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PM Narendra Modi asks states to promote '3Ts' around the world



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, chairing the meet of the NITI Aayog Governing Council on Sunday, called on each state to focus on promoting its "3Ts" (trade, tourism, technology) through every Indian Mission around the world. He said the states must focus on reducing imports, increasing exports and identifying opportunities for the latter. "We should encourage people to use local goods wherever possible," he said. "Vocal for local" is not the agenda of an individual political party but a common goal, he added. The PM said even though GST collection has improved, the potential is much more. "Increasing GST collection requires collective action by the Centre and States. It is crucial for strengthening our economic position and becoming a \$5 trillion economy," he said. On the National Education Policy, the PM said it has been formulated after considerable deliberations, and we should involve all stakeholders in its implementation and develop a

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, chairing the meet of the NITI Aayog Governing Council on Sunday, called on each state to focus on promoting its "3Ts" (trade, tourism, technology) through every Indian Mission around the world.

clear, timebound roadmap for it. Expressing his gratitude to the CMs and LGs for participating in the meeting and sharing their views and experiences, he said that NITI Aayog will study the states' concerns, challenges, and best practices and subsequently plan the way forward. The issues discussed in this meeting will define the national priorities for the next 25 years, he said, adding that "the seeds we sow today will define the fruits reaped by India in 2047."

India's maiden small rocket mission fails, two satellites unusable

Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh) | Agencies

The maiden mission of India's brand new rocket about Rs 56 crore Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) on Sunday morning ended in a failure. The launch failure of a small rocket powered by solid fuel puts the focus on the safety of India's human space mission that will be carried out by Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-Mk III (GSLV-Mk III) with the tricky cryogenic engine stage. Hours after the SSLV-D1 was launched with two satellites at about 9.18 a.m., the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said satellites are unusable as they were put into a different orbit than the intended one.

"All the stages performed normally. Both the satellites were injected. But the orbit achieved was less than expected, which makes it unstable," ISRO said in a very brief statement about the mission.

"SSLV-D1 placed the satellites into 356 km x 76 km elliptical orbit instead of 356 km circular orbit. Satellites are no longer usable. Issue is reasonably identified," ISRO said. "Failure of a logic to identify a sensor failure and go for a salvage action caused the deviation. A committee would analyse and recom-



mend. With the implementation of the recommendations, ISRO will come back soon with SSLV-D2," the space agency added.

The Indian space agency is silent on the reasons as to why the satellites or at least the EOS-02 could not be raised to the required orbit by firing its onboard motors.

Hoping to celebrate in advance the country's 75th anniversary of Independence in style the ISRO launched its freshly minted rocket Small Satellite Launch Vehicle - Developmental Flight (SSLV-D1). On its first developmental flight, the SSLV-D1 carried an earth observation satellite-02 (EOS-02), formerly known as Microsatellite-2, weighing about 145 kg and

the eight kg AZAADISAT built by 750 students of government schools facilitated by SpaceKidz India.

About 12 minutes into the rocket's flight, ISRO announced the separation of EOS-02 and the AZAADISAT.

Soon after that a heavy silence came about the Mission Control Centre at the rocket port here with ISRO Chairman S.Somanath announcing: "The SSLV-D1 mission was completed. All the stages of the rocket performed as expected. There is some data loss in the terminal stage of the rocket."

He said the data is being gathered to know the status of the mission.

"The AZAADISAT got separated. We can know about

the satellite only at night," Dr. Srimathy Kesan, Founder and CEO, SpaceKidz India told IANS.

At about 9.18 a.m. the rocket broke free of the first launch pad here and went up into a cloudy sky. The rocket's progress was smooth with all its solid fuel powered engines performing well.

The three-staged SSLV-D1 is primarily powered by solid fuel (total 99.2 ton) and also has a velocity trimming module (VTM) powered by 0.05 ton of liquid fuel for precise injection of satellites.

India's newest rocket was 34-metre tall and weighed 120 ton.

As per the flight plan, just over 12 minutes into its flight, the SSLV-D1 had to deliver

into space the EOS-2 satellite and then the AZAADISAT a few seconds later.

According to the ISRO, the SSLV is a ready to transfer rocket with modular and unified systems with standard interfaces for production by the industry.

The SSLV design drivers are low cost, low turnaround time, flexibility in accommodating multiple satellites, launch-on-demand feasibility, minimal launch infrastructure requirements and others, ISRO said.

The commercial arm of ISRO, NewSpace India Ltd plans to transfer the SSLV technology for production in the private sector after a couple of successful missions.

The Indian space agency said the EOS-02 satellite is an experimental optical imaging satellite with high spatial resolution. The objective is to realise and fly an experimental imaging satellite with short turnaround time and showcase launch on demand capability.

Launch of small satellites will be a dominant factor in the global space sector with about 7,000 satellites expected to be up in the sky by 2027, VK. Saraswat, member, Niti Aayog had said at a space seminar.

In all, about 7,000 small satellites are expected to be launched between 2018 and 2027 with a total value of \$38 billion, Saraswat said.

Managing friction in Rajya Sabha will be Dhankhar's biggest challenge

Team Absolute | New Delhi

For Jagdeep Dhankhar, the win in the Vice Presidential poll was easy, but his biggest challenge will be to manage the friction in the Rajya Sabha.

As the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha -- the Upper House of Parliament -- running the House smoothly, after he takes the oath, will require all his managing skills. As the tenure of the current Vice President Venkaiah Naidu is ending on August 10, Dhankhar will take over as the new Vice President of the country on August 11. As per the schedule, the current Monsoon Session of Parliament is to conclude on August 12, but if the Parliament session does not conclude before the scheduled time, then Dhankhar, as the Chairman of Rajya Sabha can conduct the proceedings of the Upper House for the last two days of the current session.

Considering the tussle going on between the government and the opposition inside and outside Parliament, it is believed that Dhankhar as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha will realise in the first two days the degree of difficulty in conducting the House and the eyes of the entire country will be on him.

In the Rajya Sabha, the NDA still does not have a majority and this is the reason why the opposition seems to be more aggressive here than in the Lok Sabha. Even during the current Monsoon Session, the opposition parties in the Rajya Sabha were constantly trying to target the government on the issue of hiked GST rates on food items, inflation and misuse of Central investigative agencies. During the last several sessions, there had been incidents of uproar, suspension of MPs in the Rajya Sabha and sit-in demonstrations at the Gandhi statue.

Amid the continued opposition uproar, current Vice President Venkaiah Naidu has been seen struggling to run the proceedings smoothly and now Dhankhar will have to face the same challenge for the next five years.

The strategists of the government are also well aware of the challenges in the Rajya Sabha, so along with hailing the victory, they are hopeful that Dhankhar's long legal, legislative and public life experience will help him run

the House smoothly. Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha and Union Minister Piyush Goyal congratulated Dhankhar on being elected to the post of Vice President, saying, his tenure as Chairman will prove ideal in running the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha efficiently and will benefit the public on issues of national interest.

While Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, who played an important role in strategising the conduct of the Parliament session on behalf of the government, congratulated Dhankhar for the overwhelming victory and said that he has a long experience of legal, legislative and public life, which will be of great use to the country in running the House. In the midst of increasingly bitter relations between the government and the opposition, Dhankhar will not only have to get the approval of the House for the legislative work of the government, but he will also have to ensure smooth proceedings by establishing better coordination with the opposition parties. Increasing the rate of productivity in the House will also be a big challenge for him.

IDGAH MAIDAN ROW TO RESURFACE AS K'TAKA CIVIC AGENCY SAYS ITS GOVT PROPERTY

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

The Wakf board on Sunday said it was preparing for a legal battle after the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) declared that Idgah Maidan belonged to the Revenue Department.

Objecting to the BBMP's decision, Wakf Board Chairman Shafi Saadi stated that the board would wage a legal battle. "The Supreme Court has given a verdict in 1965 that Idgah Maidan is the property of the Wakf board. So, the decision is not tenable and the order amounts to contempt of court," Saadi said. "We are approaching the legal experts now," Saadi said. The BBMP had earlier stated that the property does not belong to it. But on Saturday, it released an order stating that Idgah Maidan is the property of the Revenue Department.

Wakf board had applied for a 'khata' (property legal documents) with the BBMP, which was rejected. Joint Commissioner Srinivas had issued a notice to the Wakf board to submit documents to claim ownership of Idgah



Maidan. The BBMP had given two-months time to produce the documents. As Wakf board failed to produce the required documents, the BBMP refused to issue the Khata and declared Karnataka Revenue Department to be the default owner of the land.

The Chamarajanagar Citizen's Forum had submitted an application to celebrate the Independence Day on August 15 in the premises of Idgah Maidan. A few months ago after the BBMP had asked the Wakf to submit the relevant documents, the row had subsided. But, now with the latest BBMP order, the maidan row is all set to resurface.

NIA ARRESTS ONE ACCUSED IN ISIS MODULE CASE



New Delhi: Ahead of Independence Day the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted search operations in Delhi and arrested one accused who was allegedly involved in the activities of ISIS module case.

The accused was identified as Mohsin Ahmad, a resident of Batla House in New Delhi.

The case was registered su-moto by NIA on June 25 under sections 153A, & 153B of IPC and sections 18, 18B, 38, 39 & 40 of UA (P) Act. "The arrested accused is a radicalised and active member of the proscribed terrorist organisation ISIS. He has been arrested," the source said. Further detail awaited.

NITISH KUMAR SKIPS NITI AAYOG'S MEETING

Team Absolute | Patna

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday skipped the crucial seventh governing council meeting of NITI Aayog. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi and chief ministers of all states were invited. Sources say Nitish Kumar skipped the meeting as he recently recovered from Covid infection. Of late, the gap between BJP and JD(U) seems to be widening. Sources say Nitish Kumar is not happy with the BJP's Pravas programme in 200 Assembly constituencies of Bihar. Sources say that the BJP wanted to give out a message that it will contest all 243 assembly seats in future elections. In reply to it, JD(U) national president Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh also said that his party is also preparing for 243 seats. In the past, Nitish Kumar had questioned the parameters on which Niti Aayog evaluated the development works of a particular state. Niti Aayog, in its report, had placed Bihar at the bottom of the development index in the country. This could be another reason for skipping the meeting of the Aayog.



Telangana baby with rare genetic disease administered Rs 16 crore drug

Hyderabad | Agencies

A 23-month-old baby with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Type 1, received a new lease of life with Swiss drugmaker Novartis coming forward to donate gene therapy costing Rs 16 crore.

Baby Ellen was administered Zolgensma gene therapy, called the world's costliest drug, at a private hospital in Hyderabad on August 6, her father Rayapudi Praveen said on Sunday. The baby with a rare genetic disease is currently under medical observation.

Hailing from Bhadradi Kothagudem district of Telangana, Praveen and his wife Stella, were struggling to raise the huge money required for the only treatment option for their child. According to Praveen, they had registered their daughter under Managed Access Programme of Novartis and they



received the information that the company had selected her as the beneficiary. SMA Type 1 is a rare genetic disease that attacks the baby's nerves and muscles and makes it extremely difficult for the child to carry out basic activities like sitting up, lifting head, swallowing milk, and even breathing.

SMA is currently the leading genetic cause of infant death worldwide, and it affects one in 10,000 babies.

Praveen, a resident of Bhadrachalam, who works as a medical representative, along with his wife had set up a fundraiser on Milaap to raise the required amount for Zolgensma.

UAE-based Indo-Arab singer Neha Pandey had also used her Instagram handle to further amplify this cause. However, only Rs 79.36 lakh could be raised.

Zolgensma, made by Novartis, is available only in the US and Europe.

Under the Managed Access Programme, Novartis helps patients with serious or life-threatening diseases or conditions seeking medical products that are not yet approved or available in their country. It makes certain investigational or unapproved treatments available to eligible patients.

Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann bats for MSP as legal guarantee

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Sunday espoused the case of food growers by underlining the need for making minimum support price (MSP) a legal guarantee and ensuring foolproof marketing system for alternative crops. The Chief Minister, while addressing the national Council meeting of NITIO Aayog chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi here, recalled that at the time when country was starving for food, the hard-working and resilient farmers of the state had made country self-reliant in food production. However, he said as agriculture is no longer a profitable venture so the farmers are facing a serious crisis. "All-out efforts must be made to bail out the farmers

from this situation for which the Union government must step in." The Chief Minister underscored the need for making MSP on the crops a legal guarantee. He said it is the need of hour so that interests of farmers can be safeguarded. Likewise, Mann said the MSP must be remunerative as the input cost of agriculture have enhanced manifold and farmers are not getting right price of their harvest. Outrightly rejecting the committee on MSP constituted by the Centre, he demanded that it should be reconstituted with "real farmers" as its members. He said the committee is dominated by those armchair economists who don't have any knowledge about agriculture, and experts of agriculture, along with all stakeholders, must be made members of this committee.



PM MODI CHAIRS NITI AAYOG MEETING, NITISH & KCR ABSENT



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is chairing the seventh Niti Aayog governing council meeting, which is currently underway at the Rashtrapati Bhawan's cultural centre on Sunday in the national capital. Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar are the two big leaders who are not present in the meeting. KCR had written a letter to the Prime Minister, saying that the decision is to mark his protest against what he terms as the 'Centre's alleged discrimination against states, including Telangana'. Nitish Kumar, has just recovered from Covid-19, and has chosen to skip the meeting. This meeting is the first in-person meeting of the Governing Council since July 2019. The Council, top body of NITI Aayog, includes all the chief ministers, lieutenant governors of union territories and several Union ministers. The prime minister is the Chairman of NITI Aayog. The agenda of the meeting includes crop diversification and achieving self-sufficiency in oilseeds and pulses and agri-communities; implementation of the National Education Policy-school education; implementation of the National Education Policy-higher education; and urban governance.

CUET-UG EXAM TO NOW TAKE PLACE FROM AUGUST 24-28

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Universities Common Entrance Test (CUET) UG examination, scheduled for August 4 across 17 states but postponed till August 12 due to administrative and technical reasons, will now be held from August 24.

According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), now the postponed examination will take place from August 24-28 instead of August 12-14. The new admit cards for the exam will be issued on the official website of CUET.

The second slot of CUET had started from August 4. According to the National Testing Agency (NTA), the examination scheduled for the first slot on August 5, was postponed at 20 test centres and for the second slot, was postponed at 30 centres across the country.

As per data provided by the UGC, a total of 15,811 candidates had objected to the test being conducted from August 12-14 and had requested the exam be rescheduled.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, over 63,000 students from across the country, appeared for the CUET. However, on Friday, as well as Thursday, thousands of candidates had to face technical difficulties during both slots of the exam.

According to UGC Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar, the morning session on Sunday started well in all examina-



tion centres across the country, as the NTA had created a special grievance redressal e-mail ID for students, to ensure the test is conducted smoothly.

About the importance of the redressal e-mail, he said: "Students can email their complaints regarding subject combination, language preference and question paper by mentioning their application number. Candidates are advised to check the latest updates regarding the examination on the NTA website."

Earlier, top officials from the Union Ministry of Education, UGC, and NTA along with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, had reviewed all the preparations to ensure smooth

functioning of the examination.

Jagadesh Kumar had said: "Elaborate arrangements have been made to ensure smooth running of the CUET exam. We believe that now students will not face any technical glitches during the test.... A total of 63,404 candidates have registered in 276 examination centres across the country."

The review was conducted taking cognizance of the inconvenience caused to students in some of the centres. According to the NTA, some centres failed to follow the prescribed protocol. It said any incident of non-compliance will be taken very seriously and strict action will be taken against those centres.



RJD HOLDS 'PRATIRODH' MARCH IN BIHAR

Patna: The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) on Sunday held a "Pratirodh" march in Bihar to protest against inflation and unemployment. RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, several other leaders of opposition parties, including Congress, CPM, CPI (ML), participated in the march.

Talking to mediapersons, Tejashwi said, "What Modi Ji has contributed to the nation? Has he provided employment to 2 crore people, controlled price rise of commodities, ended terrorism, corruption, built concrete houses for every countryman? He did nothing for farmers, labourers, flood and drought affected people, did not fulfill the demand for special status to Bihar?"

"Narendra Modi came in 2014, who knew him before 2014. We have been objecting to communal forces for many years," Tejashwi said. "The way people came out from their houses to support us shows that they are angry with the BJP and Narendra Modi. They are miffed with unemployment, price rise, corruption, poor education, lack of health facilities. Moreover, they have beaten people during the protests like Agni path," Tejashwi said. "We are in the court of people (Janata Ki Adalat) and raising their voices before the government. This is a brazen government which is not listening to the voice of people. Hence, the Narendra Modi government will not come to power in 2024," Tejashwi said.

The march began from Saguna More and would end at Dak Bunglow Chowk. Tejashwi Yadav's roadshow comes days after Union Home Minister and BJP leader Amit Shah and JP Nadda held a roadshow in Patna on July 31.

Firing at Kolkata museum: CISF jawan remanded to 14-day police custody

Kolkata | Agencies

A lower court here on Sunday remanded Akshay Kumar Mishra, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) jawan, who resorted to indiscriminate firing in the Indian Museum premises at busy Park Street in central Kolkata on Saturday evening, to 14 days of police custody. Mishra was holding the rank of head constable.

One assistant sub-inspector of CISF, Ranjit Sarangi was killed and a CISF assistant commandant, Subit Ghosh was critically injured in that indiscriminate firing by Mishra, a resident of Odisha.

It is learnt that Mishra has been booked under Section 379 (punishment for theft), Section 307 (punishment for attempt to suicide), Section 302 (punishment for murder) of Indian Penal Code and Section 27 (punishment for using arms) of The Arms Act, 1959. He will be presented at the same court on August 21.

After Mishra was apprehended by police on late Saturday evening from within the Indian Museum premises, he was taken to New Market Police station, where senior officials of the Kolkata Police questioned him throughout the night.



During interrogation, Mishra said that his main target was assistant commandant, Subit Ghosh as he was being denied legitimate leave for the last two and half months. He also expressed grievance against many of his colleges for constantly humiliating him for the last few months. He said that he was denied leave even after the news of his father's demise from his native village in Odisha.

After successful operation on Saturday evening, the Kolkata Police heaved a sigh of relief as the casualty would have been much more, had the firing taken place during the visitors' hours. Meanwhile, the incident has created panic among the regular visitors of Indian Museum with the usual holiday crowd not being witnessed on Sunday.

PUNJAB PROCURES 66,666 DOSES OF GOAT POX VACCINE

Chandigarh: To protect livestock from contagious disease lumpy skin, the Punjab government has procured 66,666 doses of goat pox vaccine, which will be administered free of cost to the livestock to prevent its outbreak. Animal Husbandry Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar said on Sunday.

Taking stock of the situation, the minister said the vaccine, which was specially ordered from Hyderabad, has already been sent to all districts and doctors have started administering it.

He said the government is taking all necessary steps to prevent the spread of the disease. The department is in touch with the authorities to order more vaccine so as to ensure no shortage of equipments and vaccine, he added.

This disease is spreading, especially in the cattle, and many districts have been affected, said the minister, urging the dairy farmers not to dispose of the carcass in open.

TN to provide family health cards under 'health at doorstep' scheme

Chennai | Agencies

The Tamil Nadu health department will provide family health cards to everyone listing their names, age, occupation, health profile, and treatment undertaken, it was announced on Sunday.

State Health Minister Ma Subramanian, in a statement, said that the scheme will be part of the 'Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvum' scheme under which people are treated for diabetes and hypertension at their doorsteps. The scheme also includes providing dialysis kits, physiotherapy, and palliative care for the patients at their doorsteps.

There are 5.98 crore adults in Tamil Nadu and 4.48 crore people have been screened and found that 33 lakh people have hypertension, 23.1 lakh people have diabetes, and 16.8 lakh people have a combination of both. The statement said that 3 lakh people have received palliative care and 6 lakh received physiotherapy.

A model family booklet on health that has been distributed by the Greater Chennai Corporation to



some areas will be extended across the city as well as the state.

The civic body has screened people for ailments such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer (oral, breast, and cervix), mental health, pulmonary diseases, tuberculosis, chronic kidney ailments, and leprosy. The health department said that fol-

low-up care is also entered in the booklet.

The state Health Department is aiming to create a profile and estimate of diseases in the state and the health status of the people to rework the strategies of the Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam scheme.

Battle for Bengaluru: As BJP, Cong fight it out, AAP exudes confidence

Bengaluru | Agencies

The political parties in Karnataka have drawn their swords for the battle of Bengaluru.

After the intervention of the Supreme Court, decks have been cleared for conducting elections for the 243 wards of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the elections of which have been pending since September, 2019.

The BJP and the Congress want to establish their supremacy to show that they are running the show in the Silicon Valley of India. Both are indulging in bitter fights over the reservation of wards, and the Congress has gone to the Supreme Court. The verdict is expected soon.

Meanwhile, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is brimming with confidence that it would fly its flag in Bengaluru by springing a surprise in the civic polls of Bengaluru, no matter whenever the elections are held. The ruling BJP has been accused of bungling with reservation and the delimitation process. The Opposition blames the ruling party for deliberately wanting a prolonged legal battle so that the BBMP elections are held after the state General Assembly elections in 2023.

Anil Kumar Tadkal, spokesperson of the Congress while talking to IANS said that the BJP has violated all rules while finalising the delimitation of wards. "There has to be certain guidelines such as the number of voters or any other criterion. Where there is no presence of ST community, the ward is reserved for them similarly where there are more number of SC voters, the ward is made general category. Wherever Congress MLA's are there, in 96 wards, 72 wards are reserved for women," he says. "We are ready to face elections any day. But, the BJP is wanting to postpone the BBMP elections somehow as the notification for the state Assembly elections will be made in six months. If elections are held now, sitting MLAs will have to take care of the expenses. They may face rebellion, which would affect them adversely," Anil Kumar Tadkal explained.

The Congress candidates have been working in the respective wards for the past 3 to 4 years, after getting all details, BJP has deliberately messed



with reservation for its advantage. The wards represented by BJP candidates have remained untouched," he said.

He further said that the anti-incumbency factor is clearly visible in Bengaluru. The ruling party has destroyed the status of Bengaluru as IT, BT and garden city. First, the BJP made Bengaluru a garbage city and people know how they had put public buildings for sale. "We will focus and we will not have any problem facing elections at any given point," he said.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai defended the list by stating that the reservation matrix has been prepared in accordance with the 2015 High Court order. "The Congress had also done it when they were in power. They should introspect on what they have done. We all know what has happened in each constituency." Congress has the option of challenging the BBMP reservation matrix in the court. Instead the party is indulged in rowdiness. How appropriate is this? This shows the Congress culture. Everyone will condemn it," CM Bommai had stated. Jagadish V Sadam, the State Media Convener for AAP in Karnataka stated that Bengaluru people are suffering because of the corruption of ruling BJP. The incessant rainfall since the past three months has totally exposed the national parties. Though, ruling BJP is claiming that the low-lying areas and encroachment areas are inundated, the fact is the rainwater has

entered houses in most of the localities. They are directly suffering from the corruption practices, and voters in Bengaluru are well aware of Punjab and New Delhi models, he said. The people have decided to vote for the AAP and the victory of the party is ensured. From the selection of candidates by AAP itself, people will see differences. The not so famous people and friendly individuals from various walks of life are chosen. AAP is giving an opportunity to 122 women candidates to contest. "Our women candidates are independent and people can make out differences between the candidates of national parties who are nothing but rubber stamps. Our women candidates would be educated, independent. The people would feel proud to elect them," Jagadish V Sadam said.

Raghavendra SR, social activist, civic leader and a member of B-PAC (Bengaluru Political Action Committee), told IANS that due to the dispute on reservation, if the court takes time, there are chances of continuation of the rule of administrator in BBMP. There are questions about the delimitation of wards.

"The voters will have to observe the civic amenities, they should also know how much money has been released for their wards. The details are given in the website. Wherever there is no utilization of funds and misuse of funds are found, the voters should elect new faces," he explained.

B'LURU CIVIC BODY TO PROVIDE TUTIONS FOR POOR KIDS FROM AUG 15

Bengaluru | Agencies

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will launch a new project under which it will provide tuitions to poor children studying in the third and fifth standards from August 15 in coordination with NGO's.

The project will be launched at places across Bengaluru on pilot basis under the "Vidyarthi Belaku Adhyayana Kendra" scheme. The tuition timings will be between 5.30 pm to 7 pm.

The project's objective is to provide children from



slums and below-poverty line families with more learning opportunities, training, assistance in home work and developing skills set.

Ram Prasat Manohar, Commissioner of BBMP Welfare Department, stated that the classrooms of BBMP schools will be utilised for

the purpose presently. Local NGOs will be given authority to monitor tuition centres.

Various NGOs will provide necessary equipment and study materials to students. The youngsters who completed graduation, post-graduation will teach the students and guide them.

The BBMP will give Rs 1,500 honorary amount to these boys and girls. Every tuition centre will accommodate 20 to 30 students.

Students studying in BBMP and government schools run by the Education department can participate.

CSIR gets first woman head

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Senior scientist Nallathambi Kalaiselvi has been appointed as the first woman Director General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), a consortium of 38 research institutes across the country.

She is known for her work on the subject of lithium ion batteries, and sheA is the current director of the CSIR-Central Electrochemical Research Institute (CSIR-CECRI) at Karaikudi, Tamil Nadu.

Her appointment is for a period of two years with the day from the date of assumption of charge or till further orders, whichever is earlier, a personnel ministry order stated on Saturday.

Kalaiselvi broke the glass ceiling by a becoming scientist to head the Central Electrochemical Research Institute (CSIR-



CECRI) in February 2019.

She began her profession as an entry-level scientist in the similar institute.

Hailing from Ambasamudhran, a small city in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, Kalaiselvi went to a Tamil medium school.



Nine people killed in lightning strikes in three districts

India Meteorological Department (IMD) had predicted heavy rainfall and thunderstorms at isolated places in the state on Sunday



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Nine people were killed and two others injured after lightning struck them in Vidisha, Satna and Guna districts in the last 24 hours, officials said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy rainfall and thunderstorms with lightning at isolated places in the state on Sunday.

In Vidisha, four people were killed after lightning struck them on Saturday evening while they were standing under a tree for shelter during rain in Agasod village in Ganjbasoda tehsil, about 45 km from the district headquarters, city police station inspector Kunwar Singh Mukati said.

The deceased have been identified as Galu Malviya, Ramu, Gudda and Prabhulal, in the age group of 30 to 40 years, he said.

The bodies were handed over to their families after postmortem, he added.

In Satna, four people were killed and two minor boys injured in separate incidents of lightning strike in Podi-Pataura and Jatwara areas on

Saturday, police said.

The deceased were identified as Anjana (34), Chandra (65), Rajkumar (65) and Ramkumar Yadav (43).

The injured boys, aged 12 and 16, were admitted to a hospital, the police said.

In Guna, 45-year-old woman Manu Ahirwar was killed after being struck by lightning in Bhora village on Saturday, police said.

According to the IMD, heavy rainfall and thunderstorms with lightning are very likely to occur at isolated places in MP on Sunday.

It also predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places in MP for three days from Monday.

Many districts in the state received showers over the last 24 hours. Gwalior recorded 54.6 mm rains in the 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Sunday, as per the IMD.

A low pressure area formed over north-west Bay of Bengal was bringing in moisture to Madhya Pradesh causing rain, IMD Bhopal office senior meteorologist Ved Prakash Singh said.

Besides, the monsoon trough line was passing across the state, he added.

MP TO CONTRIBUTE \$550 BILLION TO MAKE INDIA A 5 TRILLION DOLLAR ECONOMY: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh will contribute \$550 billion to make India a \$5 trillion economy. He said that Madhya Pradesh is moving ahead keeping in mind the all-inclusive vision of Prime Minister Modi of 21st century Atmanirbhar Bharat. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that NITI Aayog has a big role in the making of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. Madhya Pradesh is a vivid example of how NITI Aayog becomes the power of the states. Chouhan was addressing the 7th meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. PM Modi presided over the meeting.

Chouhan informed that the roadmap for Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh had been developed in the state in the year 2020. Madhya Pradesh has achieved a growth rate of 19.74 percent in the year 2021-22. The state is making capital expenditure of 4 percent of the GDP and a provision of Rs 48 thousand 800 crore has been made for the capital expenditure for the financial year 2022-23, which is the highest ever. Chief Minister said that employment is our biggest priority and recruitments will be made on one lakh government posts in the next one year. He said that special campaigns would be run for cent percent achievement in beneficiary oriented schemes.

Chouhan said that taking inspiration from the crop diversification approach of Modi, an increase has been registered in the area of mustard and summer moong in the state.

Giving information about the use of modern technology in agriculture, Chouhan said that crop insurance registration has been linked with the land records of the state, which has succeeded in preventing over and duplicate insurance. Also satellite based remote sensing technology is being used for yield estimation in insurance payments.

While discussing the implementation of the National

PM Museum will prove to be a milestone in understanding the history of India: Governor

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Governor Mangubhai Patel today visited the Prime Minister's Museum at Teenmurti Marg in Delhi. Governor Patel visited all 46 technology based galleries showcasing the nation-building contribution of former Prime Ministers of India.

During the visit, Patel also took selfies with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Prime Minister Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee using Augmented Reality device. Governor Patel chanted Bharat Mata ki Jai and Vande Mataram with NCC cadets who had come from Kerala on a tour to the museum. Patel also addressed the



cadets. He told them to live their lives in such a way that the country is not looked down upon.

Patel recorded his thoughts in the visitors' book of the museum. He wrote "Today got the opportunity to visit the Prime Minister's Museum. Here each Prime Minister's gallery has been



Education Policy, Chief Minister said that Madhya Pradesh has reached the fifth position in the country by making a big leap in the National Achievement Survey of the year 2021. He informed that a successful campaign is being run in the state to engage the public in the rejuvenation of Anganwadi through the Adopt an Anganwadi campaign. While on one hand training is being imparted to Anganwadi workers in pre-primary education, on the other hand high quality 9200 C.M. Rise schools are being opened.

Chouhan informed that special emphasis is being laid on study and teaching in mother tongue in Madhya Pradesh. MBBS education in Hindi medium is being started from the session 2022-23 in Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal.

Chouhan informed that the urban bodies of the state are creating a record of cleanliness. Unprecedented works of infrastructure development are being done in the cities of the state.

Giving information about the financial management of urban bodies, CM said that unused properties worth about Rs 600 crore have been identified and monetized in the state. The development plan is being prepared in all the cities using GIS and other technologies and the work of preparing multi modal transport system and logistic hub has also been started in PM Gatishakti. Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh will leave no stone unturned in the direction of realising the resolutions of Modi. He said that under the guidance of Modi, we will achieve all the goals of the National Agenda.

PRESENCE OF LEOPARDS A WORRY AS KUNO IN MP PREPARES TO WELCOME CHEETAHS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Spread over 344 square km. Kuno National Park located in Sheopur and Morena districts of Gwalior-Chambal division in Madhya Pradesh, is getting ready to welcome the first batch of cheetahs from two African countries South Africa and Namibia.

The Union government signed the MoU with Namibia last month in New Delhi, and if all goes as per the plan, four to eight cheetahs are likely to arrive in the first lot before August 15. However, Madhya Pradesh Wildlife was yet to receive a confirmed date from the Centre.

These African cheetahs will be brought to India under a translocation project. In India, the project is being managed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under the Union Environment Ministry.

As per the wildlife officials in Madhya Pradesh, cheetahs from Namibia will be flown to South Africa and then to Delhi. After that they will be flown to Gwalior, subsequently they will be taken to Kuno national park via road.

The official said that the animal will return to a wild enclosure in India 69 years after the last recorded cheetah was hunted down in what is now Chhattisgarh in 1952.

Meanwhile, authorities at Kuno have finalised preparations but the presence of three leopards in the enclosure of cheetahs is creating problems for them. The old dweller of the forest (leopards) doesn't seem ready to share space with the foreigners.

Sources said the forest officials are scrambling to get things ready for the translocation,

at least six leopards have been trapped so far. "Unless these leopards are evicted, the cheetahs cannot be brought in. Leopards are much larger than cheetahs and are known to injure or even kill them. Drop-door cages with goats have been used but only two cubs were caught and released outside the enclosure," said a wildlife official.

Officials in Kuno National Park told IANS that a 12 km-long and 9-feet high fence with electric overhangs and a 24x7 CCTV watch, will give the cheetahs some degree of protection as they settle into their new home.

Experts associated with the project say some conflict between leopards and cheetahs is inevitable, but the fenced off enclosure will give the cheetahs a level of protection during their most vulnerable time as they come to terms with their new home.

"We were trying to shift the leopards naturally but now our priority is to shift them as soon as possible. The trap has been installed but the leopards are eluding the forest officials. Now, the forest officials will tranquilise the animals to remove them from the enclosure of 500 hectares," said JS Chauhan, principal chief conservator of forests in Madhya Pradesh.

He added, "Other preparations including the arrangement of water and shifting of prey base of at least 100 deer have also been finalised."

Experts said the African cheetahs would be quarantined for at least two weeks, which is called a 'soft release.' During this period their health and activities will be closely monitored. The second process is called a 'hard release', during which cheetahs will be set free to move into the forest.

Local youth to ensure peace during festive season

To ensure that upcoming festivals are celebrated in a peaceful atmosphere, maintaining harmony between the communities (Hindu-Muslim), Madhya Pradesh's Shajapur district police have come up with an initiative to involve local residents as social volunteers.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

To ensure that upcoming festivals are celebrated in a peaceful atmosphere, maintaining harmony between the communities (Hindu-Muslim), Madhya Pradesh's Shajapur district police have come up with an initiative to involve local residents as social volunteers.

Different groups of volunteers, comprising youth from both communities, were trained during a recent training camp organised at district police headquarters, and have given particular names such as - Police Mitra, Gram Suraksha Samiti, etc.

During the one day training camp, Superintendent of Police (SP) Shajapur, Jagdeesh Davar has instructed the volunteers to keep a

close watch on their respective areas allocated to them and to inform the police so that any untoward incident (if emerges), can be avoided.

The step has been taken in view of upcoming religious festivals - Muharram (August 9-10), Rakshabandhan (August 11), and Janmashtmi (August 18-19). During the Muharram, the people of the Muslim community carry a procession called - 'Tazia'.

Notably, the district has a mixed population of both Hindus and Muslims; and is considered a highly sensitive zone in the state.

Communal incidents spark here every now and then, which keep the police on their toes, even during non-festive seasons.

"Even a scuffle broke out between

individuals over some personal reasons would spark communal violence here. This entire Agar-Malwa region is considered a highly sensitive area due to communal clashes. Politically connected people plays a bigger role in making the tense situation for their own benefits," said another senior police officer posted in the district.

A fresh such instance was reported during recently concluded local body elections when winning councillor Samiullah Khan, who is associated with the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), had raised slogan 'Pakistan Jindabad' after winning the election. The incident made the situation tense as hundreds of people from both the communities were present there. However, the police acted swiftly and arrested Khan, and

the National Security Act (NSA) was imposed against him. At present, Khan is in Ujjain Central Jail.

Talking to IANS, SP Sanjeev Davar said, "Different group of volunteers to be deployed in both villages and town. Like, in Muslim populated areas, youths (volunteers) would ensure that weapons are not carried during the procession and if they notice anything untoward, they would immediately alert the police. Similarly, volunteers are deployed in Hindu-dominated areas with the same purpose." The security in the district is on high alert also because of Independence Day, for which the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' movement is underway. Due to this, a flag march of the police is being carried out on regular basis across the district.



CM PLANTS CHAMPA SAPLING IN DELHI

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a Champa sapling at Kautilya Marg near Apostolic Nunciature at Chanakyapuri during his stay in Delhi today. Chouhan is on a visit to Delhi to attend the meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog. Chouhan is planting saplings every day as per his resolve.

Monsoon Marathon in Pachmarhi on the theme of "Har Ghar Tiranga"

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A wonderful example of patriotism and sportsmanship was seen in the Monsoon Marathon on the theme of "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign at Pachmarhi, the hill station of 'Madhya Pradesh', the heart of Incredible India. On the occasion of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" the participants ran with the tiranga flag in their hands with enthusiasm. More than 1000 participants from different states of the country participated with enthusiasm. From 10-year-olds to 80-year-olds also participate in the marathon.

Principal Secretary Tourism and Culture and Managing Director Tourism Board Sheo Shekhar Shukla informed that the fourth edition of Pachmarhi Monsoon Marathon was successfully organized in collaboration with District Administration Narmadapuram and Adventure and You (Ak Connect). The marathon was held in four categories: 5 km, 10 km, 21 km and 42.2 km. The full marathon of 42.2 km, which was held for the first time, has got a good response. The marathon, held on the theme of Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan, is a honor to the national flag and a true tribute to the freedom fighters.

Narmadapuram Collector Neeraj Kumar Singh informed that tourism in Narmadapuram district has been selected in the 'One District One Product' campaign under Atma-nirbhar Madhya Pradesh campaign. To popularize tourism, "52 weeks 52 activities" have been marked for the whole year. Monsoon



Marathon is also a part of this activity. Which has been linked to the theme of "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign on the occasion of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav".

Deputy Director Tourism Board Yuvraj Padole said that the main objective of the marathon in 'Satpura ki Rani Pachmarhi' is to introduce the scenic beauty of Pachmarhi to the tourists of the country and abroad in monsoon. The marathon held on the "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" has also given a message to the participants to hoist the Tiranga from house to house.

All the runners who participated in the marathon were given T-shirts, RFID Timing Chip, Route Support, Finishers Medal, Certificate and Post Run Refreshment. Three top runners of the competition were honored with trophies by Police Training Academy SP Nimisha Pandey, Chairman of Special Area Development Authority, Pachmarhi Kamal Dhoot and Deputy Director Padole. Also, hotel stay vouchers were given to the winners by the Tourism Board.

Tripti Pani stood first in the 18-30 age group of the full marathon. Similarly, in the 31-45 age group, Shining Star Pahwa stood first, Harminder Singh Gill second and Pradeep Kushwaha third. Also in the age group of 46-99, Uday Bobhate stood first, Bhagwan Singh Kushwaha II and VKS Rawat third.

The Pachmarhi Marathon, painted with the national flag, was full of patriotism and enthusiasm. The Commandant of AEC Pachmarhi, Brigadier VK Bhatt and Deputy Director Yuvraj Padole flagged off the marathon. The youth running in Pachmarhi's plains with the tiranga in their hands were not only showing enthusiasm and stamina, but today they were also showing a spirit to express their love for the country. The smile of the 'Azadi ka amrit mahotsav' was being displayed on the face in the form of a resolve to keep the country above all.

The glory of Narmadapuram, the marathon run in the litigants of Satpura's queen "Pachmarhi," made the vision of the country's independence come true in front of the eyes. It seemed as if the freedom lovers were running with the tiranga on getting independence in the country. By connecting the Pachmarhi Monsoon Marathon with the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the common citizen of the state was filled with the feeling of patriotism. It is a message that Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan is not just a campaign but also a true tribute to thousands of freedom fighters who have adorned Mother India with their blood by donating their heads.



EDITOR'S SPECS

RBI must continue to focus on price stability

With even the latest forecasts suggesting that prices will remain well above the central bank's inflation target, the MPC should continue to focus squarely on inflation management. On Friday, the monetary policy committee of the Reserve Bank of India voted unanimously to raise the benchmark policy repo rate by 50 basis points. With the latest hike, the MPC has now tightened the policy rate by 140 basis points over the course of its last three meetings. The repo rate now stands at 5.4 per cent, marginally above the pre-pandemic level of 5.15 per cent in February 2020. The tone of the policy was in line with expectations with the committee emphasising the need for "calibrated monetary policy action" to contain inflationary pressures and bring headline inflation "closer to the target." The central bank's commentary on both growth and inflation remained unchanged. On inflation, even though the consumer price index (CPI) in the first quarter of the year came in marginally lower than the RBI's earlier projection, the central bank has broadly retained its earlier forecast for the full year, though with minor tinkering in the quarterly estimates. The inflation projection for the full year stands at 6.7 per cent. However, price pressures are likely to subside sharply in the second half of the year. After averaging 7.1 per cent in the second quarter, the RBI expects CPI to trend lower to 6.4 per cent in the third quarter, and 5.8 per cent in the fourth quarter, though there remains uncertainty over services inflation and how the rains will play out. Alongside, the RBI has also retained its growth forecast at 7.2 per cent for the ongoing financial year. While, going by the forecasts, growth is expected to slow down sharply in the second half of the year, the governor noted that "domestic economic activity is exhibiting signs of broadening". As per the RBI's surveys, capacity utilisation in manufacturing was higher than its long-term average, which, as the governor noted, signals the "need for fresh investment activity." With even the latest forecasts suggesting that prices will remain well above the central bank's inflation target, the MPC should continue to focus squarely on inflation management, though the normalisation of policy suggests that the pace of tightening may moderate over the course of the next meetings. While the committee has not clearly elaborated on the extent of tightening it envisages as it seeks to bring inflation in line with the target, the commentary on the natural interest rate does provide some guidance. In the RBI's June bulletin, economists at the central bank had estimated the natural rate for the post-pandemic period to be in the range of 0.8-1 per cent, which was 80 basis points lower than the earlier comparable estimate. Considering that the central bank has now projected inflation at 5 per cent in the first quarter of the next financial year, this does provide some sense of the likely path of the policy rate.

1947 and lines of lamentation

It was the dead of the night in November 1947, and winter had decided to be at its vengeful worst. Travelling on a train from Delhi with her two small children wrapped in a red shawl, she looked at the shadows of the trees outside. They were like sentinels of sorrow. The darkness, the icy winds, the sound of the train moving on the tracks... and the first draft of 'Aaj Aakhan Waris Shah Nu' was born.

The famous dirge that immortalized poet Amrita Pritam is about the horrors of the partition of Punjab during the 1947 Partition of India. Addressed to the historic Punjabi poet Waris Shah, who had written the most popular version of the Punjabi love tragedy, 'Heer Ranjha', it appeals to him to arise from his grave, record Punjab's tragedy and turn over a new page in Punjab's history.

Written in November 1947, it was the first major poem on the biggest tragedy that the sub-continent had witnessed and most writers, poets and artists stress that it is the most powerful one on the Partition -- on both sides of the border.

"It was a time when everyone was depressed, shamed and haunted. All you could hear was silence. It required a woman to write the first dirge on the tragedy. After all, what happened to women on both sides during the Partition was disgusting and criminal --- humiliated, killed, raped and sold as prostitutes. Amrita came out to scream in that silence. Of course, many critics from our side of Punjab had a problem -- 'why was the poem addressed to Waris Shah and not Guru Nanak'. The leftists thought it should have been addressed to Lenin. Now, Waris Shah was the symbol of the composite culture of Punjab, she had to call upon him and nobody else," says poet and critic Nirupama Dutt.

Adding that it enjoyed immediate following in the newly formed Pakistan too, with the poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz who read it inside his



jail cell and coming out to discover people carrying it in their pockets and reciting it at tea stalls and other addas, she asserts. "Many good poems emerged later, but this one will always enjoy a special space. Also, it towers over all her other work."

Theatre director Neelam Mansingh believes that poetry is like any other classical text -- the catalyst may be a certain terrible event that gives birth to the poem, but it becomes something that travels through time. "When you see a

massacre, brutalization of women, sexist or misogynist behaviour, one goes back and finds a thread. 'Heer' represents the essence of a Punjabi woman. She ceases to be a person but becomes an archetype. In that context, 'Aaj Aakhan Waris Shah Nu' is a poem that connects and resonates every time you read it. It never seems dated," says this Padma Shri awardee.

"Herself a great poet of her times, she added another dimension of the female point of view of Waris Shah's 'Heer' by underlining the fact that

she has to pay the price of bloody ventures of the male ego. By connecting 1947 with Waris and then Heer, Amrita has immortalised the senseless sufferings of all of us. While celebrating the anniversary of the freedom of the country, it is important not to forget the slavery of our hatred, diplomatic immaturity and political selfishness," says playwright and author Atamjit Singh, recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Sahitya Akademi honours.

Believing that an artist -- a poet, painter or filmmaker must talk and record the issues of her/his times, National award-winning Punjabi filmmaker Rajeev Kumar feels that whenever massacres, wars or any other tragedy strikes, the worst sufferers are women. "With this poem, she responds not just as an artist but also as a woman. Just like Paash wrote in the 1970s that 'we are living in the era of Vietnam' (US intervention in Vietnam). It is the way that she has articulated the tragedy and brought forth the suffering of all sides that makes it special."

Well-known critic Yograj Angrish, who has written over 10 books on Punjabi poetry and is the Vice chairman of Punjab Kala Parishad feels that some poems become evergreen and we tend to go back to them whenever history is repeated. "During the Khalistani movement, poet Surjit Patar wrote 'At that time Waris Shah was divided, now it is Shiv Kumar Batalvi's turn. Amrita was a poet of cultural tradition. When a cri-

sis came, she looked and addressed a secular poet from her tradition. Remember, Waris Shah was a Muslim. If the madness in civilization ends, this poem will also vanish. But are we naive enough to believe that?"

Even as it remains of the most talked about poems on the Partition, poet Desraj Kali, who has written extensively on Dalit issues and was published and praised widely by Amrita Pritam in her magazine 'Nagmani' believes that this is the poet's worst work. "Reading this poem, one feels she has no clue about Waris Shah's works, especially Heer. Shah's Heer is a revolutionary character, she didn't cry or get emotional. No father in Punjab even now dares to name his daughter Heer. She is anti-establishment, anti-system -- both politically and socially, for her tradition means nothing. I fail to understand why Punjabis from both sides are so obsessed with this work. Don't they look within? Are they trying to say that all the killings were just in frenzy? Let us not forget many were calculated ones too."

Poet Sudeep Sen feels that we all know what happened in 1947, but the poem is a humbling reminder of the past and a fervent cry to rise up and hold firm. "There are echoes here that one can relate to current-day politics - but a poem elicits much more, both at the level of history and emotion," he concludes.

international

CHINA LAUNCHES LONG-RANGE AIRSTRIKE DRILLS AROUND TAIWAN

Taipei | Agencies

Chinese forces took part in drills focused on land attacks and long-range airstrikes around Taiwan on Sunday, its military said, on what was expected to be the final day of extensive exercises rolled out in response to a visit to the island by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The Eastern Theatre Command of the Chinese military said around noon local time that it conducted live-fire drills in the waters and airspace around Taiwan "as planned", CNN reported.

"The drills focused on joint fire land strikes and long-range air strike capabilities," the command said in a statement posted to its official account on the social media



platform Weibo, without specifying whether the drills have ended.

The exercises, planned to take place in six zones around the island, began on Thursday and were scheduled to last until Sunday at noon local time in Beijing, Chinese state media reported.

that Chinese military drills around the island could be a 'possible simulated attack', reports CNN.

"Taiwan's military" closely monitored" the situation and deployed aircraft and vessels to "appropriately" react to Chinese military drills around the island, the Ministry added.

It also said drones "intruded" into outlying islands controlled by Taiwan, CNN reported.

The Ministry did not immediately provide an exact number for the Chinese aircraft, vessels or drones that were detected on Sunday morning or say whether they crossed the sensitive median line in the Taiwan Strait that separates the island from the Chinese mainland.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry on Sunday said it detected multiple Chinese aircraft, naval vessels and drones operating around the Taiwan Strait, in what it called a "simulated attack against the main island of Taiwan and Taiwan's naval vessels", a slight dial-up of language from Saturday when it said

SIX RUSSIAN MILITARY OFFICERS SACKED SINCE WAR BEGAN: UK INTELLIGENCE

London: At least six senior Russian military officers are believed to have been sacked since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, according to a British intelligence update on Sunday.

The poor performance of the armed forces during the invasion has been costly for the Russian military leadership, most likely leading to the dismissal of at least six commanders, dpa news agency quoted the UK's Ministry of Defence as saying in its regular intelligence update.

Among others, General Alexander Dvornikov was removed after being given overall command of the operation in Ukraine.

In addition, at least 10 Russian generals were killed on the battlefield in Ukraine, the update said.

Altogether, all this probably contributed to Russia's tactical and operational difficulties in the war against Ukraine.

The British Ministry of Defence publishes some of its intelligence on the Ukraine war in a daily update on Twitter.

Russia itself remains largely silent on personnel and tactical decisions.

Legislation to ease return of Nawaz Sharif

Lahore | Agencies

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government is considering relevant legislation to ease the return of its supreme leader Nawaz Sharif, who is in a self-imposed exile in London on medical grounds, to Pakistan, the media reported.

PML-N leader and Pakistan Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has already said the coalition government might make certain amendments that would help repeal the ban imposed on Sharif by a Supreme Court judgement in the Panama Papers case against him, the Dawn reported. "The parliament can undo the lifetime ban on politicians and it may not be struck down by the court," an insider told Dawn.

"Nawaz Sharif will be the ultimate beneficiary if this legislation is brought to parliament and subsequently adopted," the insider said, adding that the introduction of this legislation would be linked to the outcome of the Supreme Court Bar Association's petition in the

apex court challenging lifetime ban on politicians.

Earlier, PML-N Vice-President Maryam Nawaz had hinted that her father wanted to come back but there were 'certain problems' hindering his return. Besides, she had also referred to not getting a 'green light' from the powerful circles for his return, Dawn reported. After Shehbaz Sharif managed to become the premier in April last, some PML-N leaders were excited hoping that their supreme leader would now be among them soon. But legal hiccups are said to be the main hurdles in his return plans. Nawaz Sharif will likely make his return to Pakistan ahead of the general elections as PML-N leaders think his presence in the field is necessary to stop Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) juggernaut. In the face of the rising popularity of the PTI chairman who was ousted as the prime minister in April this year, the entire PML-N leadership is unanimous that the party needs Nawaz to be in Pakistan ahead of the polls if it wants to score a victory, Dawn reported.

United States accuses China of 'provocative, irresponsible' actions

Washington: The US has accused Beijing of "provocative" and "irresponsible" actions after Taiwan said China rehearsed an attack on the island. Taiwan said it responded to the Chinese drills, now in their fourth day, by deploying aircraft and ships on Sunday, the BBC reported.

The heightened tensions follow a trip to Taiwan by a US delegation led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

China views the visit as a challenge to its claims of sovereignty over Taiwan, which sees itself as distinct. Taiwan's defence ministry said Chinese ships and planes carried out missions in the Taiwan Strait over the weekend, with some crossing the median line, an unofficial buffer separating the two sides, the BBC reported. Speaking to reporters in Taipei, premier Su Tseng-chang accused China of "arrogantly" using the exercises to disrupt regional stability and appealed for restraint from the Chinese side. Beijing has not commented on the latest exercises, but its four-day long series of military drills in the air and seas around Taiwan are expected to finish on Sunday.

Washington has accused China of escalating tensions. "These activities are a significant escalation in China's efforts to change the status quo. They are provocative, irresponsible and raise the risk of miscalculation," a White House spokesperson said.

Rocket alert in Jerusalem, with residents reporting explosions

Jerusalem | Agencies

For the first time since the beginning of the Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip, there was also a rocket alarm in Jerusalem on Sunday.

According to military reports, warning sirens were sounding around the city in the morning, while residents have reported explosions, reports dpa news agency.

Since Friday, more than 400 rockets have been fired at Israel from the Gaza Strip, according to the military.

There had been fears that the situation could escalate further on Sunday, the Jewish day of fasting and mourning, Tisha B'Av.

Religious Jews mourn the destruction of the two ancient temples in Jerusalem on this day. The Islamist Hamas organization, which controls the Gaza Strip, has called for the al-Aqsa



mosque on the site known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary to be "defended and for Israeli attacks on the holy site to be

opposed". The Noble Sanctuary, or al-Haram al-Sharif, with the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa

Mosque, is the third holiest site in Islam. To the Jews it is known as the Temple Mount, where both the destroyed temples stood.

Until now, Hamas had kept a low profile in the recent conflict with Israel.

The Israeli military had launched the large-scale operation dubbed "Breaking Dawn" against the militant organization Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) on Friday.

The military chief Taisir al-Jabari and other PIJ members were killed.

The group is classified as a terrorist organization by the EU and the US.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 29 people have died since Friday, and at least 253 have been injured.

Among the dead are six children and four women, in addition to other PIJ members.

AUSTRIA PLANS CRACKDOWN ON ONLINE HATE SPEECH AFTER DOCTOR'S SUICIDE

Vienna: The Austrian justice and security authorities plan to take a tougher stance on online hate speech following the suicide of a doctor who was bombarded with death threats for her advocacy for vaccines against Covid-19.

Justice Minister Alma Zadic plans to work with Interior Minister Gerhard Karner to give every police department and public prosecutor's office the necessary resources and tools to take all victims seriously and bring perpetrators to justice without undue delay, dpa news agency reported.

"These investigations often take too long, which is of course extremely stressful for victims," she said on Saturday. Her comments came a day after Austrian officials said they would work with German prosecutors to search for those who made death threats on social media against Lisa-Maria Kellermayr, a 36-year-old doctor who died by suicide.

The doctor, who was vocal in the fight against the pandemic, was subjected to a wave of death threats from critics of government containment measures.

She was found dead in her practice just over a week ago.

The Austrian authorities have been accused of failing to provide sufficient support.

Meanwhile investigations are continuing in Germany after a man's home was searched in Bavaria on Friday.



Shinde in Delhi, may hold talks with BJP bigwigs on Maha cabinet expansion

Amid discussions about cabinet expansion in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is in the national capital where he will attend the NITI Aayog meeting on Sunday.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid discussions about cabinet expansion in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is in the national capital where he will attend the NITI Aayog meeting on Sunday. After reaching Delhi on Saturday, Shinde said that he is visiting the national capital to attend the NITI Aayog meeting. More than 35 days have passed after Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis took the oath of office but cabinet is yet to be expanded. However as per sources,

Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis are already in the capital and may discuss cabinet expansion with the bigwigs of the BJP. It is being said that list of ministers has been made and approval of BJP high command has to be taken for allotting departments. On June 30, rebel MLAs of Shiv Sena under the leadership of Shinde have formed government with BJP's support. But they are under constant attack of opposition over non-expansion of the cabinet till now. Issue of membership of rebel MLAs is also pending in the Supreme Court. It is being said that the new cabinet can be formed before August 15.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde is likely to expand his cabinet before August 15 by inducting at least 15 ministers and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis is expected to keep the crucial Home portfolio, sources said on Sunday.

Top government sources said the civic polls in the state, delayed due to the OBC reservation issue being heard by the Supreme Court, are likely to be held in October after getting a clarification from the apex court.

Shinde and Fadnavis were sworn in as chief minister and deputy chief minister respectively on June 30 after the resignation of Uddhav Thackeray due to a rebellion in the Shiv Sena ranks.

The duo have been functioning as a two-member cabinet since then, inviting criticism from opposition leaders, including NCP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

"Ajit Pawar is leader of the opposition. He will have to say such things. Ajit dada conveniently forgets that when he was in the government there

MAHARASHTRA CABINET EXPANSION BEFORE AUGUST 15; FADNAVIS TO GET HOME



were just five ministers for the first 32 days," Fadnavis told reporters here on Sunday.

The expansion of the Maharashtra cabinet will take place "before you can even imagine," Fadnavis told reporters in response to repeated

questions on the induction of new ministers.

Fadnavis said the BJP has embarked on a mission to improve its footprint in Maharashtra in the 2024 elections by identifying 16 parliamentary constituencies where opposition

parties have had a consistent winning streak.

He said these constituencies included those held by Shiv Sena leaders who have now joined the Shinde camp.

"Since Shiv Sena and BJP will contest the Lok Sabha elections as a coalition, the BJP will work to ensure the victory of the sitting Lok Sabha members from these constituencies," Fadnavis said. He said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has been given the responsibility to coordinate efforts to better the BJP's performance in Baramati, where the party had polled a good number of votes in the previous elections.

Fadnavis said Sitharaman is likely to tour Baramati in September and travel programmes of other central BJP leaders and Union ministers tasked with responsibilities for Lok Sabha polls will be finalised soon.

"In these 16 constituencies, the central BJP will concentrate its energies to better the party's performance," Fadnavis said.

Baramati is currently represented by Supriya Sule, the daughter of NCP chief Sharad Pawar. The seat is considered a bastion of the Pawar family.

THREE NABBED FOR GANG-RAPE OF 35-YEAR-OLD WOMAN

In a shocking incident, a woman was brutally gang-raped for over four days in Gondiya district, sparking a political war of words between the ruling Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis regime and the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, here on Saturday.

Team Absolute | Nagpur

In a shocking incident, a woman was brutally gang-raped for over four days in Gondiya district, sparking a political war of words between the ruling Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis regime and the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, here on Saturday.

According to Gondiya Police, the victim, aged around 35 years and working as a maid, was sexually assaulted between July 30 and August 2 by at least three persons near Kanhadmoh village under the Goregaon police station in the district.

According to the preliminary report, at around 7 pm on July 30, the woman was waiting at a bus stop to go to her brother's village when one of the accused, Shiram Urkude (37), offered her a lift on his vehicle.

When they reached near

Mudipar village, Urkude demanded to have sex with her, but when she refused, he threatened to kill her. As she continued to resist, he raped her inside the vehicle.

He continued to rape her repeatedly over the next two days and finally dumped her in an injured state near Kanhadmoh on August 1, where she awaited help.

Seeing her in a helpless state, two others Amit Ashok Sarve (30) and Aejaz Mohammed Wahid Ansari (22) also took advantage of the situation and forcibly took her away on their motorcycle. They drove to an isolated field near Gunthara, assaulted her and repeatedly raped her for several hours before abandoning her near the roadside on August 2, said the Gondiya police.

Seeing her in a badly injured state, bleeding profusely and in a semi-naked condition, some locals alert-



ed the Bhandara police. A police team rushed her first to a local hospital in Bhandara for treatment but since her wounds ran deep, she was shifted to the Nagpur Government Medical College where she underwent a surgery. However, her condition is still critical.

Swooping into action, the Bhandara Police transferred the matter to Goregaon

dent in Delhi.

Following an uproar, Shinde has ordered a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by a woman IPS officer to probe the matter, which he termed as "a serious and gruesome incident".

The Gondiya Police are scouring the CCTV footages of the various locations where the accused trio took her in their vehicles besides tapping local witnesses.

Shiv Sena leader Neelam Gorhe, BJP's Chitra Wagh and others condemned the incident and demanded that the accused should be tried at a fast-track court under the stringent Shakti Act.

NCP's Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar slammed Shinde-Fadnavis for delaying the cabinet expansion owing to which, he claimed, the government is losing a grip on the day-to-day administration, leading to such incidents.

Fake visa racket busted by IGI police, Mumbai-based agent held

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Deportation of a man from Kuwait led the IGI Police to bust a fake immigration cum visa racket and arrest a mastermind.

DCP of IGI, Tanu Sharma said that the accused was identified as Mustaq alias Jamil Picturewala. He was held from Mumbai.

"The accused is involved in arranging fake passport and visa along with his aides Zakir Yusuf Shaikh in Mumbai and Narayanbhai Chaudhary in Gujrat. They are mostly operating in areas of Gujrat and Mumbai and facilitate people in arranging fake passport and visa through which they can settle down in USA by unfair means," the official said.

The DCP said that in June one Ravi Rameshbhai Chaudhary was deported from Kuwait. During thorough scrutiny by immigration officials, it was found that he had a duplicate passport. A case was lodged in this regard.

Ravi disclosed that he



came in contact with some agents namely Narayanbhai, Zakir Yusuf Shaikh and Mushtaq - all residents of Gujrat and Mumbai.

Narayanbhai assured Ravi that his fake passport and visa would be arranged in lieu of Rs 65 lakh. Narayanbhai shared the contacts of his Mumbai-based associates. The deal was finalised for Rs 65 lakh and Ravi paid Rs 15 lakh cash in advance to the accused.

Narayanbhai told Ravi to contact Shaikh and Mushtaq. Ravi sent his photograph and signature to Mushtaq on WhatsApp. After receiving his photo and signature,

Mushtaq arranged a fake passport for him.

Thereafter, a fake visa of Netherland was obtained on the basis of fake and fabricated passport. Ravi was supposed to travel to Mexico from Netherland and then illegally to the US. The rest of the deal amount was to be delivered to Narayanbhai by the family of the passenger.

After hearing about the arrest of Ravi, the accused had fled, and kept on changing his locations.

Mushtaq was held from Mumbai following a tip-off, while the police teams have been sent to arrest co-accused.

POLICE PROBE "NUPUR SHARMA SUPPORT" ANGLE AFTER MAN ATTACKED, FOUR ARRESTED

Since the victim has some criminal cases registered against him too, police haven't ruled out personal enmity as the reason behind attack in Karjat

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A group of men attacked a resident of Karjat in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district on August 4 leaving him severely injured and police are now probing allegations that it was linked to his support to Nupur Sharma, the since-suspended BJP leader whose comments on Prophet Mohammed and Islam two months ago sparked off a row. Four arrests have been made so far, police said.

There has already been a murder in Maharashtra's Amravati besides one in Udaipur, Rajasthan apparently over social media posts supporting Ms Sharma. Karjat saw a bandh on Friday on a call by some Hindu organisations. BJP MLA Nitesh Rane demanded that the case be given to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is probing the other two murders.

The injured man, Prateek Pawar, is admitted to hospital as he received severe blows and cuts. Local police have registered a case of attempted murder and named some of the accused.

Since Mr Pawar has some criminal cases registered against him, police haven't ruled out personal enmity as the reason.

Karjat in Ahmednagar saw a shutdown on Friday over the attack.

The FIR says Prateek Pawar and his friend, Amit Mane, were waiting for some other friends by the road when a "12-14 people" arrived there -- some in a car, others on motorbikes and scooters. They allegedly abused him over his religion and one of them



first attacked him with a sword. Others joined in using knives, sticks and stones, according to Mane.

He said they kept saying "people like you are supporting Nupur Sharma and Kanhaiya Lal (Udaipur murder victim) on social media." One of the attackers allegedly told Mr Pawar that he'd meet the same fate as that of Umesh Kolhe (Amravati murder victim).

As he bled from the head and fainted, the attackers thought he's dead, and left, says the FIR, based on his friend's version of events.

People on the street did not intervene as the attackers were a large group and had weapons, Mr Mane told the police. He said he called other friends and took Pawar to hospital after the attackers left.

Police have named Shahrulkhan Pathan, Sohail Pathan, Nihal Khan Pathan, Ilail Sheikh, Tipu Pathan, Arbaaz Kasam Pathan, Arshad Pathan and Aqib Syed so far in the case.

The 'Kranti Simha' who rattled the Raj with Satara 'Prati Sarkar'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Akin to that tiny village in ancient Gaul which rattled the Romans in the fictional world of Asterix and Obelix, Satara's freedom hero, Nana Ramchandra Pisal, alias 'Kranti Simha Nana Patil', unnerved the mighty British Raj with his unique 'Prati Sarkar' (Alternative Government) Movement in the 1940s in Maharashtra. It was a parallel regime by all counts which needed the British for several years - as it was launched soon after Mahatma Gandhi's historic 'Quit India' call in Bombay on August 8, 1942.

"Nana Patil and his band of followers took it to heart and 'clamped' down on the foreign rulers in Satara, in one of the most radical rebellions in the country... resulting in police firing at 5 places, killing 11 patriots," noted scholar from Kolhapur, Prof. (Dr.) Maya Pandit, the ex Pro Vice Chancellor of the prestigious EFL University, Hyderabad, told IANS.

Though the British brutally quelled the rebellion with support of local armies of feudal lords, thugs and criminals, it continued for around 3 years and represented the common Indian's tremendous craving for freedom and later Nana Patil re-ignited the fires in the masses' hearts, she said. Nana Patil (August 3, 1900-December 6, 1976), initially worked with the Congress and post-independence with the Peasants & Workers Party, was given a Communist Party of India (CPI) ticket and elected MP from his birthplace Satara (1957) and Beed (1967). At the age of 19, he plunged into social service through Prarthana Samaj - founded in 1867



by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang of Mumbai (who also co-founded the Bombay Natural History Society in September 1883) and fought against superstitions and harmful traditions. Later, Nana Patil joined the Satyashodhak Samaj - launched in September 1873, by the legendary reformer, Mahatma Jyotirao G. Phule - and fought to eradicate social evils like dowry, child marriages, and rigid caste system, and to encourage girls' education.

Founding the Hindustan Republican Association, he retreated underground for 3 years in 1929, and suffered at least 8 jail terms between 1932-1942, for his 'direct attacks' on the colonial rulers and sometime along the route, earned the nickname of 'Kranti Simha' (Revolutionary Lion) Nana Patil.

Prof. Pandit said the Prati Sarkar Movement was "rare" as it challenged the established and repressive power structures, aimed at creating a new society led by peasants and workers and sans exploitation in the name of class, caste, religion or gender. "Nana Patil was inspired by the legendary Bhagat Singh, the struggles against the German fascist forces of Adolf Hitler in Europe, and concluded that to win against the British, he should identify and target its 'power centres' and raze them,"

she said. Accordingly, he formed a disciplined band of youth called 'Toofan Sena' (Storm Army), that attacked police stations, locked up the cops, grabbed their weapons, pounced on British government treasury boxes sent in trains or buses for salaries of its staffers and used it to finance its own revolutionary activities, torched bus or railway stations, etc. all of which struck terror among the rulers. The Toofan Sainiks swooped on cruel money-lenders - not unlike Kanhaiyalal's portrayal of the cut-throat Sukhi Lala in 'Mother India' (1957) - looted their ill-gotten wealth, burnt loan documents of farmers and unilaterally declared them 'debt-free', on the lines of the All India Kisan Sabha's vision, said the current AIKS President Dr. Ashok Dhawale.

"Nana Patil's 'Prati Sarkar' was like a regime that 'functioned' - it took up public demands and forthwith implemented them, instilling huge confidence among the down-trodden villagers and farmers, and even shared the plundered booty with them," he said.

Prof. Pandit said Prati Sarkar Movement in Satara - then a huge region - addressed burning social subjects by targeting caste system, promoting inter-caste marriages and widow remarriages, prohibition,

release of prisoners, encouraged art and culture, and organised 'Jalsas' (festivals) of dance and music to bring out the creative aspects among the people. "It communicated with the masses in their own lingo, propagated the ideals of Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar... It had a profound impact and at the height of the British Rule, the Indian tricolour fluttered over all homes and village offices for months together," she said.

The duo explained how the Prati Sarkar Movement was not just a fly-by-night operation, but had a strong foundation guided by scientific thinking and mirroring peoples' sentiments. It had all the organs of a new, workable state, a committed army expert in guerrilla warfare against the British, a treasury to finance various public upliftment programmes, an organising committee to oversee the implementation of these initiatives, a strong justice delivery system, a panel to communicate and spread genuine news among the masses, schools to train the cadres of which the most popular was the Toofan Sena, and other aspects of ideal governance. Nana Patil continued the traditions in Independent India, helping the cause of farmers, joining the liberation movements of Maharashtra, Hyderabad and Goa, and became the AIKS President in 1955. "The struggles against exploitation continue even today, like the recent (2020-2021) nationwide farmers movement, and Nana Patil's traditions stand out against the backdrop of the terribly regressive and increasingly fascist state in India now," rued Dr. Dhawale.



Hayden Panettiere returns to 'Scream' teen slasher movie franchise



Los Angeles | Agencies

American actress-singer Hayden Panettiere has returned to the 'Scream' universe. The 32-year-old Golden Globe nominee was photographed on the set of the upcoming sixth instalment in the 'Scream' franchise on Saturday. Her return to the franchise was

announced in May, following her character Kirby Reed's near-death scene in 2011's Scream 4, reports People magazine.

Her co-star Jasmin Savoy Brown, who joined the franchise as Mindy Meeks-Martin in this year's fifth instalment, shared some candid shots on BeReal of the two of them sitting in a hair and makeup trailer. "Will Mindy & Kirby be friends?? Hayden thinks yes, I think no,"

Brown, 28, wrote with the post as she took over the film's social media account.

Panettiere previously had spoken to People about her return to the franchise, which will mark her first film in eight years. "I'm so happy that this is going to be my first project back because I have such fond memories of doing Scream 4," she said

earlier.

"I love the character and I love her sass, and I feel like I'm coming back and I know her," Panettiere added of playing Kirby. "So, it's a little less intimidating. I'm excited. I'm really excited."

Danny Trejo to star in '1521' Philippines-set historical actioner

Los Angeles | Agencies

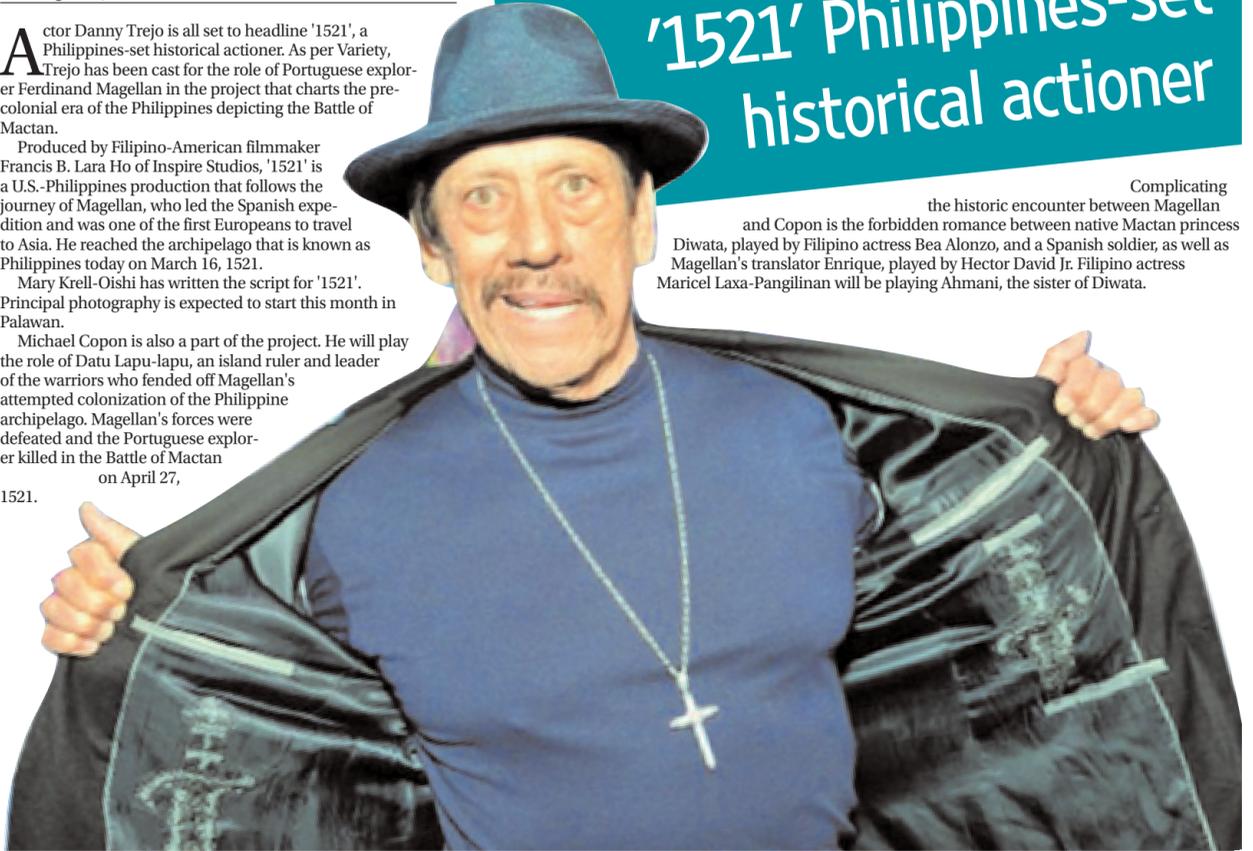
Actor Danny Trejo is all set to headline '1521', a Philippines-set historical actioner. As per Variety, Trejo has been cast for the role of Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in the project that charts the pre-colonial era of the Philippines depicting the Battle of Mactan.

Produced by Filipino-American filmmaker Francis B. Lara Ho of Inspire Studios, '1521' is a U.S.-Philippines production that follows the journey of Magellan, who led the Spanish expedition and was one of the first Europeans to travel to Asia. He reached the archipelago that is known as Philippines today on March 16, 1521.

Mary Krell-Oishi has written the script for '1521'. Principal photography is expected to start this month in Palawan.

Michael Copon is also a part of the project. He will play the role of Datu Lapu-lapu, an island ruler and leader of the warriors who fended off Magellan's attempted colonization of the Philippine archipelago. Magellan's forces were defeated and the Portuguese explorer killed in the Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521.

Complicating the historic encounter between Magellan and Copon is the forbidden romance between native Mactan princess Diwata, played by Filipino actress Bea Alonzo, and a Spanish soldier, as well as Magellan's translator Enrique, played by Hector David Jr. Filipino actress Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan will be playing Ahmani, the sister of Diwata.



'The Flash' races ahead of Ezra Miller controversies, to release on June 2023

Los Angeles | Agencies

As controversies continue to swirl around actor Ezra Miller over allegations of abuse compounded with other legal troubles, the makers of his upcoming film "The Flash" confirmed that the film will hit theatres as planned.

The makers have set the release date as June 23, 2023, reports. Warner Brothers CEO David Zaslav, speaking to investors and reporters, rattled off a list of upcoming movies based on DC Comics characters, including "Black Adam", the sequel to "Shazam!" and "The Flash", starring Miller as the superhuman speedster Barry Allen.

"We're very excited about them," Zaslav said of the projects. According to reports, Zaslav went on to suggest that all three movies might be tweaked before they arrive in multiplexes. "We've seen them," he said. "We think they're terrific and we think we can make them even better." It also reported that in June, a Massachusetts mother was granted a temporary order of protection on behalf of her 12-year-old child against Miller, 29.

The court order, stated that it was "issued without advance notice because the Court determined that there is a substantial likelihood of immediate danger of harassment". Miller, who identifies as gender nonbinary and uses they/them pronouns, has been asked to appear in court in two states after parents accused them of grooming, abuse and intimidation involving a nonbinary child, 12, and a nonbinary adult, 18. The actor has also been arrested twice this year, both times in Hawaii, on charges of disorderly conduct and second-degree assault.

Woody Harrelson writes hilarious poem for his baby doppelganger

Los Angeles | Agencies

Not everyone is lucky enough to get a poem written by 'True Detectives' star Woody Harrelson in their name. Interestingly, a toddler named Cora has managed to achieve the same.

Woody Harrelson penned a hilarious poem for Cora, who happens to be his doppelganger, reports Newsweek. Harrelson posted 'Ode to Cora' on Instagram where it has garnered over 238,000 likes and thousands of comments from charmed netizens. He wrote: 'Ode to Cora. You're an adorable child. Flattered to be compared. You have a wonderful smile. I just wish I had your hair.'

According to Newsweek, the poem was written in



response to a now-viral tweet from Cora's mom, Dani Grier Mulvenna (@DanielleKGrier). In the

tweet, posted recently, Mulvenna shared side-by-side photos of Cora and the Zombieland actor both flashing big, open-mouthed grins.

"OK, but how does our daughter look like Woody Harrelson," she joked. The tweet has amassed more than 487,000 likes and caught the attention of the 'Now You See Me' actor, who carried a screenshot of it and shared it on Instagram.

Newsweek further states that in response, an excited Mulvenna commented: "You've made our day. Can't wait to show her this when she's older, you have another fan for life." She then took a screenshot of the actor's post and shared it on Twitter. "It's not every day Woody Harrelson writes your daughter a poem," she wrote.

No Catwoman, but her mask for sure: Theories abound over axed 'Batgirl'

Los Angeles | Agencies

New details keep emerging out of the now cancelled Batgirl film. The latest to leave the audience gasping in disbelief is the reports of the film featuring a nod to Michelle Pfeiffer's Catwoman, reports Collider.

According to a recent episode of The Ringer's podcast, The Town with Matthew Belloni, Puck News founding partner Belloni and The Hollywood Reporter's Borys Kit discussed Warner Bros Discovery's decision to cancel the film.

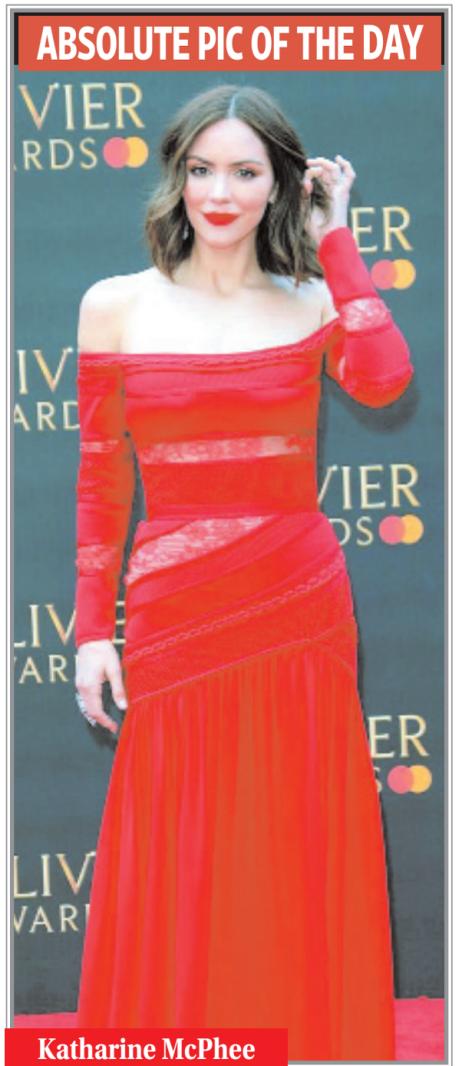
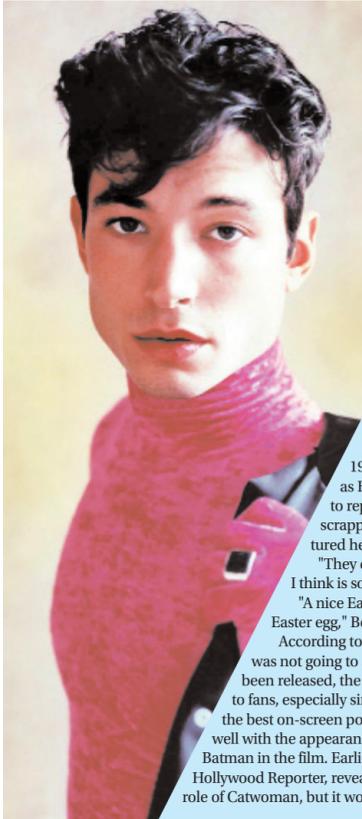
During their discussion, they reveal some of the details that have come out of test screenings for Batgirl, including an Easter egg involving Pfeiffer's iconic turn as Catwoman.

Pfeiffer, of course, played Selina Kyle/Catwoman in 1992's 'Batman Returns', which starred Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne/Batman. Collider states that according to reports from the Batgirl test screenings, the now-scraped film would have included a moment that featured her Catwoman mask.

"They do show Michelle Pfeiffer's Catwoman mask, which I think is something that fans may" Belloni said.

"A nice Easter egg, yeah," Kit interjected. "Yeah, a nice little Easter egg," Belloni said.

According to Collider, Belloni was quick to clarify that Pfeiffer was not going to appear in the film, just the mask. Still, if Batgirl had been released, the mask Easter egg would have been a nice little nod to fans, especially since Pfeiffer's Catwoman is often considered one of the best on-screen portrayals of the character. And it would have paired well with the appearance of Keaton, who was set to reprise his role as Batman in the film. Earlier this year, Pfeiffer, in an interview with The Hollywood Reporter, revealed she would consider reprising the role of Catwoman, but it would "depend on the context."



Katharine McPhee



CWG 2022

Boxing: World champion Nikhat Zareen wins gold for India

World champion Nikhat Zareen clinched the gold medal for India in the women's 50kg light fly-weight division at the 2022 Commonwealth Games by winning the final bout comprehensively, here on Sunday.

Birmingham | Agencies

World champion Nikhat Zareen clinched the gold medal for India in the women's 50kg light fly-weight division at the 2022 Commonwealth Games by winning the final bout comprehensively, here on Sunday.

The 26-year-old Indian defeated Northern Ireland's Carly McNaul, a silver medallist from Gold Coast 2018, by unanimous decision. Nikhat won three of her bouts at Birmingham 2022 5-0 and one via RSC (referee stops contest).



In a close-range contest, the two boxers traded blows early on but Zareen prevailed with her combinations early on. With a mix of left hooks and crosses, the Indian contained the 33-year-old Carly McNaul in the opening round. Carly McNaul continued to fight at

close range and resorted to a lot of clinching even as the Indian boxer countered McNaul's attacks. However, the efforts in the first two rounds were enough for Nikhat who went into evasive mode in the final round and sealed the bout and her maiden CWG medal.

BHAVINA, SONAL WIN HISTORIC MAIDEN GOLD, BRONZE IN PARA TABLE TENNIS

Birmingham | Agencies

Para-table tennis player Bhavina Patel made history by becoming the first player from India to win a gold medal in the Commonwealth Games, beating Nigeria's Ifechukwude Christiana Ikpeoyi in straight games in Class 3-5 final at the National Exhibition Centre here.

In the final played late on Saturday night, the 35-year-old Bhavina defeated the Nigerian 12-10, 11-2, 11-9 in the final in which her opponent put up some fight in the first game before her challenge fizzled away.

India also won the bronze medal in Class 3-5 competitions as Sonal Patel defeated England's Bailey 11-5, 11-2, 11-3 in the playoff for the third place.

This is Bhavina Patel's second big achievement in para table tennis in the last one year as she had put Indian table tennis on the world map at the Tokyo



Paralympics by winning a silver medal, the first by a table tennis player -- able-bodied or otherwise -- at the quadrennial extravaganza.

Last year, around this time, not many knew who Bhavina Patel was and what was her claim to fame. The Tokyo Paralympic Games changed her life as she went on to win a silver medal. Since then Bhavina has not participated in many international competitions because of the pandemic. The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, at which para-table made its

debut, was a big opportunity for Bhavina to further bolster her position as the best player in Class 3-5 and she did that in style, without any hiccups. Asked whether she was happy to prove that Tokyo Paralympics was no flash in the pan, Bhavina said she was not bothered by such thoughts. "I don't know. I'm too happy, speechless. I'm a fighter. When I want to do something, I do it. (For winning this medal) full credit goes to my family, my coaches, my (table tennis) federation, the Paralympic

Committee of India, the Sports Authority of India, and all my friends who pray for me. This is for them."

Bhavina, who took to table tennis rather late in her life to gain fitness as a mobility disorder was resulting in her gaining weight, said the sport means the world to her.

"Table tennis means life. Without table tennis, I can't live in this world."

Bhavina, who trains in her hometown Ahmedabad with a practice robot due to the pandemic, said she would think about giving her robot a name, now that it has helped her win the Commonwealth Games gold medal.

"I want to give it a nickname but I want to think about that. Yes, Perry (the mascot of Birmingham 2022) could be a name. Maybe, I would have to think about it."

Sonal Patel was also ecstatic after winning a bronze medal. "I feel good and happy, so happy. Birmingham has been good," she said.

Boxers Nitu Ghanghas, Amit Panghal clinch gold for India



Birmingham | Agencies

Indian boxers Nitu Ghanghas, Amit Panghal clinched the gold medals for the country at the 2022 Commonwealth Games after winning their respective finals in different categories, here on Sunday.

Amit defeated home favourite Kieran McDonald by unanimous decision in the men's 51kg flyweight final at the National Exhibition Centre, thus winning his first-ever gold medal at the Games.

This was Panghal's second Commonwealth Games medal, having won the silver medal at Gold Coast 2018. The gold will be a massive boost for him after suffering

a shock opening round loss in the Olympics last year.

It was also India's fifth boxing medal at CWG 2022 and the second gold medal.

In the first round, the 26-year-old Amit bided his time, waiting for an opening but was proactive in landing his punches and jabs when the opportunity arose, often going for combinations. The Indian continued to attack in the second and McDonald got a cut on his face from one of Panghal's attacks and had to be stitched up by his team.

With the bout comfortably in Amit's favour, the third round was more subdued and the Indian won his first Commonwealth Games gold medal by unanimous decision.

On the other hand, the 21-year-old Nitu beat England's Demie-Jade Reszant 5-0 in the women's over 45kg-48kg (minimum weight) category to clinch gold. This is her first CWG medal and she is also a two-time world youth champion.

Nitu, who was competing in her first CWG, looked completely in control throughout the whole bout. The Haryana pugilist's accurate punches helped her in controlling the pace of the contest and eventually led to the podium finish.

Wrestlers Dahiya, Phogat, Naveen win gold as India surge up in the table

Birmingham | Agencies

Olympic silver medallist Ravi Kumar Dahiya, star woman grappler Vinesh Phogat and 19-year-old wrestler Naveen claimed gold medals as the Indian juggernaut gathered pace on the shoulder of the mighty wrestlers as athletes Avinash Sable and Priyanka Goswami broke new grounds at Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games here on Saturday. Fellow wrestlers Pooja Sihag and Pooja Gehlot bagged bronze medals in their respective weight divisions while in lawn bowls, the Men's Fours, who emulated their women counterparts by reaching the final, had to be satisfied with a silver medal as they lost to Northern Ireland in the summit clash.

The Indian medal haul has been going at a slow but steady pace in the absence of shooting and archery and some unexpected performances in table tennis and badminton got a leg-up with the wrestlers adding three



more gold to the three they won on Friday. India are now placed fifth in the table behind Australia, England, Canada and New Zealand.

Boxer Jaismine lost in the semifinal and had to be satisfied with a bronze medal in the women's Lightweight (over 57kg-60kg) as did Muhammed Hasamuddin in Men's Featherweight (over 54kg-57kg) as he lost to Joseph Commye of Ghana 1-4 on points in the semifinals. Three boxers, world champion Nikhat Zareen, Nitu and Amit Panghal made it to the final and will be hoping to add more gold to the Indian tally.

The five medals in wrestling, two in athletics, two in boxing, and one in lawn bowls boosted India's tally to 36 -- 12 gold, 11 silver, and 13 bronze with many more set to be added in the next two days.

The day belonged to the wrestlers, especially Ravi Dahiya, Vinesh and Naveen who bagged three gold medals on Saturday.

Dahiya, a three-time Asian champion and a bronze medallist in World Championship, outclassed his Nigerian opponent Welson Ebikewenimo 10-0 on points in the Men's Freestyle 57 kg final. He started cautiously but got into his own after the referee gave him a warning for being too defensive. He claimed eight points in the next two minutes to seal victory.

Vinesh Phogat was also impressive in her win. The experienced wrestler completed a hat-trick of gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, by beating Sri Lanka's Chamodya Keshani Maduravalage Don in the

women's women's 53 kg final.

Earlier, Priyanka Goswami and Avinash Sable started the day for India with two unexpected silver medals. Priyanka became the first Indian woman race walker to win a silver medal in the Commonwealth Games when she finished second behind her Australian opponent in the women's 10 km walk.

Sable was even more awesome as he beat the Kenyan hegemony in the men's 3000m steeplechase, becoming the first non-Kenyan to win the medal at the Commonwealth Games since 1994. He finished the race in 8:11.15 between two Kenyans.

Indian lawn bowlers continued to make history as the Men's Fours added a silver to the historic gold medal won by the Women's Fours a couple of days ago. The quartet of Chandan Kumar Singh, Dinesh Kumar, Navneet Singh, and Sunil Bahadur put up a good fight but went down 5-18 to Northern Ireland at the Royal Leamington Spa.

Athletics: Eldhose Paul wins India's first triple jump gold medal; Abdulla Aboobacker bags silver

Birmingham | Agencies

India's Eldhose Paul and Abdulla Aboobacker Sunday scripted history by winning gold and silver medals respectively and securing a double podium finish for the country in the men's triple jump event at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, here.

Eldhose, who last month became the first Indian triple jumper to make the world athletics championships final, recorded a new personal best of 17.03m to finish top in a 14-man field at Birmingham 2022. His previous best was 16.99m logged at the Federation Cup earlier this year.

With this, the 25-year-old Paul won India's first gold medal in the triple jump at the Commonwealth Games.

On the other hand, Abdulla's silver-winning leap measured 17.02m - just 0.17m off his personal best.



Bermuda's Jah-Nhai Perinchief clinched the bronze medal with 16.92m, denying the Indians a clean sweep. Meanwhile, Praveen Chithravel, the third Indian in the fray, finished a commendable fourth, with a best of 16.89m.

With Perinchief setting the benchmark with his 16.92m attempt in his first jump, Praveen Chithravel and Abdulla Aboobacker stayed on the Bermuda athlete's coat-tails in second and third right from the beginning. However, it was 26-year-old

Eldhose Paul who leapt into the lead after the third attempt with a massive 17.03m attempt. Interestingly, Paul had made a slow start compared to his peers, with jumps of 14.62m and 16.30m in the first two rounds, respectively.

After the fourth round, Eldhose, Perinchief and Praveen occupied the top three positions with Abdulla Aboobacker in fourth. However, Abdulla produced an impressive 17.02m with his fifth attempt to climb to second place and pushed compatriot Praveen out of the top three.

Before Birmingham, India had won only four medals in the triple jump at the Commonwealth Games. Mohinder Singh Gill won a bronze (1970) and silver (1974), national record holder Renjith Maheswary won a bronze (2010) and Arpinder Singh won a bronze (2014).

Indian women's hockey team claims bronze medal with a thrilling win over New Zealand

Birmingham | Agencies

The Indian women's hockey team claimed the bronze medal in the Commonwealth Games 2022 with a 2-1 win in shoot-out over New Zealand here on Sunday.

In the regulation time, Salima Tete (29') scored the winning goal for India, only for Olivia Merry (60') to score a late goal for New Zealand and push the match to a shoot-out.

Savita made three sensational saves in the shoot-out, while Sonika and Navneet Kaur struck past Kiwi goalkeeper Grace O'Hanlon as India pulled off a thrilling win. With the bronze medal win, Indian women's hockey team ended their 16-year wait for a medal at the Commonwealth Games. India began cautiously, holding the ball in the midfield. Navneet Kaur and Vandana Kataria penetrated the circle in the early minutes, but New Zealand defence cleared away the danger. Nisha made a solid save after Rose Tynan made a dangerous pass inside the circle. Salima Tete almost put her team in the lead after India forced their way into the Kiwi circle through the central channel, but her shot just went wide and the first quarter ended with both teams at 0-0.

The second quarter started with India making circle penetrations from the left flank and keeping the Kiwi defence on their toes. Navneet Kaur created a chance for India to get a shot on target but New Zealand kept their composure and cleared the ball. A counter-attacking move was set up Rose Tynan as she struck a shot towards Alex Lukin in front of the goal. But the ball just went wide and the Kiwis missed the opportunity to score. Salima Tete broke the shackles and found the back of the nets with a reverse hit as India entered halftime with a 1-0 lead. New Zealand started showcasing urgency at the start of second half, and pressed deeper in India's half. Sonika broke into the circle from the left flanks, and Lalremisiami managed to get a shot, but was denied by a Kiwi defender.



Neha and Navneet Kaur created a beautiful chance for India to extend their lead. But the pass to Sonika in front of the goalpost just went wide. Before the end of the third quarter, New Zealand managed to hit the ball into the nets. But India used their referral well and the goal was disallowed due to an infringement in the lead-up.

With 15 minutes left on the clock, India burst into New Zealand's half with Sushila Chanu making threatening runs from the central channel. Kaitlin Cotter got a shot away from an acute angle, but Indian goalkeeper Savita made a good save, only to see the ball go to Olivia Shannon.

Shannon's shot, though, went above the goalpost. India created a string of Penalty Corner opportunities, but the Kiwi goalkeeper Grace O'Hanlon continued to make the saves. Olivia Merry scored from a penalty stroke in the final seconds of the regulation time to push the match to a Shoot-Out.

Megan Hull scored from New Zealand's first attempt in the Shoot-Out, while Sangita Kumari missed India's first attempt. Savita pulled off a great save as she denied Ralph Hope. Sonika levelled the score line at the Shoot-out as she struck past Grace O'Hanlon. Rose Tynan struck the side netting, but Navneet Kaur struck past Grace as India took a 2-1 lead in the Shoot-Out. With Katie Doar and Olivia Shannon missing for the Kiwis, India went on to win the match in thrilling fashion to claim the Bronze medal.

INDIAN MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM EDGES OUT SOUTH AFRICA TO REACH FINAL

Birmingham: The Indian men's hockey team set itself for its third medal ever in the Commonwealth Games as it made it to the final, prevailing over South Africa 3-2 in a closely-fought semifinal here on Saturday. India, who won silver medals in the 2010 and 2014 editions of the games, was expected to romp to victory as they had easily beaten South Africa in the FIH Pro League. But the Proteas put up a good fight on Saturday, having stunned New Zealand 4-3 in their last league match to qualify for the semifinals, the South Africans wanted to do their best against India and did not give them many easy chances. Abhishek (20th min'), Mandeep Singh (28th min'), and Jugraj Singh (58th min') scored the goals for India. Ryan Julius (33rd min') and Mustapha Cassiem (59th min') scored the goals for South Africa. India enjoyed 53 per cent possession while South Africa has 47 percent. The Indians also made 35 circle penetrations in attack while South Africa could manage only 23. But the Indians found the going tough and has to wait till the second quarter for their first goal.

SAGAR AHLAWAT REACHES SUPER HEAVYWEIGHT FINAL

Birmingham | Agencies

Sagar Ahlawat became the fourth Indian boxer to reach the final in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games here, storming past Nigeria's Ifeanyi Onyekwere with a 5-0 win on points in the men's 92 kg (Super Heavyweight) division. Sagar joined reigning World Champion Nikhat Zareen, Asian champion Amit Panghal and Nitu as the Indian boxers to make it to the finals of their respective weight divisions.

With Sagar reaching the final, India has a chance of winning four gold medals, one more than the three they earned in Gold Coast, Australia four years ago.

In the 92kg semifinal, Sagar got off to a good start and was marked the winner of the first round by all five judges. He kept



his advantage in the second round also, landing some blows on his opponent. The Nigerian tried to attack in the third round and connected some combinations to score points and was marked the winner of the third round by four of the five judges.

But as Sagar had done enough in the two previous rounds, he was declared the winner on points. In the final to be played on Sunday, Sagar will take on England's Delicious Orie, who defeated Leulila Mau'u if Australia in the other semifinal.



10 Bollywood BFFs who shows What Real Unbreakable Friendship Looks Like



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Used to count the number of friendship bands we had as a kid to see how many friends we got, but as time went on, we realise those were merely threads. Throughout our life, we meet some truly fantastic people along the way, but only a handful become our friends.

On this occasion of Friendship day we bring you some of very special friendships of B-town.

▶ **Abhishek Bachchan and John**



Abraham
Abhishek would have never guessed that the boy he was following in Dhoom would one day become his best friend.

John and Abhishek's friendship began in Dhoom. They rocked again in Dostana.

▶ **Sonam Kapoor and Jacqueline Fernandez**

Sonam & Jacqueline admitted to frequently borrowing fashion advice from one another. Jacqueline has even mentioned that Sonam is her buddy at 3 a.m.

▶ **Ranbir Kapoor & Ayan Mukherjee**

The actor-director team has two major successes to their name, and the good news is that a third one is in the works. Ranbir admitted that he seeks personal guidance from Ayan.

▶ **Ajay Devgan & Rohit Shetty**

True friendship is blind to fame or celebrity. They were pals when no one knew who Rohit was. Rohit made his directorial debut with Zameen, starring Ajay Devgan, and the rest is history.

▶ **Aamir Khan & Salman Khan**

Aamir Khan and Salman Khan are today's stars of Bollywood, but few understood this when they first met on the sets of Andaz Apna Apna. Their bond began then and has continued to this day.

▶ **Arjun Kapoor & Ranveer Singh**

Bollywood's most adored brothers. Their bromance began on the sets of Gunday, and they have subsequently been seen together at parties and performances.

▶ **Kareena Kapoor & Amrita Arora**

Bebo and Amrita are undoubtedly some of the gorgeous besties of Bollywood. They first became friends when Kareena was much in

the limelight. But, the friends that become when you are struggling are the real ones.

▶ **Salman Khan & Sanjay Dutt**

Sanju baba and Sallu Bhai have the coolest and strongest friendship in the film business. The bond began in their teenage years and has lasted to this day.

▶ **Karan Johar & Shah Rukh Khan**

When pioneers gather, they are more likely to share and connect than anybody else. The friendship between SRK and Karan warrants it. Their friendship has lasted for almost twenty-five years and is still going strong.

▶ **Alia Bhatt, Parineeti Chopra & Shraddha Kapoor**

The majority of the heroines have only a hello and goodbye friendship but this trio his , Alia, Parineeti, and Shraddha, is not like the rest. They run around together, tug each other's legs, and have a terrific relationship.

TAAPSEE REVEALS REASON BEHIND NOT APPEARING ON KARAN'S SHOW

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Taapsee Pannu, who is currently gearing up for the release of her upcoming film 'Dobaaraa', shared why she hasn't been on the Karan Johar-hosted popular chat show 'Koffee With Karan'.

During a promotional event, while Taapsee Pannu and Anurag Kashyap were promoting their film 'Dobaaraa', Karan Johar was in the adjacent room promoting his chat show. Taking note of that, the media probed Taapsee about the reason why she hasn't been invited to Karan's show.

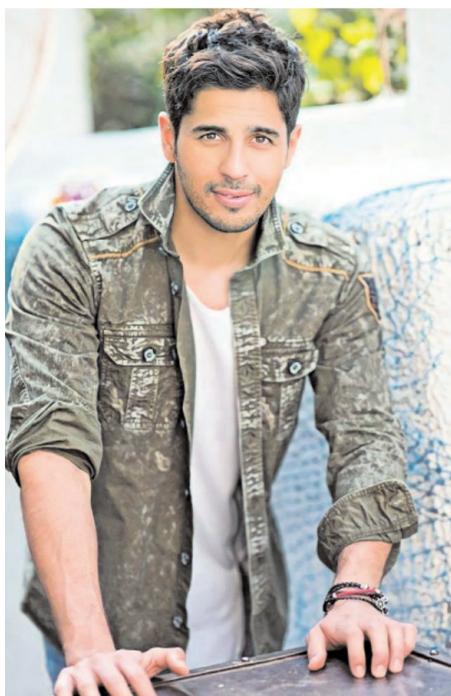
Answering the question, the actress said in jest that her sex life is not interesting enough to be invited on 'Koffee With Karan'. Taapsee is known for her quick-wit responses and this one seems to be an on-point remark as the latest season of 'Koffee With Karan' has so far been circling sex talks of all topics discussed during the episodes.

Talking about movie, which presents a unique concept in the form of time travel, has opened at prestigious film festivals such as the London Film Festival & Fantasia Film Festival 2022.

This film which reunites filmmaker Anurag Kashyap and Taapsee after their 2018 release 'Manmarziyaan', also stars Pavail Gulati. The film, produced by Shobha Kapoor and Ekta R Kapoor's Cult Movies, a new wing under Balaji Telefilms and Sunir Khetarpal & Gaurav Bose of Athena, is set to debut in theatres on August 19, 2022.



SIDDHARTH MALHOTRA SHARES BTS FROM HIS UPCOMING COP DRAMA



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Sidharth Malhotra is presently filming Indian Police Force, his first web series. For the uninitiated, Sidharth is making his debut in Rohit Shetty's police universe, as the two collaborate on their maiden digital endeavour. In addition to Sidharth, Shilpa Shetty and Vivek Oberoi play important parts in the film. Sidharth turned to social media today to provide followers with a behind-the-scenes look at his shot.

Sidharth recently uploaded a black and white photo from the Indian Police Force set. The snapshot shows the Shershaah actor changing into his action persona after landing a role.

The Shershaah actor can be seen in the shot getting into his action persona as he lands a kick in style. In doing so, he captioned the photo '(tricolour emoji) #INDIANPOLICEFORCE' @ Rohit Shetty. An OTT platform also revealed the entire context of the project earlier this year. The Indian Police Force stars Sidharth Malhotra, Vivek Oberoi, Shilpa Shetty, and Isha Talwar in the key roles. Rohit Shetty and Sushwanth Prakash are the directors. Rohit Shetty, Anusha Nandakumar, and Sandeep Saket wrote the story. Aside from Indian Police Force, Sidharth Malhotra is working on Yodha alongside Disha Patani and Raashii Khanna. He will also appear in Mission Majnu with Rashmika Mandanna.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur, whose recent Telugu release opposite Dulquer Salmaan - 'Sita Ramam' is getting positive response, will be essaying the lead character in her upcoming film 'Pooja Meri Jaan'.

She shared that she feels comfortable as an actor to have the kind of roles she always wished for.

Mrunal, who earlier worked for TV, made her Hindi film debut with 'Love Sonia', where she played the titular role. Having graduated from TV to Bollywood with lead roles have instilled confidence in her.

Expressing her gratitude,

the actress said in a statement: "I am grateful to have got such opportunities so early in my career. Even when I entered the industry I was aware of the struggle that comes with it, but my sole focus was to give my best and let my journey speak through my work."

And what makes me even happier is that people like it and appreciate it as well. It is the biggest encouragement that any actor can get."

The actress promised to "continue to work hard to strive to get the kind of films and stories" that she wants to be a part of.

"I want to attract more parts that resonate with who I'm and also the actor I wish

to be in the long run. It's an uphill task but I'm more than glad that I have this opportunity to be doing what I do. I won't deny that earlier it has been a lot of hard work to have makers believe in giving me the roles that I desired

but today I feel more comfortable and in a position where I can choose the parts I want to play," she added.

'Pooja Meri Jaan', also stars Huma Qureshi, Vikram Singh Chauhan and Vijay Raaz.

I AM GRATEFUL TO HAVE GOT SUCH OPPORTUNITIES SO EARLY IN MY CAREER : MRUNAL THAKUR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Counted among the most versatile actors of Bollywood, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, has entertained the audiences with his performances in movies like 'Gangs of Wasseypur', 'Sacred Games', 'Badlapur', and 'Bajrangi Bhaijaan' to name a few. It was his role in 'Raman Raghav 2.0' that the actor considers as the most challenging.

Nawazuddin got under the character's skin leaving the audience spell bound. He earned tremendous praises for his acting as a notorious serial killer in 'Raman Raghav 2.0'.

Recently taking his social media, the actor reminisces his personal favourite shot from the movie Raman Raghav 2.0 He shot in 104° fever. The actor later was even hospitalised.

He wrote: "Thankyou for sharing this @bindaas.faiz as this is my personal favourite seen because I was having 104 Fever and I was too under confident while doing this."

Nawaz had garnered applause, accolades and acclaim at Cannes in the year 2016 for his brilliant performance in 'Raman Raghav 2.0'.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Nawazuddin boasts of an interesting line-up of films which includes Tiku Weds Sheru, Noorani Chehra, and Adbhut, No Land's Man and Laxman Lopez amongst others.

Nawaz
recalls favourite
'Raman Raghav 2.0'
scene: 'I was
under-confident'



Masaba Gupta