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ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY'S NEW FOREST DIVERSION RULES ARE BAD NEWS FOR FOREST RIGHTS

SAVE NATURE, SAVE EARTH

The Union environment ministry has done it again. This time, it has chosen to uproot whatever is left of compliance with the Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) in forest diversion under the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. The ministry notified new rules - the '2022 Forest Conservation Rules' - under the Forest Conservation Act on June 28. It thus repealed and replaced the earlier 2003 Forest Conservation Rules and its amendments in 2004, 2014 and 2017.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The 2022 Forest Conservation Rules are to be placed for approval before the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha for 30 working days in one or more sessions. The question then is if lawmakers will approve this illegal move which seriously endangers forests and all its inhabitants, including forest-dwellers. If they disagree, will they simply clip the venomous parts of the Rules or will they actually modify them to comply fully with the Forest Rights Act? The latter is what they ought to do.The Forest Rights Act - a historic enactment and a flagship law of the Indian Parliament - was promulgated to undo the historic injustice heaped on the country's forest-dwellers, especially the tribal peoples, for more than a century since 1878. It recognised and vested all forest rights (whether listed in the law or not), except hunting, in forest-dwellers on all forest lands, including "unclassified forests, un-demarcated forests, existing or deemed forests, protected forests, reserved forests, sanctuaries and national parks".

The final chop

In the new 2022 Forest Conservation Rules, rule 6(b)(ii) states unequivocally that compliance with the Forest Rights Act is not at all required for the final approval for forest diversion, given by the environment ministry. This approval is sealed when the land for tree-lots (under compensatory afforestation) is handed over along with the NPV money.However, the Rules also state in passing that state governments should check for Forest Rights Act compliance before they notify the user agency for physically taking over the forest land - yet this is land that the environment ministry has already handed over. So much for the farce.The Forest Rights Act 2006 overrides the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, and Rules can't override or abrogate a law. For these reasons, rule 6(b)(ii) falls afoul of the law and needs to be removed. Will the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha oblige?

Decoding the new rules

The Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 creates an institutional mechanism. It prescribes procedures for the orderly approval and handing over of forest land to user agencies for diversion, de-reservation and lease for non-forestry purposes.These possibilities result in deforestation - from "clear felling" to selective felling as required by the user agency. The Act also introduces a new land-use category that adversely affects all existing residents of a forest, whether wildlife or people, most often in the form of their complete exclusion.The new 2022 Forest Conservation Rules affirm that "clear felling" is indeed "removal of all natural vegetation" from land of size 1 ha and above, by felling, burning or uprooting. It excludes selection, or coppice, felling.The new Rules have come a long way from their predecessor - the 2003 Rules - and their amendments. Earlier, either the environment ministry's regional office or the state would process all proposals to use forest land, depending on the extent of forest area to be diverted.In the new Rules, tree plantation - dressed up with the label "surrogate forests" - now parades prominently under the fancy section of 'compensatory afforestation'. Both the law and the courts have deemed that these tree lots more than sufficiently justify the takeover of forest-land - land that is invariably a part of the homes of forest-dwellers - for its wholesome destruction.The blood money to do this cover-up has been named "net present value" (NPV). It used to be Rs 4 lakh to Rs 10.43 lakh per hectare since 2009. It was hiked marginally in January 2022 to Rs.10.69 to 15.95 lakhs per hectare. Though the Supreme Court passed an order in 2008 to revise these figures every three years, the NPV stayed where it was for 13 years between 2009 and 2022. This was despite the numerous proddings for a manifold increase in the value by officials and committees. Even the most recent revision, in January, was the result of some prodding by the expert committee set up by the Supreme Court. And even this was marginal, relatively speaking.This is important because the improved efficiency in processing and fast-tracking together with a virtually frozen NPV rate will greatly contribute to the 'ease of doing business' - the new signature tune for India's progress.Once a proposal becomes eligible, the in-principle approval - a.k.a. stage I approval - is granted, with certain conditions. On fulfilling these conditions, and when the land for the tree lots and the NPV money for them are handed over, the state receives the final, or stage II, approval.The state government then hands over the corresponding land to the user agency. Between 2008, when the FRA Rules were notified, and 2019, 253,179 ha of land was diverted for non-forestry purposes; another 47,500 ha or so of degraded forest lands were diverted for afforestation.

MVA ALLIES SHOULD CONTEST 2024 ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS TOGETHER: SHARAD PAWAR

Aurangabad | Agencies

Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar on Sunday said he feels the three Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) allies - Shiv Sena, NCP, and Congress - should fight the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections together, but a decision on it will be taken only after the issue is discussed with the leaders of his party as well as the alliance partners.

On the decision to rename Aurangabad and Osmanabad districts taken in the last cabinet meeting of the Uddhav Thackeray-led government, Pawar said the issue was not part of the MVA's common minimum programme, and he came to know about the decision only after it was taken.

Pawar, who is on a two-day tour of Aurangabad, was speaking to reporters here.

Responding to a query about whether the MVA parties should fight the next assembly elections in the state together, he said, "It is my personal wish that the MVA constituents should contest the future polls together...But this is my personal opinion. I will first have a discuss the issue with my party leaders and talks can then be held with the alliance partners." The MVA government led by Uddhav Thackeray collapsed on June 29, days after his party Shiv Sena faced a rebellion launched by senior leader Eknath Shinde. On June 30, Shinde took oath as the chief minister, while BJP's Devendra Fadnavis was sworn in as his deputy. Shinde enjoys the support of 40 rebel Sena MLAs.

Taking a dig at the rebel Sena MLAs over the reasons cited by them for their revolt, Mr Pawar said, "The dissident legislators don't give any fixed reason. Sometimes they talk about Hindutva, sometimes about funds." Following their revolt, the rebel MLAs have been saying that they went against the Sena leadership as the party was going away from the cause of Hindutva. Some of them also talked about not getting funds for their constituencies.

India logs 18,257 new COVID-19 cases, 42 deaths in 24 hours

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With 18,257 new coronavirus infections being reported in a day, India's tally of COVID-19 cases rose to 4,36,22,651, while the active cases increased to 1,28,690 according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Sunday.

The toll climbed to 5,25,428 with 42 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprise 0.30 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.50 per cent, the ministry said. An increase of 3,662 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.The daily positivity rate was recorded at 4.22 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 4.08 per cent, according to the ministry The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,29,68,533, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.20 per cent. According to the ministry, 198.76 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive.

Army man covers 650 km in 36 hrs to set solo cycling

Bengaluru | Agencies

An armyman has staked claim for a place in the India Book of Records for the Fastest Cycling Solo (Men) category by covering a distance of 650 km in 36 hours.

Rahul Kumar, Craftsman from 515 Army Base Workshop, achieved the record after cycling from Bengaluru to Kanyakumari in a single stretch between July 8-9, a Defence official said on Sunday.The feat, undertaken as part of the 'Fit India', was flagged off by Brig. V.M. Panicker VSM, Stn Cdr,, Bangalore, in the presence of Brig. Alok Jain, SM, Comdt and MD, 515 Army Base Workshop.

Setting off from Bengaluru at 6 a.m. on July 8, Cfn Rahul Kumar completed the cycling feat at 6 p.m. on July 9 in Kanyakumari. The route covered three passes, Hosur, Salem, and Madurai. "Although the temperature was normal, it was raining throughout the journey, and heavy winds proved problematic. But the team supported me very well," Kumar said. India Book of Records monitored the feat online.

7TH ACCUSED OF UDAIPUR TAILOR'S MURDER ARRESTED

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a seventh person in connection with the brutal killing of tailor Kanhaiya Lal in Rajasthan's Udaipur last month, a spokesperson said on Sunday. The spokesperson said Farhad Mohammad Sheikh, alias Babla, was arrested on Saturday evening.He was a "close criminal associate" of Riaz Akhtari, one of the two main accused, and took an active part in the conspiracy to kill the tailor, the spokesperson said.Kanhaiya Lal was killed with a cleaver inside his tailoring shop on June 28.The gruesome attack by Riaz Akhtari, who is also referred to as Riyaz Attari, on the tailor was recorded on a phone by Ghouse Mohammad, and the video was posted online.

They said in a video later that they hacked Lal to death to avenge an alleged insult to Islam. The duo were arrested within hours of the killing.

GOA CONGRESS SACKS ITS LEADER IN ASSEMBLY FOR PLANNING DEFECTIONS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After an entire day of refuting reports of some of its MLAs crossing over to the ruling BJP in Goa, Congress has sacked Michael Lobo as the Leader of Opposition. The grand old party in a press conference said that a "conspiracy" was hatched by some of its leaders along with the BJP to weaken it and engineer defections.

"A conspiracy was hatched by some of our own leaders with the BJP to see that the Congress party in Goa is weakened and to engineer defections. This conspiracy was led by 2 of our own leaders LoP Michael Lobo and Digambar Kamat," Congress Goa in-charge Dinesh Gundu Rao said. "Both these people had been working in total coordination with BJP. One person - Digambar Kamat - did it to safeguard his own skin because so many cases are against him and the other person - Michael Lobo - for the sake of power and position. BJP wants to finish the Opposition," he added. Sources say five Congress MLAs -- Michael Lobo, Delilah Lobo, Digambar Kamat, Kedar Naik, and Rajesh Faldessai -- are reportedly at the Chief Minister's house.

'PROJECT VOICE' TO IMPROVE SPEAKING ABILITY OF STUDENTS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Directorate of Education is going to take a new initiative for the schools of Delhi. The objective of this initiative is to develop the speaking ability of the students. Giving information in this regard, Directorate of Education (DOE), Delhi said that from this month, project 'Voice' is being started in all government schools of Delhi. Project 'Voice' will provide a secure and friendly platform to the students. So that students can practice sharing their ideas without any hesitation. Under this programme, activities like debate, extremism will be included. Students will be divided into three grade groups - 3 to 5, 6 to 8, and 9 to 12. There will be three phases of competitions for activities in the project. The competitions will be held in both English and Hindi. Phase 1 will have intra-school competitions and Phase 2 will have regional competitions, In which every activity and age group from the school will be the first rank holder. In Phase 3, there will be a state level competition with the first rank holders of each region. At the same time, another project 'Mission Buniyaad' has played a very important role in reducing the learning gap in children in the last 2 years during Corona. This time Mission Buniyaad was implemented in a very good manner in Delhi government schools as well as in MCD schools, which has shown great results. Instructions have been given to conduct the classes of 'Mission Buniyaad' in the schools of Directorate of Education and MCD for two more months. In Delhi, most of the children at the primary level are in MCD schools. In the last two years of Corona, there was a huge gap in the learning of children here. Bridging this gap was a challenge.As per the current data, 88 per cent children of classes 3 to 5 in Directorate of Education schools and 78 per cent children in MCD schools, who recognize at least a word, will be able to read their book after 2 months of effort. On the other hand, 90 percent of children of classes 6 to 9 who can read at least a short paragraph now, will be able to read their books from Voice in the next two months. In this regard, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish Sisodia has also held a meeting with MCD Commissioner Gyanesh Bharti, Education Secretary Ashok Kumar and Education Director Himanshu Gupta and other high officials of the Education Department.

Army Gets Approvals To Induct Mandarin-Trained Personnel

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian Army has recently obtained requisite approvals to induct Mandarin-trained personnel in the Territorial Army for which notification for inviting applications for Mandarin experts into the Territorial Army has been issued on Sunday.

With recalibration of the Indian Army's strategic outlook toward Northern borders, the Indian Army has upscaled its Chinese language training and has synergistically enmeshed appropriate scaling of Chinese linguists within its overall strategy. A slew of measures has been undertaken to improve its in-house Mandarin expertise. The aim is to empower junior and senior military commanders to engage with PLA personnel as and when the situation arises. With improved Mandarin skills, Indian Army personnel will be better empowered to convey their points in a much more cogent manner.

Chinese language experts are a functional requirement at tactical level and are required for providing analysis at the operational and strategic level while catering for futuristic needs and maintaining adequate redundancy at all levels.

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMHANSA WAS ONE SUCH SAINT WHO HAD A CLEAR VISION OF MAA KALI: MODI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid ongoing political storm over a controversial remark against Goddess Kali, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, was one such saint who had a clear vision of Maa Kali.

The Prime Minister was virtually addressing the birth centenary celebration of Swami Atmasthananda.

The Prime Minister said, "Swami Ramakrishna Paramhansa, was one such saint who had a clear vision of Maa Kali, who had surrendered his whole being at the feet of Maa Kali. This whole world, this variable and constant, everything is pervaded by the consciousness of the mother. This consciousness is seen in the Kali Puja of Bengal."

The Prime Minister underlined that a "beam of this consciousness and power was illuminated by Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa in the form of Yugpurush like Swami Vivekananda and the spiritual vision that Swami Vivekananda felt about Maa Kali, had infused extraordinary energy and power within him".

"A mighty personality like Swami Vivekananda would get excited like a small child in devotion, in the memory of Jaganmata Kali," Prime Minister Modi said.

The Prime Minister remarked that he could see the same sincerity of devotion, and the same power of Shakti Sadhana within Swami Atmasthanandaji.

The Prime Minister paid his tributes to Swami Atmasthananda by reminiscing the time he spent with him. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said, "This event is filled with many feelings and memories. I have always been blessed by him, there was an opportunity to be with him. It is my good fortune that I kept in touch with him till the last moment."

Prime Minister Modi noted that be it Adi Shankaracharya hundreds of years ago or Swami Vivekananda in modern times, the saint tradition of India has always been proclaiming 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' and the establishment of Ramakrishna Mission is also associated with the idea of 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat'.

While highlighting the contributions of Swami Vivekananda, the Prime Minister said that he lived this resolution in the form of a mission and his influence was seen in all parts of the country and his travels made the country realise its ancient national consciousness in the era of slavery, and also infused new confidence in it. "This tradition of Ramakrishna Mission was carried forward by Swami Atmasthananand ji throughout his life," he noted.

While remembering the time he spent with Swami Atmasthananda, Prime Minister Modi said that he was fortunate to talk to him in Gujarati. The Prime Minister also remarked on the time during the Kutch earthquake when relief work was carried out under the guidance of Swami Atmasthananda.

While taking the example of Digital India, Prime Minister Modi stated that India has emerged as a world leader in the field of digital payments.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the achievements of giving 200 crore vaccine doses to the people of India. "These examples are a symbol of the fact that when the thoughts are pure, efforts do not take long to complete and obstacles show us the way," he added.

Draupadi Murmu meets BJP MPs, MLAs from Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As part of her election campaign, NDA Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu on Sunday met BJP MPs and MLAs from the national capital.

Except Lok Sabha member from North West Delhi, Hansraj Hans all the other six BJP MPs had attended the interaction with NDA Presidential candidate Murmu.

Among eight BJP MLAs, O.P. Sharma was not present due to health issues.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta and state general secretary (organisation) Siddharthan were also present during the interaction.

Lok Sabha Members Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma, Ramesh Bidhuri, Gautam Gambhir, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Meenakshi Lekhi and Manoj Tiwari were present during interaction with Murmu.MLAs Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Vijender Gupta, Ajay Mahawar, Anil Bajpai, Abhay Verma, Mohan Singh Bisht and Jitender Mahajan were also present.One of the BJP lawmakers present during the interaction said that NDA Presidential candidate Murmu urged the MPs and MLAs to support her. "She sought our support in Presidential election and talked about her journey and struggle of life," he said.

Vijender Gupta tweeted: "Welcomed Presidential candidate Smt. Draupadi Murmu ji to Delhi. PM @narendramodi's commitment to social justice & women empowerment are reflected in Murmu ji's nomination. Nation would feel proud to see a strong woman leader from tribal community being elected as the President."

Gujarat farmer commits suicide after being harassed by builders

MEHSANA | Agencies

A farmer committed suicide after being harassed by some builders, who not only duped his Rs 5 lakh but also blocked the road to his farm, in Kheralu Taluka of the Mehsana district in North Gujarat.

Jasubhai Chaudhary, deceased farmer Kiran's elder brother, in his complaint with the Kheralu Police stated, "My younger brother committed suicide on Saturday because builders Keval Chaudhary and four others cheated him and blocked road to his farm, though he took up the matter with builders several times, they did not give passage for farm and so he committed suicide."

In the FIR, Jasubhai said his brother used to cultivate in the ancestral agriculture land in the Kheralu, where he had constructed a house and was living with his family. On road touching the farm, Vinubhai Chaudhary and Keval Chaudhary have developed a commercial complex, which blocked the road leading to Kiran's farm. So Kiran requested them to give way for his farm, to which they initially refused.

Later the builders agreed to give passage but on a condition that Kiran will have to buy one shop in the complex, to which he agreed and also made a down payment of Rs 5 lakh. However, even after the partial payment, the builders did not give passage to his farm and neither allotted a shop in the commercial complex. Left with no option after being harassed by the bilders, he committed suicide by hanging himself.

Kheralu Police Inspector, A T Patel said that the builders have been booked under abatement to suicide. "Police will carry out an investigation and the builders and their associates will be arrested soon," he added.

TWO WIVES KILL HUSBAND AFTER 3 YEARS OF CONSPIRACY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A 45-year-old man was murdered by his two wives in Delhi. Both the wives conspired jointly for three years and killed their husband with the help of sharpshooter. An official gave this information on Sunday. The police have so far arrested three accused - 42-year-old Geeta (ex-wife of deceased husband Sanjeev Kumar), Geeta Devi (28) alias Najma (current wife) and Komal (21), daughter of the ex-wife.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-East) Isha Pandey said that on July 6, information was received from Majidiya Hospital that a person named Sanjeev Kumar had been brought dead from the accident spot, following which the police immediately reached the spot. In the hospital, the police found that the deceased was brought there by his wife Geeta Devi alias Najma.

Geeta Devi told the police that she, along with her husband and son, was on their way back home from the vegetable market on a motorcycle. During that time her husband met with an accident. She hid the fact that her husband had been shot, the

officer said.

The DCP said Geeta Devi alias Najma was trying to divert the investigation in the wrong direction. She said that her deceased husband was threatened by the DTC employees of Kalkaji depot. When questioned by the police, his claims turned out to be fake.During continuous interrogation, Geeta Devi alias Najma revealed that her husband has been married twice and his ex-wife's name is also Geeta and she is living separately with her son and 2 daughters in Dakshinpuri, Delhi.It is learned that both Geeta Devi aka Najma and Geeta were in touch with each other for the past several years. When the ex-wife came to know about the cruel behavior of the deceased Sanjeev towards his new wife, Geeta gave a new mobile phone to Geeta Devi alias Najma. Her husband was not aware of this mobile phone.

Ex-wife Geeta was aware of the suffering of Geeta Devi aka Najma along with her husband. Hence, both the wives of Sanjeev along with Geeta's daughter Komal hatched a criminal conspiracy to kill Sanjeev about 2-3 years ago and divide their property among themselves, the official said.Geeta Devi alias Najma approaches her cousin Iqbal and asks him to arrange a sharp shooter to kill her husband. After this Iqbal brought a sharp shooter and the deal was settled for Rs 15 lakh.The police got the clue when it came to know that Geeta Devi alias Najma had removed the picture of the number plate of Sanjeev's motorcycle, which added to the police's suspicion. It was later revealed that he had shared that picture with the sharp shooter and then deleted it. The sharp shooter shot and killed Sanjeev near Deepalaya School in the transit camp, the official said.

The Economist shows distorted map of India in latest issue

The Economist has published a distorted map of India in its latest issue with part of Kashmir being blacked out as part of an article on BJP winning control of the richest state of Maharashtra.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Last year in June, Twitter showed a distorted map of India, with Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as separate countries which was later removed after a backlash.

As per The Economist, Eknath Shinde, who represents a part of Thane in the state Assembly and had himself once driven an auto rickshaw for a living, was sworn in as Chief Minister of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital.

Shinde's ascent capped 10 days of political turmoil in India's richest and second-most populous state. A longtime member of the Shiv Sena, for decades Maharashtra's dominant political force, Shinde broke away along with some 40-odd legislators and tied up with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which runs the national government.

"It is a blockbuster surprise," says Sanjay Jha, a former spokesman for the Congress party, which until last week helped run the state in a grand coalition with the Shiv Sena and a third party.

Nobody expected the Sena, as it is often known, to crack up, The Economist reported.

Indigo Airlines technicians go on leave after pilots

CHENNA | Agencies

After pilots and cabin crew, aircraft maintenance technicians of IndiGo Airlines took mass leave after being dissatisfied with their pay hikes. According to reports, the Delhi and Hyderabad-based aircraft maintenance technicians of Indigo Airlines have taken leave on the night of July 8.

An Indigo Airlines spokesperson could not be reached for comment.According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Indigo Airlines' on-time performance on July 9 stood at 75.2 per cent.Some pilots took leave in April and cabin crew earlier this month, affecting operations.

Union Minister Kapil Moriswa Patil was stranded on Saturday

evening as an Indigo Airlines flight from Madurai to Chennai got delayed. He was later taken to Mumbai by Indigo Airlines flight.

Mortal remains of Mulayam's wife consigned to flames

Lucknow | Agencies

The mortal remains of Sadhana Gupta, wife of Samajwadi patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav, were consigned to flames here at Pipra Ghat on Sunday.

Sadhana Gupta, 62, died in a Gurugram hospital on Saturday after a prolonged illness. Her body was flown to Lucknow later in the evening.

Mulayam Singh Yadav, Akhilesh Yadav, Shivpal Yadav, Prof Ram Gopal Yadav, Dharmendra Yadav and other family members were present.The pyre was lit by Prateek Yadav, Sadhana's only son.Earlier, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the residence of Mulayam Singh Yadav to offer condolences.Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak and former deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma also visited his residence.A large number of Samajwadi leaders and workers had gathered at Mulayam's residence since morning to pay their tributes to the departed soul.

Weather of Uttarakhand becomes disaster, 6500 passengers stranded in Badrinath and Sonprayag

Dehradun | Agencies

Rain continues in many districts of Uttarakhand. Bad weather is also disrupting the Chardham Yatra. Badrinath Highway remained closed on Sunday morning due to heavy rains. Due to which about 4000 passengers have been stopped at Joshimath, Govindghat, Pandukeshwar and 2500 passengers at Badrinath.

The same, 100 passengers left for Kedarnath from Sonprayag till 8 am, but they were stopped due to rain. At the same time, due to heavy rains in Joshimath on Friday night, pedestrian paths have been damaged at many places. On Saturday, no tourist was allowed to enter the valley by the Nanda Devi National Park administration.

Meteorological Center Dehradun issued a yellow alert of rain in five districts of the state. According to the Meteorological Center, there is a possibility of rain with heavy showers at isolated places in the mountainous areas of the state on Sunday. Similarly, light to moderate rain and thundershowers may occur

at many places from plains to hilly districts.

Due to heavy rains on Friday night, the foot track Dwaripera and Glacier Point have been damaged. Forest Officer Chetna Kandpal said that the road leading to the valley has been broken due to heavy rains. Tourists are currently not being allowed to enter the valley. Improvement work will be done on the road after the weather becomes normal. Only then the movement of tourists will be smooth.

The water level of many rivers has increased due to the two days of rain in the state. 225 roads including three national highways were closed due to debris and boulders falling from the hills. Out of these, only 46 roads have been opened. The work of opening the roads is also going on very slow due to the rain.

People have been advised by the State Emergency Operation Center to stay away from the river banks. At the same time, the maximum water level of Tehri Dam lake is at 760.20 meters as against 830 meters. 6.020 cusecs of water has been released from the dam lake.

Bad weather suspends Amarnath yatra

Jammu: The Amarnath Yatra has been suspended from Jammu due to inclement weather conditions and no fresh batch was allowed to proceed from Jammu to the base camps of the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said. "Amarnath Yatra has been suspended from Jammu to twin base camps in Kashmir due to inclement weather. No fresh batch was allowed to move towards Amarnath" .

The annual 43-day pilgrimage commenced from the twin base camps -- Nunwan-Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and Baltal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal -- on June 30. Over one lakh pilgrims have offered prayers at the cave shrine, housing the naturally formed ice 'Shivling', the officials said. A total of 69,535 pilgrims have left in 10 batches from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the Valley since June 29, the day the first batch of pilgrims was flagged off by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.The yatra is scheduled to end on August 11 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

नाम परिवर्तन

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि पूर्व में मेरा नाम **TAHIR ALI** था। जो कि परिवर्तित होकर **TAHER KHATOLIWALA** हो गया है। अतः अब मुझे मेरे नए नाम **TAHER KHATOLIWALA S/o AKBAR ALI** से जाना व पहचाना जाए। पता : फ्लैट नं. 402– B, 31/M, खातीवाला टैंक, इंदौर, (म.प्र.) 452015

"REWARDING DEFECTION": DEPUTY SPEAKER TO SUPREME COURT ON EKNATH SHINDE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

There is "no better way to reward defection than offering its leader the post of Chief Minister," Maharashtra Deputy Speaker Narhari Zirwal has told the Supreme Court ahead of today's big hearing over the political crisis in the state. The rebel MLAs should be disqualified and should be suspended until disqualification proceedings are complete, Zirwal wrote.

On June 27, the Supreme Court had issued notice to the Deputy Speaker seeking his reply on the plea filed by Eknath Shinde camp against his disqualification notices. The court will hear a clutch of petitions from both sides tomorrow.

"The MLAs have engaged in anti-party activities and deserve to be disqualified as Members of the Maharashtra Assembly," Zirwal wrote today in response to Eknath Shinde's appeal.

The rebels have committed the "constitutional sin of defection". Eknath Shinde -- who is now the Chief Minister -- was "hand-in-glove with the BJP all along," read Zirwal's response to the court.

The MLAs of Maharashtra were passing 'resolutions' sitting in Assam, which had the effect of destabilising their own government. Their conduct is "egregious and palpable" and their membership in the party should be terminated, the Deputy Speaker added.

Zirwal has also asked the top court that the rebels be stopped from entering the assembly or participating in any House proceedings until disqualification proceedings are complete. The rebels

last attended the two-day special session of the assembly where they voted in favour of the government led by Eknath Shinde.

Zirwal had issued notices to 16 rebels last month wgo followed Ekath Shinde to Surat, then Guwahati and later Goa. Shinde's name is on the list too. The notices were sent following a request for disqualification from the faction led by former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray before he stepped down from the top post. But the rebels had challenged it in court, claiming they had two-thirds majority therefore they are the real Shiv Sena and have the power to ally with the BJP.

Team Thackeray contended their stance is illegal and under the anti-defection law, they can be disqualified as they have not merged with the BJP.

The Tenth Schedule of the Constitution disqualifies defectors from the membership of legislative bodies, but some exemptions have been granted in its Paragraph 4, which reads: "Disqualification on ground of defection not to apply in case of merger. (1) A member of a House shall not be disqualified... where his original political party merges with another political party and he claims that he and any other members of his original political party: (a) have become members of such other political party or, as the case may be, of a new political party formed by such merger; or (b) have not accepted the merger and opted to function as a separate group....

"(2)... The merger of the original political party of a member of a House shall be deemed to have taken place if, and only if, not less than two-thirds of the members of the legislature party concerned have agreed to such merger."

The sub-section (2) has often been interpreted as - in case two-thirds among a party's lawmakers defect and join another party, they would escape disqualification. This has been upheld by the High Court in Goa.Critics say the whole of paragraph 4 has been badly drafted and leaves loopholes for horse-trading -- which is just what the law intended to stop.Despite the rebellion carried out by the Eknath Shinde faction, the original Shiv Sena remains under the leadership of Uddhav Thackeray, Zirwal wrote.

76 people died in Maharashtra so far this monsoon

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rain-related incidents have claimed the lives of 76 people in Maharashtra during the ongoing monsoon season so far, a report by the state disaster management authorities said on Sunday.

Of the total number of deceased, nine persons died on Saturday -- four in Wardha district, three in Gadchiroli and one each in Nanded and the coastal Sindhudurg district, it said.

As many as 125 animals have perished since June 1 with rains lashing parts of the state. The India meteorological department has forecast heavy rainfall in the coastal Konkan region of the state till July 13. Rainfall of 64 mm to 200 mm is expected in the region, the report said.

In view of the Met department's prediction, teams of the National Disaster Response Force have been stationed in the costal districts, including state capital Mumbai, it added.

In landslide and flood-prone areas of Raigad and Ratnagiri districts, people from vulnerable areas have been shifted to safer locations, the report said.

Last year, Chiplun town in Ratnagiri and Mahad in Raigad were among the places worst-hit by extremely heavy rains.

Between July 23 and 25 last year, more than 110 people had died in Raigad, Ratnagiri, Satara and Kolhapur districts of Maharashtra in rain-related incidents.

Anger against us should not be taken out on the city: Aaditya Thackeray

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena leader Aaditya Thackeray on Sunday said he has requested the Maharashtra government to construct a veterinary hospital at the construction site of the Aarey metro car shed.

"Whatever anger they (Maharashtra government) have against us should not be taken out on the city. Jungles and the environment need to be protected, climate change is upon us," the leader said.

He further said, "We had proposed construction to be turned into a veterinary hospital for jungle".

Earlier, Aaditya Thackeray on Sunday urged the new Eknath Shinde government to scrap the Aarey metro project.Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation announced its plan to cut down over 2,700 trees from the Aarey colony to build a car shed for the

Metro. The colony, spread over 13,000 hectares, is home to over 27 Adivasi villages and has various animal species.The Bombay High Court in September 2019, verbally directed the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL) and the state government not to cut any trees in the Aarey forest area for the construction of a metro car shed, to which they agreed. Later in October 2019, the High Court dismissed all petitions against the proposed cutting down of over 2,500 trees in Aarey Colony of Mumbai to make way for a Metro car shed.

However, the Maharashtra government had stayed the order for the Aarey metro car shed project following massive public agitation in the city.In 2020, the then Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced that the state government had withdrawn cases registered against people who were protesting against the proposed metro car shed in Aarey.

YOUTH KILLED MOTHER, ATTEMPTED SUICIDE, SAVED BY COP

Mumbai: Depressed over a property issue, a 21-year-old man allegedly killed his 46-year-old mother by slitting her throat with a sharp weapon at their flat in suburban Mulund on Saturday, police said.

The accused, Jayesh Panchal, later tried to kill himself by jumping in front of a local train at Mulund railway station but was saved by an alert Government Railway Police (GRP) official.The incident came to light when neighbours of the Panchals in a housing society in Vardhaman Nagar saw blood stains outside their flat and alerted the police.When police personnel entered the flat, they found a woman, later identified as Chhaya Panchal, lying in a pool of blood, a police official said.

Police also found a note written in Gujarati language and a knife.

"Police then called up the husband of the deceased woman. He translated the note and said his son had committed the crime as he was depressed over some property issue," the official said. The accused was admitted to a hospital and booked under section 302 (Punishment for murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), he added.

Notices to Fifty three Sena MLAs of both factions

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra legislature secretary has issued showcause notices to 53 out of the total 55 Shiv Sena MLAs in the state - 39 of the faction led by Eknath Shinde and 14 of the Uddhav Thackeray group.

One of the 14 MLAs from the Thackeray side, Santosh Bangar, joined the Shinde camp on the day of the floor test of the latter's government on July 4. MLAs from both the sides confirmed having received the showcase notice. Both the sides have accused each other of defying the party whip during the Speaker's election and the trust vote on July 3 and 4, respectively, seeking disqualification of the legislators from both the sides.

The Shinde faction has not included the name of Aaditya

Thackeray, son of former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, in the list of MLAs against whom they have sought disqualification. The notices have been issued under the Members of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly (disqualification on grounds of defection) rules. The legislators have been asked to explain their stand within seven days, sources said. The Shiv Sena has 55 MLAs in the 288-member Assembly, whose current strength is 287 due to the death of a Sena legislator. In the trust vote, 164 MLAs voted for the motion of confidence, while 99 voted against it.After winning the trust vote in the state Assembly on July 4, the Eknath Shinde faction of the Shiv Sena had issued a notice to 14 legislators from the Uddhav Thackeray camp for violating a whip issued by the Sena whip and Shinde loyalist Bharat Gogawale. A day before the floor test, Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar had recognised Gogawale as the Shiv Sena's chief whip, removing Sunil Prabhu, who belongs to the Thackeray faction. On July 3, Rahul Narvekar of the BJP was elected Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly. He had polled 164 votes, and he defeated Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena candidate Rajan Salvi, who got 107 votes.

Sex racket busted at Lower Parel; 5 held

The NM Joshi Police have arrested five persons and rescued six women, all Thailand nationals, from a spa located at a popular, high-end mall in Lower Parel. The police raided the spa, after receiving a tip off about a prostitution racket taking place on the premises.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On July 8, Assistant Commissioner of Police Shriniwas Panhale received a tip off about a sex racket at Thai Spa. A team under Inspector MD Dorkar was formed to raid the premises. "On reaching the spa, the police rushed into cabin number 4, where they found a women and man without clothes on," said an officer from NM Joshi Police station. "Four more rooms were raided in which girls and customers were found in compromising positions," the official added.

The police arrested Milan Jain, 35, Sunil Morkar, 52, Sadansingh Anand, 49, and Navin Bhasin, 49, and a female manager Alwyn Rodriquez. All were booked under IPC Sections 370 (1), 370 (3), 294, 114, 34 and relevant sections of the Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act 1956. The accused were produced before a holiday court, which sent them to police custody. The women were sent to a rehabilitation home.

COPS BRAVE STRONG CURRENTS TO RESCUE MAN IN PUNE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A video of two police officials braving strong currents to rescue a man in Maharashtra has gone viral on social media.

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Member of Parliament Supriya Sule shared the clip on Twitter on Saturday.

The video shows two police officials, Constables Saddam Shaikh and Ajit Pokare, from Dattawadi in Pune, jumping into a stream near Bagul Udyan in Shivane village to rescue a man being swept away by strong currents.

"Dattawadi,Pune Police Constable Saddam Shaikh and Ajit Pokare rescued a man who was being swept away in a stream near Bagul Udyan in Shivane.Risking their own lives,the

courage shown by the two is commendable!We are proud of the Maharashtra Police!" Sule wrote on Twitter.

The courage of the two officials was lauded by thousands on social media.

Maharashtra has been in the grips of an intense monsoon, with floods being reported in several districts of the state.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has put all the districts on high alert and is monitoring the situation. The chief minister directed the officials to make all arrangements, including the shifting of people living in vulnerable areas.

Taking precaution, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has deployed 17 teams in areas of Maharashtra that have reported heavy to very heavy rainfall.

The long hand of ED and the rise of Maha's ED

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

At the special session of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly on July 3-4, during the voting the Opposition benches of the Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress reverberated with catcalls of 'ED', 'ED' to at least one MLA in the House.

The jeering and taunts were directed at the Shiv Sena MLAs group which had revolted on June 20, leading to the collapse of the 3-party 31-month-old MVA alliance -- headed by ex-Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray -- on June 29.

Ten days later on June 30, a new Bharatiya Janata Party-supported government headed by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was sworn-in, making it one of the swiftest state political coups in recent decades, and the first of its kind in Maharashtra.

Sensing the sour mood' of the Opposition, the Deputy CM later concurred' with them, in a lighter vein stating that now, indeed - an E'-D' government - comprising E'knath Shinde and D'evendra Fadnavis was in power here.

A harbinger of things to come in the future?, as many legislators on both sides were left wondering with central investigation agencies like the Income Tax Department, Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Investigation, Narcotics Control Bureau, et al -- once invisible lurking ghosts, but now common household names and the butt of many a joke and memes.

Back in September 2019, the ED had dropped its own IED

by issuing a statement naming - of all persons, Nationalist Congress Party president Sharad Pawar in an alleged money-laundering scam cooked up in the Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank Ltd.

Unfazed, Pawar took what he termed the ED's love-message' in his stride, and self-summoned' himself, dressing up to report suo-moto at the ED office, and perhaps, give the investigators a sharp love-bite', too!

Aware of a possible law-and-order situation as thousands of NCP workers prepared to join Pawar's ED yatra', the then BJP-led government of CM Fadnavis panicked.

He immediately deputed the then Police Commissioner to meet and cajole the irked Pawar to abandon his plans - and since that masterstroke', the 81-year-old Maratha has not heard from the ED, but recently, the IT department has sent him a notice.

After the BJP-led NDA government took over at the Centre, the non-BJP ruled states, including Maharashtra post-November 2019, are feeling the heat as many of their prominent leaders are being fried on the griddle of one or multiple central agencies.

In fact, Maharashtra had become a favourite hunting ground of the central snoops during the MVA government and the three alliance partners screamed from the rooftops at how the BJP has let loose the ED, IT, CBI, NCB to terrorise and silence them.However, concealing a smile on a straight face, the BJP leaders airily dismissed all allegations and the central agencies remain freely on the prowl.

The past few years have seen over a dozen Sena-NCP-Congress leaders under microscopic scrutiny, playing havoc with the politicians, their political careers and parties, and lately, even an entire state government.

EDITOR'S SPECS

Situation of Sri Lanka

China employed its devious 'Debt Trap Diplomacy' to gain a strategic edge over Sri Lanka, an independent foreign policy think tank said on Saturday after Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe resigned making way for an all-party cabinet to assume control of the country. "In response to Sri Lanka's financial crisis, China employed its devious 'Debt Trap Diplomacy' to gain a strategic edge over the nation and hold its economy hostage. The port cities of Hambantota and Colombo have been leased to China for 100 years. China is now the second largest lender to Sri Lanka, holding more than 10 per cent of Sri Lanka's outstanding foreign debt in 2019," Red Lantern Analytica said in a statement. It added that Sri Lanka has fallen apart as a country because of the economic disaster caused by the poor governance, lack of transparency, the Chinese debt trap, and corruption. Sri Lanka's GDP-to-Debt ratio has been continuously increasing since 2010, when the island nation's financial downward spiral began, the statement said, adding that an increase in the current account deficit and a steep decline in exports precipitated a full-blown economic crisis in 2019. However, when China took advantage of the situation to increase Sri Lanka's debt burden, India gave a helping hand by offering financial packages consisting of a $500 million credit facility for gasoline imports and a $1 billion credit facility for imports of critical products from India, the think tank asserted. Additionally, India has sent $2.4 billion through currency swaps, loan deferrals, and other credit lines. However, it was unable to save Sri Lanka, which was entirely enslaved by Chinese debt and ultimately succumbed to it. China's economic help to Sri Lanka was mostly a plan to get political and security leverage against India, and move forward with its expansionist goals along the Indian Ocean Rim.

RISING HUNGER & THOUGHTLESS GOVERNANCE POLICIES

Lalit Garg

In the latest United Nations Global Food Security Report, the situation of hunger in the world is more dire than before, a stigma on the picture of all development. The increase in the number of hungry people among the emerging economic superpowers, systems and development in the world is a serious question on the development of the world and the structure of a balanced society. Somewhere there is a flaw in the development model of the world or there is a difference between the words and deeds of the present governments. It seems that the tempting nature of development is being considered as success, but keeping its basic aspects at the centre, necessary steps have not been taken or they have not been implemented, only then the ironic conditions of hunger and hungry people are increasing like never before.

What an insensitivity and neglectful mentality it is that no new report on the tragic and horrifying issue of hunger does not come as a surprise, but it certainly shows that there is no balanced approach to the formulation and implementation of policies around the world. This only shows the flaw in the policy and intention of the governance systems.

About two billion and thirty crore people in the world are facing hunger and scarcity. The difficulties, crises and tragic situations that this population is facing in order to collect food for two times, proves the statements of the development of the governments and systems of the world to be meaningless. According to this UN report, the Corona epidemic and the subsequent Russo-Ukraine war have played an important role in worsening hunger. The report, published jointly by several UN agencies, says that the world is moving away from its goal of eliminating hunger, food insecurity, health and malnutrition in all forms by 2030.

In the latest report of the United Nations, even though the causes of starvation, corona epidemic, war, conflict, violence, climate change, natural disaster etc. have been talked about, for this, on big reasons like neo-imperialism, neoliberalism, free economy and market structure. No attention is paid, the growing gap between rich and poor, etc. is not discussed. One of the major discrepancies in the economies of the world has been that on one side it is poor and on the other hand it is super-rich. There is a big gap between these two. If there is not much noise on this growing gap, one reason for this is also that it is assumed that the goal of poverty alleviation will automatically be achieved through the rise of prosperity of the upper classes or through high growth rate. This expectation is completely misleading and does not seem to be fulfilled.

On the contrary, the World Food Program report states that due to high food prices set by the governments, 75 million people in the world have fallen into the grip of starvation which was earlier than it. In this increase in the population going hungry or undernourished, 30 million people belong to India only. Add to this the lack of drinking water, education at least up to secondary level and basic medical facilities, then we can see that India is really a world of the underprivileged even after seven decades of independence. A large section of today's world, riding on development, science and achievements, still lives a suffocating life in poverty, deprivation, hunger, which does not struggle with the circumstances, but makes compromises. Feels insecure all the time. In which lack of self-confidence teaches to live in darkness. For which justice and authority become meaningless. How much the measures adopted in order to cope with the corona epidemic helped in the prevention of the spread of the virus, is yet to be assessed, but as to its practical effect, if people are faced with a crisis of filling their stomachs, then why this condition persists, we need to think again.

The big question is that when the figures of hunger can be exposed with the help of modern technology and science in the world, then why such systems are not developed which can stop hunger. What is needed is that there are a large number of high-level systems, including institutions, experts, techniques, which are deeply monitoring the issue at the international level, so why are concrete policies not prepared for its far-reaching solution! Why is hunger not controlled? On the contrary, this problem has become more and more serious. In fact, if balanced and sensitive systems-policies are made and serious efforts are made to make better use of the resources on the earth, then ways can be found to deal with the situation of food insecurity and starvation. But due to the spending of all the money on war and other meaningless matters and also the destruction of existing resources, starvation is not shown seriously by the world community, then whose interest is behind it? Concerns have been raised about providing nutritionally balanced meals to the deprivation-stricken population, but the reality is that many people are not getting even the minimum amount of food they need to survive.

Our world is full of contradictions and ironies. Hunger on the one hand, and the abundance of expensive feasts and luxuries of the rich class, abundance of junk in big feasts is a stigma on humanity. In this way, food wastage should be curbed, advertisement companies should also be given guidelines, food should not be wasted in hotels and educational institutions, offices, canteens, meetings, weddings and other functions and other institutions. We can use this food to get rid of poverty, hunger and malnutrition in our society. Such an environment should be created not only by relying on governments, but through public awareness. Finally, we must ask ourselves whether we want or want to change a disturbed, unstable, violent and unhealthy society. Do we want to be citizens of a world of hunger and hungry people or citizens of a world of happy and resourceful citizens?

Is this problem stable over a long period of time because the victims of starvation belong to the very poor and vulnerable communities, which governments do not consider it necessary to care?

Why is it that between the inventions of science and the new dimensions of its progress, there is talk of settling the world of space and life on new planets and on the other hand arrangements are not being made to feed the population present on the earth itself! The reason for this is irregularities, corruption and neglect in these poverty alleviation policies, hunger eradication programmes, services and schemes which deal with the weaker sections of the society. A big demand is to curb this corruption. Secondly, at the policy level also, the world's rulers will have to think afresh. Hunger and poverty alleviation programs should not be carried out like distribution of philanthropy, but should be directed in such a way that people living below the poverty line can come above it permanently. This can happen only when these plans are combined with such economic and development plans which emphasize on involving more and more people in the development process.

international

LANKA PROTESTERS EAT LUNCH; HIT GYM AT PRESIDENT'S HOME

Colombo | Agencies

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's palace has become a new tourist spot in Colombo after angry protesters took over the residence yesterday. On Saturday, videos emerged of the protesters taking a dip in the swimming pool, dining in the kitchen, and relaxing in bedrooms at the president's home. Today, a sea of people were seen working out at the gym in the palace.

Dramatic visuals show several protesters running on the treadmills in the gym. The protesters also use the cardio and weight equipment in the facility.

President Rajapaksa has fled and is currently on a Sri Lankan Navy ship, government sources said. On Saturday, the Sri Lanka government said that President Rajapaksa would resign on July 13.

But the protesters say they will not budge from Rajapaksa's residence till he resigns. "Our struggle is not over. We won't give up this struggle until he actually leaves," student leader Lahiru Weerasekara told reporters.

The dramatic events were the culmination of months of protests by people angry with the unprecedented economic crisis in Sri Lanka and the Rajapaksa family's incompetence and corruption. Sri Lanka is reeling under a severe foreign exchange shortage which has resulted in the worst financial crisis in almost seven decades. The country has been hit by severe food and fuel shortages along with prolonged blackouts.

HUNDREDS MARCH IN PROTESTS AGAINST CORRUPTION IN CHINA

Beijing | Agencies

Hundreds marched Sunday in protest against alleged corruption by local officials in the central Chinese city of Zhengzhou, multiple participants told AFP, in a rare public demonstration in the tightly-controlled country.

Hit hard by the country's economic slowdown, four banks in Henan province have since mid-April frozen all cash withdrawals, leaving thousands of small savers without funds and sparking sporadic demonstrations.

Sunday saw some of the largest protests yet, with several hundred people rallying in front of a branch of the People's Bank of China in the Henan capital Zhengzhou, according to multiple witnesses who declined to be named.

Images circulating on social media showed banners denouncing "the corruption and violence of the Henan authorities".

Protesters were "hit, wounded and were bleeding from the head. Disabled people were also violently beaten," one participant told AFP, estimating the number of demonstrators to have been "several thousand".

Local authorities in Henan did not immediately comment on the protests.

Some demonstrators accuse officials of colluding with local banks to suppress protests, with authorities last month accused of exploiting the Covid health pass to quell new protests, turning protesters passes red to effectively bar them from public spaces.

The health pass has become a ubiquitous part of life in China under Beijing's strict Covid-zero strategy, and is required to access the vast majority of buildings, shopping centres, public places and also certain public transport.

While most accept use of the technology for public health purposes, some have voiced concern that it could also be used for surveillance of the population -- already widespread in China.

Demonstrations are relatively rare in tightly-controlled China, where social stability is an official obsession and where opposition is swiftly repressed.

But desperate citizens do sometimes take to the streets, despite the risk of arrest and prosecution.

Analysts say that some local banks across China have found their already-precarious financial situations exacerbated by corruption.

15 KILLED IN BAR SHOOTING IN SOUTH AFRICA'S JOHANNESBURG

Johannesburg: Gunmen armed with rifles and pistols opened fire at people sitting in a tavern in the South African township of Soweto in the early hours of Sunday, killing 15 and wounding nine, police said.The carnage took place shortly after midnight, according to police who said the group of men entered the Orlando East tavern before "shooting randomly at the patrons". The unknown gunmen fled the scene and are now on the run, said police, adding that wasn't not clear how many were involved in the attack. South Africa is one of the world's most violent countries with 20,000 people murdered every year, one of the highest per-capita murder rates globally. Soweto, near Johannesburg, is the largest of the country's Black townships. They were the creations of white minority rule, which ended in 1994 but whose legacy of widespread poverty and youth unemployment persist nearly three decades later.Local media reported that another shooting in a tavern in Pietermaritzburg, about 500 km southeast of Soweto, had killed four people overnight. A police spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for confirmation.

Anti-speeding technology introduced to new cars in the EU

London | Agencies

New cars in the European Union (EU) are now required to be equipped with anti-speeding technology, called Intelligent Speed Assistance, or ISA. As CNET reports, under the regulation, auto manufacturers will have to implement one of several ISA technical options that will kick into gear when the driver exceeds the speed limit.

The car may alert the driver with a visible warning followed by an acoustic or vibration alert. The gas pedal may be gently pushed back on the driver's foot or the car may reduce speed automatically.

The driver can override the latter two functions, the EU said, by slightly pushing on the gas pedal, the report said.

The European Commission is quoted as saying, "It aims to protect Europeans from traffic accidents, poor air quality and climate change, empowering them with new mobility solutions that match their changing needs and the competitiveness of European industry." protect."

Some vehicles already include warnings for over speeding, but the driver must set them manually. EU regulation requires the technology to work automatically.

The non-profit European Transport Safety Council, which advocates for road safety measures in the EU, said it welcomes the new regulation, but that the minimum standard of beeping sound bothers drivers and is insufficient for safety.

In addition, ETSC said, cars can collect inaccurate speed information if they are equipped with systems that set speed limits by using cameras to analyze signage only and lack a digital map of the speed limit.

New Covid-19 cases above 20,000 for 2nd day in S.Korea

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea's new coronavirus cases stayed above 20,000 for the second consecutive day on Sunday amid growing concerns about a resurgence in infections nationwide.

The country added 20,410 new Covid-19 infections, including 250 from overseas, bringing the total caseload to 18,511,845, the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) said.

The KDCA reported 19 more deaths from the virus, putting the death toll at 24,643. The fatality rate stood at 0.13 per cent, Yonhap news agency reported.

The number of critically-ill patients came to 67, up from Saturday's 61.

As of 9 p.m. Sunday, local governments had reported 12,213 additional cases, down 7,629 from the same time on Saturday. The figure, however, more than doubled from 5,880 posted at the same time the previous week.

Daily cases are counted until midnight and announced the following morning.

South Korea has seen a marked drop in infection numbers from the peak of more than 620,000 in mid-March, with the daily counts staying mostly in four digits in June.

But the numbers began to rise again, hitting more than 10,000 on June 29 and over 20,000 on Saturday.

Health authorities confirmed that the country has entered a new wave of Covid-19, citing the fast spread of the highly contagious mutation of the Omicron strains.

The government is reportedly considering a new set of anti-virus measures.

IRAN TIGHTENS ENTRY RULES AMID INCREASING COVID-19 CASES

Tehran: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has said that passengers can only gain entry to Iran upon submission of negative Covid-19 test results and full compliance with Iranian health protocols, citing the recent increase in infections.

In his address to a meeting of the national anti-coronavirus task force on Saturday, Raisi called for stricter compliance with the health regulations and instructions at all land, air and sea entries to Iran, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the Iranian presidency's website.

He highlighted the necessity of receiving a booster dose of Covid-19 vaccines, noting those with underlying medical conditions should particularly take precautions.

Iran's daily cases on Monday surpassed 1,000 for the first time since April 27, according to the Iranian Health Ministry's website.

Iranian experts warn that two fast-spreading sub-variants of Omicron will become the prevailing strains in the country in the coming weeks.

WITH BODY OF 2-YEAR-OLD BROTHER, 8 YEAR OLD BOY SAT BY THE ROAD

IN MORENA TOWN, 8-YEAR-OLD GULSHAN WAS SEEN SITTING WITH THE BODY OF HIS 2-YEAR-OLD BROTHER RAJA.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A tiny arm sticking out of one corner of a white cloth covering a small body, its head resting on the lap of a dazed young boy, back to the wall and bundled on the side of a dirty road, told a story of unspeakable helplessness and apathy.

In visuals shot by a local journalist in Morena town on Saturday, 8-year-old Gulshan was seen sitting with the body of his 2-year-old brother Raja while their father PoojaramJatav desperately looked for a vehicle to take them home.

A resident of Badfra village of Ambah, Poojaram had brought his 2-year-old son to the Morena District Hospital - around 450 km north of Bhopal - after being referred there by a local hospital in an ambulance.

Suffering from anaemia and ascites - abdominal swelling caused by the accumulation of fluid, most often related to liver disease - Raja died during treatment. But the ambulance that had brought them had already returned.

Poojaram, a man of limited means, pleaded with the doctors and staff of the hospital for a vehicle to take the body back to his village, around 30 km away. He said he was turned down and told the hospital did not have a vehicle at hand, and he would have to pay for one outside.

An ambulance operator parked on the hospital premises asked for Rs 1,500 - much more than what the single father of four could afford.

A helpless Poojaram left the hospital with the body of his son Raja, Gulshan in tow. He could not find any vehicle.

It was then that he decided to leave Gulshan in front of Morena's Nehru Park as he went to look for a ride back home that he could afford.

For half an hour, Gulshan sat there, his dead brother's head on his lap, eyes gazing out for his father's return.

Caressing the body, swatting away flies, a tear or two would roll down his cheek. A crowd gathered and someone alerted the authorities.

Finally, a police officer Yogendra Singh picked up the body and led Gulshan back to the district hospital where Poojaram and his sons were given an ambulance, at last, to make their way home - a difficult ride for any family, now made more harrowing.

BOMB HOAX IN JAIPUR-SIKANDRABAD EXPRESS

- It is being told that TTE has got a slip inside the train, in which it is written to blow up S-4 and S-6 of the train. After this the train has been evacuated. Along with this, the team of other GRP, RPF has also reached. After 3 hour search, bomb threat call for Jaipur-Secunderabad Express turns out to be hoax

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A paper slip with written threat to blow up two coaches of Jaipur Sikandrabad express at Itarsi junction of state turned out to be a hoax, said the railway officials.

The GRP, RPF and local district police reached the spot and made an intense search of the bogies, said Hitesh Choudhary, SP.

Gurkaran Singh, SP of Narmadapuram also reached the railway station with the bomb deduction and disposal squad and sniffer dogs and searched the area. The Jaipur-Secunderabad Express was searched thoroughly by police and RPF personnel at Itarsi station on Sunday after authorities received a call informing about a bomb onboard, which turned out to be a hoax, an official said.

Following the bomb threat call, teams from the railway police, Railway Protection Force and the district police carried out a search of the train after sending its passengers to platform number one and evacuating platforms two and four as a precautionary measure, Narmadapuram Superintendent of Police Gurkaran Singh said.

All the passengers traveling in coach B-3 and B-4 were asked to get off the train with their luggage as police started searching the train for the explosives.

"The train had reached Itarsi station at 1:10pm. The bomb detection and disposal squad also took part in the operation. No suspicious object was found after a three-hour search. However, a slip was found in the coach which said there was a bomb in the AC coach. The train left on its onward journey at 4pm," the SP informed.

The train was headed green towards Sikandrabad at around 4 pm after an intense inspection, added the SP. Superintendent of police rail, Hitesh Choudhary while talking to Absolute India over phone said that the train was heading towards Sikandrabad. Crossing Narmadapuram station a passenger found a hand-written note in the bathroom at around 1 pm on Sunday.

"The note said that a bomb was placed in two bogies to kill my family, please help. The slip was handed to ticket collector and the TTE further informed about it to the control room. The GRP, RPF and local district police reached the spot and made an intense search of the bogies", the SP added. The incident created panic among the passengers. Several confused passengers shared their experience on social media.

Medha Patkar booked for misuse of funds taken in name of tribal children education

- Medha Patkar, social activist and founder of the 'Narmada Bachao' movement, book under section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for allegedly misusing the funds collected in the name of education of the tribal children.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Social activist and founder of the 'Narmada Bachao' movement Medha Patkar, book under section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for allegedly misusing the funds collected in the name of education of the tribal children. The latest development came after an FIR was filed in Madhya Pradesh's Barwani against 12 persons, including the activist, for the misuse of the funds.

In the FIR filed by plaintiff Pritam Raj, he accused Patkar, the trustee of the Narmada Navnirmaan Abhiyan, of allegedly obtaining over Rs 13 crore in the name of education of tribal children between the years 2007 to 2022. It is also reported that she used the funds against the government.

The other accused in the FIR has been identified as Praveen Rumi Jahangir, Kailash Avashya, Mohan Patidar, Vijay Chauhan, Ashish Mandaloyi, Sanjay Josi and others.

Medha Patkar is famous for her hunger strike in protest of the decision of the authorities to increase the height of the Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada river. It is expected that the project displaced about 200,000 people from Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. It is reported that the foundation stone of the project was laid by former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1961. The work on the project began in 1987.The work on the dam was stopped in May 1995 after Medha Patkar started Narmada BachaoAndolan (NBA), which made her popular across the world.

However, the Supreme Court of India gave the approval to ramp up the height of the dam to 138 metres in June 2014. In February 2017, the apex court directed the government to provide a compensation of Rs 60 lakh for each of the 700 families expected to be displaced.

Elephant held captive in chains after killing its mahout at Panna Tiger Reserve

"THE ELEPHANT HAS BECOME AGGRESSIVE AND DANGEROUS. IT ESCAPED INTO THE FOREST AFTER KILLING THE MAHOUT AND WAS CAUGHT AFTER TRANQUILIZING. WE HAVE PUT EVERYONE ON HIGH ALERT, SAID UTTAM KUMAR SHARMA, FIELD DIRECTOR.

Team Absolute | Panna

A 55-year-old elephant is held captive in chains and shackels in the Panna Tiger Reserve after the elephant brutally killed its mahout BudhramRotiya on Monday, said an official.

Ever since its arrival at the Panna Tiger Reserve in 1993, 'Rambahadur', a wild elephant, was trained and looked after by mahout BudhramRoutia. In the two decades, 57-year-old Routia led the elephant on umpteen campaigns which involved formidable tasks like tranquilising tigers and maintaining a vigil in the forests.

"The elephant has become aggressive and dangerous. It escaped into the forest after killing the mahout and was caught after tranquilizing. We have put everyone on high alert, said Uttam Kumar Sharma, Field director.

"A team of forest workers and mahouts kept tracking Rambahadur throughout the night to prevent him from moving around the populated area. He has become so aggressive that the mahouts are being chased from 150 to 200 meters away. Despite it, the team kept chasing him and after a struggle of hours, he was caught near Hinauta Hathi Camp after tranquilizing, said the field director.

According to Uttam Sharma, elephant Ram Bahadur was brought to the reserve in 1993 from the forest of Chhattisgarh, aging approximately 26 years. Deceased mahout Budhram was taking care of the elephant since then. This elephant has also twice fatally attacked the world's oldest elephant, Vatsala.

Rs. 17 lakh looted from ATM kiosk using gas cutter

- A gang of thieves allegedly robbed an ATM in Chhatarpur and decamped with over Rs 17 lakh. The incident took place at SBI's kiosk located near Panna Naka in Chhatarpur.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A gang of thieves allegedly robbed an ATM in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur and decamped with over Rs 17 lakh. This is not the first time that a kiosk of the nationalised bank has been targeted. The incident took place at SBI's kiosk located near Panna Naka in Chhatarpur.

No alert was received by the nationalised bank and the heist came to light on July 9 morning. In an attempt to protect their identity, the thieves had sprayed black paint on CCTV cameras.

Bank staff who spotted the ATM theft immediately informed the police about the incident. On learning about the theft, DIG (Chhatarpur range) along with staff and forensic experts, sniffer dogs reached the spot and examined the kiosk.

Police officials asserted that the amount of cash robbed from the ATM is around Rs 17 lakh. The thieves had cut the ATM machine with a gas cutter and committed the theft.

Recently, in a similar case, thieves robbed three ATMs and decamped with over Rs. 42 lakh after breaking the machines with gas cutters and spraying black paint on CCTV cameras in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district.

The incident took place at three different ATM kiosks in Shivpuri city. The thieves allegedly used gas cutters to break the machines and sprayed black paint on the CCTVs. According to police, at least Rs. 19.26 lakh was stolen from a State Bank of India (SBI) ATM at Gwalior bypass, while the accused stole Rs. 22.89 lakh from another SBI ATM half a kilometre away.

CM PLANTS SAPLINGS OF BANYAN, NEEM AND CASSIA

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Cassia, Banyan and Neem saplings in Smart City Park located in Shyamala Hills. Along with planting saplings, everyone also did shramdaan.

Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, members of Gulmohar G- Van Bhagini Mandal Sanstha, Indrakshi Amar, Seema Singh, Neeta Thakur, Smita Nandi and Geeta Rawat also planted saplings. Senior journalists Ravindra Jain, Mamta Jain, Avichal Jain, Himani Jain, Dinesh Jain and Amit Jain also planted saplings. Family members also brought little baby Vibhan along with them and gave the message of environmental protection. Chief Minister Chouhan blessed Vibhan. Banyan has religious medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Immunity increases by drinking its decoction. Similarly, neem rich in antibiotic elements is known as a medicine. The bark and leaves of Cassia Javanica are used in the preparation of Ayurvedic medicines.

Devotees offer Namaz at city's mosques on Eid-ul-Azha

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A large number of devotees visited different mosques in the city to offer Namaz on Sunday morning to mark Eid-ul-Azha.

The devotees included men and children wearing Kurta-Pyjamas, sherwanis, jackets,coats and caps in various colours. Bhopal Shahar Qazi, Syed Mushtaq Ali Nadwi conducted the Namaz at Idgah at 7am. It was followed by Jama Masjid, Taj-ul-Masajid and Moti Masjid. After prayer, people exchanged greetings by hugging each other. After the prayers, the devotees reached their homes and celebrated the festival by offering sacrifice. During the prayers offered at Idgah, Bhopal Commissioner MakrandDeouskar, collector AvinashLavania along with police, administration and Bhopal Municipal Corporation team were present.For the past two years, the celebrations were severely hit due to Covid pandemic. There was a ban on mass gatherings and so Eid prayers had to be offered at home. Markets were shut, guests were not welcomed and greeting others with a hug was ruled out. Now, all the restrictions have been lifted, joy and bonhomie are in the air on Sunday. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan felicitated and extended his good wishes to the people of the state on Eid-ul-Azha. He said that this festival gives a message of sacrifice, devotion and mutual trust and inspires to strengthen humanity and brotherhood. Chouhan has appealed to celebrate the festival with peace, harmony and accord as per the glorious tradition of India.

SEC EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER DEATH OF TWO PRESIDING OFFICERS

Bhopal: State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh has expressed grief over the death of two presiding officers in Shahdol district in the third phase of the three-tier Panchayat General Election 2022. Shri Singh has prayed for the peace of the departed soul.In Shahdol district's Janpad Panchayat Gohparu and Budhar, two presiding officers died on the spot after their vehicle collided with a tree near Jaisinghnagar while going home on their own vehicle after conducting panchayat elections and depositing election materials. Also, two polling officers were seriously injured. The injured were immediately rushed to the district hospital where they are undergoing treatment.

Dewas police: Messiah for missing minors

The meticulously planned tracking system devised by Dewas police saves hundreds of girls from flesh trade.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

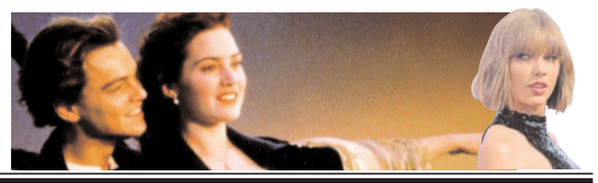
In May 2014, three minor girls belonging to two families were reportedly abducted from outside their houses in Mundladangi village of Madhya Pradesh's Dewas district. Despite months of searching, the police could not make any headway.More than seven years later, the Dewas police rescued the three girls from flesh trade in Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The same year in 2021, a special team of the district police had saved a student of a premier school from being pushed into sex trade in Nepal.

The teenage girl, who lived in Dewas city's industrial area was lured into a love trap over social media by a youngster operating from Ludhiana (Punjab). She was brainwashed to leave her home state and landed up in east UP's Gorakhpur. Before she could be trafficked into sex trade in Nepal, the Dewas police team, tracking her movements through electronic surveillance traced her and also busted the alleged girl trafficking racket with the arrest of two men. These cases are among hundreds of success stories of the district police tracking the missing children, mostly girls. Their meticulous planning has given the entire exercise a new name: 'Dewas Model.'The tracking procedure involves a combination of electronic surveillance and an authentic information network on the ground. It has helped in tracking nearly 100% cases of missing minors in 2020-21. In figures, it means tracking and rescuing of 203 minors who went missing from various parts of the west MP district in 2020. In 2021, 264 out of 267 minors missing from the district

were recovered.

The success doesn't end there: 64 missing girls in abduction cases between 2014 and 2019 were tracked and rescued in 2020, while 41 other girls who too went missing during the same six years span, were rescued successfully in 2021. This takes the success rate of the Dewas police's model of tracking children to 132% in 2020 and 114% in 2021.

More than 70% abducted minors have been tracked and rescued from adjoining states, including Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. Maximum 55% tracing and rescue has happened in Gujarat, where the girls from poor families, have either been lured in the name of jobs or have been married there after being taken there on the pretext of some other promise.According to Dewas district police superintendent Shiv Dayal Singh, who assumed the charge of district police chief in June 2020, the track-and-rescue of children varied between 50% and 60% before 2020. "We focused on the minors, starting with detailed analyses of cases of kidnapping in the previous five years to locate the hotspots from where these children were abducted," he said. "A more focussed and organised system of probing the old and new cases was developed, with the cyber cell in the pivotal role. Bounties were declared on unidentified accused in old as well as new cases followed by constitution of dedicated teams," said Singh.The police identified top kidnapping destinations - Surat, Ahmadabad, Rajkot and Morbi (Gujarat), Jaipur, Udaipur, Ajmer and Kota (Rajasthan), Mumbai and Nagpur (Maharashtra), Gorakhpur (UP) and New Delhi. "A comprehensive data base of reliable local informants was developed in all these kidnapping destinations and all of them linked to WhatsApp groups, which also has cops. A dependable network of informants. This helped in swift tracing and rescue of kidnapped minors," said the SP Dewas."Tracing the kidnapped girls and reuniting them with their parents is like winning an award," says inspector Amit Jadaun, head of the team that traced the three little girls from sex rackets in Rajasthan and Maharashtra in 2021. All three have been rehabilitated and enrolled in schools. Tracking procedure involves a combina-tion of e-surveillance and an authentic information network on the ground.



CARDI B SIZZLES IN A SHEER CATSUIT WIRELESS FESTIVAL

Los angeles: Cardi B stole the show at the Wireless Festival in Birmingham on Saturday evening as the singer pulled out all the stops with her sheer mesh outfit.

The hitmaker put on a sizzling display in a sheer mesh sequinned stocking with teats pasties as she took to the stage to put on another show-stopping performance.

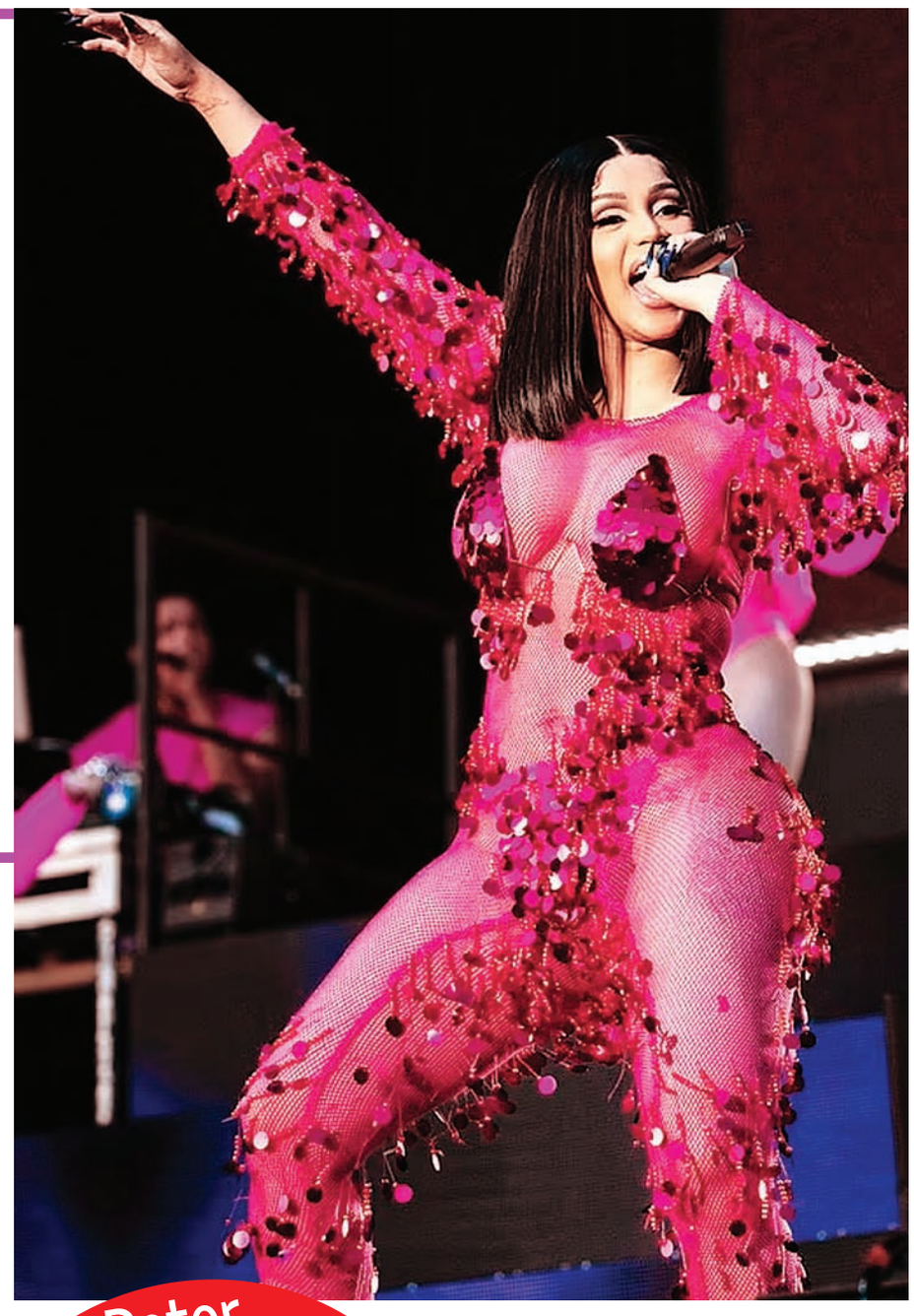
The sheer ensemble clung to her incredible curves as the bodysuit's perfectly placed embellishment maintained her decency.

Her brunette bob was styled in a straight hairdo and she enhanced her flawless complexion with full coverage make-up.

The outfit's metallic embellishments glistened under the stage lights a she showed off an impressive range of dance moves.

Cardi's racy red ensemble just about covered her modesty as the carefully placed sequins protected her from suffering a wardrobe malfunction.

Wowing in the daring garment which was almost completely see-through, she also decided to go shoeless with the ensemble as she stormed the stage during a stellar set, reports;dailymail.co.uk. The Grammy winner twerked up a storm on stage before strutting from side to side as she whipped the audience into a frenzy.



AMERICA HAS DONE A WONDERFUL JOB AT HUMILIATING ME:BRITNEY SPEARS

Los Angeles | Agencies

Britney Spears released a since-deleted Instagram statement on Saturday hitting out against the TV specials and documentaries made about her life.

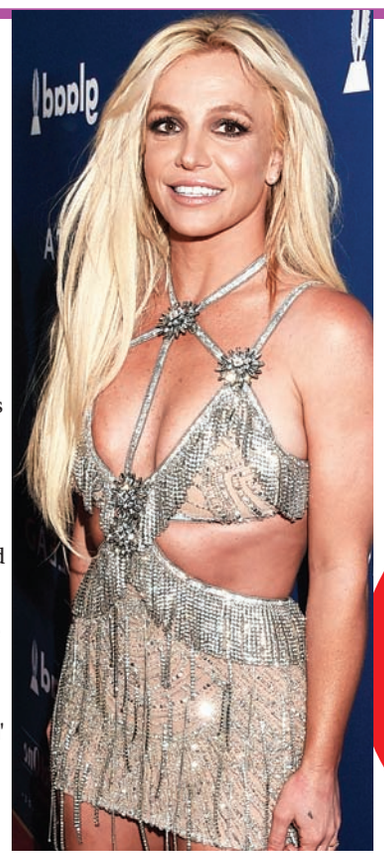
The pop singer expressed her anger in length and stated that no other stars would have received the amount of harsh press that she did without their permission.

The artist also blamed America for bullying her over the years, saying, 'I feel like America has done a wonderful job at humiliating me.'reports;dailymail.co.uk.

Britney explained that throughout her life, she had always walked to her car when arriving at the airport. However, after recently arriving back in Los Angeles after spending a romantic honeymoon with husband, Sam Asghari, she was picked up in a golf cart.

The star stated that the only reason a cart was brought around for her was because, 'they knew they were gonna take my pic so they so lovingly brought it for the first time in 20 years.'

However, Britney expressed that her anger wasn't due to the 'whole embarrassing ugly pic sell' of her. Documentaries and specials have been made about the singer without any permission from her.



Peter Andre shares his fear of daughter Princess

Los Angeles | Agencies

Peter Andre has shared that he fears his daughter Princess growing up too fast, admitting that: 'You don't want to let them go too much too quick'.

Chatting as he took to the red carpet during Thursday night's Caudwell Children Butterfly Ball with his daughter, wife Emily and son Junior - singer and TV personality also explained that he is starting to 'loosen the reigns' as she gets older.'I don't even know the words Love Island. Those two words don't go together in my house,' he jested.Going on to say: 'Listen I can say what I want now as she's only 15. When she gets to 18 I might not have a say.'reports;dailymail.co.uk.

Peter's comments come after Princess took to Instagram on Tuesday to share a snap of herself before heading out to a wedding, sporting a glammed up look.

Jaz slams the show for 'not showing her on screen'

Jazmine entered the Love Island villa to challenge the contestants during the ultimate relationship test, Casa Amor.

Los Angeles | Agencies

And now, following her exit, Jazmine Nichol has slammed show bosses for failing to 'show her on screen' with viewers even joking that they 'filed a missing persons report' following her scarce scenes.

The stunning brunette took to Instagram to thank fans for the 'love and support' and added that it was 'only the start.'

In the caption, she began: 'Hi guys, it's Jaz, I'm back. Just want to say a huge thank you for all of the love and support I've seen so far.

'I'm so overwhelmed with all the lovely messages I've seen and the funny memes!'

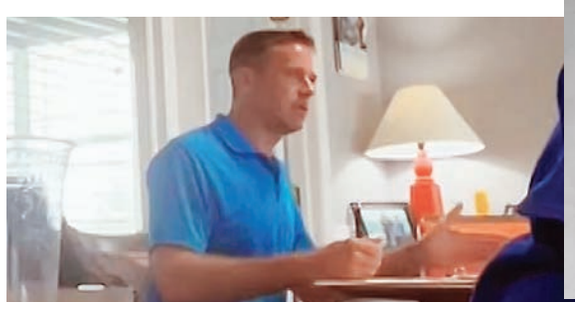
She continued: 'I'm excited for all of you to see my personality that was not shown on screen and the Jaz that the villa saw, this is only the start.'reports;dailymail.co.uk.Jazmine's disappearance from the Villa did not go unnoticed by fans of the show who said that she deserved better. One wrote: 'MISSING PERSON disappeared after 6 seconds of air time.' alongside a photo of her on the show.

Armie is working as a time-share salesman

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Armie Hammer who reached the very top of the world with many different films but fell from grace after accusations of sexual assault, sexual misconduct and fetichizing cannibalism,is now working as a timeshare salesman in the Caribbean - despite previously denying claims he'd taken up a new career, TMZ reported. To everybody's knowledge, Armie Hammer was living in the Cayman Islands since the global pandemic started.

The actor was spotted at the Morritt's resort office last month, wearing a blue polo shirt and going over pricing for a unit with a couple of potential buyers.During the pitch he reportedly offered the potential buyers a timeshare for $2,020 per week or, 'only about $21,000 for ten years of vacations.' Yesterday photos of Hammer - snapped on June 29 - walking into the office while sporting a clean-shaven look and a blue polo shirt with matching navy pants merged.The getup was similar to the one other hotel staffers had been seen wearing, but the Social Network star's attorney denied that he was working for the establishment.It is unclear whether Armie has chosen to leave Hollywood permanently and embark on a new career in property sales, or whether he's doing research for a role ahead of a possible acting comeback.



Idina Menzel details her regular night-mares

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Idina Menzel suffers regular nightmares including a terrifying dream about all her teeth falling out.

Opening up about sleeping habits, the actress revealed that she often has vivid dreams which leave her terrified, including one about failing to graduate from college and another in which she loses all her teeth, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"I have recurring nightmares that I haven't graduated from college and that me teeth are falling out," she told Us Weekly.

However, despite suffering bad dreams, Menzel said she never has any trouble falling asleep. She added, "I can fall asleep anywhere."The actress-singer recently opened up about battling her "neuroses" and admitted she had particularly struggled with turning 50 last year. However, she credited her 12-year-old son Walker, who she has with husband ex-husband Taye Diggs, with helping her conquer her fears.

She said of reaching the milestone age: "I am ashamed to say it, but I was having a hard time with it. I think it was subconsciously bothering me more than I led on, in regards to my relevance as a performer and actress. I'm feeling like the old lady sometimes, and that's not who I am. I feel very young at heart."

"I'm very vibrant, and the music I sing is for lots of young people. So it's silly for me to play into that. But I will be honest and say I have to combat a lot of my own neuroses," she added.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Nazarova Arina

82-YEAR-OLD KERALA EX-MLA WINS TWO BRONZES IN WORLD MASTERS ATHLETICS

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

CPI-M leader and former Kerala MLA, M.J. Jacob has won two bronze medals in the World Masters Athletic meet in Finland, his office said.

The 82-year-old politician won the medals in the 80 m and 200 m hurdles competition in the M80 category which is for men aged between 80 and 84 years.

He had won gold medals in 80 m hurdles and 200 m hurdles in Kerala Masters athletics held earlier this year. Jacob had also won gold medal in the Asian Masters athletics championship previously.Jacob had won the Pirvarom assembly seat for the CPI-M in 2006, defeating sitting MLA and former minister T.M. Jacob. Piravom is a Congress bastion and his victory was rated as a surprise.

He was also the former President of Tirumarady panchayat and served as Ernakulam district panchayat member.

The World Masters Athletic Tampere, held from June 29 to July 10, is a world championship event for athletics (track and field) for male and female athletes aged 35 and above.

India vs England 3rd T20

Suryakumar Yadav's 117 runs in vain, India lost match by 17 runs

Nottingham | Agencies

Suryakumar Yadav played a brilliant game in the third T20I against England at Trent Bridge on Sunday, scoring 117 runs in 55 balls, despite losing the team by 17 runs. England reached 215/7 thanks to David Malan's 77 and Liam Livingstone's unbeaten 42. On the other hand, Suryakumar Yadav made shots around the field for India but due to lack of support from other batsmen, India were reduced to 198/9 in 20 overs. Although India has already won this series.

Rishabh Pant and Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma could not show more amazing. Rohit Sharma hit two fours off Topley's ball. But on the last ball of the fifth over, Topli bowled a slow delivery, which Sharma was caught straight at deep midwicket.

After the power-play, Suryakumar hit a four and a six off Willie in successive deliveries. After this, he welcomed Liam Livingstone with three fours in four balls. After an exceptional lofted shot at long-off for a boundary off a yorker from Jordan, Suryakumar completed his fifth T20I fifty off 32 balls off Topley. After this, Suryakumar kept on hitting the shots and scored his century in 48 balls. Jordan dismissed Harshal Patel and Ravi Bishnoi in the last three balls of the innings for England's victory.

Brief scores :
England 215/7 in 20 overs (Dawood Malan 77, Liam Livingstone 42 not out; Ravi Bishnoi 2/30, Harshal Patel 2/35). India-198/9 (Suryakumar Yadav 117, Shreyas Iyer 28; Reece Topley 3/22, Chris Jordan 2/37.

2nd Test, day three

Chandimal's unbeaten century puts Sri Lanka in control against Australia

Galle | Agencies

An unbeaten 118 from Dinesh Chandimal and half-centuries from Angelo Mathews (52) and Kamindu Mendis (61) propelled Sri Lanka to take a crucial 67-run lead in the second Test against Australia at the Galle International Stadium on Sunday.

At stumps, Sri Lanka ended day three's play at 431/6 in 149 overs, making it a day thoroughly dominated by the hosts.

Sri Lanka may have lost Kusal Mendis early in day three, trapped lbw by off-spinner Nathan Lyon. But that did not deter the hosts' veteran batters, Mathews and Chandimal frustrated the visiting bowlers and confidently notched up an 83-run partnership.Chandimal was refreshing in his counter-attack against Lyon, hitting him for a four and six off successive deliveries. When Chandimal was on eleven, he had a huge reprieve when Alex Carey missed a tough stumping chance off Lyon. Australia then burnt their remaining reviews in the space of nine balls as Sri Lanka owned the first session. Post lunch, left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc got rid of Mathews and had Chandimal caught behind for 30 in his next over. But with no reviews left with Australia, they were unable to challenge the on-field verdict as ultra-edge showed a big inside edge. Chandimal then brought up his 22nd Test fifty by sweeping through fine leg and despite a brief delay with tea being forced early due to rain, Sri Lanka continued to gain control of the match. Chandimal converted that fifty into his 13th Test hundred, also helping Sri Lanka get into the lead.He also built a 133-run lead with Mendis as Australia struggled to get a breakthrough. As soon as final session came, Australia got some wickets as Mendis tried to go for a wild slog, but was castled by Lyon. Three overs later, Niroshan Dickwella went for a big shot off Lyon and was caught at mid-on. Chandimal and Ramesh Mendis ensured that Sri Lanka didn't lose another wicket till stumps arrived.

Brief scores :
Australia 364 in 110 overs (Steve Smith 145 not out; Prabath Jayasuriya 6-118) trail Sri Lanka 431/6 in 149 overs (Dinesh Chandimal 118 not out, Dimuth Karunaratne 86; Mitchell Starc 2-47, Mitchell Swepson 2-90) by 67 runs

Changwon Shooting World Cup

Arjun Babuta, Parth Makhija reach top eight in 10m Air Rifle

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Two Indian shooters Arjun Babuta and Partha Makhija have qualified for the top eight of the 10m air rifle event at the ISSF World Cup Rifles in Changwon, Korea. Arjun finished second in the 53-strong field in the 60-shot qualification stage with a score of 630.5. Parth, on the other hand, finished fifth with a score of 628.4. The final is to be held on Monday.

Shahu Tushar Mane, the third Indian shooter in the mix, finished 30th with a score of 624.4. Sergei Richter of the Israeli Air Rifles topped the field with 631.6.

Shooters from Australia, Austria, Korea, Thailand and the United States claimed the other five qualifying spots, leading among them Tokyo Olympic silver medalist Lukas Kozeniski of the US.

Indian shooters faced disappointment in the women's 10m air rifle, but none could advance. Mehuli Ghosh was the closest, losing just 0.1 points from the qualifying spot. He scored 628.7 to finish 11th in the field. India has fielded a 32 strong team in the Changwon World Cup, with over 430 athletes competing from 44 countries. The World Cup will end on July 21.

World Games Archery

Abhishek Verma and Jyoti Surekha win bronze medal for India

Alabama (USA) | Agencies

Indian pair of Abhishek Verma and Jyothi Surekha Vennam won a bronze medal in the mixed team archery event at the World Games 2022 here. The Indian archery pair defeated Andrea Becerra and Miguel Becerra of Mexico 157-156 in the bronze medal play-off to give India their first medal of the season.

Abhishek and Jyoti took a 40-39 lead at the end of the first set. However, World Championship bronze medalists Andrea and Miguel bounced back in the second set to level the match 78-78. The Indian pair took the lead once again in the third set and scored four 10s in the final set to register a close win on Saturday.

Archery Association of India said in a tweet, "Compound mixed pair Abhishek and Surekha win medals for the first time in World Games 2022, held in USA from 07 to 09 July 2022."

Earlier, Abhishek and Jyoti had defeated New Zealand 156-155 in the quarterfinals, but lost to the Colombian pair of Danielle Munoz and women's world No. 1 Sara Lopez 157-159. This is India's first medal in archery at the World Games and fifth overall medal in all disciplines since the event's inception in 1981. India's previous medals had come in snooker, powerlifting and badminton.

However, Verma's individual campaign, the Asian Games gold medalist, ended without a medal. He lost 145-148 to Christopher of Canada in the bronze medal play-off.

Youth National Boxing Championship

Haryana, SSCB continue to dominate

Chennai | Agencies

Eleven women boxers from Haryana and 11 men from Services Sports Control Board (SSCB) advanced to the finals of the fifth Youth Men's and Women's National Boxing Championships here. Reigning Asian Youth Champion Tamannaah (50kg) from Haryana put on a stellar game as she defeated Simran Verma of Maharashtra in a unanimous decision. She will face Kusum of Uttar Pradesh in the semi-finals.

Asian Youth Championship silver medalist Keerthy (81 plus kg) dominated her bout against Kerala's Ashwin Biju from the start, forcing the referee to stop the competition in the first round. She will face Mohini Rana of Uttarakhand in the last-4 leg.

Other nine boxers from Haryana who have made it to the semi-finals include Bhawna Sharma (48kg), Anjali (52kg), Neeru Khatri (54kg), Prachi (60kg), Raveena (63kg), Priyanka (66kg). , Lashu Yadav (70kg), Muskan (75kg) and Pranjal Yadav (81kg).In the men's section, 2022 Asian Youth Champions Vishwanath Suresh (48kg) registered a 5-0 win over Rahul Kumar of Bihar. Viswanath remained in control from the start and maintained his momentum throughout the match. He will face Achutha Rao of Andhra Pradesh in the semi-finals. In the 86kg weight category, Mohit defeated Aditya Junghu of Haryana 5-0. He will next face Dileshwar Gandham of Andhra Pradesh. The remaining nine boxers of Services to reach the semi-finals are Jadumani Mandengbam (51kg), Ashish (54kg), Nikhil Kumar (57kg), Harsh (60kg), Preet Malik (63.5kg), Ankush Panghal (67kg), Anjani Kumar (71kg), Deepak (75kg) and Raitham (92+kg).

Chandigarh's Parineeta Sheoran (48kg) and Lovleen Kaur (66kg) entered the semi-finals by winning their quarterfinal matches. Parineeta defeated Yamini Kanwar of Rajasthan 3-2 in a close contest and Lovleen defeated Srinidhi of Tamil Nadu in the third round of RSC.

Meanwhile, defending Asian Youth Champion Rohit Chamoli (51kg) from Chandigarh suffered a 0-5 loss against Anurag Kumar of Madhya Pradesh.

VIDEO OF CAPTAIN ROHIT AND PANT'S CONVERSATION GOES VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Edgbaston: A video of a funny conversation between wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant and captain Rohit Sharma during the second T20 match of the three-match series on Saturday has gone viral on social media. After winning the first T20 quite comfortably, India surprised the hosts in the second match as Pant opened for the team along with Rohit.

During their opening partnership, a funny incident happened during the very first over of the Indian innings. Pant took a risky single to open his account in the game, however, he was saved from colliding with bowler David Willey.

After completing the run, Pant was caught on the stump mic asking his captain if ye came out, takkar maar do kya?"

Rohit replied, "maar de aur kya."

The whole funny conversation between the two Indian players has gone viral on social media and users are constantly sharing videos on the platform.Notably, this was not the first time that Rohit was involved in such an incident. In a T20 match against Bangladesh recently, the star opener was infuriated after left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman came forward and expressed his displeasure.

Earlier, when MS Dhoni was the captain of the team, he took a single off Rahman to one side, which led to Dhoni being fined 75 per cent of his match fee, while the bowler was fined 50 per cent.

ICC places Pant in its promotional video for T20 World Cup

Sydney | Agencies

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has named Rishabh Pant a 'place of pride' in a promotional video for the ICC T20 World Cup posted on social media. The ICC on Sunday posted the video on Instagram and captioned it as, "Welcome to the T20 World Cup proms." The video has garnered millions of views with fans appreciating the promo, while some are apprehensive of the cricketer retaining his place in the T20 squad. One fan also said, 'Imagine he hasn't been selected for the World Cup squad.'

Pant has been in fine form in England, where he scored a scintillating century and half-century in the rescheduled fifth Test against the hosts and scored 26 off 15 balls in the second T20I at Edgbaston with Rohit Sharma at the helm on Saturday, but he recently returned to the south. Didn't make much impact in the five-match T20I series against Africa that ended at home.

However, India head coach Rahul Dravid backed Pant, saying that he is an integral part of the team despite scoring just 58 runs at a strike rate of 105.45 in the series against South Africa. Pant's performance in IPL 2022 was also poor, with the Delhi Capitals captain scoring 340 runs at an average of 30.90.

Pant, however, is a popular figure where, during the 2020-21 Test tour, he hit a historic unbeaten 89 in the final Test at the Gabba, which the visitors won by three wickets to win the four-Test series 2-1.

Hope to do better in US Open: Ons Jaboor

London | Agencies

Kazakhstan's 17th seed Tunisia and world number 2 Jabur in the Wimbledon women's singles final said she would return to the Grand Slam to win the title. The final slam of the season is the US Open, hoping for a better performance. Jaboor lost to Rybakina 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 on Saturday but earned the distinction of becoming the first Tunisian, Arab or African woman to make a slam singles final in the Open Era.

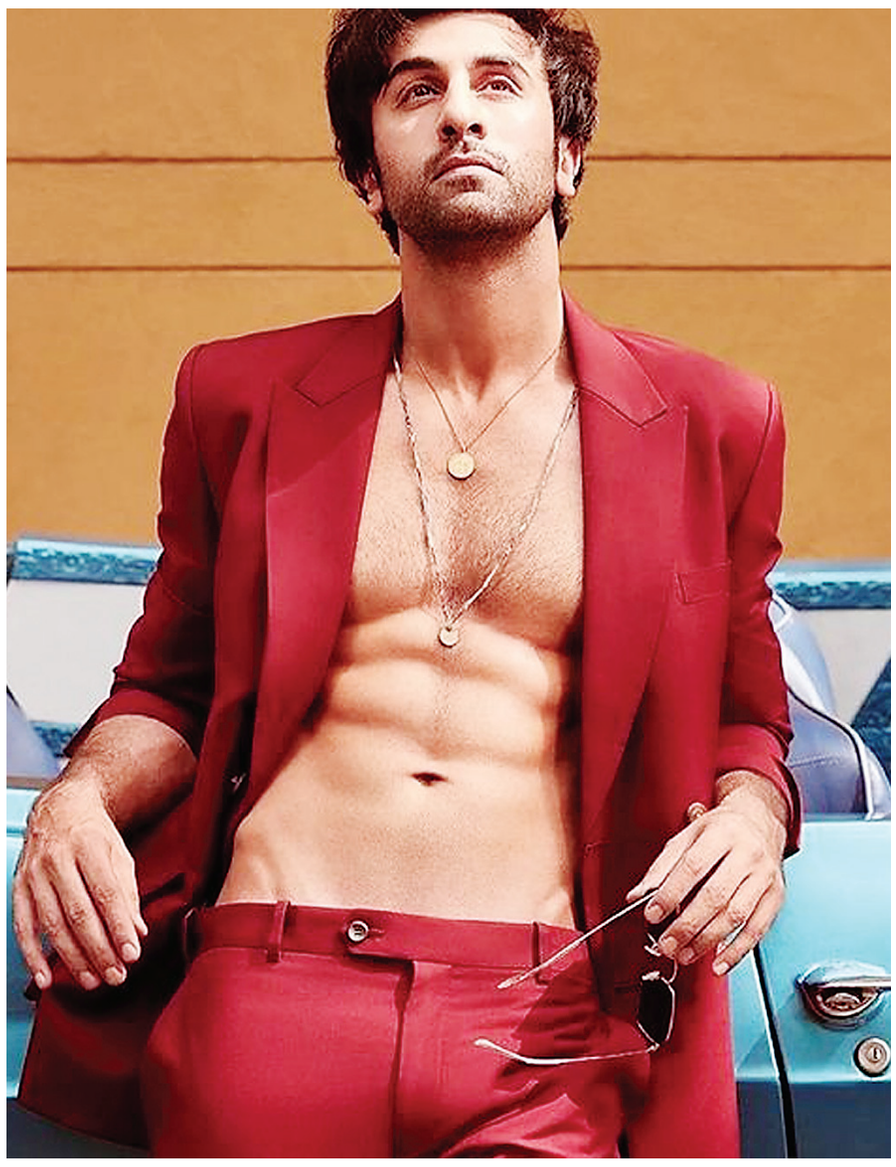
Jaboor, 27, said, "I know of course I am going to win the US Grand Slam. This is tennis and winning and losing is part of it. I will definitely learn from it. But I am very positive about it." "

She added, "It's a good experience for me. I am looking forward to my next final. I am sure I will learn a lot from it. But two weeks are positive for me. I am only thinking about doing my best." I have been."

Before coming to Wimbledon, Jabur had not progressed beyond the quarterfinal stage. Although she finished third in Berlin chasing her second title of the season, she lost in the first round of the French Open after a similarly strong run-up.The Tunisian attributed the win to Rybakina's quick serve.

She further added, "It's frustrating to play someone who serves really well and doesn't give you a chance to take that break sometimes. I was just saying to myself, I trust you." I even said 'I love you' to myself during the match." Poland's No. 1 Inga Swietek Jabur became the strong favorite for the title with a third-round loss, noting that she hadn't lost it on the grass court in more than a year before losing to Rybakina on Saturday.

He added, "I am very happy with my results. I do not regret anything. I gave my 100 per cent today."



RANBIR ON TAKING A DIG AT HIS FLOP FILMS

Heartthrob Ranbir Kapoor is returning to the big screens after a hiatus of four years. The actor was last seen in 2018 in Sanju. Currently, the actor is vehemently promoting his upcoming period drama Shamshera.

Aakruti Bagla | Mumbai

As a part of the promotion, a video was shared by the makers in which the actor was seen in double roles, just like his upcoming period drama. Titled The Other Kapur Show, it saw Ranbir Kapoor in a conversation with Ranbir Kapur. Overall, the video featured the Sanju actor roasting himself, his career and even his marriage ceremony with actress Alia Bhatt.During a media interaction, when Absolute India News exclusively quizzed his initial reaction when the idea was presented to him and his inputs in this process.

Talking about it, the actor quipped, "I genuinely believed in whatever I said. I participated and collaborated with writers on that script for a week so that we could give the audience an entertaining video. Since I am playing a double role in the film, we had the idea that lets subconsciously do something where Ranbir interviews Ranbir. So it wasn't just some words that were given to me and I just read it. I am aware of my faults, my own disadvantages and the things that are said about me. Also, I like self-deprecating humour and poking fun at myself. That was the overall idea and it was a lot of fun."

Riteish extended his thanks to Salman Khan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Riteish Deshmukh revealed in 2021 that he will make his directorial debut with the Marathi film Ved. In addition to Riteish, Ved will star his wife, actress Genelia Deshmukh, Jiya Shankar, Ashok Saraf, and Shubhankar Tawde. Now, Riteish has revealed that Salman Khan would appear in his film as a cameo. Deshmukh conveyed his thanks to Salman and uploaded photos of them from the set of his directorial debut on his social media profile.

Riteish thanked the actor for his support and captioned the photos: "As we celebrate Ashadi Ekadashi, I wish you all a life filled happiness, love and prosperity. On this auspicious day it thrills me to say that with your kind blessings I have completed filming my first directorial Marathi movie '???' (Madness, Crazy, Passion). This road had its own challenges but when you are surrounded with people that have your back, forward is the only way you can go." Further, he added: "One such person is my dearest 'Salman Bhau' @beingsalmankhan, I have no words to express my gratitude for the grace and kindness he has shown towards Genelia and me. He was part of my debut marathi film 'Lai Bhaari' and now he is a part of my debut directorial film ???. Love you Bhau. ??? ??????? ???? !!! ????? ?????? ????????????. Riteish Vilasrao Deshmukh."

Alia returns to the bay after wrapping up the shoot of her HW debut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Alia Bhatt recently took the internet by storm after she announced the news of her pregnancy. Shortly after her wedding in April, the actress jetted off to shoot for her Hollywood debut in London.

On 9th July, the actress informed her fans and followers that she has wrapped up shooting for the film and is returning to the bay. On 10th June the mommy-to-be was clicked at the airport. To surprise her, Ranbir Kapoor also came to the airport to pick her up. The two shared a super sweet hug as they met each other.

To note, Alia Bhatt's baby bump was evident in the pictures. The actress opted for a comfy black and white outfit as she arrived.On the work front, Alia Bhatt is gearing up for Brahmastra alongside Ayan Mukerji. Apart from this, she has Rocky aur Rani ki Prem Kahani in her pipeline. The diva is also going to mark her debut as a producer with her maiden venture Darlings.

Taapsee: I'm putting a halt to any prep-heavy films

Shachi Chaturvedi | Mumbai

Taapsee Pannu is set to play Mithali Raj in her next sports drama. While talking about the same she mentioned how she has never played cricket in her life even though she has played other sports. "I've never played cricket before. Learning the body posture, the game, and everything else was quite challenging for me. It took me months to perfect the shorts I had to do on film. I'm still unaware of how to play the game. Basically, I have learned the answer to the questions that were asked in the question paper. " Said Taapsee.

Later talking about the choices of film and taking up prep-heavy film Taapsee said "Movies featuring famous actors do not come to me. I haven't made a decision yet, but I don't have many alternatives. Only films that no one wants to make come to me. It's either too risky to take those films or too out of the box only" The actor continues "now, I'm putting a halt to any prep-heavy films since they're taking a mental toll on me. I don't mind seeing a health professional if I feel the necessity"

Payal -Sangram tie the knot

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After dating each other for a long time, actor Payal Rohatgi and wrestler Sangram Singh have finally embarked on a new chapter of their lives. The much-loved pair tied the knot with each other on July 9 in Agra. Post the couple's dreamy wedding, they treated fans with a glimpse of their big day. Sharing the pictures, she captioned "??yal ke Sang???".

For her wedding, Payal donned a beautiful red bridal lehenga, which she paired with heavy jewellery. She completed her look with choodas, looking picture-perfect as ever. While the bride looked elegant in her traditional avatar, her groom complemented her in a white sherwani. For the unversed, the much-in-love couple took nuptial vows in the presence of their family members and close friends. The couple started dating in 2011 and got engaged in 2014. However, their wedding got delayed multiple times due to various reasons. Their pre-wedding festivities for the two began on 6th July, with Payal hosting an intimate Mehendi ceremony at her residence in Ahmedabad.

The two met while shooting for the reality show, Survivor India, in 2011, where their love blossomed.

Sehban Azim shares his interest in doing reality shows

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Being part of a reality show and showing the real side is often loved by many TV actors and the same goes for Sehban Azim.

Azim is playing the lead role of 'Yohan' in the TV show 'Spy Bahu'. The actor shared why despite being keen on doing reality shows, he couldn't be part of them till now.

He said: "I always find reality shows very interesting, but somehow I have never been part of any of them as every time I get an offer, I'm always shooting for fiction shows and it seems difficult for me to manage time."

He added: "I enjoy photography. But as currently I'm shooting for my show, I have not been able to find time for anything, even for photography. As our show 'Spy Bahu' is not a usual 'Saas-Bahu' drama and we tend to have a lot of outdoor shoots, it has been a hectic schedule to find time for anything else."

Sehban, who is popular for his roles in shows like 'Tujhse Hai Raabta' and 'Dill Mill Gayye', elaborated that he is quite happy with his current project.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Palak Tiwar

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