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WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS:

Neeraj Chopra clinches India's first-ever silver medal with historic throw of 88.13m

▶ THE BILL SEEKS TO EXTEND THE APPLICATION OF DOMESTIC LAWS TO RESEARCH STATIONS SET UP BY INDIA IN THE ANTARCTIC REGION. BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT WERE ADJOURNED ON FRIDAY, 22 JULY, AND WILL RECONVENE ON MONDAY AT 2 PM.

EUGENE (OREGON) | Agencies

Tokyo Olympics javelin throw champion Neeraj Chopra on Sunday (IST) ended India's 19-year-long wait for a medal at the World Athletics Championships after he clinched the silver medal at the 2022 meet with historic throw of 88.13m. This was India's second medal at the World Championships and the first podium finish since Anju Bobby George won a bronze medal in long jump at Paris in 2003. Chopra's best effort of 88.13m in the final at the Hayward Field was short of Anderson Peters' gold medal-winning mark of 90.54m while Tokyo 2020 silver medalist Jakub Vadlejch won the bronze with 88.09m.



made a disappointing start with a foul. On the other hand, reigning champion Peters of Grenada set the benchmark high with a 90.21m attempt in his first throw of the final. Needing to shatter his personal best and the national record of 89.94m, set at the Stockholm Diamond League last month, for a shot at gold, Neeraj posted 82.39m and 86.37m with his second and third attempts, respectively. However, he was still short of a medal position after the third series of throws. The Indian nevertheless, ensured three additional throws to try and climb back into a medal position as he was placed fourth after Round 3. The bottom four drop out after the first three throws.

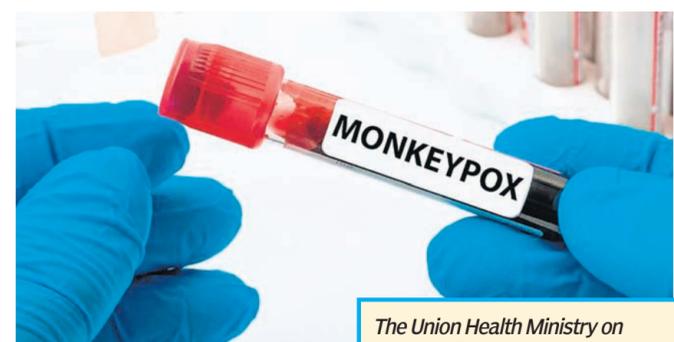
Meanwhile, Peters extended his lead at the top with a 90.46m mark in his second attempt. Chopra finally climbed up into the top three with an 88.13m fourth attempt which saw him leapfrog the Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch and Germany's Julian Weber into the silver medal position. The Tokyo Olympics champion fouled his fifth and sixth attempts but had done enough to win India its maiden silver medal at the World Championships. Peters breached 90.54m with the final throw to

PM MODI CONGRATULATES CHOPRA ON HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated Neeraj Chopra on winning a silver medal at the World Championships in men's javelin. In response to a tweet by Sports Authority of India, Prime Minister Modi said, "A great accomplishment by one of our most distinguished athletes! Congratulations to @Neeraj_chopra1 on winning a historic Silver medal at the #WorldChampionships. This is a special moment for Indian sports. Best wishes to Neeraj for his upcoming endeavours."

increase his margin of victory and became the first man since the legendary Jan Zelezny to successfully defend a men's javelin throw crown at the World Athletics Championships. It was only the fifth time that the javelin throw final was won with a 90m-plus throw in the 18 editions of the World Championships. Another Indian javelin thrower -- Rohit Yadav -- finished 10th with a best attempt of 78.72m, which came in his third attempt. His two earlier attempts measured 77.96m and 78.05m.

Health Ministry confirms 1st monkeypox case in Delhi, patient isolated



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Health Ministry on Sunday officially confirmed the first case of monkeypox in Delhi, saying that the 34-year-old male patient is presently isolated at the Lok Nayak Hospital in the national capital. In a statement, the Ministry said the confirmation of the diagnosis has been done by National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. "The patient is presently recovering at a designated isolation centre at the Lok Nayak Hospital. Close contacts have been identified and are under quarantine as per the MoHFW guidelines," it added. As per the Ministry guidelines, public health interventions like identification of the source of infection, enhanced contact tracing, testing sensitisation of private practitioners, are being carried out. In connection with the first case reported in the capital city, a high-level review of the situation will also take place on Sunday.

The Union Health Ministry on Sunday officially confirmed the first case of monkeypox in Delhi, saying that the 34-year-old male patient is presently isolated at the Lok Nayak Hospital in the national capital, while on Saturday, the World Health Organization declared the global monkeypox outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern.

With this, India's overall monkeypox case tally has increased to four. On Saturday, the World Health Organization declared the global monkeypox outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern. The global health body said the expanding monkeypox outbreak in more than 70 countries is an "extraordinary" situation that now qualifies as a global emergency.

NOTHING ELSE EXPLAINS MAMATA BANERJEE'S SILENCE ON PARTHA CHATTERJEE EXCEPT ADMISSION OF CRIME: BJP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday slammed the Trinamool Congress and said that the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's silence over the arrest of the state's Commerce and Industries Minister and close confidante Partha Chatterjee is an admission of corruption committed by the latter. Chatterjee was arrested on Saturday by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the recruitment irregularities in West Bengal School Service Commission when he was the state Education Minister. West Bengal BJP Co-incharge Amit Malviya tweeted: "Nothing else explains Mamata Banerjee's silence on Partha Chatterjee, her close confidant, now in jail, except an admission of the crime, when she had hit the road to defend a police officer! Mamata may be trying to distance herself from Partha, but their association is well known." Hitting out at the West Bengal Chief Minister, Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Saturday said: "In a well-planned conspiracy, Mamata Banerjee is trying to target the central law enforcement agen-

cies and its senior officers and spreading lies so that her political and financial crimes remain under the carpet and are not made public. It is a ploy to hush up cases of massive corruption and scam of the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress government." Referring to ED seizures made from Chatterjee's close associate, Chandrasekhar added: "Ironically till a few days ago West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee used to praise her Minister Partha Chatterjee and his associates for their 'good work', now the entire world knows what kind of work they were doing. It is because of the 'good work' that illegal money and property worth crores is being accumulated." BJP National Vice-President Dilip Ghosh said: "A few days ago Chief Minister Banerjee had openly praised Minister Chatterjee and his close female associate. It is also a truth that under Banerjee's government, the recruitment process has never been fair and transparent, and in every government recruitment process there has been massive corruption and nepotism." "Mamata Banerjee claims that she knows everything, but she does not know what her Ministers are doing,"

RSS' Dattatreya Hosabale raises concern over rising food prices



New Delhi: Expressing concern over the ever-increasing inflation and rising food prices in the country, RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale has advised serious consideration on the issues. Hosabale made the remarks on Saturday while addressing the two-day conference organised by RSS-affiliate Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, and Agricultural Economics Research Centre. He said that food, clothing and housing are the basic needs of the people and so the prices should be affordable and bearable. He also stressed that the basic necessities should be affordable but the burden should not be passed on to the farmers, adding that cooperatives can play a big role in this regard. In his address, Hosabale gave the credit for the development of agriculture in the country in the past 75 years since independence to the governments, scientists and farmers. He also stressed the need for a movement to make agriculture attractive in order to stop migration from villages to cities.

India well-equipped to give befitting reply to all enemies: Rajnath Singh

I CRITICISE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S POLICIES, NOT HIS INTENTION: RAJNATH SINGH

Jammu: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said that those criticising the country's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru must remember not to question either his intention or integrity.

In his address at an event to commemorate the 'Kargil Vijay Diwas', he said that there are a lot of people who criticise Nehru and that "I also belong to a political party... I do not want to criticise any Prime Minister of the country". "I also do not question the intention and integrity of any Prime Minister. There was no failure in their intention," he said, in a reference to the 1962 India-China war. "We indeed faced defeat in 1962, but India is no longer that same nation. India is one of the strongest nations now. I don't target the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru for the 1962 debacle. I criticise the policies India adopted then," he asserted.



New Delhi | Agencies

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said that India is "well equipped" to give befitting reply to "anyone who casts an evil eye on us." Addressing an event to commemorate 'Kargil Vijay Diwas', he said: "India has become a strong and confident nation which is well equipped to protect its people from anyone who tries to cast an evil eye. It is the spirit of national pride at the core of our values that protects the unity and integrity of India." He asserted that the sole aim of the Narendra Modi government is to safeguard the interests of the nation and it has taken a series of steps to develop a self-reliant defence ecosystem that provides indigenous state-of-the-art weapons/equipment to the armed forces to fight all kinds of future wars.

"Our priority is to achieve Atmanirbharta in defence as it is central to developing a robust security apparatus for the safety and security of the nation. To realise this vision, 68 per cent of the defence budget has been earmarked for procurement of defence equipment from domestic sources," he said, adding that due to the recent measures taken by the government, India today finds itself among the top 25 exporters of the world in defence items. "We have set a target to achieve Rs 35,000 crore worth of exports by 2025 and become the top exporter in the times to come. Our aim is to make India a global superpower. This will be a fitting tribute to our fallen heroes who made the supreme sacrifice while dreaming of an India which is strong, prosperous, self-reliant and victorious," Rajnath Singh said. Terming Article 370 as an artificial legal barrier, he asserted that its abrogation brought a new dawn of hope to the dreams and aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the youth. The decision opened new avenues for the welfare of the people and the UT is now progressing at a much faster rate, he added. On PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan, the minister said that these areas are illegally occupied by Pakistan and a resolution to free it has been unanimously passed in the Parliament.

Lucknow jeweller gets extortion letter with bullet

Lucknow: A jeweller here has received an extortion letter with a live bullet through a courier. According to police, Aakash Gupta, owner of a jewellery shop here in Krishna Nagar, received a threat letter through a courier. When he opened the letter, he found a live bullet in it. "The extortionist has demanded Rs 5 lakh and gave a life threat to me," said Gupta. He said a delivery man of a private courier company came to his shop and handed him the letter. "After reading the letter, I immediately informed the police. Two policemen were deployed for my security," he said. The name of the sender in the letter is given as Vijay Jaiswal and the address is given as Lucknow Jail. The letter said that if the money was not given, the bullet would be used. The jeweller has been asked to hand over the money to the sender at the jail. It is noteworthy that 12 years ago, Aakash's brother had been murdered and his body was found in Barabanki district. The accused have not yet been arrested. In 2019, a dacoity took place in their cousin's jewellery shop in which two persons were killed. ADCP (Central) Raghendra Mishra said that the matter was being investigated and action would be taken at the earliest. A few persons have also been detained for questioning, he added.

New nasal monoclonal antibody therapy effective against Covid variants, MERS

NEW YORK | Agencies

Researchers have discovered a neutralising monoclonal antibody that potentially acts as a potent universal coronavirus therapy against SARS-CoV-2 and all its variants of concern, including Beta, Gamma, Delta, Epsilon and Omicron. It showed effectiveness against the deadly previous coronaviruses SARS-CoV, that emerged in China in 2002, and MERS-CoV, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome that appeared in Saudi Arabia in 2012. It even showed effectiveness against several common cold coronaviruses, according to the study published in the journal PLOS Pathogens. The monoclonal antibody -- 1249A8 hmAb -- targets the S2 stalk region of the viral spike (S) protein that is highly conserved among beta-coronaviruses, yet is also essential for the virus to attach and enter cells, leading to infection. When given as an intraperitoneal



injection or a nasal dose, it protected mice from SARS-CoV-2 illness, as measured by maintenance of body weight and clearance of virus from mouse lungs four days after infection, said the team from University of Alabama at Birmingham. "New Covid variants pose the risk of evading the immune system a even in vaccinated and previously

infected individuals, and there remains the potential for other genetically distinct coronaviruses to emerge as new pandemic strains in the future," said James J. Koblitz, from the varsity. "For these reasons, finding new therapeutic and prophylactic drugs and vaccine strategies that have universal activity against the coron-

aviruses is essential for protecting humanity against the current and future beta-coronavirus outbreaks or pandemics," he added. Vaccines and other monoclonal antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 have largely focused on the receptor-binding domain, or the RBD, located at the heads of the S viral protein spike that projects from the surface of the virus. The RBD is very good at eliciting an immune response, but that portion of the S permits many mutations that can let the virus escape antibodies. This team focused on finding an antibody target on a part of the spike called the S2, or the stalk region. This region is highly conserved and only rarely mutates because that would disrupt its essential function. After the RBD at the head of the S attaches the coronavirus to a receptor molecule on the surface of a target cell, the S2 stalk acts to bring the virus inside the target cell. There the virus replicates, killing the cell and releasing a hoard of new, infectious

viruses. The team screened blood samples from adult convalescent patients. Seventeen hmAbs showed binding to the S2 protein. Only four of these were able to neutralise a SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus and a live SARS-CoV-2, including the Beta and Omicron variants. The top performer, the 1249A8 hmAb, had the broadest and most potent neutralising activity, against strains. The team had previously demonstrated that direct respiratory delivery of a SARS-CoV-2 RBD-specific 1213H7 hmAb enables substantial dose-sparing therapeutic activity in hamsters. The 1249A8, 1213H7 cocktail -- given as a nasal dose, 12 hours after infections with SARS-CoV-2 Delta or the first SARS-CoV isolated in 2002 -- showed broad therapeutic activity in hamsters. The two hmAbs are being developed as a therapeutic cocktail for Covid-19 by Aridis Pharmaceuticals, a US biopharmaceutical company in its AR-701 cocktail designed for inhaled delivery.



SCUFFLE BREAKS OUT IN KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE OVER DARSHAN

A SCUFFLE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN DEVOTEES AND FOUR TEMPLE SERVANTS INSIDE THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF THE KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE IN VARANASI IN UTTAR PRADESH.

Varanasi | Agencies

A scuffle took place between devotees and four temple servants inside the sanctum sanctorum of the Kashi Vishwanath temple in

Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. The CCTV footage of the incident has now gone viral on the social media.

In the footage, temple servants and the two devotees are seen showing each other in what appears to be the inside area of the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

According to reports, the incident took place on Saturday evening, when an 'aarti' was underway at the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

The devotees insisted on having a darshan even when the doors were shut. What started as an argument almost came to blows when the devotees and temple servants started

pushing each other inside the sanctum.

The devotees were taken out of the sanctum and temple servants sent a letter to the temple administration apprising them of the incident. They accused the police of non-cooperation.

Meanwhile, the two devotees have filed a police complaint against five people, including the four temple servants, after the incident, alleging assault.

A few days ago, there was a similar dispute between the state police and the temple staff regarding darshan. The staff reportedly sat on dharna and the issue was resolved later.

After cross-voting by MLAs, Gujarat Cong fears poaching of Assembly candidates

Gandhinagar | Agencies

After seven Gujarat Congress MLAs reportedly cross-voted in the Presidential election, senior party leaders have started fearing poaching of party candidates in the run-up to the Assembly elections scheduled later this year.

Few leaders strongly believe that the only solution is that the party nominates genuine and original Congressmen with a clean slate sans any criminal cases.

A senior Congress leader wishing anonymity told IANS, "The way seven Congress members cross-voted, they can go to any extent. They (the BJP) can poach Congress candidates either before or after the filing of nomination for the Assembly polls, which will not only embarrass the party, but also throttle its chances of returning to power in Gujarat." The foundation of such fear, the politician believes, is that the ruling party has set a target to win at least 152 seats in the 182-member



Gujarat Assembly. The BJP is focusing on seats which the Congress has won multiple times, for which poaching might become necessary.

In the recent past, the BJP has roped in many Congress workers and leaders into its fold, but in the last 60 years, not a single Congress candidate has switched sides, said party leader Paresh Dhanani, the former Leader of Opposition in the Gujarat Assembly. "I have suggested to the senior

leaders of the party to field die-hard Congressmen as party candidates, those who have risen from the party cadre and have stayed with the Congress even during times of crisis. If such candidates are fielded, the BJP will never be successful in poaching," Dhanani said. The Congress will also have to ensure that the candidates have no criminal history, pointed out Jivanbhai Kumbharvadiya, President of the Jamnagar district Congress committee. Kumbharvadiya also feels that all those who switched sides had some weaknesses, which were exploited by the ruling party. However, according to Shankarbhai Amaliyar, head of the BJP's district committee in Dahod, importing opposition party workers or leaders has had a negative impact on BJP's cadre, because the party workers are committed to BJP's ideology and are not in a rat race to secure electoral tickets. Amaliyar said that the party workers, including aspiring candidates, are aware that when senior leaders take some decisions, they are in the larger interest of the party.

Telangana Congress MLA hints at joining BJP

Hyderabad | Agencies

Congress' Telangana MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy on Sunday dropped hints that he will soon switch loyalties to the BJP.

The member from Munugode constituency said that only BJP can defeat the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). The Congress leader also remarked that switching loyalties is a historic necessity. He told media persons that he feels that the time has come to move to another party. He said if people of Munugode want, there will be a by-election in the constituency. Rajgopal Reddy, who met Union

Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi two days ago, claimed that they did not discuss politics, but the situation in Telangana. He alleged that a state, which once had a surplus budget, is now facing a situation where it is not in a position to pay salaries to the government employees. He alleged that the TRS government pushed the state into a debt trap.

He also claimed that after the defeat in Huzurabad by-election, Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao was making plans to win the by-election in Munugode.

The MLA said though he likes the Congress and has respect for party president Sonia Gandhi, the party has taken some wrong deci-

sions, and is not in a position to take on the TRS.

Without naming state Congress chief A. Revanth Reddy, he said that he can't work under those who had gone to jail.

Rajgopal Reddy and his brother Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, who is a Congress MP, had openly criticised the appointment of Revanth Reddy as the party chief last year.

While Venkat Reddy recently mended fences with Revanth Reddy, his brother remained a bitter critic of him.

Rajgopal Reddy has been in touch with BJP leaders for more than two years. He, however, delayed the move to switch parties.

ASSAM POLICE BUST INTER-STATE DRUGS RACKET, ARREST MANIPUR COP

Guwahati: Assam police have busted an inter-state drugs racket with the arrest of two persons, including an officer of Manipur Police, a senior official said here on Sunday.

Joint Commissioner of Police Partha Sarathi Mahanta said that a consignment of one lakh Yaba tablets (a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine) had come from Moreh near the India-Myanmar border which was meant to be sent to Bengaluru via Guwahati. The accused persons, who have been identified as Thongkipin Haokip and Letmychhin Haokip, were arrested when they were coming to Guwahati in a Tata Nexon car.

One of them is a police officer from Manipur's Moreh district. According to sources, he was involved in the drugs racket for the last four years.

Odisha CM meets President-elect Droupadi Murmu in Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Sunday met President-elect Droupadi Murmu at the latter's residence in the national capital.

Patnaik is in Delhi to attend the swearing-in ceremony of India's first tribal President scheduled on Monday. After meeting Murmu, Patnaik said he is honoured that the daughter of Odisha has been chosen to become the first citizen of the country.

"I will be present at her oath-taking ceremony on Monday," Patnaik told reporters. Murmu secured victory in the Presidential



poll on Thursday after defeating Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha by a huge margin. She will become the 15th President of India. Murmu hails from

Rairangpur in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, which burst into celebrations the moment the news of her victory reached there on Thursday.

Smriti Irani sends legal notice to Congress over 'malicious allegations' against daughter

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Minister Smriti Irani on Sunday sent legal notice to the Congress and its senior leaders Pawan Khera, Jairam Ramesh, Netta D'Souza over their "malicious allegations" against her daughter and asked them to tender a written unconditional apology.

She also asked them to withdraw the allegations they have made against her 18-year old daughter with immediate effect. The notice, sent through her lawyer, said that these allegations have been made with the knowledge of their falsity, or at least in careless disregard of the truth.

"The false allegations were intended to hurt the reputation of our client as a minister and a person in public life, and also to outrage her modesty and that of her daughter. These are serious offences under the Indian Penal



Code and also a tort making the addressees liable to penal damages.

"In the circumstances as mentioned hereinabove, we hereby call upon addressees to tender a written unconditional and

unequivocal apology forthwith not later than 24 hours from the receipt of this notice, which should be widely disseminated in print media and on social media.

"Unconditionally withdraw the allegations with immediate effect

and cause to remove all such false information from all platform(s) disseminating the allegations, including but not limited to the allegations.

"Cease and desist from disseminating any content whatsoever, arising out of or in any connection with the allegations and/or similar content thereto in respect of our client and her daughter, Zoish Irani. Ensure that all the record of the allegations is permanently deleted and the same is never disseminated re-circulated in future," the legal notice read.

In case of failure to act as mentioned above, Irani would be constrained to initiate appropriate civil and criminal proceedings against them, the notice warned.

On Saturday, the Congress had in a press conference alleged that restaurant 'Silly Souls Cafe and Bar' run by Irani's daughter in Goa, got its excise licence fraudulently.

Allow Ukraine-returned medical students to study on here, Stalin urges PM

Chennai | Agencies

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra

Modi to give necessary directions to the concerned authorities and ministries to make necessary amendments in the relevant Central acts for allowing medical students who have returned from war-torn Ukraine to complete their education in Indian institution.

His demand came soon after the Parliament was told that the National Medical Commission does not permit to transfer or accommodate any foreign medical students to any Indian medical college or university.

Stalin, in the letter, pointed out that even though the reply in the Parliament was given in response to steps taken in certain states regarding admission to medical colleges, this has brought to light the uncertain future of medical students who came back to the country from war-torn Ukraine, thus, dropping their medical education midway.

He said that considering the present situation in Ukraine, it may not be practically possible for the students to return to colleges there and that uncertainty will prevail even after the war



ends. According to him, since the commencement of war in Ukraine, around 2,000 medical students have returned to Tamil Nadu, thus, making it the state with the maximum number of Ukraine returnees. If the government is having difficulties in amending the relevant Central acts for medical admission, then it should take necessary steps at the earliest to provide the students with an alternative option to continue their education in foreign universities with similar regulations and academic ambience, he said. The Tamil Nadu government would provide full cooperation to all the efforts taken by the Prime Minister and the Centre in this matter, he added.

NORTHERN ARMY COMMANDER INTERACTS WITH SECURITY PERSONNEL AT AMARNATH CAVE SHRINE

Srinagar: Northern Army Commander Lt General Upendra Dwivedi visited the Amarnath cave shrine on Sunday where he interacted with the members of J&K Police, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the Indian Army.

A defence statement said: "During his visit, Lt Gen Dwivedi commended the security personnel for their selfless service during the recent cloud burst incident."

At least 16 people were killed while 40 others were injured in flash floods near the cave shrine on July 8.

Timely action taken by the security forces, including the Army, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), helped evacuate over 15,000 pilgrims to safer places during the flash floods.

These teams also retrieved bodies of the deceased from the debris.

KULDEEP BISHNOI MEETS NADDA, HARYANA CM

New Delhi: Haryana MLA Kuldeep Bishnoi on Sunday met BJP chief JP Nadda and Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and discussed political issues.

On July 10, Bishnoi had met Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

In the recent Rajya Sabha biennial election held in June, Congress MLA Bishnoi cross-voted which led to the defeat of party candidate and former Union Minister Ajay Maken.

Due to the cross-voting, Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi removed Bishnoi from all party positions including the post of a special invitee to the Congress Working Committee with immediate effect.

After meeting Nadda on Sunday, Bishnoi tweeted: "During meeting discussed current political issues with him."

"Talking about his meeting with Khattar, Bishnoi said" "Held an important discussion regarding current political issues and development work of Haryana."

Bishnoi served two terms as a Lok Sabha Member and is serving the fourth term as a member of the Haryana Legislative Assembly from Adampur constituency.

Delhi govt's event hijacked on PMO's directions: AAP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday alleged that an event organised by the Delhi government was hijacked on the directions of Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and banners were allegedly put up carrying pictures of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the stage.

"On the orders of the PMO, the police entered the stage of Delhi government's 'Van Mahotsav' event's closing ceremony and put

up a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said. Rai alleged that the police forcibly entered the event which was scheduled for Sunday evening and also threatened to arrest the AAP workers if they removed the Prime Minister's poster from the stage. "What does Modiji want to prove by putting his picture in the programme of Delhi government?" the AAP queried on social media, where it also shared pictures of torn-down posters of Delhi Chief

Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The programme was to be jointly attended by Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena and Kejriwal along with Rai. "Who does not know your (Modi) name, face and photos. But this act of hijacking a programme has made it clear that there is a fear of Arvind Kejriwal instilled in your heart," Rai said.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Chief Minister along with the State Environment Minister skipped the event and will not participate in it, party sources said.

INDIA REPORTS 20,279 FRESH COVID-19 CASES, 36 DEATHS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India on Sunday reported a marginal decline at 20,279 new Covid-19 cases in last 24 hours as compared to 21,411 reported on Saturday, said Union Health Ministry.

In the same period, the country has reported 36 more Covid-19 deaths, taking the nationwide toll to 5,26,033.

Meanwhile, the active case-load of the country has marginally increased to 1,52,200 cases, accounting for 0.35 per cent of the country's total Covid-positive cases.

The recovery of 20,279 patients in the last 24 hours took



the cumulative tally to 4,32,10,522. Consequently,

India's recovery rate stands at 98.45 per cent.

Goa collaborating with foreign countries for employment: CM

Panaji | Agencies

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Sunday said that the NRI Commission is collaborating with foreign countries for generating employment opportunities for the youth in the coastal state.

"NRI Commissioner is working to provide overseas jobs to youth. Efforts are there to seek jobs available in medical, nursing, paramedical areas overseas," he added.

The Chief Minister said that in Goa, nearly 2 lakh jobs will be created in the tourism sector in the next five years and the youth should look at all opportunities to seize them.

"Youth should see in which area they can join and build their career," he added. Sawant said that it is not possible to give government jobs to everyone, but the jobs available in other sectors in Goa and across the country must be seized. "It is painful to see that candidates who have passed Engineering, LLM apply for clerk post (in government departments). They should make a career in their profession as there are many opportunities in their respective areas," he added. Sawant said that 'Skill India -- Be A Professional' programme will be organised in the state to guide youth so they get jobs in their profession.

BJP FLAGS FOUND IN UP CONGRESS OFFICE

Lucknow: BJP flags were found in UP Congress state headquarters in Lucknow and a video of the incident has gone viral on social media.

Former Congress leader Zeeshan Haider tweeted a video of the incident in which Congress party workers are seen standing around, gazing in apparent surprise.

"There seems to be no buzz at the incident. Those who have charge of the state office are apparently neither shocked nor surprised at this. The state of the Congress can be assessed from this incident," he told IANS.

None of the office bearers at the Congress office were willing to comment on this. One of the young leaders said, "We are probing the incident. This is the mischief of some unidentified people."



SANJAY RAUT SLAMS MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY FOR RECOGNISING REBELS

Sanjay Raut alleged the Centre was trying to save the current Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government to "finish off" the Shiv Sena.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday alleged that Speakers of the Maharashtra Assembly and the Lok Sabha violated constitutional norms by recognising the rebel groups of party lawmakers.

The action is akin to a temple priest looting its donation box and temple trustees cutting its dome atop. Similar things are happening in temples of democracy in the country, Raut claimed in his weekly column Rokhthok in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana'.

He alleged the Centre was trying to save the current Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government to "finish off" the Shiv Sena. The Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government in Maharashtra collapsed last month after Sena MLA Eknath Shinde along with 39 other legislators revolted against the party leadership. Shinde was on June 30 sworn in as the chief minister and BJP's Devendra Fadnis took oath as his deputy. Out of the 19 Shiv Sena MPs in the Lok Sabha, 12 are lending



support to the Shinde camp.

CM Shinde on Tuesday said Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has recognised Rahul Shewale as the Shiv Sena leader in the Lower House of Parliament. In his column in Saamana on Sunday, Raut claimed, "After the formation of the new government in Maharashtra, the Legislative Assembly Speaker violated

the constitutional norms. The picture was no different in the Lok Sabha."

The rebel MLAs and MPs are now free from probes which they are facing from central investigation agencies, said Raut, who is the executive editor of Saamana. The contention of the rebel lawmakers that they are the real Shiv Sena and have not quit the party is an attempt to save their skin,

he claimed.

As per the 10th Schedule of the Constitution, 16 rebel legislators including Chief Minister Eknath Shinde stand disqualified, he further claimed. "The Centre is trying to save the state government and the 16 rebels to finish off the Shiv Sena permanently," Raut alleged.

The country's future and its democracy depend on what decision the Supreme Court's constitution bench takes (on a petition filed by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena seeking disqualification of these rebels), he said. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla recognised the breakaway group of Sena parliamentarians without taking cognisance of a letter that party MP Vinayak Raut gave to him, the Shiv Sena's chief spokesperson claimed. Vinayak Raut had in his letter submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker on Monday night said he was the "duly appointed" leader of the Shiv Sena Parliamentary Party and Rajan Vichare was the chief whip.

He had also asked the Speaker not to entertain any representation from the rival faction.

Aaditya Thackeray Predicts Mid-Term Polls In Maharashtra

Aaditya Thackeray also said that the rebel Sena MLAs who have been "forced to revolt" were welcome to return to the Uddhav Thackeray-led party if they wished so.



Team Absolute | Paithan

Shiv Sena leader Aaditya Thackeray on Saturday claimed that the Eknath Shinde-led government will soon collapse and Maharashtra will have mid-term elections.

Speaking before a gathering of party workers here on the third day of his 'Shiv Samvad Yatra', an outreach campaign, he also said the rebel Sena legislators betrayed his father, then chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, when he was unwell.

Paithan is the Assembly constituency of Sena MLA and former minister Sandipan Bhumre who has joined the rebel Shiv Sena faction led by chief minister Eknath Shinde.

"Mark my words... this government will soon collapse and Maharashtra will have to face mid-term polls," said Aaditya Thackeray, a former minister himself.

Rubbishing Bhumre's claim that Sena ministers in the previous Sena-NCP-Congress government did not get funds, Aaditya Thackeray said Paithan region got the first scheme under the Marathwada water-grid project. "Bhumre was given Assembly ticket five times. When I thought of everything we have done for these people, tears came to my

eyes. But this is not the time to cry, this is the time to fight," he said. The state faced rain fury in the last fortnight and many lives were lost, but the government is being run by only two people (Shinde and his deputy Devendra Fadnis), the Sena leader said. He called the 40 rebel MLAs as "traitors" who conspired to split the Shiv Sena when his father was unwell and leading the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Later in the day, Aaditya Thackeray also spoke at a rally at Nevasa in Ahmednagar district where he praised Shankarrao Gadakh, a Sena ally and MLA of Krantikari Shetkari Paksh. "If you have friends, they should be like Gadakh. Your own people (on the other hand) betray you and turn traitors," he said, speaking even as it rained heavily.

"Gadakh was firm on his decision to stay with Uddhav-ji and kept his commitment even after the government was toppled. While working in the government, Uddhav-ji's only mistake was that he couldn't indulge in politicking. He did not snoop on his MLAs and MPs. We will continue to commit this mistake, because if we can't trust Shiv Sena workers, who do we trust," he said.

Sex Racket Busted In Thane, 3 Women Rescued: Police

BASED ON A TIP-OFF, THE POLICE LAID A TRAP ON FRIDAY EVENING BY SENDING A DECOY CUSTOMER NEAR A RESTAURANT IN WAGLE ESTATE AREA IN THANE.

Team Absolute | Thane

Police have busted a flesh trade racket operating in Maharashtra's Thane city and rescued three women, an official said on Sunday. One of the rescued

women, aged 22 and hailing from West Bengal, told the police that she was compelled to take up prostitution to pay for the medical treatment of her father who was suffering from tuberculosis, said senior police inspector Mahesh Patil from the anti-human trafficking cell.

Based on a tip-off, the police laid a trap on Friday evening by sending a decoy customer near a restaurant in Wagle Estate area in Thane.

They arrested a woman who was allegedly running the prostitution racket, the official said. The police also rescued three women - two aged 20 and 22 belonging to West Bengal and one 18-

year-old native of Samastipur in Bihar, the official said.

The accused woman used to charge ₹ 20,000 per customer and pay ₹ 3,000 out of it to the victims, he said.

The accused and the victims worked as bar dancers in Dombivli township here, but as the money earned from it was insufficient, they had taken up flesh trade, the official said.

The rescued women were sent to a shelter home.

The Srinagar police here registered a case against the accused under provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, the official added.

EDUCATION SOCIETY CHEATED STUDENTS OF 65 CRORES: PROBE AGENCY

The money collected from 350 medical aspirants was used for purchasing properties or for personal use by the accused, the probe agency alleged in the charge-sheet recently filed in the money laundering case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The former working president of the Kolhapur-based Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Education Society (SCSES) and other accused had collected over ₹ 65 crore from medical aspirants for admission in a college run by the trust, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has claimed in its charge-sheet in the case.

The money collected from 350

medical aspirants was used for purchasing properties or for personal use by the accused, the probe agency alleged in the charge-sheet recently filed in the money laundering case.

According to the ED, the SCSES had collected the amount despite being aware that it did not have necessary permissions from the Medical Council of India or Maharashtra University of Health Science for granting admissions to the MBBS course. The ED is probing the case pertaining to duping of medical aspirants by the SCSES, in which the trust's former working president Mahadev Deshmukh and his brother Appashaheb, the then secretary have been arrested.

The Deshmukh brothers are currently in judicial custody.

The probe agency filed its charge-sheet before a special PMLA court against Mahadev, three former officer bearers. As per the charge-sheet,

Mahadev Deshmukh in collusion with the other accused had cheated around 350 gullible students from 2011 to 2016 and collected around ₹ 65.70 crore on the pretext of offering admission for MBBS course in the college called Institute of Medical Science and Research (IMSR) run by the SCSES. The accused assured the students of granting admission despite being aware that the society did not have permission from the Medical Council of India and the Maharashtra University of Health Science, it stated.

The students were neither given admission, nor was their amount refunded, it said.

The funds were allegedly collected in cash and shown as hospital income and integrated in the financial system through seven bank accounts of the society and colleges, it said. The ED has also claimed that the money was further layered in the

guise of salaries, processing fees, construction payments, purchase of medical equipment etc., and was either integrated in the individual bank account of the accused persons or withdrawn in cash by them.

The proceeds of crime were utilised for purchase of movable and immovable properties or for personal use, it said. Meanwhile, the SCSES' present director Arun Gore, in his statement told the ED, claimed that after he joined as the charitable educational trust's director, many students had approached the new board with their grievances.

It came to light that the earlier board of directors had taken cash from approximately 750 students and given them bogus assurance of admission, Gore's statement said.

As per the charge-sheet, he has submitted a list of those students and the details of the cash amount collected from 720 students.

Har Ghar Tiranga campaign shoots up Tricolour demand

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Off the Western Express Highway, past monsoon puddle, at Naigaon East sits a massive compound. On entering the compound gate, you find a huge Tricolour flying above a high pole. The glass door nearby leads to the factory where dozens of workers are busy creating our Tiranga of various sizes.

From procuring fabric to painting, colouring, ironing, cutting and packing, the flag-making company's 55,000 sq ft factory is working overtime to meet the huge demand.

"Never before in my life have I seen such a great demand for the Tricolour. It is difficult to meet the demand since we cannot compromise on quality," says the company's founder-owner

74-year-old Amarjitt Singh Nagi. Ever since the Centre announced the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign as part of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav, the celebrations of 75th year of our Independence, the demand for the national flag has shot up. What has accentuated this demand is Home Minister Amit Shah's appeal to the citizens on Friday this past week to hoist the Tricolour from their homes from August 13 to 15. "The bulk of the order has put us into overdrive. People are ordering online too," says Nagi's son Dalbir. At his first-floor office at the factory premises Nagi shows us a circular of the government which names his company among the flag makers from where the flags can be procured. The circular also speaks of the government's resolve to see flags in 1.46 crore homes and 1.50 crore offices across the state.

Since the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign is backed by the BJP's top leaders, including PM Narendra Modi and Shah, the party workers have begun finding ways and means to make the campaign a grand success. The minority leaders of the BJP in the state too have got activated. BJP (Maharashtra) secretary Haider Azam has decided to distribute one lakh flags free among different mosques, madrasas and minority-owned schools and colleges across the state. "This is to create patriotic feelings among the citizens. We will ensure that the national flag reaches at least one lakh Muslim homes and establishments," says Azam who recently got senior BJP leader and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis gift a flag to cleric Mufti Manzur Ziyae. Gyan Shah at Byculla is preparing

to meet the BMC officials in a day or two to discuss the order for the Tricolour that the Civic body wants to place. "The demand has jumped to 40%

to 50% more than what it used to be on the eve of August 15 in the previous years. It is good that many people will now hoist the Tricolour on and around our Independence Day," says Shah. Both Nagi and Shah assert that Indians are not much used to hoisting the Tricolour like, say, Americans are.

"Everywhere you go in America, you will see people hoisting their national flag. It is displayed at government offices, private homes, factories, schools and colleges. We woke up to it only after industrialist Naveen Jindal won a court battle (in 1996) for flying the national flag as a fundamental right, says Negi.

CGST sleuths bust Rs 185 crore fake ITC scam in Mumbai, nab 2

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central GST's Mumbai South Commissionerate has busted a major racket of Rs 185 crore fake GST invoices used to avail bogus GST Input Tax Credit of around Rs 22 crore, and arrested two persons, officials said here on Saturday.

The accused are the proprietor of Aditya Enterprises, who lent his identity for the creation and use of this firm for the scam in return for monetary gains, and his friend who operated the entity to receive and issue fake GST invoices.

Following a specific tip-off, the Anti-Evasion Wing of CGST Mumbai South Commissionerate launched the investigations against Aditya Enterprises and detected that the purported business address was actually a residential premise with no trace of any trading activity.

The duo was produced before the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court and sent to 14 days' judicial custody.

The sleuths also found that the firm had fraudulently claimed ITC of Rs 11.01 crore and passed on ITC of Rs 10.96 crore, using bogus

invoices of around Rs 185 crore, though there were no actual business transactions involving supply or receipt of goods.

The CGST said that a network of over 250 such business organisations are spread across several states like Delhi, Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, and Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra, and these are being probed to recover the dues to the government.

This is the fifth arrest of the Commissionerate in the current fiscal and it has detected GST evasion of Rs 949 crore plus recovery of Rs 18 crore.

Woman assaulted in road rage; brother-sister duo among three held

THE ACCUSED WOMAN, WHOSE CAR DASHED AGAINST THE TWO-WHEELER OF THE BEAUTICIAN, IS IDENTIFIED AS AAYA KADAWALA AND HER BROTHER AS FAIZ KADAWALA, AN OFFICIAL SAID

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A road rage incident in Mumbai led to the abduction of a 37-year-old beautician riding a two-wheeler allegedly by a man and his sister in suburban Khar, following which three persons were arrested, police said.

The accused woman, whose car dashed against the two-wheeler of the beauti-



cian, is identified as Aaya Kadawala and her brother as Faiz Kadawala, an official said. The incident occurred on the Khar link road on Saturday late night when a car allegedly driven by Aaya dashed against the two-wheeler of the complainant, leading to a heated argument between them, he said.

Meanwhile, Aaya called up her brother Faiz who in turn asked his friends to reach the spot. "They all started abusing and assaulting the complainant woman and her cousin brother. The accused took away her gold chain and

two-wheeler and bundled her into their car. They drove to a hotel in Bandra where they again abused and threatened the woman," the official said quoting the First Information Report (FIR). In her FIR, the woman named the brother-sister duo and five unidentified persons. Police on Sunday arrested Aaya, Faiz, and one more person under various sections, including 365 (Kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person) and 392 (Punishment for robbery), of the Indian Penal Code, the official added.

Mumbai police serve notices prohibiting unlawful assembly to Aarey protestors

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai police have started serving notices

under the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) to people gathering to stage demonstrations against the construction of the metro car shed at Aarey colony here, an official said on Sunday.

The city police have started issuing notices under section 149 of the CrPC, prohibiting unlawful gathering at the protest venue in the western suburb of Goregaon, he said.

Notices have been served to two protestors, Tabrez Sayyed and Jayesh Bhise, in the last two days warning them not to assemble unlawfully and violate the law, the official said.

Hundreds of protestors, including women and senior citizens, have been staging demonstrations with placards and "Save Aarey" banners. A few people were seen with placards appealing to the newly elected President Droupadi Murmu to intervene and save the forest area in the



city. The police have barricaded the venue and no one is allowed to go near the car shed site, the official said.

Amrita Bhattacharya, one of the protestors, said "People come to the protest venue from different parts of the city and the police have been taking down their names and addresses to serve them a notice." Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Zone

12 Somnath Gharge said, "Leaders, chiefs of NGOs and people heading various groups have been approaching the police seeking permission to stage demonstrations. Hence, we issued notices under section 149 of the CrPC just to warn them to maintain law and order." Soon after the assuming office, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde directed the

state administration to submit a proposal to build the Metro-3 car shed in Aarey Colony instead of Kanjurmarg. The previous Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had shifted the proposed car shed site to Kanjurmarg from Aarey Colony on the ground of environment protection, but the issue got embroiled in a



EDITOR'S SPECS

Murmu as prez may yield rich poll dividend

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to pick a candidate from the last row to be the country's first citizen serves two purposes. It empowers and fires the aspirations of the most marginalised sections. It can also fetch rich electoral rewards for the ruling NDA. As a tribal and a woman, the new Indian president, Droupadi Murmu, represents two of the most neglected sections of Indian society.

The socio-economic plight of women and tribals cannot be overstated even as we enter the Amrit Kal of India's independence. Tribals' age-old existential struggle for their rights over jal, jangal, jameen continues, and they still belong to the group that independent India's development schemes have least benefited. Women, too, need the government's attention as gender equality is one of the critical imperatives for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders in 2015. President Murmu's ascension to the Rashtrapati Bhawan has brought the focus back on these issues. The symbolism of her selection is not lost, and discussions on how her presence on Raisina Hill would affect the sections she represents have already begun. Apart from bringing the plight of tribals and women centre stage, electoral considerations may have played a role in the selection. The criticality of the tribal vote could not have been more apparent than in how Murmu's nomination forced Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren to break ranks with the opposition to vote for her. Aam Aadmi Party of Arvind Kejriwal has made concerted efforts to win over the tribals of Gujarat. He has tied up with the Bhartiya Tribal Party of the state's prominent tribal leader, Chhotubhai Vasava. Tribals constitute nearly 15% of Gujarat's population. With Murmu's elevation, the BJP can expect to retain its support among the tribals.

INSIDE DROUPADI MURMU'S WORLD: PASSIONATE TEACHER, DISCIPLINARIAN, VEGETARIAN

President-designate of India Droupadi S. Murmu is not new to records and several are already to her credit in a dizzying political career spanning barely a quarter century, zooming from a Municipal Councillor in 1997 to the country's First Citizen in 2022, for which she will take the oath on Monday (July 25).

President-designate of India Droupadi S. Murmu is not new to records and several are already to her credit in a dizzying political career spanning barely a quarter century, zooming from a Municipal Councillor in 1997 to the country's First Citizen in 2022, for which she will take the oath on Monday (July 25).

With this, Murmu will be the first tribal, second woman, post Pratibha Patil (2007-2012), and the latest President with a teaching background after Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1962-1967), Dr Zakir Hussain (1967-69), Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma (1992-1997), K.R. Narayanan (1997-2002), and Pranab Mukherjee (2012-17), ascending to the country's highest office.

A stern disciplinarian, as acknowledged by her daughter Itishree Ganesh Hembram, her teaching experience may prove handy - brooking no nonsense from errant politicians, but without wielding the proverbial cane!

At 64, Murmu will be the youngest-ever President, pipping the record-holder, Neelam Sanjiva Reddy (1977-1982), who also took office at 64, by a couple of months.

As Murmu prepares to enter the majestic Presidential Palace, her thoughts would stray to her humble beginnings in the small village of Uparbeda, Odisha, where she is born in a Santhal tribe family, and had two brothers -- Bhagat (deceased) and Taranisen, who is now her close aide.

A brilliant student, she later went on to become the first graduate from the tribal hamlet where once her father Biranchi Tudu and grandfather Narayan Tudu lorded as 'Sardars' (head-men).

While leaving her primary school, the headmaster mechanically asked what she planned to do in life, the little Droupadi innocently replied, "public service", but five decades later, he realised that she had fulfilled her childhood ambition.

After her schooling, uncle, Kartik Charan Majhi, a former MLA and Minister (1967), took her to Bhubaneswar to enable her complete her higher education, and graduated as a B.A. (1979) from the Rama Devi Women's College. That year, she secured a clerical job in the Odisha government and worked there for sev-



eral years and meanwhile, got married to a Bank of India employee, Shyam Charan Murmu, who lived in Pahadpur, around 10 km from Uparbeda.

Their first child, a daughter died aged three, devastating the young couple, who later had two sons -- Lakshman and Sipun, and a daughter Itishree, though whom the Murmu family later established a "Maharashtra connect". Murmu soon quit her government job to care for the family but took up teaching as honorary Assistant Professor at Sri Aurobindo Integral & Educational Research, in Rairangpur. In the early 1990s, she was noticed by some senior Bharatiya Janata Party leaders as a rare, educated, working tribal woman and cajoled her to take up public service. In 1997, the BJP fielded Murmu for the Rairangpur Municipal Council elections and she was elected as a Councillor - green-signalling her spiralling political career.

The greenhorn councillor took her job seriously, people were taken aback to see Murmu leading from the front, hands-on on the roads, solving civic problems and other basic issues, when most elected representatives notoriously "vanish" post-polls. Three years later, in 2000, she became a BJP MLA, repeated the feat in 2004 and also served as a Minister of State for five years handling various portfolios, and in 2015 became the first woman-ever from Odisha to be appointed Governor of

Jharkhand. The trail-blazer route from 2000-2015 had many pitfalls, her elder son Lakshman died in 2009, she lost her second son Sipun in an accident in 2013, and her husband Shyam Charan passed away due to a heart attack in 2014, leaving her shattered.

"After her first son's death, she veered to religion and meditation with the Brahma Kumaris, and craved inner solace to calm her distressed soul. It helped -- upon Sipun's demise, Droupadi even urged people not to visit as 'mourners' but as 'guests', and remained composed despite the major personal tragedies," said Odisha BJP Vice-President Sukeshi Oram. A prominent tribal leader herself, Oram remembers how they met regularly at various BJP events, shared accommodation, travelled together, but she barely displayed any trace of the emotional scars of the huge personal calamities she had endured. "She behaved at ease with everyone, rarely getting flustered... But whenever she could, she would immerse in spiritual activities and meditation, and even today is up very early in the morning for it," said Oram.

Later, Murmu founded the 'Shyam, Lakshman, Sipur Memorial Residential School for Tribal Girls' in her erstwhile family home and has donated most of her ancestral assets, according to Oram.

In 2008, Murmu travelled to Pune to "see off" Itishree who would pursue a 3-year Post Graduate Diploma in Management, specialising in Human Resources and International Management, from the Suryadatta Institute of Management & Mass Communication (SIMMC), and is now a manager with UCO Bank. "Madam Murmu had come to drop off her daughter like other parents, they were very friendly with everybody... Itishree beti lived in the campus hostel, was a bright student who mingled with all," said SIMMC Director Prof. Sanjay Chordiya. In 2006, Murmu turned a vegetarian, and now relishes only Satvik food, enjoys cooking and on special occasions, she would drop in at the Ranchi Raj Bhawan kitchen to guide the chefs to include a dash of Odisha cuisine for the VIPs. Murmu loves to drape Santhal tribal sarees, but is equally at ease in other styles, a family member revealed how she has asked them to take around a dozen (sarees) with them to New Delhi, as she will take the oath in her traditional attire on Monday. With public consciousness uppermost in her mind since her school days, Murmu has donated blood over 100 times and planted 1,000 saplings in different places, displaying her eco-friendly streak.

international

3 DEAD, 2 INJURED IN PHILIPPINES UNIVERSITY SHOOTING

Manila: At least three people were killed and two others injured on Sunday during a shooting incident at a university in the Philippines, police said.



The Metro Manila Development Authority confirmed that the shooting took place at 2.55 p.m. at the gate of Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City, reports Xinhua news agency. "A guard was killed," Quezon City Police District Director Remus Medina told local media.

The Philippine National Police said the shooter seized a car and attempted to escape, but was caught up by the police. The National Bureau of Investigation agents were also dispatched to the field "to investigate and extend assistance to the victims and school authority."

The campus is "currently on lockdown", said the university. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Alexander Gesmundo was supposed to attend the law school's graduation ceremony on Sunday afternoon, which was cancelled in the wake of the incident. Supreme Court spokesperson Brian Hosaka said Gesmundo was "in transit when the shooting happened and was advised to turn back".

Protests in Balochistan against 'fake encounter' by Pak security forces

Quetta | Agencies

Protests were held in Turbat and the provincial capital Quetta in Balochistan against the alleged "fake encounter" of Baloch missing persons by the Pakistani security forces in Ziarat, media reports said.

The families of the victims staged a three-day sit-in protest in front of the Governor's house in Quetta and warned that if the culprits of the Ziarat incident are not brought to justice, the protests will be expanded throughout the province indefinitely, Balochistan Post reported. Hundreds marched in Turbat carrying placards and banners, demanding justice for the victims of the alleged fake encounter. The BNP-Mengal also carried out a protest in Dalbandin, Dera Allah Yar, Chaghi, Noshki, Turbat and Jafarabad against the Ziarat incident.

Activists on social media condemned the fake encounter and campaigned for the perpetrators to be given the come-uppance. The hashtag StopBalochGenocide trended on Twitter in Pakistan for hours, Balochistan Post reported. The families of the victims



were also joined by activists from the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, the National Democratic Party and the Baloch Yakjehti Committee.

The protesters claimed that the nine men killed in the Ziarat incident were Baloch missing persons who were picked up by the Pakistani security forces. The protesters said the victims were killed in a fake encounter by the Pakistani security forces and demanded that the culprits be brought to justice. The families had lodged FIRs against

their "enforced disappearance", entered their names in the missing persons' list and filed applications against their "abduction" in the missing persons' commission of Pakistan. Furthermore, the families also visited the missing persons' camp in Quetta and participated in demonstrations, asking for the safe recovery of their loved ones.

The Home Minister of Balochistan, Zia Langove, also confirmed that five men had their names on the missing persons' list, Balochistan Post reported.

China launches space station's first lab module

Beijing | Agencies

China on Sunday launched Wentian, the first lab module of its space station.

The new module will function both as a backup of the core module and as a powerful scientific experiment platform, Xinhua reported.

Wentian, which literally means 'quest for the heavens', is the first of three modules planned for launch by China - the core module, Tianhe, and two lab modules, Wentian and Mengtian.

The Tianhe module was launched in April 2021, and the Mengtian module is set to be launched in October this year. The three together constitute the structure of China's Tiangong space station, is expected to be completed this year. The Wentian module is 17.9 meters long, and has a maximum diameter of 4.2 meters, and a takeoff mass of 23 tonnes, according to Liu Gang, deputy chief



designer of the China manned space program's space station system with the China Academy of Space Technology. The Long March-5B Y3 carrier rocket, carrying Wentian, blasted off from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on the coast of the southern island province of Hainan, according to the China Manned Space Agency. Together with a Shenzhou crew spacecraft and Tianzhou cargo vessel docked at the Chinese station, the completed Tiangong will be around 20 per cent as massive as the International Space Station (ISS), which has a mass of about 460 tonnes, Space.com reported.

Emergency declared as wildfire rages near Yosemite National Park

San Francisco | Agencies

Authorities have declared a state of emergency in part of California as a wildfire continued to rage near the Yosemite National Park.



The state of emergency has been declared in Mariposa County and in a statement, California Governor Gavin Newsom said the flames were being "driven by hot, dry weather and drought conditions".

The fast-moving wildfire, dubbed the Oak Fire, grew to 6,555 acres (about 26.5 square km) overnight, prompting mandatory evacuation orders, Xinhua news agency.

The wildfire ignited on Friday afternoon in Mariposa County and was still zero contained as of Saturday, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire).

It is about 50 km away from Yosemite Valley, near Yosemite National Park, one of the most popu-

lar national parks in the US.

The blaze had destroyed at least 10 structures and damaged another five by Saturday, threatening 2,000 other structures, Cal Fire said.

"Fire activity is extreme with frequent runs, spot fires and group torching. Emergency personnel are working to safely evacuate people and are actively engaged in protecting structures," said Cal Fire, noting that explosive fire behaviour is challenging over 400 firefighters on the spot. It is now "one of California's largest wildfires of the year", the Los Angeles Times said in a report.

Some residents were forced to temporarily evacuate and some roads in the area, including one major highway to Yosemite, were closed. With the Oak Fire, the streak of relatively modest and non-destructive wildfires in California so far this season appears to be over, said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist at the University of California, Los Angeles. He added that record vegetation dryness and less stable atmospheric conditions will likely favour plume-dominated behaviour at times. Swain estimated that the Oak Fire will very likely surpass 10,000 acres (around 40.46 square km) in less than 24 hours.

Another explosive wildfire, the Washburn Fire, has burned over 4,850 acres (19.6 square km) to date with 79 per cent contained in over two weeks near Yosemite National Park. The Washburn Fire has drawn national attention as hundreds of firefighters are battling the blaze to protect some of the world's oldest and largest trees in the park.

1ST BATCH OF CONTRACTS FOR PORTUGAL'S RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN SIGNED

Lisbon: The first batch of 13 projects for the Portuguese Recovery and Resilience Plan (PRR) were signed in Lisbon to receive funds from the European Union (EU) to overcome the post-pandemic economic crisis.

The projects were selected through the program "Mobilizing Agendas for Business Innovation" in the sectors of agri-food, biotechnology, and electric mobility, reports Xinhua news agency.

According to Prime Minister Antonio Costa, Portugal will receive a total of 1.6 billion euros (\$1.63 billion) from the EU for the program.

Still, there is a "possibility of adding another 2.3 billion euros" if Portugal uses loans from the EU, he said. Costa said that the funds will be used to "structurally change the profile of the Portuguese economy", and create "high-technology exporting sectors".

In addition to the 13 projects financed, there are still another 38 ones that have already been selected to receive European funds in the coming months.

Houthi-fired shells hit Yemen's Taiz, 13 kids injured

Sanaa | Agencies

A total of 13 children were injured in an attack carried out by the Houthi militia against a residential neighbourhood in Yemen's southwestern province of Taiz, a security official said.

"Mortar shells were fired randomly by the Houthis on residential houses of a densely populated neighbourhood in the southwestern part of Taiz during the past hours," the official told Xinhua news agency.

"A total of 13 children were injured as a result of the shells that landed indiscriminately on the residential area controlled by the government," he said.

The attack coincided with the arrival of a high-ranking UN delegation to

Taiz, the third largest city in Yemen, to push the warring sides in Yemen to extend the truce that expires on August 2. During the past days, Yemen's Houthis carried out a series of attacks against various areas of the war-ravaged Arab country, as UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg stepped up his effort to extend the Yemeni truce.

Several rounds of negotiations between the government and the Houthis were conducted under the auspices of the UN but failed to achieve any progress toward ending Yemen's years-long military conflict.

The Houthi militia backed by Iran set new conditions to accept the UN proposal to extend the truce with the Saudi Arabia-led coalition for another six

months. As hopes for truce extension begin to fade, political observers said that the possible failure to break the years-long political stalemate on Yemen's issue will badly affect the Yemeni people aspiring for permanent peace.

The truce in Yemen, first enforced on April 2 and renewed for another two months on June 2, will expire on August 2.

"An extended and expanded truce will increase the benefits to the Yemeni people," Grundberg's office said in a statement, adding that the truce will also provide a platform to build more confidence between the parties and start serious discussions on economic priorities.



IMD ISSUES ORANGE ALERT FOR EIGHT DISTRICTS

Some major rivers in the state are in spate due to intermittent rainfall over the last couple of days, prompting the authorities to open sluice gates of some vital dams.

- IMD issues orange alert warning of very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall
- The alert has been issued for 8 districts
- A yellow alert has been issued of likely heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places



Team Absolute | Bhopal

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday issued an orange alert warning of very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall in eight districts of central Madhya Pradesh.

Some major rivers in the state are in spate due to intermittent rainfall over the last couple of days, prompting the authorities to open sluice gates of some vital dams.

The IMD's orange alert forecasts very heavy to extremely heavy rain-

fall, ranging from 115.6 mm or above, at isolated places in Bhopal, Raisen, Rajgarh, Sehore, Vidisha, Guna, Agar Malwa and Shajapur districts. Apart from this, a yellow alert has been issued warning of likely heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places of 10 districts, and Shahdol and Narmadapuram divisions. The IMD has also issued a yellow alert warning of likely thunderstorms with lightning at isolated places of seven divi-

sions - Bhopal, Jabalpur, Narmadapuram, Gwalior, Chambal, Rewa and Sagar. All three alerts are valid till Monday morning, the IMD said. The state's lifeline, Narmada river, besides Parvati, Betwa and some other water bodies were in spate, but flowing below the danger level, said Kamlesh Raikwar, an executive engineer of the state water resources department. The gates of 14 out of 52 reservoirs have been

opened to release water, he said. At least 12 gates of Indira Sagar, which is the state's biggest dam, 18 of Omkareshwar, eight of Rajghat and nine of Tawa dam have been opened, the official said.

A low pressure persisting over southwest Rajasthan was drawing moisture from the Arabian Sea to western Madhya Pradesh causing rainfall, said Ved Prakash Singh, senior meteorologist at the IMD's Bhopal Centre. Apart from this, a cyclonic circulation over south-east Madhya Pradesh was drawing moisture from Bay of Bengal to eastern parts of the state, he said. A monsoon trough passing from the two systems across the state was converging moisture from both directions, the official said. According to the IMD, in the last 24 hours ending 8.30 am, Narmadapuram, Narsinghpur, hill station Pachmarhi, Nowgaon in Chhatarpur and Bhopal have received 60.0 mm, 64.0 mm, 51.0 mm, 47.4 mm and 46.3 mm rainfall respectively.

110 percent more tendu patta collected this year Exceeding target

Team Absolute | Bhopal

This year 110 percent more tendu patta (tendu leaves) have been collected against the target in the state. The target was 16 lakh 29 thousand standard bags, against which 18 lakh 2 thousand standard bags of tendu patta collected. In the year 2021, 16 lakh 60 thousand standard bags of tendu patta were collected.

On this achievement, Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah has congratulated the gatherers, members of primary forest produce cooperative societies and the staff involved in tendu leaf collection and management. It is

noteworthy that collection of tendu leaves is a major source of livelihood in tribal dominated areas in the state.

State Minor Forest Produce Federation, 80 district unions and 1071 primary forest produce cooperative societies are doing the work of collection of tendu leaves. As many as 35 lakh gatherers are associated with them. Of them, 50 percent of the gatherers are from Scheduled Tribe families and 40 percent of the gatherers are women.

The Managing Director of Madhya Pradesh State Minor Forest Produce Federation Pushkar Singh informed that Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had announced a

hike of Rs.500 in the collection rate of tendu patta in the conference of Forest Committees and tendu patta collectors held on April 22, as a result of which the rate of 3 thousand rupees per standard bag has been fixed. This hike has also led to an increase in the remuneration of the gatherers. This year, the work of transferring an amount of about 540 crores as remuneration directly into the accounts of the tendu patta collectors has begun, which is 100 crores more as compared to last year. A sale price of Rs. 600 crore was received in the year 2020 and Rs. 843 crore in the year 2021 through the collection of tendu leaves.

HANDLOOM PROMOTER POONAM KAUR LAL MEETS CM

Bhopal: Handloom promoter Poonam Kaur Lal met Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at his residence office. During this, visit discussions were held about the development of handlooms and upliftment of artisans of the state. Kaur Lal presented artwork and coffee table book to Chief Minister. Chouhan expressed hope that the handloom industry, an integral part of Indian culture and heritage, will attain a new identity due to Ms. Kaur Lal's determined spirit and publicity. He wished Kaur Lal all the best for being successful in her virtuous mission. It is worth mentioning that Kaur Lal is an Indian actress, model and quite active in South Indian cinema. Her love for handloom is not hidden from anyone. She has been promoting handloom products for a long time. Kaur came to Bhopal for participating in the Lal Youth Mahapanchayat.



1142 more water supply schemes included in Jal Jeevan Mission

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Public Health Engineering Department has issued approval for single water supply schemes of 1142 villages at a cost of Rs. 608 crore 55 lakh 87 thousand for rural tap water supply under Jal Jeevan Mission. The work of providing water at every home of the rural population of the state through tap connections is going on continuously. The proposals of water supply schemes received from the field offices are being sanctioned at the government level so that the works can be done according to the target in the mission. Along with new schemes, the

works of retrofitting are also included in these single village schemes of water supply.

The rural population of Narmadapuram, Raisen, Betul, Ujjain, Shajapur, Ratlam, Dewas, Dhar, Barwani, Gwalior, Guna, Datia, Katni, Chhindwara, Seoni, Mandla, Dindori, Narsinghpur, Umaria and Anuppur will get the benefit from the works of these approved water supply schemes. On completion of the proposed water supply schemes, the rural families residing in these districts will be provided water through tap connections at their homes.

In these approvals issued under the mission, single water supply schemes of a total of 1142 villages have been included. The availability of water has been ensured to about 51 lakh 20 thousand rural families of the state at their homes. Similarly, there are 5 thousand 382 villages where drinking water has been provided to all the families. In the mission, 70 to 90 percent works of water supply schemes of more than 23 thousand 700 villages are about to be completed and works of group and single water supply schemes are being started for more than 7 thousand 300 villages.

CHIEF MINISTER CONGRATULATES NEERAJ CHOPRA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated Neeraj Chopra for creating history by winning silver medal in Javelin Throw in the World Athletics Championships. Expressing his feelings on social media, Chouhan through his social media handle wrote for Neeraj Chopra that "You are an inspiration and priceless youth icon for the country, India is proud of you." It is worth mentioning that Shri Neeraj Chopra bagged a silver medal in the final of the championship in Eugene, USA by throwing a javelin to a distance of 88.13 meters.

MPTF to hold three-day online quiz to mark International Tiger Day

To mark 'International Tiger Day' on July 29, the Madhya Pradesh Tiger Foundation (MPTF) has announced to organise a three-day quiz competition.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

To mark 'International Tiger Day' on July 29, the Madhya Pradesh Tiger Foundation (MPTF) has announced to organise a three-day quiz competition.

The quiz, which will start on July 26 and conclude on July 28, will cover subjects related to tigers only. The online quiz without any registration fee will be open for people of all age groups from

anywhere in the world. However, only one participant will be allowed through one registration.

Multiple entries revealed at any stage will lead to rejection of registration, Anil Shukla, a senior official in the Madhya Pradesh forest department, told IANS.

"This is an open book quiz with no time limit. So one can take help from online resources while competing. The purpose of this quiz is to spread awareness about wildlife in general. In case the participants don't know the answer to any question, we suggest that they read from multiple sources and mark their answers only when they are sure about it," Shukla said.

All the participants will be given a certificate of appreciation.

"The top 20 scorers will be selected as

winners and will be given a surprise gift. The winners will be declared on International Tiger Day on July 29 on MPTF's Facebook page at 7 p.m.," said Jayesh Patel, an official in the forest department. The participants can login at <http://www.bit.ly/tigerdayquiz22> for registration.

Madhya Pradesh, which is known as the 'tiger state' of India, has also earned the dubious distinction of accounting for the highest number of deaths of these wild cats.

As per the data published by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), till July 15 this year, a total of 74 tiger deaths were reported from across the country, of which 27 were reported from Madhya Pradesh, the highest for any state.

SEC issued instructions Collector authorised to administer oath to the mayors and corporators

Team Absolute | Bhopal

State Election Commission authorised the Collector and District Election Officers to administer oath to newly elected mayor and corporators of the municipal corporation of their district. Collectors and District Election Officers have been instructed to conduct oath administration proceedings as per the provisions in the first meeting of the mayor and corporators.

Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh apprised that under the Madhya Pradesh Municipal Corporation Act, the mayor and every corporator of the Municipal Corporation shall

sign on the oath or affirmation in the prescribed format before the officer authorised by the State Election Commission prior to participating in the election of the president in the first meeting of the Corporation or before assuming the office. If the mayor or corporator of the Municipal Corporation does not take oath, it shall be deemed that such mayor and corporator has not assumed his office. Shri Singh has said that if a mayor or corporator does not take oath within three months from the date of his/her election without the permission of the Divisional Commissioner then his/her seat will automatically be deemed vacant.

National flag must be hoisted in every house on Independence Day: Governor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has called upon the people of the state to hoist the national flag in every house on Independence Day. He said that the society and individual exist only when there is a country. It is the ultimate duty of every person to contribute his best to strengthen the nation. We must not do any such work that can hurt Mother India. He said that it is the utmost duty of the office bearers to always follow the oath that they take. Patel was addressing the swearing-in ceremony organized by Madhya Pradesh Agrawal Mahasabha at Hindi Bhawan.

Patel asked everyone to make a concerted effort to establish India as World Guru. Giving the example of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's powerful resolve, he said that when he was not



given visa by the US, he had called upon people to work unitedly to make the Gujarat model an ideal of development. He had said that those who are refusing, will themselves invite him one day. What he said happened.

Patel said that being a representative of the prosperous and enlightened class, the responsibility and role of Agrawal Samaj becomes all the more important in the development of the

country and the state. He said that just as the weakness of one part of the body makes the whole body unhealthy. In the same way, if a family and community is deprived and backward, it weakens the society and the country. Those who are capable and competent, it becomes their duty to take the responsibility of development of the poor, backward and deprived sections. Patel said that the contribution of the society in the development of the country in all fields, economic, religious and social, is incomparable. The spirit of service to living beings is deep rooted in the Agrawal Samaj. For the society the whole of India is its family and the world is Kutumba. The contribution of the Samaj in running charitable and religious institutions is not hidden from anyone. The achievements of Samaj's talents have made the country proud. The nation is proud of the Samaj.

Special campaign of PWD for the maintenance of city roads

Instructions were given by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for the maintenance of the roads damaged during the rainy season of capital Bhopal.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Public Works Department will run a seven-day special campaign from July 25 for the maintenance of roads of Bhopal Capital Region damaged in the rainy season. Nodal officers have been appointed for each road for effective operation of the campaign. The survey work of damaged and waterlogged

roads has been completed by the nodal officers by visiting the capital from July 23.

Principal Secretary Public Works Neeraj Mandloi informed that in the special campaign, all the routes transferred from Public Works Department Division and Capital Project in the capital region will be maintained. In this context, a special meeting of nodal officers will be held at Nirman Bhawan from 4 pm on July 25. Instructions were given by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for the maintenance of the roads damaged during the rainy season of capital Bhopal. In this sequence, the Public Works Minister Gopal Bhargava has instructed the departmental officers to run a special campaign for the maintenance of the roads of the capital.

CM PLANTS NEEM, BANYAN AND HARSINGAR SAPLINGS

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Neem, Banyan and Harsingar saplings in the Smart City Garden.



Representatives of Shri Ram Colony Residents Association Bhopal including Sunil Upadhyay, Anoop Gupta, Mukesh Nema, SC Rawat and AK Tripathi took part in plantation as well. Chouhan along with Handloom campaigner Poonam Kaur also planted saplings. Kaur presented a Kalamkari Shiva statue to Chief Minister Chouhan. Shri Ram Colony Residents Association is active in the field of cleanliness and environment-protection along with the Municipal Corporation through public participation. The residents' association is always ready to help the needy people in and around their colony. Banyan has both religious and medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Similarly, Neem which is rich in antibiotic elements is known for its medicinal qualities. Harsingar is an excellent medicinal plant.

'TIGER STATE' MP RECORDS DEATH OF 27 BIG CATS IN 2022, HIGHEST IN COUNTRY

Till July 15 this year, of the total number of 74 tiger deaths registered in the country, MP alone accounted for 27 of them - highest for any state during this period, the data published by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) on its website has revealed.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh, which is known as the 'tiger state' of India, has also earned the dubious distinction of accounting for the highest number of deaths of these majestic striped felines.

Till July 15 this year, of the total number of 74 tiger deaths registered in the country, MP alone accounted for 27 of them - highest for any state during this period, the data published by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) on its website has revealed.

The centrally located state is followed on this front by Maharashtra, which registered 15 deaths during the period. Karnataka comes next with 11 fatalities, Assam five, Kerala and Rajasthan four each, Uttar Pradesh three, Andhra Pradesh two, Bihar, Odisha and Chhattisgarh one each, among other states, as per the NTCA figures. According to officials, territorial fights, old age, ailments, poaching and electrocution are some of the prominent reasons for their deaths. Madhya Pradesh had regained the coveted tag of being the 'tiger state' of the country in the 2018 census. As per the All-India Tiger Estimation Report 2018, the state



was home to 526 tigers, the highest for any state in the country.

There are six tiger reserves in the state, namely Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Satpura, Panna and Sanjay Dubri.

Of the 27 tiger deaths this year, nine were males and eight females. In other cases, the gender of the animals was not mentioned in the data. The deceased included adults, sub-adults and cubs. Tigers live, breed and hunt in forests and they are at the top of the food chain. As apex predators, their presence indicates a

healthy and broader ecosystem. Expressing concern over the rising number of tiger deaths, wildlife enthusiast and Right to Information (RTI) activist Ajay Dube told PTI, "In Panna, no tigers were found about 10 years back. After that, the NTCA advised the states to set up their own Special Tiger Protection Forces (STPFs) for safeguarding the big cats, especially from poachers." The Centre has made budgetary provisions for supporting the STPFs, but the MP government has so far not constituted any such force due to its own vested interests, he alleged. If established, this force will check, besides poaching, other activities like illegal mining and felling of trees in the forest areas, he said. Dube also said that states like Karnataka, Odisha and Maharashtra have created STPFs and their results are visible as Karnataka, despite having a sizable population of tigers, has a lower mortality rate of big cats than Madhya Pradesh. Principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF) wildlife, JS Chauhan, said, "The higher number of tiger mortality is due to the fact that Madhya Pradesh has the highest population of big cats in the country. Due to this, the number of their deaths is naturally also high." Territorial fights among tigers can't be avoided as it is a natural process for them. Old age is another issue," he said.



HERE'S WHY LUPITA NYONG'O JOKES THAT FANS CAN CALL HER 'ANT-WOMAN'

A Oscar-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o has joked that her fans can call her 'ant-woman' after she eats the insect for the first time.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o has joked that her fans can call her 'ant-woman' after she eats the insect for the first time.

In a video posted on Instagram, the 'Black Panther' star tries eating ants for the very first time, reports people.com.

"It's ants," the Oscar-winner says in the clip, showing her food to the camera.

"It's really good, it's not even crunchy or anything."

Nyong'o captioned the post, "You can call me Ant-Woman!!" adding the hashtags, #Marvel, #Ants and #Foodie.

In the comments, her US co-star Winston Duke poked fun at her culinary adventure, writing, "What is u doin babyeh.. what you eating ants fohhh?!!" Duke, 35, continued, "This is ant-agonizing me.. I'm feeling antsy.. what would yo aunt say.. My antenna is going crazyyy."

Nyong'o's ant tasting took place at an Audi-sponsored event in Los Angeles earlier this week, which featured food from the Copenhagen-based restaurant Noma. "An event to celebrate sustainability, and the food and company was absolutely divine. What a wonderful evening!" she wrote in the caption of a post about the event.

In the video, the actress is seen wearing a pink one-shoulder jumpsuit while holding a glass of bubbly.

It is not the first time, Nyong'o has let her fans into unexpected adventures.



SIMON PEGG CALLS DAUGHTER 'GREATEST THING' IN HIS LIFE

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Star Trek' actor Simon Pegg's daughter is the "single greatest thing" to have happened to him. The 52-year-old actor, who has 13-year-old Matilda with wife Maureen McCann, would happily relive the time his little girl was born over again because it was such an "amazing" and "profound" experience, reports aceshowbiz.com.

He said: "If I could live any time in my life again, it would definitely be the four days I spent in St. John's hospital in Santa Monica when my daughter was born. I flew back from filming 'Paul' and my wife and I went to get a Starbucks, then we drove to the hospital, and we had a child, and it was amazing." She was born to 'Girl' by The Beatles. Then the first song that came on after I cut the cord was 'Tomorrow Never Knows', my favourite Beatles song, so I was bobbing around the operating theatre to that," Simon continued.

"We stayed in hospital for a few days, ordering pizza. July 4 came and we had a curry and watched the fireworks from our window."

He continued: "And I just remember it being such a profound moment; suddenly we were three and it was beautiful. Whenever Tilly's birthday comes around I tell her that story and now she's like, 'Oh shut up dad, I know, you had a Starbucks, you went to the hospital, blah blah blah!'"

"But for me that was, you know, because she's the single greatest thing that's ever happened to me in my life. So that can really be the only answer to that question."

The actor recalled going through a "depressive period" when he went to university because he missed the "amazing" friends he had made at drama school, reports aceshowbiz.com.



'She-Hulk: Attorney At Law' trailer features jokes and Daredevil

Los Angeles | Agencies

The trailer of the upcoming superhero series 'She-Hulk: Attorney At Law', which was unveiled at the San Diego Comic Con over this past weekend, follows Jennifer Walters, an attorney specialising in superhuman-oriented legal cases, reports

'Empire' magazine. Walters must navigate the complicated life of a single, 30-something who also happens to be a green 6-foot-7-inch superpowered hulk. That's because her cousin happens to be one Bruce Banner (Mark Ruffalo, who co-stars in the show as his Smart Hulk form). According to 'Empire', the show also has Tatiana Maslany in a lead role, and has been directed by Kat Coiro and Indian-American Anu Valia, with a script from the head writer Jessica Gao. Coiro, Valia and Jessica spoke at Comic Con. They talked about the lighter tone (there are definitely shades of 'Deadpool' in that aside from the camera) and some of the cameos we can expect -- beyond Tim Roth as Emil 'The Abomination' Blonsky and Benedict Wong as Wong, we now know that Daredevil in the suit also shows up. 'She-Hulk: Attorney At Law' is set to debut on OTT platform Disney+ Hotstar on August 17.



'GODFATHER' ACTOR JAMES CAAN'S CAUSE OF DEATH REVEALED

Los Angeles | Agencies

The cause of actor James Caan's death has now been revealed to be a heart attack and coronary artery disease. The actor, who starred in "Godfather", died on July 6 at the age of 82. The Los Angeles County Coroner revealed the information in Caan's death certificate, which was obtained by 'TMZ'. The certificate lists his immediate cause of death as myocardial infarction and the condition leading up to it as coronary artery disease. His contributing conditions are listed as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and congestive heart failure, reports 'Entertainment Weekly'. The certificate indicates that he died at 9.02 p.m. PT at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Centre in Los Angeles and was buried at Eden Memorial Park. 'Entertainment Weekly' further states that Caan's death was announced on his Twitter page the day after his passing. The tweet read, "It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Jimmy on the evening of July 6. The family appreciates the outpouring of love and heartfelt condolences and asks that you continue to respect their privacy during this difficult time. End of tweet."

Caan's death earlier this month led to an outpouring of remembrances for his sterling body of work, including his performance as Sonny Corleone in "The Godfather" (1972), for which he was nominated for a Best Supporting Actor Oscar, as well as his role as a master safecracker in Michael Mann's 1980 directorial feature debut, "Thief". His other lauded portrayals included his roles in Wes Anderson's "Bottle Rocket", Stephen King's book-turned-movie "Misery", the big-screen adaptation of "Dick Tracy", and the new Christmas classic "Elf."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Ellie Goulding says her voice has gotten "stronger" since becoming a mother.

After welcoming her first child, Arthur, with husband Caspar Jopling into the world last April, the aEazy

er admits she felt like her whole brain changed after she gave birth, while her vocals are "better than ever", reports aceshowbiz.com.

Speaking on 'Smallzy's Surgery', she said of motherhood "It is by far the most challenging thing that I've done. It's amazing that you are growing this human and when they smile at

you, you are just like, it's all worth it; when they smile at you and when they do silly things."

The "Love Me like You Do" hitmaker added: "But my singing is better. I have had a vocal coach for the past couple of years and she is like, 'Your voice sounds better than ever.' So I don't know if it has made some kind of difference to my vocal cords, I don't know, but my voice is a lot stronger than it was - so that is one pro."

Earlier this year, the 35-year-old pop star revealed she was battling crippling anxiety during 2021.

Ellie Goulding credits motherhood for her 'stronger' voice

Lover' hitmak-

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IND V WI, 2ND ODI

HOPE'S TON, POORAN'S HALF-CENTURY PROPEL WEST INDIES TO A MASSIVE 311/6

Port of Spain | Agencies

On the back of vice-captain Shai Hope making his 100th ODI appearance memorable by scoring a rollicking century and captain Nicholas Pooran smashing a dazzling 74, West Indies were propelled to a massive 311/6 against India in the second ODI at Queen's Park Oval on Sunday.

On the pitch where they lost by three runs in the first ODI on Friday, Hope, who became the tenth batter and fourth from the West Indies to score a century in his 100th match in the format, and Pooran dazzled under the bright Sunday sun to post a challenging chase for India. For the visitors, Shardul Thakur took 3-54 while the spin trio of Axar Patel, Deepak Hooda and Yuzvendra Chahal took a wicket each.

Electing to bat first, Hope took his time to settle in as his opening partner Kyle Mayers went hard on the Indian bowlers in the powerplay. Continuing from where he left off in his 74 in the first ODI, Mayers plundered six fours and a six, five of which came against



debutant pacer Avesh Khan, who came in for Prasad Krishna in the playing eleven.

But his joyride came to an end at 39 off 25 balls, falling to Deepak Hooda by chipping a straight catch back to the off-spinner. Shamrah Brooks joined Hope and added 62 off 74 balls for the second wicket.

Brooks consistently found boundaries through backward point and leg-

side before trying to defend against Axar Patel, only for the ball to take the outer edge to captain Shikhar Dhawan at first slip. One brought two for India as Brandon King's top-edge on a slog-sweep was caught easily by Dhawan off Yuzvendra Chahal.

Hope, who brought his fifty by slog sweeping Yuzvendra Chahal over deep mid-wicket for a huge six, welcomed Avesh with a glorious drive

through wide of mid-off and took a boundary each off Patel and Hooda.

From there, Pooran used his feet brilliantly to smash sixes in the 'V' four times to reach his fifty in quick fashion. Post that, Pooran enthralled Sunday crowd with few more lusty hits. The 117-run stand between Hope and Pooran ended when Thakur bowled the West Indies skipper around his legs. Hope marched on to reach his 13th ODI century in the same fashion when he got his fifty: dancing down the pitch to launch a six over Chahal's head. Hope and Rovman Powell smashed three boundaries overall before Thakur took the latter out by holing out to long-off. Hope holed out eventually for 115 but boundaries from Romario Shepherd and a six by Akeal Hosein in the final over was enough to get West Indies past the 300-mark and survive their full quota of overs for the second time in as many matches.

Brief scores

West Indies 311/6 in 50 overs (Shai Hope 115, Nicholas Pooran 74; Shardul Thakur 3-54) against India

'HUNGER IS THERE', NEERAJ CHOPRA VOWS TO WIN GOLD IN NEXT EDITION OF WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Eugene (Oregon) | Agencies

Tokyo Olympics javelin throw champion Neeraj Chopra, who clinched the historic silver medal at the 2022 World Athletics Championships, is elated from his performance and said that there is a hunger inside him to win gold in next edition of worlds competition.

With his best throw of 88.13m, Neeraj won silver and ended India's 19-year-long wait for a medal at the World Athletics Championships. This was India's second medal at the World Championships and the first podium finish since Anju Bobby George won a bronze medal in long jump at Paris in 2003.

"I am happy to have won silver, the country's first medal in the World Athletics Championships after 19 years, I will take it. World Championships is even tougher than Olympics, its record is higher than that of Olympics," said Neeraj after his World Championships heroics.

The 24-year-old Indian further said, one cannot get gold each time but he will



focus and concentrate on training and improvement in order to win the yellow medal in next year's World Championships. "An athlete cannot win a gold every time but we have to keep trying and give our best. I have learned a lot from the challenging situation today, and I will work for improvement," Chopra said. "I have won gold at all levels except this World Championships silver. So, hunger is there to win gold. I will try to change the color of the metal (to gold) in the next World Championships in 2023 (in Budapest). The other competition I want to win gold in is the Diamond League," he added.

When asked to whom he would dedicate the silver medal, the star athlete said, "Anju Bobby George madam won India's first medal? Everybody who has played a part in my success and those who are praying for my success, I would like to dedicate to them." Neeraj also mentioned that he spoke to Pakistani athlete Arshad Nadeem who finished fifth with a best throw of 86.16m.

"I spoke to him after the end of the event and told him that he had performed well. He said he had problems with his elbow. He was not doing well at the start so I told him he made a good comeback," he said.

Hemanth Muddappa begins Drag Nationals campaign in style

Mantra Racing's Hemanth Muddappa of Bengaluru, won a triple including the premier 1050cc and above class, as he began his 2022 campaign in the Indian National Drag Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit (MIC), here.



Chennai | Agencies

Mantra Racing's Hemanth Muddappa of Bengaluru, won a triple including the premier 1050cc and above class, as he began his 2022 campaign in the Indian National Drag Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit (MIC), here.

The nine-time National champion in a thumping dash to the finish line, posted top times and won two National Championship classes, the 4-stroke Super Sport 1051cc to 1650cc (Suzuki Hayabusa) class and the 4-stroke Super Sport 551-850cc category astride a Kawasaki ZX6R, besides the 851 to 1050cc race, which is declared as a support race this season.

The Bengaluru rider, however, missed a chance to make a clean sweep, due to technical glitches, and could only finish seventh in the newly re-introduced Unrestricted Open class. Despite a slight delay in his reaction time, Muddappa romped home to a sweet

victory in 8.614 seconds as he made his debut in the 4-stroke 550 to 850cc class touching a top speed of 198.45 kmph. Shifting to his majestic Suzuki Hayabusa, he dominated the 1051cc to 1650cc race and began his title defence in style. With a top-speed of 225.14 kmph, he took the honours in a field of 14 riders. The fastest Indian in motorsports said, "I am thrilled to start the season on a positive note. Though I am happy to win a double as we take home a lot of positives, we continue to learn and will come back stronger in the next two rounds. Our goal is three National titles and we go back to work. I thank my dedicated team Mantra Racing and all the boys. It is their victory." The combination of Mantra Racing and Hemanth Muddappa have been consistently ruling the track and winning laurels at the Drag Nationals and have set many National records. The second round will be on November 5 & 6 while the final round will decide the National champions on December 17 and 18 at the same Drag strip at MIC.

Men's national kabaddi: Harayana, T.N, U.P, Chandigarh, Goa, Maharashtra reach quarters

Charkhi Dadri | Agencies

Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Services, Haryana, Chandigarh and Maharashtra qualified for the quarterfinals of the 69th Senior Men's National Kabaddi Championship 2022 after registering wins in the round of 16 matches here on Saturday.

In the first match of the Round of 16-stage, Indian Railways defeated Punjab 49-30. Pro Kabaddi player Pawan Sehrawat was the top scorer of the match, scoring 12 raid points for Indian Railways.

In the second pre-quarterfinal match, Tamil Nadu pulled off a thrilling 33-27 win over Himachal Pradesh. Pro Kabaddi player Chandran Ranjit was the star of the show as he scored a total of 16 raid points to help his team Tamil Nadu to qualify for the quarterfinals of the competition. Continuing his fine run of form, PKL superstar Rahul Chaudhari scored nine points to guide Uttar Pradesh to a comfortable 41-16 win over Delhi in their third Round of 16 match while Pro Kabaddi star Surender Gill's super 10 helped Goa beat Karnataka 40-27 in the fourth match in this stage. In



the fifth pre-quarterfinal match, Services registered a comprehensive 48-17 win over Madhya Pradesh, courtesy of a collective effort from Sawin (7 points), Naveen Kumar (6 points) and Arjun Deshwal (6 points).

Pro Kabaddi star Mohit Goyat single-handedly led hosts Haryana to a remarkable 48-34 win over Rajasthan. Mohit bagged 17 points in the match to help the home team

seal a place in the quarterfinal stage of the competition. Chandigarh edged past Bihar 57-48 in a thrilling pre-quarterfinal clash. Vijay (18 points) and Rakesh (17 points) led Chandigarh's charge as they combined to score a total of 35 raid points in the match.

In the last match of the day, Maharashtra defeated Kerala 48-30 to seal a place in the last-eight stage of the tournament.

The quarterfinals, semifinals and final will be played on Sunday.

Results (round of 16): Indian Railways beat Punjab 49-30; Tamil Nadu beat Himachal Pradesh 33-27, Uttar Pradesh beat Delhi 41-16, Goa beat Karnataka 40-27, Services beat Madhya Pradesh 48-17, Haryana beat Rajasthan 48-32, Chandigarh beat Bihar 57-48, Maharashtra defeated Kerala 48-30.

FORMULA 2: INDIAN RACER JEHAN DARUVALA FINISHES SECOND IN FRANCE

Indian racer Jehan Daruvala scored his sixth podium of the season in the French round of the Formula 2 championship at the Paul Ricard track here on Sunday.

Le Castellet | Agencies

Indian racer Jehan Daruvala scored his sixth podium of the season in the French round of the Formula 2 championship at the Paul Ricard track here on Sunday.

Jehan started the Feature race from 10th on the grid. But he fought his way up to seventh as a combination of strategy, which put Jehan in the lead before his stops, and blistering

speed after his late switch to fresh tyres, saw him climb up the order.

Jehan said, "It's good to be back on the podium after what happened in Silverstone and Austria. We were struggling with pace down the straights but had some good battles to finish 2nd. We would have finished even higher in the Feature race with our strategy to run a long first stint but we gambled on a safety car and stayed out a bit longer than ideal. Other than that, it was a solid weekend for us. We still have some areas to work on and I'm confident we'll come back stronger next weekend in Hungary."

Jehan's second-place finish in France was his fifth this season. The 23-year-old, who races for Italian team Prema, was robbed of a

potential fourth F2 victory by a post-race penalty in the last round in Austria.

The Red Bull-backed racer, who earlier this week completed a second Formula One test with McLaren, now heads to Hungary, the last round of a busy month of racing before the annual summer break.

Jehan started Saturday's Sprint race from pole position and after a lightning start led into the first corner. He was comfortably holding his own at the front when an incident involving three cars brought out the safety car.

Jehan timed the restart to perfection, allowing him to open up a small gap to second-placed Liam Lawson. But the latter's superior straight-line speed allowed him to close in.

It looked like it would only be a matter of

time before Lawson used his car's superior speed down the straights to get past Jehan and sure enough the Kiwi swept around the outside into Turn 1. Jehan held his line but the pair touched which opened up a tear on Jehan's front tyre. But he fortunately didn't suffer a puncture.

A few laps later Marcus Armstrong attempted to pass Jehan for second at the same corner but on the inside. They made contact but Jehan, forced wide across the chicane, kept his position. He had to slow down significantly, however, to give up any advantage he may have gained, which allowed Lawson to pull clear at the front.

Armstrong was handed a five-second penalty for forcing Jehan off the track.

Canada upset USA to win men's 4x100m relay at World Athletics

Eugene | Agencies

Canada upset pre-race favourites the United States to win the men's 4x100m relay at the World Athletics Championships on Sunday (IST).

The United States, who took all six medals in the men's 100m and 200m, led all the way in the first three legs, but were overtaken by Canada in the final leg due to a messy baton pass. The Canadian team of Aaron Brown, Jerome Blake, Brendon Rodney and Andre De Grasse won in a

world lead time of 37.48, 0.07 seconds ahead of the US team.

Britain took the bronze in 37.83. The United States won the women's 4x100m relay with a world leading time of 41.14 seconds. Jamaica, led by Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce who took the 100m gold and 200m silver a few days ago, finished just 0.04 seconds behind to take the silver, while Germany pocketed the bronze in 42.03. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's Gudaf Tsegay sustained stiff competition during the last lap to win the women's 5,000m title.

India wicketkeeper Karuna Jain announces retirement from all forms of cricket

Bengaluru | Agencies

India wicketkeeper Karuna Jain on Sunday announced her retirement from all forms of cricket. Karuna featured for India in five Tests, 44 ODIs and nine T20Is from 2005 and 2014, making 195, 987 and nine runs respectively.

On her ODI debut in 2004, she made 64 against the West Indies in Lucknow, which made her an integral part of the Indian team.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been a part of my cricketing journey from the very beginning to all my coaches, support staff and my team mates whose been a part throughout my career." "Each one of them has taught me something differ-

ent about the game and life that made me the player and person I am today. It's been an incredible journey I've been able to have and it would not have been possible without everyone who supported me during my ups and downs," said Karuna in a statement posted on her official Instagram account.

In women's Tests, she effected 17 dismissals behind the stumps, which is the second-best tally among Indian keepers after Anju Jain, who made 23 dismissals. Karuna, the Bengaluru-based wicket-keeper, went on to thank everyone in her family as well the BCCI and state associations she represented in domestic circuit.

"My family being the biggest support and my

brother being a cricketer himself made it easy and challenging for me to adopt the game and deliver the best in every time I stepped onto the grounds. I could continue to play the sport and contribute for a very long time because of unflinching support and sacrifices done by them."

"I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the BCCI and the State Association that I have represented which include Air India, Karnataka and Pondicherry and all the support extended by them. With a lot of happy and satisfied feelings, I'm able to make this announcement of my retirement from all forms of cricket and looking forward to contributing back to the game."

Mathews becomes 6th Sri Lankan to play 100 Tests, receives special cap from Vaas

Galle | Agencies

Veteran Angelo Mathews on Sunday became the sixth Sri Lankan cricketer to play 100 Test matches when he took the field in the second and final game against Pakistan, here.

The 35-year old received a cap to mark the occasion from Chaminda Vaas, the bowling coach. Interestingly, both Mathews and Vaas went to the same school and now both have played 100 Tests for Sri Lanka.

"Presentation: Angelo Mathews receives commemorative cap and a special gift before play to mark his 100th Test for," tweeted Sri Lanka Cricket along with pictures. Before Mathews, five Sri Lankan



players -- Mahela Jayawardene (149 matches), Kumar Sangakkara (134), Muttiah Muralitharan (133), Chaminda Vaas (111), Sanath Jayasuriya (110) -- have played more

than 100 Tests for the country. Mathews, who made his test debut in 2009 and is on the verge of 7,000 test runs, wants to score 10,000 runs in the red-ball cricket.

"It would be nice to get to 10,000 Test runs. Not many guys have done that and that's something that I want to achieve," Mathews had said on the eve of the landmark match.

Asked about his inspiration, Mathews took the name of England fast bowler James Anderson, who made a comeback to the England Test side, under the captaincy of Ben Stokes, just a month back in the English summer.

"Jimmy Anderson is my inspiration. At the age of 40, he's still delivering and he wants to do it for a couple of more years. It's the drive that you have. This is not going to stop here and I still have a few more years left. Age is just a number and I'll work on my fitness," he said.



'Whirlwind 48 hrs of pure celebration': Parineeti on PC's 40th b'day in Mexico

Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra shared a sneak-peek from her sister Priyanka Chopra Jonas's 40th birthday party.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra shared a sneak-peek from her sister Priyanka Chopra Jonas's 40th birthday party. Parineeti took to Instagram, where she shared pictures from the birthday celebration, which included Priyanka's husband Nick Jonas and mother Madhu Chopra among friends in

Mexico.

In the spirit of being at the beachside, Priyanka dazzled in a yellow co-ordinated set while Parineeti sported a short white strappy dress. For the evening bash, Priyanka chose a royal blue thigh-high slit gown and Parineeti slayed in a shimmering short dress. Parineeti captioned the image: "It was a whirlwind 48 hours of pure celebration, jet lag, tacos, hugs, laughs and the ocean! Will take a week to recover from, and a lifetime to forget! Happy bday to the world's desi girl, but my mimi didi. I love you."

She also shared a string of more pictures from her Mimi didi's luxurious birthday bash and gave the same caption.

On the work front, Parineeti, who was last seen in the sports biopic 'Saina', will next appear in Ribhu Dasgupta's untitled film and the Amitabh Bachchan-starrer 'Uunchai'.



On 'Prem Rog' 40th anniversary, Padmini Kolhapure looks back

The musical romance film 'Prem Rog' which stars the late actor Rishi Kapoor and actress Padmini Kolhapure is set to complete 40 years on July 30. The film, directed by the legendary filmmaker-actor Raj Kapoor, marked the return of the director to special themes.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The musical romance film 'Prem Rog' which stars the late actor Rishi Kapoor and actress Padmini Kolhapure is set to complete 40 years on July 30. The film, directed by the legendary filmmaker-actor Raj Kapoor, marked the return of the director to special themes.

As the film clocks 40 years in a few days, actress Padmini Kolhapure reminisced about the old days. She shared, "Prem Rog" was an era-defining film in the history of Indian cinema. It wasn't just a story of two star-crossed lovers, but it mirrored the tragic reality of rural India during that time. "The actress also spoke about her character in the movie and said that her work in the film became the voice of oppressed women. "My character, Manorama was more than a damsel in distress, she was the voice to all those women who couldn't speak up for themselves."

She further mentioned, "And only Raj Kapoor sahab could've managed to narrate this poetic chaos. In contrast to my full of life, bubbly Manorama, we had Devdhar played by our beloved Rishi Ji who was calm, compassionate, and composed. A character that was so refreshing even for him."

"As we celebrate 40 years to the film, I still discover some new details and realise what a layered masterpiece 'Prem Rog' was," she concluded.

'Prem Rog' is considered an all-time classic by Raj Kapoor. The film will be aired on Zee Bollywood on July 30 at 11 a.m. for a celebratory premiere.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

'SHAMSHERA' OPENING WEEKEND BO EARNINGS LANGUISH AT NO. 11 OF 2022 LIST

films above it: "KGF: Chapter 2", Rs 193.99 crore; "Doctor Strange 2", Rs 79.5 crore; "RRR", Rs 75.57 crore; "Thor: Love and Thunder", Rs 64.8 crore; "Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2", Rs 55.96 crore; "Samrat Prithviraj", Rs

Despite the combined presence of Ranbir Kapoor, who has returned to the big screen after a four-year hiatus, and the actor he has played in a biopic, Sanjay Dutt, "Shamshera" finds itself at a lowly No. 11 among opening weekends, according to the trade news and reviews site, www.bollymoviereviewz.com.

The period action drama produced by Yash Raj Films, which is expected to gross Rs 32-34 crore in opening weekend, opened in 5,550 screens across the world, so there's only one way to interpret the collection figure -- the movie hasn't really done well. It figures even lower than the dud most recently released by YRF, namely, "Samrat Prithviraj", which made Rs 39.4 crore. The first weekend collection is the bellwether for which way a film is headed. The only recent exception was "The Kashmir Files", which picked up (and how!) as a result of the buzz about the film generated during the first weekend.

Keeping that caveat in mind, compare the "Shamshera" collection with that of each of the 10

39.4 crore; "Gangubai Kathiawadi", powered solely by Ranbir's wife Alia Bhatt, Rs 39.12 crore; "Jugjugg Jeeyo", Rs 36.93 crore; "Bachchan Pandey", Rs 36.17 crore; and, finally, the third Hollywood release on this list, "Jurassic World Dominion", Rs 35.55 crore.

"Shamshera", according to www.bollymoviereviewz.com, cost Rs 150 crore to make, of which Rs 50 crore was Ranbir's fee. The only reason why YRF has no real cause for worry is the re-negotiated Rs 350-crore, four-movie deal the production house has inked with Amazon. Unfortunately, for the streamer, three of the four films -- "Bunty Aur Babli 2", "Jayeshbhai Jordaar" and "Samrat Prithviraj" -- have not done really well at the box office. Now, "Shamshera" doesn't offer much hope either.

YRF also has a Rs 500-crore, multi-year, multi-movie deal with Sony TV signed in 2019 for satellite rights. That's also money in the bank for YRF, but where does that leave the streamer and the general entertainment channel? Will they be wary now about signing such deals and focus more creating their own content? As they say, only time will tell.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Vidya Malavade, who plays the wife of actor Kumud Mishra in the series 'Dr. Arora', has talked about her character Vaishali and the challenges of not essaying a "quintessential good wife".

In the show, Vidya's character leaves her husband because of his inability to perform.

Talking about her character, Vidya said: "It was very challenging for me to play the character because I think the thing about emotions is more of what she was holding back and giving out very less. But there was everything that was inside of her."

"There was so much inside of her to sort of hold back everything and perform there are not many lines that she says. Everything that is happening is in her presence, body language, eyes and her face. There is very little that is said except in the end.

She even spoke about the intimate scene she shot for the show.

"The intimate scene was emotionally and physically driven which was difficult in terms of just performing that."

Vidya shared that the show's creator and filmmaker Imtiaz Ali even praised her for her performance.

Shedding more light on her role, she said: "She is not playing the good wife who succumbs to her husband's inability but she is rather brave enough to say 'I'll move out of it. In the 90's in a small town I don't even know how many women had that kind of courage but she didn't play the quintessential good wife. It was a big challenge."

Created by Imtiaz Ali, directed by Sajid Ali and Archit Kumar, the eight-episode web series 'Dr. Arora' also starring - Vidya Malavade, Shekhar Suman, Vivek Mushran among others, released on SonyLIV on July 22.

VIDYA MALAVADE TALKS ABOUT NOT PLAYING 'QUINTESSENTIAL GOOD WIFE' IN 'DR. ARORA'

Hindi film industry needs to pull up its socks: Farhan Akhtar

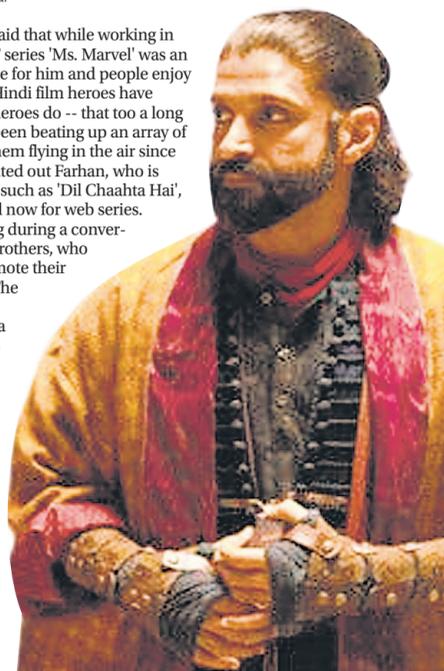
Farhan Akhtar has said that while working in the superhero OTT series 'Ms. Marvel' was an amazing experience for him and people enjoy superhero movies, but Hindi film heroes have been doing what superheroes do -- that too a long time.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Farhan Akhtar has said that while working in the superhero OTT series 'Ms. Marvel' was an amazing experience for him and people enjoy superhero movies, but Hindi film heroes have been doing what superheroes do -- that too a long time. "Our heroes have been beating up an array of bad guys and sending them flying in the air since time immemorial," pointed out Farhan, who is well-known for cult hits such as 'Dil Chaahta Hai', 'Lakshya' and 'Don', and now for web series.

Farhand was speaking during a conversation with The Russo Brothers, who were in Mumbai to promote their action film for Netflix, 'The Gray Man'.

Bollywood has taken a beating of late as it faces stiff competition at the box office from superhero films and content coming from South India. Farhan, who also runs the production company Excel Entertainment with Ritesh Sidhwani, said that while Hindi films may not have big budgets to compete with content from Hollywood, the industry as a whole needs to pull up its socks.



Pranutan Bahl