for more than 5 crore national flags.

The government's Har Ghar Tiranga campaign to celebrate the 75th year of independence has led to an unprecedented demand for the national flag across the Country.

Traders associations said that manufacturing mills are working day and night to deliver flags on time. Wherever there are textile markets in other states like Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar etc. people have started making our national flags leaving other routine work. Generally flags of sizes 9x6, 18x12, 16x24, 20x30 and 53x35 are in high demand in the markets.

Confederation of All India Traders secretary general Praveen Khandelwal said that the demand of national flag is such that even textile traders in Surat alone, the country's largest textile market, has received orders for more than 5 crore national flags. Khandelwal said that after the central government made the tricolor campaign a part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), corporate companies across the country have also started ordering flags.

"Generally, there was a demand for nation-



al flags in the country around January 26, August 15 and October 2, but in the last two years due to Covid, the programmes of these national festivals did not take place on a large scale, due to which the stock unused then were in the market currently but after the call of Prime Minister Modi and efforts by central government and the state governments to celebrate the Har ghar tiranga campaign on a large scale and CAIT appealed to trade organisations across the country to join this campaign, the demand for tricolor flags in all the states of the country has increased tremendously," he said. The Traders association said that various campaigns are being run by different social, cultural, and religious organisations and it is certain that in the coming days the whole country will be decorated with the Tiranga.



CONG TO PROTEST AGAINST PRICE RISE, UNEMPLOYMENT AND AGNIPATH SCHEME

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress to hold nationwide protest against price rise, unemployment, Agnipath scheme and GST on essential commodities, on August 5.

The "record-breaking" inflation level coupled with "huge" increase in the prices of many essential commodities, particularly pulses, edible oil, LPG, petrol and diesel has burdened the common people to an "intolerable extent", Congress leader K.C. Venugopal said in a letter to the party's state and district units.

"Taking our uncompromising protest against the record-breaking price rise and unemployment forward, the Congress party has decided to observe massive nationwide protest on August 5," the AICC General Secretary added.

The surge in prices of essential commodities has also been accelerated with an "unjustifiable" increase in GST by the Central government on essential commodities like pre-packed grains, fish, honey, jaggery, wheat flour, the letter noted.

"The country is also witnessing a



phase of massive unemployment both in rural and urban regions... Also, the controversial, poorly conceived and hastily drawn up Agnipath scheme, which carries multiple risks, has not only subvert-

ed the long standing traditions and ethos of the armed forces but also destroyed the aspirations of millions of unemployed youths," reads the letter.

Venugopal asserted that ever

since the commencement of the monsoon session of the Parliament, the party "is fighting relentlessly both inside and outside the House against these anti-people policies of the government".

In 7 years, 260% spike in arrest in drugs cases: Shah

Chandigarh | Agencies

Zero-tolerance policy towards the narcotics is showing results, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday, noting that there were seizures of 3.3 lakh kg drugs, and there was a 200 per cent increase in the number of cases registered.

While chairing a conference here on drug trafficking and national security, Shah said that during the past seven years (2014-2021), there has been a 260 per cent increase in arrests made so far.

A total of 1.52 lakh kg drugs were confiscated during 2006-2013, while 3.3 lakh kg drugs were seized in the 2014-2021 period.

Between 2006 and 2013, Rs 768 crore worth of drugs were seized, while between 2014 and 21, Rs 20,000 crore worth of drugs were seized.

Pointing out that the drug problem was 'more' in Punjab, a border state, he asserted the Centre stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the state government in the fight against the drug menace. The government is holding talks with all stakeholders to make laws more stringent and has taken a proactive approach to connect with the states in the anti-narcotics efforts, Shah said.

"Everyone says the drug problem is more in Punjab, which is a border state. Therefore, we will have to make more efforts. If the state



government allots land, the Centre will set up a forensic lab in Amritsar and a small centre of NCB for training purposes," he stated.

The fight against drugs, which was progressing swiftly and in the right direction, has started showing results, he said. "In this fight, bringing states together and taking on this scourge with synergy is very important. The drugs have an adverse impact not only on those consuming them but also on society, the economy and the country's security. We have to weed it out completely," Shah noted.

Coinciding with the conference, nearly 31,000 kg drugs were destroyed by the NCB teams in Delhi, Chennai, Guwahati and Kolkata.

Delhi HC asks govt to decide on ban on sex-selective surgeries on intersex infants

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court has directed the city government to decide on the recommendations of the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) on a plea seeking a ban on medically unnecessary, sex-selective surgeries on intersex infants and children, except in cases of life-threatening situations.

The Public Interest Litigation has been filed by NGO Sriшти Madurai Educational Research Foundation, seeking directions to frame a detailed policy or guidelines specifying the conditions when can medical surgery on intersex infants and children can be performed. Advocate Robin Raju, representing the petitioner, submitted that the DCPCR has given a detailed



report to the Delhi government on the issue. As per its recommendations, the Commission advised the respective departments to include people who are intersex, or from a similar marginalised background to be a formal member of the Committee. This step would ensure that the community is adequately represented, and

their voices heard in the decision-making process. As the Delhi government counsel sought eight weeks time for to take appropriate decision on the recommendations made by the DCPCR, the court, disposing of the plea, said: "In light of the aforesaid, no further orders are required to be passed in the instant petition."

COURT REJECTS BAIL PLEA OF TEESTA, EX-DGP SREEKUMAR

A court here on Saturday rejected the bail plea of activist Teesta Setalvad and former Gujarat DGP R.B. Sreekumar.

Ahmedabad | Agencies

Both were arrested by the Ahmedabad crime branch following the Supreme Court order, which had pointed out that they had misused judicial process and action should be taken against them.

It has been alleged that both had filed false affidavits against the name of 2002 riots victims, created fake evidence to defame Gujarat, and intended to get the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi arrested and punished by the court.

Ahmedabad Principal Judge (City Civil and Sessions Court) D.D. Thakkar rejected the bail plea of both Setalvad and Sreekumar.

Rejecting the bail application, the court noted: "If the applicants -



applicant is a lady and another is a retired IPS officer and aged person, they are not required to be enlarged on bail."

Minister and others, the Court has enlarged the accused on bail. Therefore, looking at the above facts and circumstances, even though the

applicant is a lady and another is a retired IPS officer and aged person, they are not required to be enlarged on bail."

PARTHA SQUEALS, SAYS MONEY WAS EVEN COLLECTED FOR RAILWAY JOBS

Kolkata | Agencies

Former minister of the West Bengal Cabinet and suspended Trinamool Congress leader Partha Chatterjee has apparently told interrogators that everybody in the party, including the top leadership, knew about the money collected from ineligible candidates to get them jobs as school teachers. According to an investigator, Partha Chatterjee has started speaking after losing his ministerial berths and being suspended from the party.

"He claims that he was just the custodian. He never asked for any money neither accepted any from candidates. There was a party diktat and he was following orders. He was supposed to sign documents prepared by others. The money was also collected by others and sent to him. He had been instructed to keep the money in safe custody. Hundreds of crores were later taken away for 'party' use. Only a fraction of the sum was confiscated. This is what he has revealed so far," an official said.

Partha Chatterjee has been an MLA for over two decades. Some even claim that he was among the Congress leaders in the early 90s who mentored Mamata Banerjee. He has been a close associate of the late Subrata Mukherjee and never faced the kind of humiliation or physical and mental pres-



sure that he is undergoing on Saturday at the age of 70. No wonder, he is speaking up. "Partha Chatterjee now claims that the party earned money by selling jobs in other departments

as well. This culture goes back to the days before the Trinamool Congress came to power in West Bengal. People allegedly got railway jobs by paying money. He has also mentioned a certain office in Majerhat where these deals were struck. Partha Chatterjee claims that the party took so long to take a decision about his fate as other leaders were cleaning up their homes. Once this was over, they washed their hands off, leaving him to fend for himself," another ED official said.

Lawyers say that Partha Chatterjee is an accused and whatever he says has to be backed by corroborative evidence. His mere knowledge as former secretary general of the party won't help. About the role played by Arpita Mukherjee, Partha Chatterjee has maintained that she is somebody he was trying to help in building a career in modelling and films. He has admitted that he required a front to stash the cash that he allegedly held for the party. In lieu of her 'services', certain concessions had to be granted. Partha Chatterjee has claimed that many other top leaders dropped by at properties purchased in Arpita Mukherjee's name. However, these are mere allegations that will have to be proved before a court of law. The ED is taking no chances as any wrong move could bring the present case against Partha Chatterjee and Arpita Mukherjee crashing down.

Foreign cigarettes, smuggled from Myanmar, seized in Mizoram

Aizawl | Agencies

The Assam Rifles have seized foreign cigarettes, valued at Rs 1.04 crore, in Mizoram after these were smuggled from Myanmar, officials said on Saturday.

Assam Rifles sources said that the paramilitary troopers, accompanied by Mizoram Police, seized the cigarette carton from an abandoned house at Dungle in Champhai district on Friday night.

The seized contraband was handed over to the custom's preventive wing. No one was arrested in connection with the seizure. An Assam Rifles statement said: "Ongoing smuggling is a major cause of concern for the state of Mizoram, especially along



the India-Myanmar border. Assam Rifles, rightly christened as the 'Sentinels of Northeast' have continued their efforts against the smuggling activities in Mizoram."

Besides various illicit drugs, especially heroin, methamphetamine tablets, also commonly known as

'Yaba', poppy seeds, opium, ganja (marijuana), morphine, bottles of cough syrup, various other contraband like gold, as well as arms and ammunition are often smuggled from Myanmar to the northeastern states, especially Mizoram and Manipur, with which it shares an unfenced border.

Raj discom engineers' obscene dance videos go viral, top officials suspended



Jaipur | Agencies

Top Rajasthan discom officials have been suspended after a video of their obscene dance at a retirement party of a colleague recently went viral on social media.

As per the information, woman dancers were invited for the retirement party of Superintending Engineer, Vigilance, B.S. Shekhawat in Pushkar on June 18. The party, which started at 8 p.m., lasted till 3 a.m. In the party, many officers were seen dancing with the women allegedly under the influence of alcohol.

In these videos, apart from B.S. Soni and Shekhawat, other officials were also seen doing obscene dance with the dancers. The government took this matter seriously. Soni was suspended late on Friday and an inquiry committee constituted to investigate the matter. It was also found, much to the surprise of senior officers, these engineers of Ajmer discom, who arrived at the Pushkar hotel for the party, took TA/DA. They also used government vehicles to reach here. Apart from the discom officials, contractors from Nagaur along with Kishangarh also joined the party.

BJP activist murder: ABVP besieges K'taka Home Min's house, Min says protest 'to open his eyes'

Bengaluru | Agencies

Condemning the murder of BJP activist Praveen Kumar Nettaru, a large number of RSS-affiliated student outfit Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) members laid siege to the residence of Karnataka Home Minister Araga Jnanendra here on Saturday.

Condemning the "inaction" of the ruling BJP, the agitators tried to barge inside Jnanendra's residence in Jayamahal area as they demanded his resignation. Police had to carry out a baton charge to disperse the protesters and detained ABVP members. The Home Minister was not at the residence at the time of protest and the police have arranged tight security at the residence after the protest.

Reacting to the protest, Jnanendra stated that the



protestors have opened his eyes. "ABVP members who staged the protest demanded a ban on communal organisations like PFI, SFI. They have attempted to open my eyes and draw my attention in this regard," he said. "The protestors maintain

that without banning these organisations, it is not possible to establish peace," he said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has taken DGP Praveen Sood and state intelligence chief B Dayanand to task for not get-

ting inputs on a flash protest in front of the Home Minister's residence, police sources said. He also questioned police's lack of success in making breakthroughs in the investigation of the BJP activist's murder, sources added.

Some elements creating conflict in name of religion, ideology: NSA Doval

Team Absolute | New Delhi

National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval said on Saturday that some elements creating conflict in the name of religion and ideology, which is hindering the country's progress.

Speaking during an event here, he said, "There is an atmosphere of conflict in the world, and if we have to deal with it then it is necessary to maintain the unity of the country. The way India is progressing, people of all religions will get benefited from it." In the same event, Chairman of All India Sufi Sajjada Nasheen Council (AISSC) Hazrat Syed Naseruddin Chishty said, "We condemn when an incident occurs. It's time to do something. There is a need to rein in and ban radical organisations. They should be banned if there is evidence against them." The event was part of Modi government's outreach programme to ensure reli-

gious harmony in the country. Apart from religious leaders of different religions, Sufi saints also participated in the event. The initiative comes at a time when there is religious discord in the country in the wake of suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma's controversial remarks on the Prophet and the extreme reactions from a section of Sufi Bareilly Muslim community. Sharma was suspended by the BJP after some west Asian countries lodged protest against her remarks. However, despite protests broke out in different parts of the country with reports of violence in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The controversy took a more serious turn when Kanhaiya Lal, a tailor in Udaipur, Rajasthan, was beheaded in an Islamic State-style assassination act by two Muslim men who filmed the murder and threatened to kill Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

absolute india

"A liar is always lavish of oaths."



Pierre Corneille

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MIRABAI CHANU CLINCHES INDIA'S FIRST GOLD MEDAL AT 2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES



Birmingham | Agencies

Tokyo Olympics silver medalist Mirabai Chanu won India's first gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in the women's 49 kg weightlifting event, here on Saturday. Mirabai, who was the outright favourite to win her division, lived up to the billing with a total lift of 201kg (snatch - 88kg; clean and jerk - 113 kg). With her mark, she shattered the Commonwealth Games record in the category.

The previous Games record, in fact, was held by Chanu herself courtesy a 191kg lift which brought her the 48kg gold medal at Gold Coast 2018. It was Chanu's third successive medal at the Commonwealth Games. She finished with silver at Glasgow 2014 and won gold at Gold Coast 2018. This is India's third medal in Birmingham after Sanket

Sargar's silver and Gururaja Poojary's bronze in the men's 55kg and 61kg respectively. The Manipuri ace began her title CWG defence with a 84kg effort, a new Games record in snatch, and improved it to 88kg with her second try to match her personal best. Her third attempt, a crack at 90kg, though, was unsuccessful. The second-best lifter after Chanu in snatch was Mauritius' Roilya Ranaivosoa, who logged a best effort of 76kg.

In the clean and jerk, Mirabai lifted 109kg with her first attempt to shatter both the Games and Commonwealth record and secure the gold. A lift of 113kg in her second attempt saw her extend the winning margin. Roilya Ranaivosoa won the silver medal with 172kg (76kg + 96kg) while Canada's Hannah Kaminski claimed the bronze with 171kg (74kg + 97kg).

'Bangkok nearer to NE than Delhi; facilitates investment, promotes tourism: Meghalaya CM Conrad K. Sangma

SOME KIND OF INDICATION!

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and his Nagaland counterpart Neiphiu Rio on Saturday said that Bangkok and other Southeast Asian nations are geographically nearer to the northeast India than India's capital Delhi, facilitating the region suitable for investment, trade and business and promoting tourism.

Meghalaya CM Conrad K. Sangma, Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio, Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, along with India's Minister of State for External Affairs R.K. Ranjan Singh, several ministers from the northeastern states, senior officials of Central and state governments in the north-east and top industrialists, among others attended the 2nd edition of 3-day North-East India Festival, where Meghalaya CM stated this. The festival which began on Friday in Bangkok's Central World Complex.

Bangkok/Shillong/Kohima | Agencies

Addressing the festival on the second day, Sangma said that northeast India and South East Asian nations can develop strong cultural and economic ties, banking on the similarities of the two regions which are diverse in different ways. "The historical bond between India and Thailand is more than 2,000 years old. It goes back to the time of King Ashoka in the 3rd century BC when Buddhism was introduced to Thailand from



India. Buddhism is a common thread that runs through both nations. India's bilateral relations with Thailand are rooted in history, age-old social and cultural interactions and extensive people to people contacts," he added.

Sangma said that it is evident from the fact that recently Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the Government of India is implementing various rail, road and air connectivity projects worth \$17.19 billion in the northeast. India's Act East policy has been complemented by Thailand's Act West policy in bringing the two countries closer," the Meghalaya Chief Minister added.

Lauding the "Act East Policy" and the political will of the Government of India and the states of the North East, he said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a lot of thrust on the North East for its economic

growth that in turn is slowly bridging the infrastructure gap, which is creating an enabling environment for promoting trade and business ties with Southeast Asian nations.

Speaking at the event, Nagaland Chief Minister Rio hoped that the festival would help in further connecting the two regions with age-old social and cultural relations, shared history and ethnicity. He said that by educating people on the similarities of the people of northeast region of India and the people of Thailand and other South East Asian countries, it can help unify and help form close economic collaboration between Northeast India and Southeast Asian nations. He said that the festival will give a further thrust to the Act East Policy of the Government of India and Act West Policy of Thailand and other South East Asian coun-

tries. The Chief Minister also shed light on the famous Hornbill Festival. He stated that the state hosted eight ambassadors of the ASEAN countries during the Hornbill Festival last year and is looking forward to welcoming a Thailand delegation of the tourism industry this year. Rio said that India is investing extensively towards building infrastructure to connect its northeastern region with the ASEAN countries as part of its Act East Policy.

"India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway promises to transform the region economic landscape through trade with the ASEAN and the development of Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport and building of an Integrated Port and Inland Water Transport Terminal in Sittwe (in Myanmar) being undertaken in consonance with the Act East Policy of the Government of India provides further impetus to the trade and investment of the NE region with the ASEAN countries," he added.

The Chief Minister informed that in the fourth week of August 2022, Nagaland is organising a major national level investment summit in partnership with the government of India under the leadership of Union Finance Minister. He stated that the state's biggest strength is the creativity of its people and that Nagas are emerging in the creative fields in India - starting from music, fashion, hospitality and service industry. He said that the state has a dedicated department under the banner of Task Force for Music and Arts, (TaFMA) engaged in creating an eco-system for music and the arts.

Defence counsel for poor, state bound to secure egalitarian social order: SC judges

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Supreme Court judge Justice U.U. Lalit on Saturday said that the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) is going to establish a legal aid system in all districts for the poor, on lines of the public prosecutors' office.

Justice Lalit, Executive Chairperson of the NALSA, was addressing the first All India District Legal Services Authorities Meet. He said that 350 districts have been selected in the entire nation, including 112 aspirational districts, which, according to the government, are to be given top priority.

The District Legal Service Authority (DLSA) office will function as a nodal office, having an interface with the needy undertrial, and defence counsel would be provided to the poor accused who cannot afford private lawyers, he added.

Referring to the 42-day Pan-India Awareness and Outreach Programme, Justice Lalit said in this programme, NALSA, through the State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) and DLSAs, reached out to nearly all villages across the nation. Another Supreme Court judge, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, while addressing the meet, said justice should not be limited to the socio-economically privi-



leged sections and state actors should secure a just and egalitarian social order. He emphasised on the use of technology, which could reduce the digital divide by widening the reach.

Justice Chandrachud said: "19.2 million cases were heard on video conferencing by the high courts and district courts as of April 30. The National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) has data of 17 crore decided and pending cases."

Against the existence of graded inequality in the nation, he said justice ought not to be limited to the socio-economically privileged sections of our society and state actors should ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any section of the society due to social and economic disabilities.

MORTAL REMAINS OF FLIGHT LT ADIVITYA BAL REACH HOME IN J&K LD

Jammu: The mortal remains of flight Lt Adivitya Bal reached his home in R.S.Pura town of Jammu & Kashmir on Saturday.

Defence spokesman, Lt Colonel, Devender Anand said: "The mortal remains of Flight Lt Adivitya Bal arrived in a service aircraft at AF station Jammu today." "A solemn wreath laying ceremony was organised at Air Force Station, Jammu. Air commodore G.S.A Bhullar, AOC Jammu, Divisional Commissioner Jammu region and other senior military and civil dignitaries paid tributes to the braveheart.

"The mortal remains were then taken by road to his native place at R.S. Pura for the last rites with full military honours."

Flight Lt Adivitya Bal and wing commander M. Rana were killed in MIG-21 trainer aircraft crash in Rajasthan on July 28.

Wing commander, M. Rana belonged to Himachal Pradesh while Flight Lt Adivitya Bal belonged to J&K.

SpiceJet says returning older aircraft in phased manner

A SpiceJet spokesman said: "As part of this modernisation plan, we are returning older aircraft in a phased manner including these three aircraft. These returns have been planned and will not have any impact on our operations. SpiceJet has already returned 12 old Boeing aircraft to lessors in the last calendar year. We have 13 MAX aircraft in our fleet and the new inductions would begin from October 2022."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Mid deregistration request for its aircraft, budget carrier SpiceJet on Saturday said that it plans to replace all its older Boeing aircraft with the new Max model in a phased manner and by the next calendar year, it will induct around 20 new Max planes into its fleet.

Its statement came as aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has received requests from the lessor for deregistration of three of the airline's planes. Leasing firm Awais Ireland Ltds filed the requests for three Boeing 737 aircraft - VT-SYX, VT-SYX and VT-SYJ, stationed at Varanasi and Amritsar - on July 29. The deregistration requests of flights has been filed under Irrevocable Deregistration and Export Request Authorisations (IDERA) and sources said that it is usually filed if a lessor and airline are unable to reach a payment negotiation. Deregistration process is generally



allowed after the aviation regulator checks if the aircraft has any pending dues from tax authorities and airports. The government has taken measures to strengthen the ecosystem for aircraft leasing and financing in India. Under International Financial Services Centres Authority Act 2019, the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) was established during April, 2020. Financial assessment carried out by it in September 2021 revealed that SpiceJet is operating on cash and carry and suppliers are not being paid on a regular basis leading to the shortage of spares, the DGCA said.

Point 5140 at Drass named Gun Hill



New Delhi: To commemorate the victory of the Indian Armed Forces and pay tribute to the supreme sacrifice of the Gunners in Operation Vijay, Point 5140 at Drass in the Kargil sector has been christened as "Gun Hill". The Indian artillery was able to focus lethal fire on the enemy and their strongpoints like point 5140 which was key to the success of the army's operation in evicting the intruders. On behalf of the Regiment of Artillery, a wreath was laid by Lieutenant General TK Chawla, Director General of Artillery, at the Kargil War Memorial, Dras, alongwith veteran Gunners who had participated in the operation. Lieutenant General Anindya Sengupta, General Officer Commanding, Fire & Fury Corps, also laid a wreath on the occasion. The ceremony was conducted in the presence of veterans from all artillery regiments, which got the honour title "KARGIL" in Operation Vijay.

Hitler's watch sold for \$1.1mn in US auction



Washington | Agencies

A watch said to have belonged to Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler sold for a whopping \$1.1 million at an auction in the US despite apprehension by members of the Jewish community, a media report said.

The timepiece made by German watch firm Huber, which has a swastika and the initials AH engraved on it, was sold to an anonymous bidder at the Alexander Historical Auctions in Maryland, according to the BBC. The auction house which deals with historic autographs, documents, and photographs, militaria from all

conflicts, and important relics, says the watch was given to Hitler most likely on April 20, 1933, on his 44th birthday when he became the Chancellor of Germany. "The watch and its history have been researched by some of the world's most experienced watchmakers and military historians, all of whom have concluded that it is authentic and indeed belonged to Adolf Hitler," the auctioneer said in its product catalogue. It also said that watch was taken as a war souvenir when a group of some 30 French soldiers stormed the Berghof, Hitler's mountain retreat on May 4, 1945.

INDIA'S FIRST MONKEYPOX PATIENT RECOVERS, TO BE DISCHARGED

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Health Minister Veena George on Saturday announced that the country's first ever monkeypox patient has fully recovered and will be discharged later in the day.

The 35-year-old Kerala native arrived here from the UAE on July 12 and had tested positive for the virus two days later.

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 and was under close observation.

"The entire treatment protocol was planned by the National Institute of Virology, Pune and at repeated intervals samples were taken and tested. By now all the samples have tested negative two times and the patient has fully recovered and is perfectly fine," said George. Initially, concerns were raised over the infected man's close contacts with his parents after his arrival, as well as 11 other passengers who had travelled with him. But health authorities had assured that all the contacts were closely observed, allaying fears.

George also said that two other positive cases in the state who also arrived from the Middle East, were in stable condition and recovering fast.

Terrorist killed, 2 army jawans, cop injured in Baramulla encounter



Srinagar | Agencies

A terrorist was killed and two soldiers and a policeman were injured in an encounter between terrorists and security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district on Sunday, police said.

Acting on specific information generated by police regarding presence of a terrorist in village Wanigam Bala in Kreeri area of Baramulla, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by police, army and the SSB.

As the joint search party approached towards the spot where the terrorist was hiding, he began firing indiscriminately

which was retaliated. "In the initial exchange of fire, two soldiers and a police personnel received injuries and were shifted to hospital for treatment where their condition is stable," police said.

"In the ensuing encounter, one terrorist was killed and his body was retrieved from the site of encounter. However, the identification and affiliation of the killed terrorist is being ascertained."

Arms and ammunition including an AK-47 rifle, three AK magazines, seven AK rounds, a pouch and a bag have been recovered from the site of encounter.

India logs 20,408 new Covid cases, 54 deaths



New Delhi: In the last 24 hours, India reported 20,408 new Covid cases and 54 deaths, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

The new fatalities took the nationwide death toll to 5,26,312. The active caseload marginally declined to 1,43,384, accounting for 0.33 per cent of the country's total positive cases. The recovery of 20,958 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,33,30,442. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.48 per cent.

While the daily positivity rate marginally declined to 5.05 per cent, the weekly positivity rate stood at 4.92 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 4,04,399 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally



GOVERNOR KOSHYARI SPARKS AN INFERNO WITH 'ANTI-MARATHI' REMARKS, DOUSES IT AFTER UPROAR

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari again landed in a hot soup - this time after his perceived 'anti-Marathi' remarks, but after a major political row, he made a tactical retreat, here on Saturday.

The stinging salvos were fired in Mumbai on Friday when he lauded the contributions of the Gujarati and Rajasthani communities to the progress and development of Maharashtra, at a ceremony.

"If you remove Gujaratis and Rajasthanis from the state, especially Mumbai and Thane, then nothing will be left. Mumbai will lose its tag of the country's commercial capital without them," Koshyari declared.

The utterances sparked into a political inferno with all major political parties - the Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party, Congress, the ruling Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his ally Bharatiya Janata Party and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena flaying Koshyari, though Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi's Dr Prakash Ambedkar patted the Governor.

Chief Minister Shinde termed it as the Governor's 'personal views' which he did not support and said that the contributions of the Marathis to the state and Mumbai can never be denigrated.

"Mumbai has progressed and got fame as the financial capital because of the hard work of Marathis. The Governor must ensure that the Maharashtrian's pride and image are not hurt by his utterances," said Shinde in Nashik.

BJP's Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis categorically said: "We don't support the Governor's views" and was supported by ex-minister Ashish Shelar, though MLA Nitesh Rane took an opposing viewpoint.

"The Marathis are famed the world over for their achievements in all sectors and fields. Their contributions to the progress of Mumbai and Maharashtra is significant, and even the Governor is aware of this in his heart. We are not with



him," said Fadnavis.

Ex-CM and Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray said Koshyari has "insulted" the people of the state and now deserves to be shown 'Kolhapuri chappals (footwear)'.

"He regularly keeps making such controversial statements and does not maintain the dignity of the august office he occupies. He is trying to divide communities and even the Hindus by naming Mumbai and Thane where civic polls will be held shortly. Now it's time to consider whether this parcel named Koshyari should be packed off from here or put behind bars," said an agitated Thackeray.

In a sharp attack, Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant said the Governor habitually demeans and defames Maharashtra and its people, and "those who have sent him here should take him back".

Slamming the Governor, NCP's Chief Spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said Koshyari has forgotten that "it were the Marathis who gave their lands and labour" to make the industries and businesses of the migrant communities profitable.

Castigating the Governor, Sena's Raut said that Koshyari has apparently not read the contributions of stalwarts like Jagannath Shankarsheth who had worked to make Bombay a financial powerhouse from the mid-1850s.

Termining it "Koshyari's hoshiyari" (Koshyari's oversmartness) MNS President Raj Thackeray asked the Governor not to keep blabbering if he doesn't know the state's history as his comments have pained the people here.

"The Marathi people and others have given their lands and labour, and ensured a conducive environment that attracts people from all over to do business here. Do they get these anywhere else? Ahead of the elections, don't try to spoil the atmosphere or corner the Marathis, that's my request," said Raj Thackeray. Taken aback by the furious backlash, Governor Koshyari hurriedly clarified that his words were misconstrued as usual and reaffirmed the contributions of Marathis to Mumbai which is the pride of Maharashtra and also the country's commercial capital.

"I had no intentions to underestimate the Marathis... they have built Maharashtra by sheer hard work and there are many leading Marathi industrialists here, and are famous not only in the state but all over India and the world. Praising one community does not amount to insulting others," said the Governor in a statement on Saturday.

He reiterated that he was proud of the opportunity to serve the land of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and the Maharashtrians as the Governor and he had even learnt Marathi in a very short time.

'HOUNDED' BY ED, SHIV SENA DY. LEADER FLEES TO EKNATH SHINDE CAMP

Jalna: Under the scanner of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Maharashtra ex-minister and Shiv Sena Deputy Leader Arjun Khotkar announced that he is joining the rebel faction led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, here on Saturday.



Declaring his intentions at a crowded media conference, Khotkar said that he held detailed discussions with Shiv Sena President and ex-CM Uddhav Thackeray and Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut on his decision.

"I have explained to them the compulsions - which all are aware - behind my decision, the harassment to my family... I am forced to make certain decisions... And they (Thackeray-Raut) have understood my predicament," said an emotional Khotkar, without naming the ED.

To a query, he said that when a person is facing a crisis, he will seek protection from somewhere - an indirect indictment of the central agency which is probing him and his family since the past over two years.

On the central agency probe against him, Khotkar reeled off figures of financial deals pertaining to the alleged illegal auction sale of the Jalna Cooperative Sugar Factory Ltd. by the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB) and claimed he was innocent.

A couple of days ago, Raut lauded Khotkar for displaying courage and admitting to the harassment by the ED which had compelled him to take the decision (to switch sides to Shinde camp). Seven months after he was raided in November 2021, last month (June 2022), the ED attached Khotkar's properties under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the FIR lodged by the Economic Offences Wing of Mumbai Police.

Among other things, the investigators claimed that the sugar mill was fraudulently sold by the MSCB to the relatives or associates of the bank's officials and directors flouting norms. Khotkar's move came after he called on Shinde, another rebel ex-minister Abdul Sattar and a union minister in the past couple of days.

3 held for supporting Maoists in Gadchiroli

Nagpur | Agencies

The Maharashtra Police have arrested three persons, including one medical practitioner Pawan Uike, an MBBS doctor, who works at the Kamalapur Primary Health Centre in south Gadchiroli, for putting up banners of the banned CPI (Maoist).

Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police (SP), Ankit Goel said that the suspected Maoists were arrested when a police team patrolling in the area saw them putting up pro-Maoist banners at Kamalapur, provoking the tribal population to protest against the state government and the police for - what they claimed to be - "anti-people" policies. The banners also appealed to the locals to observe "Martyrs Week" from July 28 to August 3 to com-



memorate the death anniversary of rebel leader and founder of CPI(ML), Charu Majumdar.

Maoists urged the people to observe Mazumdar's death anniversary and pay tribute to all martyrs -- including Central Committee member Milind Teltumbde, who was killed in an encounter in Gadchiroli in November 2021 -- and all those who laid their

lives in the "People's movement".

"It is alleged that the three suspected Maoists arrested were providing logistics support to the Maoists. All the three have been booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. We are finding out whether the doctor Uike was doing all this voluntarily or was forced to do it," the Gadchiroli SP added.

RBI may hike 25-50 basis points at monetary policy meeting next week

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) rate-setting committee is likely to hike 25-50 basis points in repo rate in the monetary policy meeting to be held between August 3-5, according to the estimates of various fund managers and economists.

Economist and fund managers are of the mix view on the policy stance. Few are expecting stance will be change to 'Neutral', while some says 'Withdraw of accommodative stance could persist'.

"We expect 40-50 bps hike in repo rate in August policy review. Withdraw of accommodative stance could persist," said Vivek Kumar, Economist, QuantEco Research.

In last two policies, the central bank has hiked the rate by a cumulative of 90 basis points in May and June, due to high inflation, which was breaching RBI's upper tolerance band for the consecutive months.

"25-35 bps of repo rate hike. Stance



may switch to neutral. Guidance may be somewhat more comforting than previous policy given some correction in commodity prices and range bound crude oil prices," said Mahendra Jajoo, CIO, Fixed Income at Mirae Asset Investment Managers.

On the inflation front, Upasna Bhardwaj, Chief Economist at Kotak Mahindra Bank, said risks to domestic inflation remain on the upside in case of continued pass-through of high input prices, pass-through of higher crude prices to domestic

pump prices, and higher food prices due to weak monsoon or lower acreage.

She also added that geopolitical tensions and implications for energy prices will remain a risk for inflation. Along with inflation, the RBI will be mindful of the external sector imbalances too. Trade deficit can remain wide in case of a sharper fall in exports due to global demand slowdown while imports remain sticky.

Participants are expecting after the rate hike by the central bank, the yield on the government bonds rise further by 15-20 basis points from the current level. But, the levels on the bonds will also follow the movement in prices of crude oil and US Treasury yields.

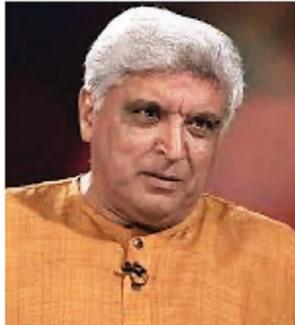
The long end of the curve is pricing in rate pause or rate reversal whereas shorter end of the curve is pricing aggressive rate hikes leading to curve flattening. In such a scenario markets are likely to be volatile reacting to every development.

Mumbai court to hear Kangna's plea on 11th Aug against lawsuit filed by Javed Akhtar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kangana Ranaut has urged a Mumbai court to record her sister Rangoli Chandel's evidence in the defamation lawsuit filed by veteran lyricist Javed Akhtar. Ranaut filed the application before Metropolitan Magistrate R R Khan on Friday, with the help of her lawyer, Advocate Rizwan Siddique. The court has rescheduled the hearing for August 11th.

Ranaut appeared before the Metropolitan Magistrates' Court last month and pleaded not guilty. In November 2020, Akhtar filed a court complaint alleging that Ranaut had hurt his reputation by making false statements against him in a broadcast



interview. In his lawsuit, Akhtar said that



Ranaut dragged his name during an interview while referring to a "coterie"

that exists in Bollywood in the aftermath of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suspected suicide.

Ranaut has filed a counter-complaint with the metropolitan magistrate court, charging Akhtar of defamation, "extortion and criminal intimidation."

In her lawsuit against Akhtar, the actor claimed that following a public fight with her co-star, the poet invited her and her sister Rangoli to his house with "malafide intents and ulterior objectives" before "criminally intimidating and threatening" her.

Meanwhile, Kangana is presently filming her next Indira Gandhi biopic Emergency, and she is also working on Tejas.

Man killed youth; alleging of having affair with his wife

Team Absolute | Thane

A man has been arrested for allegedly electrocuting a 26-year-old youth over suspicion that the latter was having an affair with his wife, a Thane rural police official said on Saturday.

The body of Jayesh Walimbe was found on July 22 and probe found that accused Pundalik Walimbe had killed him by administering electric shock, he said.

"The probe began after Jayesh's kin had filed a missing person complaint with Khinavli police. Pundalik has



been charged with murder and destroying evidence," he added.

The police have registered case of murder and destroying evidence against accused.

Three held for duping people on false promise of jobs

Mumbai police have arrested three persons for allegedly cheating 22 persons to the tune of Rs 20.57 lakh on the false promise of giving job placements to them abroad, an official said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The accused were identified as Manish Pandey (34), Sai Pritam Madhav Aamin (40), both residents of Vashi in Navi Mumbai, and Hrishikesh Nalawade (35), resident of Ambernath in Thane district.

Unit three of the Mumbai crime branch arrested the accused trio for their involvement in duping the job aspirants, the official said.

A 62-year-old woman, who works as a job recruiter, had filed a complaint at Byculla police station in this connection, he

said. "The accused had promised the woman that they would send her candidates abroad for jobs," the official said.

They took money from all those candidates and cheated them, he said, adding that a probe is underway.

Woman dies after eating noodles, Mumbai Police term it accident

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 27-year-old woman died in Mumbai after accidentally consuming food laced with rat poison, police said. While making instant noodles, the woman accidentally added tomato that was laced with rat poison.

The incident occurred in Pascal Wadi area in Mumbai's Malad. Police said that the woman, identified as Rekha Nishad, had laced tomatoes to kill rats in the house on July 21. The next day, she accidentally added the tomato to her noodles.

"While watching TV, she accidentally added the tomato to her food," said Musa Devarshi, Sub Inspector of Malvani Police. She started vomiting hours after eating her meal. Her husband and brother-in-law her to the nearest hospital.

The woman died on Wednesday while undergoing treatment at the hospital.





PROVIDE KCC TO ELIGIBLE DEPRIVED FARMERS BY RUNNING A CAMPAIGN: CM

- ▶ FIX MONTHLY TARGETS OF BANKERS' SCHEMES AND COMPLETE THEM
- ▶ IN THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF CHIEF MINISTER A SPECIAL MEETING HELD OF STATE LEVEL BANKERS COMMITTEE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the state can progress rapidly only through a strong banking system. All the bankers should contribute actively in achieving the goal of the schemes of the government and strengthen the banking system. Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) should be provided to eligible underprivileged farmers by running a campaign. Chouhan was presiding over the special meeting of State Level Bankers Committee at Kushabhau Thackeray Auditorium on Saturday. Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Mahesh Kumar Jain, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Vice President of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi besides senior officials of banks were present. Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh wants to contribute rapidly to India's \$5 trillion economy. For this, efforts should be made to increase the income of the people. If income increases, the economy will also grow rapidly. Month wise



targets of government schemes should be fixed and they should be fulfilled. Chief Minister said that Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana is a boon for the people. PM Swanidhi Yojana is changing lives of people. He directed to fulfill the target of providing loans to women self-help groups. Chouhan said that this is an area to change the lives of poor sisters. He told to complete the target of opening balance accounts of Jan-Dhan Yojana. Swamitva Yojana is very important scheme. Loans should be made available on priority to the beneficiaries for this scheme. In the meeting, instructions were given to fix the date of August 22 for Employment Day. Chouhan said that work fast for the annual credit plan. Private banks should also have an important participation in PM Swanidhi Yojana. The pending complaints with CM Helpline related to the banks should be resolved expeditiously. Bankers should work for the welfare of the poor. Make banks a friend of the public. Poor people may also easily avail the facility of banks. He said that the bankers should contribute in achieving the target with strong will power. If Madhya Pradesh moves ahead, the country will progress.

Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Mahesh Kumar Jain said that the role of bankers is important for the progress of Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh's contribution should be better for India's \$5 trillion economy. There is no dearth of resources and efficient leadership here. The state should progress by bringing forward the industrial sector. Take action as per demand. Madhya Pradesh has taken a good step by presenting district wise financial inclusion report. A good beginning of Bank Sakhi has been made in the state. It needs to be taken further. CD ratio is low in 14 districts of the state, which should be increased. Rural Regional Banks and Co-operative Banks should take note of this. Bring new ideas to provide banking facilities. He said that more efforts should be made to promote self-help groups and financial literacy. We all need to work together and have innovative ideas. Central Bank of India Executive Director Rajiv Puri delivered the welcome address. He said that the bankers should actively contribute in the development of the state. Leave no stone unturned to provide employment to the youth.

WEEK AFTER RAISEN DEATH, ANOTHER B-TECH STUDENT FOUND DEAD

Bhopal: While the case of a Bhopal B-Tech student found dead in mysterious circumstances is yet to be solved, yet another engineering student was found dead on his institute's campus on Saturday, police said.

Uddeshya Ahirwar, 22, a 4th year engineering student, was found hanging from a tree in the campus of the Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT) here, Anil Vajpayee, in-charge of Kamlia Nagar police station, said. Ahirwar, a resident of Burhanpur district, was staying at campus hostel of MANIT college run under the Union Education Ministry, he said. "The body has been sent for post-mortem examination and further investigation is underway. We are interrogating college staff and students staying in college campus," Vajpayee said. On July 24, the body of Nishank Rathore, who was a B-Tech student in Bhopal based college, was found cut into two pieces on railway tracks in Barkhed-Midghat area in Raisen district. While the police investigation revealed that it was a suicide case, however, the family claimed Rathore was murdered.

Madhya Pradesh won 2 awards at ITCTA Conclave Chandigarh

Received awards in the category of Promoting Fairs and Festivals of MP and the maintained state corporation hotels

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Tourism won two national level awards at the 8th edition of International Tourism Conclave and Travel Awards in Chandigarh. Madhya Pradesh Tourism was honoured with the award for promoting its Fairs Festivals and Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation for Well Maintained Hotels. On behalf of Madhya Pradesh Tourism, Deputy Director Yuvraj Padole and General Manager Surendra Pratap Singh received the awards. Expressing happiness on receiving the award, Principal Secretary Tourism and Managing Director Tourism Board Sheo Shekhar Shukla said that it is a matter of great pleasure for us that Madhya Pradesh Tourism has been honoured with awards in various categories this time too. With these awards, we will set high national standards in the field of hospitality and services. Being honoured with these awards in the presence



of Senior Officials of Tourism Board, Tour Operators, Destination Management Companies (DMCs), Stakeholders excites us to do even better. State Tourism Development Corporation's Managing Director S Vishwanathan said that apart from being happy on receiving the award, it also gives inspiration to expand and increase the facilities of tourists progressively. In future, we will try to innovate and make our units even better, hotels with state-of-the-art tourist facilities. Deputy Director (Event and Marketing) Tourism

Board, Yuvraj Padole gave a brief description of the tourist destinations and other aspects of tourist attractions in the state from PPT. He said that Madhya Pradesh has immense potential for wildlife safaris, natural beauty, adventure activities, camping, water sports, delicious cuisine, heritage sites, tribal culture, handicrafts, wellness and mindful tourism. Due to its geographical location, Madhya Pradesh is called the heart of India. The state is connected to every part of the country by highways and rails and with major parts of the country by air.

Chief Minister plants saplings in Smart City Park

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Banyan, Neem and Pink Cassia saplings in the Smart City Park today. Ayush Katara, Bhupendra Jain Shastri, Apoorv Jain, Abhishek Kirar and Ujjwal Soni of Yuva Dharmashree Sanstha planted saplings. Along with CM Chouhan, Sachin Kapoor and Khushboo Kapoor also planted saplings. The organisation is working in the field of cleanliness and environment. Along with this, it is also active in providing food grains to the needy people in Bhopal, Vidisha and Raisen and motivating people to donate blood. Banyan tree has religious and medicinal significance. According to



Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Consumption of its decoction boosts the immunity. Rich in antibiotic elements,

Neem is known as the ultimate medicine. It is also full of medicinal qualities. The bark and leaves of Pink Cassia are used in making Ayurvedic medicines.

CM CALLED ON BY RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was called on by the Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Mahesh Kumar Jain at the residence office. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Vice Chairman of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis Professor Sachin Chaturvedi were present. Chouhan presented central books on road map of self-reliant Madhya Pradesh and the road map of the state for five trillion dollar economy to Jain. CM Chouhan also discussed about mutual cooperation in the implementation of development works and public welfare schemes and promotion of industrial activities in the state.

"Harit Vasundhara:" Innovative Initiative to motivate students to plant 100 saplings every year

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A unique initiative has been taken by the Higher Education Department to develop environmental awareness and love for greenery among the youth through the Harit Mission (Green Mission). Under this, "Harit Vasundhara Abhiyan" (Green Earth Campaign) was launched by the state level NAAC cell. Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav launched the campaign from Ujjain. He said that plantation is necessary to reduce the ever-increasing temperature in the world and preserve the greenery of the Earth. Yadav said that at the time of Corona pandemic, we realised the importance of oxygen. Through Harit Vasundhara, students will not only plant saplings but will also understand their responsibility towards the society. In the Harit Vasundhara Abhiyan, the college will motivate the students to plant 100 saplings every year. The first year students will plant a sapling in the college campus as green ambassadors and will also take care of the plant during the study period. Before leaving the college, they will assign the task of tak-



ing care of the plant to a fresher first year student. The college will ensure to plant at least 100 saplings in its campus in a year. Apart from this, the college will encourage students and employees to plant saplings on various occasions like birthday, anniversary, environment day, earth day, water day, nature day etc. For the campaign in the college campus, a teacher will be appointed as the nodal officer and a boy or a girl student will be appointed as the student coordinator. In the colleges having eco club, the in-charge will be made the nodal

officer. Under Harit Vasundhara Abhiyan, the records of GPS tagged photographs will be maintained by the nodal officer on quarterly basis to ensure the growth of the plant. The student who planted maximum trees and took care of them would be honoured as Green Ambassador of the institute in the final year. Under the Green Vasundhara Abhiyan, various types of plants related to educational purposes, medicinal plants, fruit trees, indoor plants, ornamental hanging, aromatic and flowering plants will be planted in the colleges.

CM CHOUHAN CONGRATULATES INDIAN PLAYERS WHO WON MEDALS IN CWG

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated Mirabai Chanu, who won India's first gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in the women's 49 kg weightlifting event, Sanket Mahadev Sagar for winning silver medal in weightlifting 55 kg weight category and P Gururaja for winning bronze medal in men's 61 kg weightlifting category at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. Chief Minister Chouhan said that Chanu, Gururaja and Sanket Mahadev Sagar have made the entire country proud with their splendid performance.

Tree Plantation Campaign

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As many as 15 thousand 866 people planted saplings and uploaded 4 lakh 17 thousand 852 photos on the Vayudoot app in the Ankur Abhiyan of the state government, on the first day of the grand campaign that started from July 28. There were 7 lakh 38 thousand 88 saplings registered in the app till July 27, which increased to 7 lakh 53 thousand 954 on July 28. On Thursday, the maximum registration was 1400 in Indore district, 1175 in Gwalior, 1126 in Guna, 844 in Ratlam and 716 in Bhind district. On July 28, 4 lakh 17



thousand 752 participants uploaded the first photo in the Ankur-Vayudoot app. Till July 27, 7 lakh 38 thousand 88 people had registered in the Ankur campaign, which rose to 7 lakh 53 thousand 954 on the first

day of the plantation campaign. On the first day, administrative officers, students and people in urban and rural areas planted saplings and uploaded photos. The campaign will continue till August 15.

ELECTRICITY BILL PAYMENT CENTRES WILL OPEN ON SUNDAY

Bhopal: Electricity bill payment centres will continue to function as normal working days on 30 July (Saturday) and 31 July (Sunday) in the jurisdiction of Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company (Central Region Power Distribution Company). All the zonal offices of the four city divisions i.e. West, East, South and North divisions of Bhopal city circle and bill payment centres in Danish Nagar, Misrod, Mandideep will remain open as normal working days on the said holiday. Power consumers can also make bill payment at cash counters in zonal office of the capital and also at ATP machines installed at various places in Bhopal city.

Medical career is not a profession, it is service to mankind: Governor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that medical career is not a profession but service to mankind. This work is gift of God. Doctors should serve humanity with full devotion and honesty. Have a sense of service towards the patient. Treat even the weakest person in the society with full devotion. Speak kindly to patients. Governor and Chancellor Patel was addressing the first convocation of Madhya Pradesh Medical Science University in Jabalpur today. Governor Patel presented

gold medals to 73 students of Faculty of Medicine, Dental, Ayurvedic, Homeopathy, Nursing, Paramedical etc and degrees to 120 students from 2015 to 2018. The Governor also released the souvenir of the University. Governor Patel said that there is a need to work at a fast pace towards the prevention of sickle cell anaemia in the state. All universities should take responsibility of 5 villages each for this and try to prevent it by raising awareness about sickle cell disease. For the prevention of diseases, special attention is needed

towards lifestyle and diet. There is a need to change the foreign way of life. Referring to the National Education Policy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Governor said that there is a need to become a super power in the field of education. He also stressed on regular evaluation of medical colleges. He said that the students should fulfill their duties, never forget their parents and motherland. Unfurl the tricolour in every house from 13 to 15 August in the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence. Must read life stories of freedom fighters and great men.

GOVERNOR ACCORDS TOUCHING FAREWELL TO THE EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS



Bhopal: Governor Mangubhai Patel bid farewell to the officers and employees transferred and retired from Raj Bhavan by presenting them shawls, shrifal and mementos. It is noteworthy that the Governor's Law Officer DPS Gaur and the Governor's Special Assistant Rajesh Barsaiya Gupta have been transferred to the parent departments. Bhagat Ram, an employee working in Raj Bhavan, is retiring from the post of Khalasi on July 31.

Financial inclusion is the need of the day for a happy and healthy life for all: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that financial inclusion is the need of the hour. When the world was facing economic crisis, India had efficient financial management under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Due to this there was no economic crisis in India. Modi has brought a social revolution by opening the bank accounts of the poor by launching the Jan-Dhan Yojana. Middlemen have been eliminated from banks. Chouhan was addressing the Financial Inclusion Seminar and releasing the district-wise Financial Inclusion Index report prepared by Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis at Kushabhau Thackeray Auditorium. The booklet of NABARD was also released in the programme.

Chouhan said that the Reserve Bank of India is doing efficient financial management. This has also improved the financial management of Madhya Pradesh. He said that this is the first financial inclusion report of Madhya Pradesh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis has played a commendable role in its making. For this, he thanked the Vice President of the Institute, Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi. He said that this report would act as a guide in the development of the state. The Chief Minister said that the country would be empowered with Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas. Financial inclusion is must for everyone to be happy, healthy, and for the well-being for all. He said that the way PM Modi is taking India forward, the contribution of Madhya Pradesh will also be better. In the field of financial inclusion, steps have been taken for women

empowerment through bank sakhi, women self-help groups in the state. He said that it is not enough just to open an account in the banks, it is also necessary to use it in all dealings. Chouhan said that benefits of various schemes are being given to the beneficiaries by organizing employment day every month in the state. Work is being done to bridge the gap between richness and poverty. PM Swanidhi and Udyam Kranti Yojana have changed lives of people. He said that all the bankers need to work as a team. Efforts are being made to make banks accessible to the common man. Chouhan said that digital transactions have been promoted by including direct account transfer (DBT) in all major beneficiary oriented schemes in the state. Aadhar linking is also being done in the accounts of Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojanas to prevent the possibilities of financial

irregularities. In the state, more than 84 percent of the accounts of Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana have been linked with Aadhaar. Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India Mahesh Kumar Jain said that the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis established in Madhya Pradesh is giving important suggestions to the state government from time to time, due to this the state is developing economically. Banks play a significant role in economic growth. He said that all the bankers should focus on providing basic financial services to the citizens. He also advised for financial literacy and effective communication. Jain said that Madhya Pradesh should adopt 5-C approach of content, capacity, community, communication and collaboration for financial inclusion. He said that there is a need to focus on strengthening the regional rural banks.

COMMITTEE FORMED FOR EXPANSION AND STRENGTHENING OF DOS&T

Bhopal: In the technological era of communication revolution, the State Government has constituted a committee with a view to the commitment of each department to implement its schemes through information technology and to provide the benefits of the schemes conveniently online to the beneficiaries/citizens. Keeping in view the needs of the departments in the scenario of Madhya Pradesh, this committee will submit suggestions and recommendations regarding expansion, strengthening and new action plans etc of the Department of Science and Technology. The chairman of the committee will be Additional Chief Secretary, Public Health and Family Welfare, Mohammad Suleman. Additional Chief Secretary General Administration Vinod Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Finance Manoj Govil, Principal Secretary Energy Sanjay Dubey, Principal Secretary Public Works Neeraj Mandloi will be members. Principal Secretary Science and Technology has been made Member Secretary. The committee will submit its report to the Chief Secretary in a month.



No epidural for Mandy Moore when she has her second child

Los Angeles | Agencies

American singer Mandy Moore will have an unmedicated birth procedure when she welcomes her second baby this fall because of an autoimmune disorder called immune thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP), reports People magazine.

The 'This Is Us' stars opened up about not being able to receive an epidural during childbirth in an interview with Today Parents. Moore and her husband Taylor Goldsmith are already parents to 17-month-old son Gus, whom she also delivered without medication due to the condition.

"My platelets are too low for an epidural," Moore shared. "It was awful. But I can do it one more time. I can climb that mountain again." She continued: "I wish medication was an option -- just the idea of it being on the table is so nice. But we'll just push forth like we did last time."

People magazine further stated that the singer also shared a positive pregnancy update on Instagram. "I am fine. I just have to continue to get my blood checked -- my platelet levels checked -- throughout pregnancy. They're low, but they've always been low," Moore said, as per Today. "But I'm all good. Everything's good."

The disorder can "lead to easy or excessive bruising and bleeding. The bleeding results from unusually low levels of platelets -- the cells that help blood clot." Pregnant women who suffer from ITP are at a "greater risk of heavy bleeding during delivery".



WILL SMITH APOLOGISES TO CHRIS ROCK FOR 'UNACCEPTABLE' OSCARS NIGHT SLAP

Los Angeles | Agencies

Acconitry Will Smith has opened up about the controversy surrounding his assault of Chris Rock at this year's Academy Awards, offering his most unvarnished thoughts about an altercation that has marred his public image, despite being named Best Actor, reports 'Variety'.

In an emotional YouTube post, according to 'Variety', Smith addressed why he did not apologise to Rock when he accepted the Best Actor prize for his work in 'King Richard' shortly after he charged the stage and slapped the comic for making a joke about his wife Jada Pinkett Smith's short haircut.

"It's all fuzzy," Smith said. "I've reached out to Chris and the message that came back is he's not ready to talk, and when he is, he will reach out." Smith once again reiterated that he was sorry for his actions, calling his behaviour "unacceptable". The actor has said he had responded violently because Rock's joke referenced the hair loss that Pinkett Smith suffers because of her medical condition known as alopecia.

It's a struggle that Pinkett Smith has publicly addressed in the past, notes 'Variety'. "There is no part of me that thinks that was the right way to behave in that moment," Smith, who sighs deeply at some parts and seems to be fighting back tears, says in the video. "There's no part of me that thinks that's the optimal way to handle a feeling of disrespect or insults."

Crowds surge for Billie Eilish's impromptu 'Happier Than Ever' gig

Los Angeles | Agencies

An impromptu live performance from 20-year-old Grammy-winning singer Billie Eilish drew huge crowds at Amoeba Hollywood that too at a few hours notice, reports Variety.

This weekend, her second studio record, 'Happier Than Ever', celebrates its one-year anniversary, and on Friday afternoon (Pacific Standard Time), she took to her iconic hometown record store to perform an acoustic set of selections from the record.

According to Variety, fans crowded every nook and cranny of Amoeba's new Hollywood location to see the singer play a four-song set. Finneas, the singer's brother, producing partner and tourmate, joined her onstage with an acoustic guitar and supporting vocals.

Variety adds that after opening with 'Billie Bossa Nova' and performing 'TV' off her recent 'Guitar Songs' EP, Eilish left it up to the crowd to decide the next song, which resulted in an impassioned shouting match that settled on 'Getting Older'.

Finally, the dynamic energy of the record's title track translated incredibly well into acoustic form, spurring an inspired crowd sing along that Eilish effortlessly led as the set's closing number.

At the end of the performance, the singer thanked the crowd and left fans with the most Billie Eilish mic drop possible: "And happy 'Happier Than Ever' anniversary, b****"

Between songs, Eilish thanked fans for coming out on very short notice to see her and Finneas play, noting that the one-year anniversary of 'Happier Than Ever' also falls on her brother's 25th birthday.



Incredible Dua Lipa

The Singer slips into a bedazzled catsuit as she rocks Lollapalooza stage... following firework incident that left three fans injured

Chicago | Agencies

Dua Lipa commanded attention as she took the Lollapalooza stage on Friday, for the second day of the annual four-day music festival, held at Grant Park in Chicago, Illinois.

The English singer, 26, looked incredible as she slipped her spectacular figure into a bedazzled skintight catsuit that featured transparent panels.

The show is her first one after the incident that occurred during her concert at the Scotiabank Arena in Toronto on Wednesday, in which three people were injured after illicit fireworks were set off at the venue.

The Don't Start Now hitmaker wore a pair of matching black boots with her alluring outfit, and sported a pair of dangling earrings.

The singing sensation wore her black tresses parted in the middle and cascading down her shoulders.

As for glam, the star opted for a light shade of violet eyeshadow and a dark lipstick on her pout.



Scorsese, DiCaprio to team up yet again for 1740s shipwreck thriller

Los Angeles:

The inimitable combination of Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio, who have just wrapped up the film adaptation of the award-winning journalist and bestselling author David Grann's non-fiction book, 'Killers of the Flower Moon', for Apple Original Films, are already onto their next project, says 'Hollywood Reporter'.

The upcoming film is based on another of Grann's riveting stories, the shipwreck mystery thriller 'The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny, and Murder'.

Set in the 1740s, says 'Hollywood Reporter', Wager's story is set in motion when a patched-together boat with 30 emaciated men land on the coast of Brazil. The men were the surviving crew of the British naval ship, HMS Wager, which was chasing a Spanish vessel and had crashed onto a desolate island in South America's Patagonia region. Their tales of surviving the seas and the elements made them heroes.

Six months later, however, another vessel, even more beat up than the first, ended up off the coast of Chile, this one with three men. These new sailors accused the other men of being mutineers.

As accusations and counter-charges flew, according to 'Hollywood Reporter', the British Admiralty set a special trial in motion to uncover the truth of what exactly happened on the island, exposing a story of not just a captain and crew struggling to survive while battling some of the most extreme elements on the planet, but also fighting against their own human natures.

DiCaprio will be coming off starring with Robert De Niro, Jesse Plemons, Lily Gladstone and Brendan Fraser in 'Flower Moon', set in the 1920s Oklahoma and depicting the serial murder of members of the oil-wealthy Osage Nation.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kimberley Garner

Neil Patrick Harris called the shots for 'ahem' nude pic in OTT series 'Uncoupled'

Los Angeles | Agencies

'How I Met Your Mother' star Neil Patrick Harris shared that he had a unique job on the set of the Netflix series 'Uncoupled' -- and it had to do with combing through explicit photos, reports People magazine.

In one scene, Harris' character is seen setting up a dating profile when his friend tells him he needs an explicit picture of



his "ahem" to really round out his photos. Behind the scenes, Netflix tapped Harris, 49, to select the critical genital photo.

Quoted by People, Neil told Page Six at the 'Uncoupled' premiere, "Not only did I get approval. I was asked to choose said d***, which is harder than you think, no pun intended."

He added: "We started looking through photos of people who have taken pics of their d*** in locker rooms. And you had to find the right angle and girth and manscapery."

Of the end result, Harris said he's content. "I think we found the right mix," he concluded. "I'm proud of what I'm packing downstairs."



Common Wealth Games 2022, Birmingham

GURURAJA WINS INDIA'S SECOND MEDAL--A BRONZE

B Shrikant | Birmingham

For over a year, weightlifter Gururaja Poojary did not go to his home in Udipi district in Karnataka, instead deciding to stay at the national camp in Patiala, preparing for his entry into a new weight division, shifting to an Olympic weight category for the Paris Olympics in 2024.

The 27-year-old Junior Warrant Officer (JWO) in India Air Force had got married in May 2021 but decided to leave his wife with his parents in Karnataka so that he can concentrate on his career.

All those sacrifices paid dividends as Gururaja on Saturday captured a bronze medal in the men's 61kg weight division at the Commonwealth Games 2022, the first medal in this weight class according to him.

The Karnataka lifter made it a productive morning session for India at the weightlifting arena in Birmingham, winning the country's second medal of the day at the Commonwealth Games here on Saturday. Sanket Mahadev Sargar had



earlier opened India's medal account on the second day of competition by winning a silver medal in the men's 55kg division. Gururaja came up with the best effort in his last attempt in the men's 61kg division, improving on his personal best by lifting 151 in his third attempt in clean and jerk. He had the best effort of 118 in the

snatch, giving him an aggregate of 269kg. He finished behind Malaysia's Muhamad Aznil Bin Bidin, who lifted 127 in snatch and 158 in clean and jerk for a total of 285, which is a new Games Record.

Morea Baru of Papua New Guinea took silver with a total of 272 (121 in snatch and 152 in clean and jerk, finishing well clear of Gururaja, who finished just one kg ahead of Youri Simard of Canada, who had an aggregate of 268.

Having fulfilled his wish, Gururaja was ecstatic with his performance in the men's 61kg.

"The decision not to go home and stay at the national camp at NIS Patiala for over a year has paid. I have made many sacrifices. All those have paid off today as I won another medal for the country," said Gururaja after his event.

He said he was happy with his performance as he had done the same weights during practice.

"I had done the same 118 kg in snatch in practice and also did it 152kg in clean and jerk. So, I am happy because I managed to give my best," said Gururaja.

He said he was hampered by a wrist injury and also had some fever for a couple of days while in India. "I had a slight fever before I left for Birmingham and though it cured soon after, the weekends.

Gururaja said he will take rest for the next few weeks and rehabilitate his injured wrist.

Boxer Hassamuddin advances to next round in 54kg round

Indian boxer Mohamed Hassamuddin started his campaign in the 2022 Commonwealth Games here on a winning note, beating Amzolele Dyeyi of South Africa in their men's featherweight (54kg-57kg) division bout at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) on Saturday.



Birmingham | Agencies

In their Round of 32 bout, Hassamuddin won a unanimous decision on points, beating the South African 5-0 with all five judges scoring the bout in his favour. He used his better technique and strength to great advantage to do enough in each of the three

rounds to get the better of an opponent.

The 27-year-old Hassamuddin, who hails from Nizamabad in Telangana, was scored 30-27, 29-28, 29-28, 29-28 and 30-28 by the five judges as he dominated the bout against his South African opponent. Hassamuddin, whose father Samsamuddin and brothers,

Ahteshamuddin and Aitesamuddin, represented India at international boxing events, and had won a bronze medal in the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia in men's bantamweight (68kg).

He will not take on Bangladesh's Mohd Hossain for a place in the quarterfinals on August 1.

India announce ODI squad for Zimbabwe tour, Chahar, Kuldeep return

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India on Saturday announced their squad for the three-match ODI series to be played against Zimbabwe in Harare from August 18.

Most of the regular ODI members -- skipper Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Rishabh Pant, Hardik Pandya and others -- have been given rest and Shikhar Dhawan will lead the side after recently guiding India to 3-0 win in West Indies. Pacer Deepak Chahar, who was out of action for a quite long time due to injury, has made a comeback in the team.



India's squad for 3 ODIs: Shikhar Dhawan (Captain), Rituraj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Avesh Khan, Prasidh Krishna, Mohd Siraj, Deepak Chahar.

Silicon Valley Classic draw: Sakkari, Badosa, Jabeur included as top seeds

San Jose (USA) | Agencies

World No 3 Maria Sakkari, No 4 Paula Badosa, Ons Jabeur, and Aryna Sabalenka have been drawn as the top seeds at the Silicon Valley Classic tennis tournament, which begins on August 1.

A finalist in 2018, Sakkari returns to San Jose as the top seed. The Greek star has enjoyed consistent success in San Jose, having followed up her run to the final with a semifinal appearance last year.

The top four seeds have eyes into the second round. Sakkari will await the winner of the enticing first-round encounter between Bianca Andreescu and Shelby Rogers.

San Jose will be Andreescu's first hard-court tournament of the season. The Canadian star comes into San Jose off strong clay and grass seasons, highlighted by making the Rome quarterfinals and Bad Homburg final. Rogers won their sole prior meeting, a straight-set win last summer in Chicago.



Sakkari, Badosa, Jabeur, and Sabalenka have been drawn as the top seeds at the Silicon Valley Classic tennis tournament, which begins on August 1.

The 27-year old Sakkari's quarter also sees No 8 seed Karolina Pliskova and Amanda Anisimova, who is in the midst of the best season of her career. Pliskova faces a rematch with Katie Boulter in the first round. The British wildcard ousted the Czech in the second round of Wimbledon last month.

Wimbledon finalist and World No.5 Ons Jabeur is also in the top half of the draw. Jabeur will face either Madison Keys or Zhang Shuai in the second round. Garbie Muguruza is the other seed in Jabeur's quarter and will open against Camila Giorgi. Meanwhile, No 2 seed Badosa leads the bottom half of the draw, which includes No 4 seed Aryna Sabalenka, No 6 seed Coco Gauff, Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina, and four-time major champion Naomi Osaka. Badosa will open her tournament against either Alison Riske or a qualifier, a wtatennis.com report said.

Poland Open

Caroline Garcia, Ana Bogdan to lock horns in women's single final

Warsaw (Poland) | Agencies

Caroline Garcia and Ana Bogdan beat the rain and their opponents -- Jasmine Paolini and Kateryna Baindl, earning straight-sets semifinal wins to set up a clash for the title at the Poland Open, here on Saturday.

No 5 seed Garcia of France breezed past No.10 seed Jasmine Paolini of Italy 6-1, 6-2 to reach her 12th career singles final. Garcia took just 65 minutes to improve to 3-0 against Paolini.

Garcia backed up her stunning upset of World No 1 Iga Swiatek from the previous round, as she continues her run of stellar form this summer. She has now won 17 of her last 20 matches, which includes a run to the Bad Homburg title and a Round of 16 showing at Wimbledon.

Under persistent drizzle that became much more substantial as the match neared its conclusion, 45th-ranked Garcia beat World No.58



Paolini by winning 80 per cent of her first-service points and 60 percent of her first-return points.

Former World No 4 Garcia fired six aces on the day as well. Garcia is up to 236 aces for the year, and she has claimed the mantle of this season's

ace leader from reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina.

Garcia threatened to finish the match in under an hour, holding triple match point at 6-1, 5-1. However, Paolini came back from 0-40 down in that game to prolong

affairs as the rain increased. In the following game, though, Garcia converted her fifth match point to complete the victory.

Garcia, who has an 8-3 record in her previous singles finals, will now take on Bogdan in the championship match. Garcia defeated Bogdan in their only prior meeting, which came in the second round of Wimbledon five years ago. Bogdan of Romania has already posted her career-best result this week, making her first Hologic WTA Tour singles final. Bogdan defeated lucky loser Kateryna Baindl of Ukraine 7-5, 7-5 in Saturday's first semifinal to achieve that feat.

World No 108 Bogdan was pushed past two hours for the first time this week by Baindl, but the Romanian still has not lost a set in the tournament. Bogdan won exactly two-thirds of points off of the Baindl second service to win a tour-level semifinal for the first time in her fifth attempt.

Gaurav Gill rules Day 1 of INRC Rally of Coimbatore 2022

Coimbatore | Agencies

Seven-time National champion JK Tyre's Gaurav Gill (co-driver Musa Sherif) played with experience to finish on top of the overall table on day one of the Rally of Coimbatore 2022-the 2nd round of the Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) here on Saturday.

The three-time APRC champion, who loves to hit top speeds, decided to go easy for once. The average speed clocked was just 70kmph but that's the way he approached the day from the start. "For a World Rally Championship (WRC) driver like me it is bad. I always touch speeds of 100 and above. That's where you show your skill but, this time



around, I wanted to bring the car safely home," said the Delhi star Gaurav Gill.

Driving the XUV300, Gill managed a solid lead of 1 min 31 sec over his nearest rival Karna Kadur who is second currently and by 1 min 50sec over Arjun Rao who finished third. He made 37 seconds on the first stage and further built it up in the sec-

ond stage that was repeated, to end the day on a merry note for the team.

He was quite pleased with his show. "I am happy that it ended the way we had planned the day," said Gill and quickly added that he and Musa were literally chatting and correcting pace notes while on the move.

Listened to gut instinct to bowl a short ball to Mayers, glad it paid off: Arshdeep

Tarouba (Trinidad) | Agencies

In India's 68-run win over the West Indies at the Brian Lara Stadium, left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh gave a reminder of the potential he has in international cricket. In a chase of 191, Kyle Mayers smacked a six and four on Arshdeep's first two balls of the day.

But on the very next ball, Arshdeep bowled a short ball outside off-stump, which took Mayers aback, clearly not expecting a change in length while walking down the pitch and managed to give a catch to mid-wicket. He would return in the 17th over to rattle Akeal Hosein's stumps with a lovely incoming yorker, giving a glimpse of his death-bowling skills.

"With them chasing 190, they would come hard (at us) from the start and go for the attack. We needed a wicket up front, he (Mayers) attacked from the start. At that time this was the option, he could hit a boundary off the bounce. But at that time the gut instinct said, 'need to take this chance' and it paid off," said Arshdeep in post-match press conference.



The youngster also attributed his spell of 2/24 in the first T20I to role clarity from the Indian team management. "As a bowler it becomes easy when you know clearly what role you're going to play and when you're going to be bowling from the support staff and captain.

India look for better batting, bowling show in crucial match against Pakistan

Birmingham | Agencies

After squandering a chance to win their first Group A match against Australia, India will be seeking better show in batting and bowling in a crucial game against Pakistan at Edgbaston on Sunday.

Touted as a match of catching a wide public interest due to the large number of Indian and Pakistani-origin people residing in the city, expect the stadium to be a full house when Harmanpreet Kaur and Bismah Maroof lead their respective teams on the field in a match where the future of their campaign in the tournament hinges heavily.

A win for either of them means the chance for a medal will be alive while a loss would put either of the teams on the brink of an early exit



from the competition.

On a sunny Friday, as women's T20 cricket made its debut in the Commonwealth Games, India, captain Harmanpreet led the way with the bat, making 52 off 34 balls and was supported by opener Shafali

Verma's 48 off 33 balls in posting 154 on board. India were given a real chance to win when pacer Renuka Thakur took 4-18, bowling away Australia's top four batting line-up of Alyssa Healy, Beth Mooney, Meg Lanning and Tahlia

McGrath. At 49-5, India had a real chance of victory.

But apart from Renuka and Deepti Sharma, India's bowling made errors in line and length as Ashleigh Gardner, Grace Harris and Alana King took Australia to a come-from-behind win.

If India are to keep themselves alive in the competition, they will need better efforts from bowlers like Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Radha Yadav and Meghna Singh to stop the Pakistan batters from getting huge runs. They might look at getting experienced all-rounder Sneha Rana back in the eleven to strengthen themselves in batting and bowling with pace all-rounder Pooja Vastrakar yet to arrive in Birmingham due to being infected with Covid-19.



Parineeti Chopra and Akshay Kumar to share screen

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Akshay Kumar is one of the busiest actors in B-town with the plethora of interesting projects in his pipeline. He is currently gearing up for Aanand L Rai's Raksha Bandhan. But details about one of his upcoming project has surfaced. Recently social media went abuzz when Akshay Kumar's pictures from the fields of London and Yorkshire were leaked. A source close to the film had confirmed that Akshay Kumar is shooting for an untitled next, based on a real-life hero and his bravery in a rescue operation at a coal mine.

Now, details about the leading lady are out! And it's none other than his Kesari co-star Parineeti Chopra. Announcing the same, Parineeti took to her social media handle and posted a picture with Akshay Kumar and captioned, "We are back! This time the Kesari duo may be shooting in York, but the laughs, jokes, games and Punjabi Gupshup is the same @AkshayKumar #Newbeginings #Poojaentertainment"

Needless to say, offset- the duo look super cool together in York.



'We are women, we adjust each other's crown'

Ekta Kapoor Reacts To Kangana Ranaut's "Sasti Copy" Comment on her recent film.

The producer also reacted to Kangana's 'sasti copy' comment towards Taapsee and quipped, "There's only

'sasti copy' of Kangana when the Pink star didn't praise her sister while lauding Judgemental Hai Kya's trailer.

Last year, Kangana took a jibe at Taapsee after the latter tweeted about the Income Tax raids at her place. The Queen actress had referred to Taapsee as 'sasti' in her tweet, writing, "You will always remain sasti because you are sab rapists ka feminist... your ring master Kashyap was raided in 2013 as well for tax chori... government official's report is out if you aren't guilty go to court against them come clean on this ... come on sasti."

one similarity. Both are amazing, trailblazer women. To play them against each other is not our job. We're women, we shouldn't be pitting actresses against one another. We adjust each other's crown, not remove it."

For those who are unaware, Kangana Ranaut and Taapsee Pannu are often seen taking a dig at each other. It all started when Rangoli Chandel called Taapsee a

reference, Ekta Kapoor was asked about further working with both the actress. To which she said, "It's an amazing thing to collaborate with such amazing actors. If there's an interesting project, I will only approach the actor and request them to read the script."

She added, "So, it is a heartening thing to work with great actors. They bring in a lot more, Kangana is a brilliant actor and so is Taapsee."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Remake of the 2018 Spanish drama Mirage, Anurag Kashyap directorial Dobaaraa stars Taapsee Pannu, Pavai Gulati and Rahul Bhat in the lead roles. The film is produced by Ekta Kapoor. Recently, a trailer launch event was held in Mumbai where Anurag Kashyap and Ekta Kapoor were present. During the press con-



'KBC' director reveals format changes



Ila Sankrityayan | New Delhi

As the Amitabh Bachchan-hosted show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 14' is about to start, director Arun Sheshkumar talks to IANS about the formula to make a non-fiction like 'KBC' work for audiences that are varied, Big B in the spotlight, and changes made in the new season.

He said: "The beauty of 'KBC' is that this is one show where your talent is your knowledge. Your talent is your luck. You don't need to know dancing or singing or any kind of an extra co-curricular talent per se.

What you have studied or what you

are reading is what you are bringing onto the show as your experience and your personal life."

"So, 'KBC' attracts those kind of people to come and share their experiences in terms of current affairs, their general knowledge, and the aspiration to win big money and change their life."

He further shared how he envisioned Amitabh Bachchan at the centre of his directorial perspective.

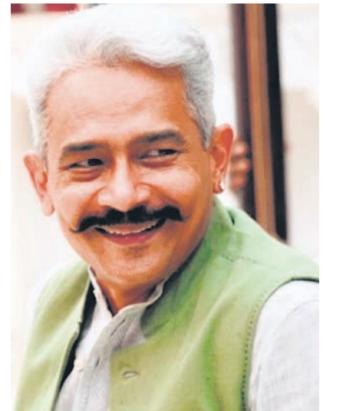
The other highlights of season include 3 lifelines - Audience Poll, Video-a-Friend and 50:50 adding excitement to the gameplay.

'KBC 14' is all set to start from August 7 at 9 pm on Sony Entertainment Television.

ATUL KULKARNI ON NORTH-SOUTH DEBATE "I HAVE NEVER UNDERSTOOD THIS"

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Laal Singh Chaddha, starring Aamir Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan, is one of the most anticipated films of 2022. As the promotions have begun, we have seen Aamir give a screening for everyone, including South celebrities like Chiranjeevi, Naga Chaitanya, and others. Fans of Aamir are eager to watch how the film fared in the midst of the ongoing North vs. South conflict. Now, the film's writer, Atul Kulkarni, has given his thoughts on the North vs. South argument and even disclosed whether he suffers pre-release anxiety. In an interview with a leading news portal, Atul, who wrote and translated Forrest Gump into the Aamir and Kareena starring Laal Singh Chaddha, revealed that he 'doesn't think' about the North-South divide and other related issues. He went on to say that Pan-India films have been created for a long time and that people have been viewing them. He did, however, acknowledge that the audience does not always remain the same and that it evolves. Atul, a writer for Laal Singh Chaddha, stated, "I don't really think about all these things. I believe people watch what they like. We take pride in producing the highest number of films as a nation in the world, and we take pride as a nation having such a rich history of filmmaking. Suddenly we love to make discrimination [over language]. I have never understood this." He also stated that it is the obligation of filmmakers to present tales in a beautiful manner while not thinking about other things. Aamir recently attended a press conference with Naga Chaitanya and Chiranjeevi to start off the film's promotion. He and the South's biggest actors gathered together to face media questions about the film. Aamir also shared a behind-the-scenes video from Laal Singh Chaddha featuring Chaitanya's character Balaraju. In the video, Chaitanya discussed his experience working with Aamir and stated how heartbroken he was when the film came to an end for him.



Tiger Shroff roots for Disha Patani's film amid constant break-up rumours

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ek Villain Returns, the sequel of the super-hit thriller drama Ek Villain, released on 29th July 2022. Directed by Mohit Suri, the sequel stars Arjun Kapoor, Tara Sutaria, John Abraham, and Disha Patani in pivotal roles. Within just a day of release, the film received mixed reviews and managed to rake in 7.05 crore.

If recent reports are to be believed, Disha Patani and Tiger Shroff have parted ways after dating for 6 years. However, the two are tight-lipped about the same.

Amid breakup rumours, the Heropanti actor took to social media to give a shoutout to Disha Patani's recently released film Ek Villain Returns. Taking to his Instagram Story section, Tiger uploaded a poster of the film and wrote, "What a gripping movie and fantastic performances by the whole cast congrats guys!"

On the work front, Tiger Shroff has films like Ganapath, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan and Screw Dheela in his pipeline. Meanwhile, Disha has Sagar Ambre's directorial action-drama film Yodha, starring Sidharth Malhotra and Raashii Khanna in the lead roles. The actress will also feature in Nag Ashwin's directorial Project K co-starring Prabhas and Deepika Padukone.



Mrunal Thakur got extensive language training for Telugu debut

Hyderabad | Agencies

Actress Mrunal Thakur, who is all set for her Telugu debut, reveals that she underwent two months of intensive Telugu language training in order to perfect her on-screen pronunciation for the role in 'Sita Ramam.' Hanu Raghavapudi, Mrunal's official south Indian debut director, has helmed the film starring Malayalam superstar Dulquer Salmaan. Mrunal had private language instruction from Suvama Majji, who sometimes instructed Mrunal in person at her Mumbai home and other times via phone and video calls. Mrunal underwent training for a month, putting in two hours a day to perfect her Telugu pronunciation and grammar for 'Sita Ramam'. As she elaborates on her role in 'Sita Ramam', Mrunal said: "I have always been attracted by the interior of India. The characters who emerge from these settings are likeable, captivating, complex, and most importantly, very real. I love a challenge, so the fact that people are praising how I shaped up as Sita in the movie (based on their reactions to the trailer and songs) is a tremendous complement for me." "I took it upon myself to make sure that my diction in the movie was spot-on. I usually try to put myself in the shoes of my characters, so I went through diction training once more for Sita Ramam", the 'Super 30' actress explained. Mrunal Thakur will next be featured in 'Gumrah' with Aditya Roy Kapoor and 'Pippa' opposite Ishaan Khattar, in addition to 'Sita Ramam'.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Ananya Panday