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Time for India to pitch Rupee as credible alternative: SBI

► **'WE BELIEVE INFLATION IN FY23 IS LIKELY TO COME AROUND 6.4-6.5 PER CENT (BELOW RBI PROJECTION OF 6.7 PER CENT) WITH INFLATION MOVING BELOW 6 PER CENT ONLY IN NOVEMBER 22. FOR FY24, IT SHOULD COME AT 4.8 PER CENT,' THE REPORT SAID.**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Many countries across the globe has been surreptitiously searching for nontraditional payment and settlement mechanisms that points to 'Dollar Distancing' finally happening. Meanwhile, an interesting development is taking place in the global currency market. There has been a significant jump in the demand for Yuan arising from short-circuiting the sanctions in place by corporates in select jurisdictions who have been utilizing multitude of non-dollar currencies to procure crude and other commodities viz. coal through striking deals in

Renminbi/HKD/AED pairs at discounted rates, SBI Ecowrap report said. Russian-Turkey bilateral trade is currently running at about \$23.5 billion with both sides committing to increasing this to \$100 billion by 2030. With China vowing to anchor the bonhomie with Russia, there seems a certainty that 'Dollar Distancing' could be a reality in coming days. Similarly, according to some media reports, India has been aggressively purchasing coal and oil from Russia since the beginning of Russia-Ukraine war, which allowed then to procure this items at lower cost. Oil has also moved down below \$100/bbl and moving around \$96/bbl after the increase in US stockpiles

indicated low demand.

On the external data front, the recent trade deficit data shows an increase to record high in July 2022, annualizing the current deficit numbers gives annual deficit of 8.5 per cent of our GDP projections for FY23 which is much lower than the peak deficit of 10.7 per cent of GDP achieved in FY13. Thus, the current situation is much better than that in 2012-13. Moreover, the market has already priced in higher CAD i.e. higher than 3 per cent of GDP for FY23.

On the inflation front, going forward, SBI Ecowrap report expect inflation trajectory for India to be benign. CPI numbers for March 23 could be even



lower than 5 per cent, if July CPI numbers are closer to 6.5 per cent-6.6 per cent, a likely possibility.

Centre says lay guidelines on freebies; SC favours balance between economy & welfare, says

FOCUS THE CORE ISSUE

The Centre on Thursday asked the Supreme Court to lay down guidelines to regulate the freebies announced by political parties to induce voters, till the legislature devises a mechanism. The issues associated with freebies were also acknowledged by the apex court, which observed that the economy losing money and the welfare of the people, both have to be balanced.

► The bench said it is a serious issue and added that people who are opposing freebies have a right to say, since they are paying tax and expect that amount should be spent on building infrastructure etc and not in distributing money. The Chief Justice said the expert panel can look into it, and it cannot get into making legislation.

► The petitioner claimed RBI data shows that the total outstanding liabilities of the states as on March 31, 2021 are a staggering Rs 59,89,360 crore. Senior advocate, representing the petitioner, emphasised on financial discipline, and said "Where would this money come from? We're tax payers?"



definitely an issue of concern and there should be financial discipline. They however pointed out that in a country like India, where poverty is an issue, how could poverty be ignored. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, said: "We are proposing a committee, comprising secretary, central government, secretary of each state government, representative of each political party, representative of Niti Aayog, RBI, Finance Commission, National Taxpayers Association and others." He added that till the legislature steps in, the court may

lay down something.

The top court declined to consider a plea for de-recognising parties for making promises to give freebies and noted that idea to de-recognise political parties for making promises to give irrational freebies during the polls was 'undemocratic'. "I do not want to enter the area of de-registering a political party etc. as it is an undemocratic idea...We are a democracy after all," the Chief Justice said.

A counsel argued that most of the freebies are not part of the manifesto but are declared

during rallies and speeches.

The Chief Justice said the question is to what extent the court can interfere or go into the issue? He reiterated that it is a serious issue and pointed out various schemes introduced by the Centre and state governments for the welfare of the people. Mehta said freebies cannot be welfare, and there are other scientific ways to provide welfare to the people. He added that now elections are only fought on the ground of freebies. "If freebie is considered to be for the welfare of the people, it'll lead to a disaster," said Mehta.

Citing the distribution of gold chains and TVs by political parties, senior advocate Arvind Datar said there was a decision by this court which states that giving freebies is adhering to the Directive Principles of State Policy under the Constitution, which needs to be looked into. The bench noted that financial discipline has to be there and the economy losing money and welfare of the people, both have to be balanced. After hearing the arguments, the top court scheduled the matter for further hearing on August 17. The court had sought suggestions from stakeholders and recommended setting up an expert panel to scrutinise the issues associated with irrational freebies.

Coal smuggling: ED summons 8 IPS officers from Bengal to Delhi

Kolkata | Agencies

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday issued summons to eight Indian Police Service (IPS) officers from West Bengal to appear before its Delhi headquarters for questioning in connection with the coal smuggling scam.

Of the eight IPS officers who are being summoned between August 21-31, two are additional director ranking officials namely ADG of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Special Task Force (STF) of the state police, Gyanwant Singh and ADG of state Intelligence Branch (IB), Rajeev Mishra.

Two of them are deputy inspector ranking officers, namely DIG (traffic division) of state police, Sukesh Kumar Jain and DIG of state civil defense, Shyam Singh. The remaining four are superintendent ranking officers namely SP (Purulia) S Selvamurugan, SP of state anti-corruption branch, Koteswar Rao, the SP of West Bengal Police Recruitment Board (WBPRB), Tathagata Basu and the SP of the state counter insurgency force, Bhaskar Mukherjee

ED sources said that they have some specific clues about the direct or indirect involvement of all these



officers while coal smuggling was at its peak and the central agency sleuths would like to question them on how this menace could happen while they were in office.

The ED and CBI, which are conducting parallel probes, have identified Asansol in West Burdwan district and portions of Purulia district as the epicentre of the scam.

The ED has already questioned Trinamool Congress's national general secretary and party MP, Abhishek Banerjee, who also happens to be the nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, as well as his wife Rujira in connection to the case.

A Thailand-based bank account, purportedly held by Rujira, is currently under the ED scanner.

SIX KILLED IN J&K SUICIDE ATTACK; INJURED SOLDIER SUCCUMBS

Jammu: An army soldier who was injured while fighting the terrorists on Thursday in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district succumbed to his critical injuries in the hospital.

With the death of the injured soldier, the toll in Thursday's foiled 'Fidayeen' (Suicide) attack in Rajouri district has reached six. Two terrorists and 3 army soldiers were killed earlier when a suicide attack by the heavily armed terrorists was foiled in Rajouri district. A Defence statement said on Tuesday evening: "Rifleman Nishant Malik who was injured while bravely fighting and eliminating 2 terrorists in Pargal, Rajouri has succumbed to injuries. "Indian Army condoles the loss of braveheart and stands in solidarity with his family," it added. Malik was a resident of Adarsh Nagar village in Haryana's Hisar.

Shashi Tharoor to get France's highest civilian award

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor set to be conferred with France's highest civilian award Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, a host of party leaders congratulated him on the prestigious honour.

The French government is honouring him for his writings and speeches and French Ambassador here Emmanuel Lenain has written to Tharoor informing him about the award.

"As one who cherishes our relations with France, loves the language and admires the culture, I am honoured to be recognized in



this way. My gratitude & appreciation to those who have seen fit to award me this distinction," Tharoor said in response to a tweet congratulating him on the award. Several Congress leaders as well as Congress's Kerala unit and the state's Youth Congress unit also congratulated the MP from Thiruvananthapuram. Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said he is in a state of "absolute euphoria" while coming to know that Tharoor is being conferred upon the highest civilian honour of France for his "extraordinary erudition and penetrative knowledge".

Jagdeep Dhankhar took oath as Vice-President

Team Absolute | New Delhi

President of India Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of Office of Vice-President to Dhankhar at a swearing-in ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Thursday morning.

A renowned lawyer and former West Bengal Governor, Dhankhar took over as the 14th Vice-President of India and Chairman of Rajya Sabha.

Prior to oath taking, Dhankhar visited Rajghat in the morning



and paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi.

"Felt blessed, inspired and motivated to be ever in service of Bharat in serene sublimity of Raj Ghat while paying respects to Pujya Babu," he tweeted.

AT LEAST 4 DROWNED, 17 MISSING AS BOAT CAPSIZES IN YAMUNA RIVER IN UP

Lucknow: At least four people drowned while 17 others were feared missing after a boat capsized in the river Yamuna in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh today. According to sources, the boat had capsized in Banda district's Marka area. Rescue workers, however, managed to save 13 missing passengers and bring them back to shore.

boat was carrying more than 30 people. The help of divers is being taken to trace the missing. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over loss of lives in the accident and expressed condolences to bereaved families. CM has directed district administration officials, NDRF and SDRF teams to immediately reach the spot and carry out rescue, relief work.

Mask is mandatory at public places in Delhi, fine on violators

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the wake of a sudden surge of new Covid-19 cases in the national capital, the Delhi government has made wearing of masks in public places mandatory and a fine of Rs 500 will be imposed on violators.

The decision was taken by the DDMA after noticing that people were not adhering to wearing of masks at public places.

The district administration has been directed to implement the decisions which were taken in the DDMA's meeting held in April.

"The DDMA after examining all the relevant facts related to the issue of penal provisions for not adhering to the Covid protocol of wearing of masks at public places, decided that whereby not wearing of face mask/cover in all public places has been made an offence, a fine of Rs 500 for not wearing of face mask/cover in all public places in Delhi will be imposed," said a Delhi government notification.



It further said that people travelling together in a private vehicles will be exempt from being fined.

In view of the decision, three Enforcement Teams in Revenue District South has been constituted to monitor the enforcement of the mandate.

7 STUDENTS SUSPENDED AFTER THEIR HUGGING VIDEO GOES VIRAL

Silchar: Seven students of a college in Assam have been suspended after being caught indulging in an "inappropriate act" in the classroom.

A group of boys and girls from Class 11 of the college were hugging and poking each other in the classroom. Another student of the same class recorded the video and later uploaded it on the social media.

The incident happened in Ramanuj Gupta College of Silchar, a private-run institute in the state. The video went viral and netizens criticised the students' behaviour. Some also blamed the college authority.

The videos came to the notice of the college authorities on Wednesday, and seven students were immediately barred from attending college. Out of seven, four were girls and three were boys. The college authority has issued notice to the students saying that they were visibly indulged in acts of turpitude. Such types of activities are tantamount to gross violation of discipline of the institution. Therefore, the following erring students were suspended from attending the classes for an indefinite period.

Rajiv Gandhi assassination convict Nalini moves SC seeking premature release

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case has moved the Supreme Court seeking premature release.

S. Nalini, a convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination, has moved the apex court challenging the Madras High Court order, which dismissed her plea saying that it cannot exercise powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to pass a similar order, which was passed by the apex court to release another accused, A.G. Perarivalan, in the case. "The directions sought by the petitioner cannot be given by the court, as it otherwise does not have power similar to what the apex court has under Article 142 of the Constitution of India. For the foregoing reasons, the writ petition is dismissed as not maintainable," said the high court in an order passed on June 17. On May 18, the Supreme Court invoked its extraordinary powers to do complete justice under Article 142 of the Constitution, as it ordered the release of A.G. Perarivalan, sentenced to life in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.



A bench comprising Justices L. Nageswara Rao (retired now), B. R. Gavai, and A. S. Bopanna said: "In the exceptional facts and circumstances of this case, in exercise of our power under Article 142 of the Constitution, we direct that the Appellant is deemed to have served the sentence in connection with crime. The Appellant, who is on bail, is set at liberty forthwith". Perarivalan is currently on bail. His death sentence was commuted to life sentence and terrorism charges were withdrawn.



NO CHAIR FOR MANY DALIT PANCHAYAT PRESIDENTS IN TN: SHOCKING SURVEY REPORT

Chennai | Agencies

In a survey conducted by the Tamil Nadu Untouchability Eradication Front (TNUEF), it was shockingly found that many Dalit panchayat presidents in the state were not even allowed a chair in their offices. The survey found that in 22 out of the 386 panchayats surveyed, Dalit presidents were not provided chairs.

The survey which was conducted in 24 districts of the state found that many Dalit panchayat presidents were not even allowed to hoist the national flag. In some cases, the panchayat presidents were not even allowed access to the local body office and in some cases, they were not given access to documents.

While speaking to media persons after releasing the report on

Thursday, TNUEF's K. Samuel Raj who spearheaded the survey said, "The outcome of the survey is shocking and sad. Panchayat presidents are not even allowed to sit in chairs and they are not allowed to hoist the national flag when the country is all set to celebrate its 75th Independence. Such a problem prevails in 20 panchayats."

He said that it was sad to see that caste discrimination is prevalent in



Tamil Nadu, a state that vouches on the ideology of Periyar who fought against caste discrimination. Samuel Raj said, "We appeal to the government to create an exclusive mechanism to redress the grievances of the Dalit panchayat presidents."

The TNUEF leader said that they would submit the report to the government and urge them to depute special officers to felicitate the panchayat presidents unfurl the national flag on

August 15.

He also demanded the government prosecute the Chinna Salem tahsildar under the provisions of the SC/ST Atrocities Act for holding an illegal peace talk and forcing the Dalit woman panchayat president of Eduthavainatham in Kallakurichi district, V. Sudha to agree to the headmaster of the local school unfurl the national flag on Independence Day instead of her.

Samuel Raj said that a couple of days ago, Sudha had petitioned the Kallakurichi Superintendent of Police and requested police protection to support her in hoisting the national flag on Independence Day.

He also said that the Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar and ST Commission were inactive and expressed shock and disappointment over this.

Delhi LG orders FIR against 11 ex-DDA officials, withdrawal of pension benefits

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, V.K. Saxena, in his capacity as Chairman of Delhi Development Authority (DDA), ordered on Thursday to register an FIR against 11 former DDA officials in a nine-year-old case of financial misappropriation and violation of Codal Formalities, CPWD Works Manual and GFR, which was reported in 2013.

The retired DDA officials include a chief engineer, superintendent engineer and executive engineer while the other officials were from the finance and accounts departments.

The officials facing action include Abhay Kumar

Sinha, then Member (Engineering); Venkatesh Mohan, then Member (Finance); Om Prakash, CE (Retd); Nahar Singh, SE (Retd); JP Sharma, EE (Retd); PK Chawla, Dy CAO (Retd); Jasvir Singh, AAO (Retd); SC Mongia, AAD (Retd); SC Mittal, AE (Retd); RC Jain, AE (Retd); and Dilbagh Singh Bains, AE (Retd).

Considering the 'grave misconduct' and 'loss' to the exchequer, the LG has also ordered to "permanently withdraw the full pension benefits" of these retired officials, against the department's recommendation of withdrawing only 25 per cent of their pension.

The case is related to the work for upgradation and

beautification of Coronation Park at Kingsway Camp that was awarded to M/s Ajab Singh & Co in 2013.

The tender cost of the work was Rs 14.24 crore, but additional works amounting to Rs 114.83 crore were carried out at Narela and Dhirpur without any sanction.

According to the report, the original project cost of Rs 14.24 crore was escalated to Rs 28.36 crore and the same was further deviated with additional work, at a different location altogether, amounting to Rs 114.83 crore which was executed without any sanctioned estimate.

This resulted in overall payment of Rs 142.08 crore to the agency.

Centre spending taxpayers' money to waive loans of super rich: Kejriwal

Team Absolute | Mumbai

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday weighed in on the freebie debate and raised doubts over the Central government's finances while questioning its policies.

Kejriwal said that taxpayers' money is for the public, and not for the politicians to write off loans of their friends.

"Had these people not waived loans worth Rs 10 lakh crore for their friends, the Central government wouldn't have had to impose tax on milk, curd or stop pensions of our soldiers. These people are waiving



laks of crores of loans for their rich friends and taxing the poor," Kejriwal said in a press briefing on Thursday. "These people spend public money on their friends, while we give it to the underprivileged 'Aam Aadmi'. If all the government money is spent on a few people, how will the country progress," he asked. Taking a dig at the Centre, the Chief Minister said that they brought in the Agnipath scheme saying they have no money for pension. "It has never happened

since Independence that the country is left with no money to pay pension to its soldiers. Where did the Centre's money go? The Central government shares a part of taxes it collects with the states. Earlier, it was 42 per cent. Now it has been cut to 29-30 per cent. The Centre is collecting twice-thrice the amount of taxes it collected in 2014. Where is all the money going," Kejriwal asked.

He added that the Centre's budget in 2014 was Rs 20 lakh crore, which is Rs 40 lakh crore now.

"The Centre has spent Rs 10 lakh crore on waiving loans of super rich people, their friends.

Vedic scriptures like Manusmriti give respect to women: Justice Prathiba Singh

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi High Court Justice Prathiba M. Singh has said that Vedic scriptures like Manusmriti have always given a very respectable position to women, adding that our ancestors knew very well how to respect them.

"Manusmriti itself says that if you don't respect and honour women, all the 'puja pathi' that you may do will have no meaning," she said during a speech at a conference titled 'Challenges faced by women in science, technology, entrepreneurship and mathematics' held on Wednesday.

The high court judge further said that we are lucky to be in a country like India which is progressive about



women being in leadership roles. "I am not saying we need to ignore the violence and the bad things that happen to women at a lower level, but yes, at the higher level, at the middle level, we are seeing women growing," she said.

Singh also said that there are women fora where regular interactions take place between senior and budding woman lawyers.

"We encourage youngsters to come into law and to do litigation. It is not about empowerment, it's about putting the best systems in place to make sure that the systems are women-friendly and flexible enough to allow women to come up and use their educational qualifications to contribute to the country's progress," she added.

Action initiated, says SpiceJet on smoking video inside aircraft

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Referring to a video making rounds on social media of a passenger smoking onboard a SpiceJet aircraft, the airline on Thursday said that the issue was probed, and necessary action was taken into the matter.

The passenger was put on a No Flying list by the airline for 15 days in February this year, said a SpiceJet spokesperson. "The matter had been investigated thoroughly in January 2022 when the video was brought to our notice and a complaint had been filed by the airline with the Udyog Vihar police station in Gurugram. The video, the investigation had revealed, was shot on January 20 while passengers were boarding the flight SG 706 scheduled to operate from Dubai to Delhi," said a SpiceJet spokesperson. The airline said that the said passenger and his co-passengers shot the video on the 21st row when the cabin crew were occupied with completing the on-boarding procedure. "None of the passengers or crew was aware of the act. The matter came to the airline's notice on January 24 through social media posts," it added.



The matter was referred to the Internal Committee constituted as per the provisions of Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) on handling of

unruly passengers (not consisting of any SpiceJet employee). The said passenger was put on a no flying list by the airline for 15 days in February.

Tejashwi invites ED, CBI, I-T to open their offices in his house

Newly appointed deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav invited ED, CBI and Income Tax to open their offices inside his residence and investigate whatever they want. "We have no objection with it," Yadav said.

Patna | Agencies

We want the people of ED, CBI, Income Tax to open the offices inside my house. Still, if they would not get peace then what can I do? We have no objection with whatever they want to investigate against us," Tejashwi said.

"Lalan Singh, the national president of JD-U, rightly pointed out that we have nothing to hide and we are not afraid of central agencies. They have chargesheeted me a long time ago but initiated trial in the court. They do not have proof against me. The case (IRCTC scam) happened at a time when I did not have beards



and mustache," Tejashwi said. "During 18-month tenure as a deputy chief minister of Bihar, there was not a single charge of corruption on me. We have 18 ministers under the RJD quota and none of them were involved in any kind of corruption case," Tejashwi said. "BJP has only one modus operandi to create fear through CBI, ED, Income Tax and if any leader

is scared of. If anyone is ready for horse-trading, fix the rate and buy it," Tejashwi said.

"After the formation of a new government in Bihar, it brings a smile on the faces of common people not only in the cities but in villages, Panchayats and blocks. We are committed to form a government with the motive of 'Dawai, Sichai, Padhai, Kamai, Sunwai and Karwai'. Once the government passes the vote of trust in the Bihar assembly, we will give jobs to every hand in Bihar," Tejashwi said. After becoming Bihar's deputy chief minister, Tejashwi Yadav went to Delhi to take the blessings of his father Lalu Prasad.

Idgah Maidan row: BJP all set to celebrate festivals, confrontation feared



Bengaluru | Agencies

The Idgah Maidan row appeared to be escalating as the ruling BJP was all set to celebrate festivals at the controversial site located in Bengaluru's Chamarajpet.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday stated that festivals and national events will be lawfully held on the ground. Congress MLA and former Minister Zameer Ahmad Khan had earlier said the celebration of the Ganesh festival will not be allowed at the controversial site.

National General Secretary and BJP MLA C.T.

Ravi challenged Khan, saying, "Who is Zameer Ahmad Khan to give permission to celebrate a Hindu festival? The property is not owned by his father."

"We will celebrate Ganesh festival with all fervor. No one can stop us... This is a Hindu nation and not an Arab country where we need permission to celebrate Hindu festivals," he stated.

Meanwhile, the intelligence authorities have suggested that the celebration of any festival could lead to disturbance in the region. The report has been submitted in this regard, police sources stated.

Meanwhile, the police have filed an FIR against Bhaskaran, an activist of a Hindu organisation for stating that he would destroy the Idgah tower at the controversial site.

CM Bommai clarified that the Idgah Maidan belonged to the revenue department. When asked about Congress MLA Zameer's statement, the Chief Minister maintained that "no matter what statement is given, law is important". The police have held peace meetings with the Muslim community leaders and requested them not to get provoked with social media posts.

Congress mega plan to print booklets to reach people for agitation

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ahead of the mega rally against inflation in Delhi, the Congress has planned to build up the agitation programme from the village level and involve retail and mandi workers in it.

The party will organise "Mehangai Chaupal" interactive meetings at mandis, retail markets and other locations in all assembly constituencies from August 17 to 23.

The party will print booklets and will distribute them to all state organisations and they will then further translate and print them in the local language and then distribute them to the public.

The Congress hopes to connect with the masses this time and as party feedback is that its nationwide agitation on August 5 against the Modi government's anti-people policies strongly resonated with the people.

The Congress is also planning to hold an agitation on the demand to roll back the Agnipath scheme, party MP Deepender Singh Hooda said. "After August 15, we will take to the streets, just like we did in our fight against inflation, to protest against unemployment and demand rollback of the Agnipath



scheme," Hooda said.

The party has extended full support to the 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan' campaign launched by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and to the united front of ex-servicemen, who

fought for 'One rank, one pension', the Congress will extend full support to the campaign against the Agnipath scheme.

The Congress had held a nationwide agitation against inflation and

unemployment on August 5 when several party leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, were detained.

The party will take this fight forward with a series of protests against price rise and unemployment in the coming weeks. This will culminate in a "Mehangai Par Halla Bol" rally on August 28 at the Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi that will be addressed by senior Congress leaders. Pradesh Congress Committees will simultaneously hold "Mehangai Par Halla Bol - Chaloo Dilli" events at the state, district, and block levels.

The Congress said the people of India are suffering because of the Modi government's economic mismanagement. Inflation is being exacerbated by higher taxes on essential goods like curd, butter, milk, and packaged foodgrains, while the transfer of public assets to crony capitalists and the introduction of the misguided Agnipath scheme are making a bad employment situation worse.

"The Indian National Congress will continue to spread awareness about these anti-people policies among the people and increase pressure on the BJP government to change course," said Jairam Ramesh, party general secretary.



UPSET FARMER SETS HIMSELF ON FIRE OUTSIDE POLICE STATION

SHEETAL RAJAK, A RESIDENT OF CHOWKA VILLAGE, WAS MENTALLY DISTRESSED AFTER HE LOST HIS CROP DUE TO SUB-STANDARD PESTICIDE, HIS WIFE SAID.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A farmer in Sagar district was left with 25 per cent burns after he tried to set himself on fire on the premises of a police station allegedly after the cops refused to take his complaint against a shopkeeper who sold sub-standard pesticide to him.



sub-standard pesticide. He was mentally stressed and because of that he approached the local police station to lodge a complaint against the shop owner who had sold him the pesticide but the police refused to lodge the complaint," his wife Nisha Rajak said.

Kamal Nath hit out at the Chief Minister Shivraj Chouhan of not doing enough for farmers in the state. "The BJP government had promised to double the income of the farmers but has doubled the cost. Shivraj Sarkar has nothing to do with

the problems of the farmers," Nath tweeted. According to reports, Sheetal Rajak sprayed the pesticide across 20 acres, but the soyabean crop still got infested with pests.

"Agriculture department is probing the complaint of substandard pesticides and an inquiry will be held to look into why no action was taken by the police when he complained," a senior cop said.

Garlic farmers are also angry with the government not getting a fair price for their produce. In districts like Dewad and Ujjain, known as the garlic belt of the country, the farmers are demanding the Centre and the States to immediately announce a market intervention scheme and start procuring garlic to help them.

LUMPY'S KNOCK IN MP, PYRE RAISED



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Lumpy, a skin disease of cattle has knocked in Madhya Pradesh, two cases have been reported in Ratlam. Since then, the possibility of spreading this virus has increased in other areas of the state as well.

Divisional Disease Research Laboratory in the affected area as per the advisory. No death of animal is reported, health of 69 animals is improving. In Ratlam district, the work of administering 12,000 vaccine doses to animals has been completed.

ratory and ensure ring vaccination with gout pox vaccine and adequate storage of the drug within a radius of five kilometers from the site of rupture. Special vigil has been increased in Alirajpur, Jhabua, Ratlam, Mandasaur, Neemuch, Rajgarh and Burhanpur bordering Rajasthan and Gujarat.

AIIMS BHOPAL TO INCREASE 10 PC BEDS

Official said they have received an approval for the construction of a 150-bed critical care unit in the institute and a Memorandum of Understanding of Rs 98 crore has also been signed for its building construction work

Team Absolute | Bhopal

AIIMS will provide for 24x7 treatment and no patient will be denied treatment for the want of money, said institute director Dr Ajay Singh Wednesday.

under Ayushman scheme, even the patients of Above Poverty Line (APL) category will get free treatment if need be. They would not be denied treatment over monetary issues.

He further said, iWe have noticed patients moving from one ward to another due to lack of proper guidance. There will be a unified system to guide the patients to help them lead to their desired department.

we are going to have Gamma Knife radiation surgery for neurosurgery. It will be a super speciality facility in central India, the AIIMS director added.

In addition to Amrit Pharmacy and Jan-Aushadhi, AIIMS administration will start its own medical pharmacy to provide all medicines to patients. It will be an internal arrangement, said the director.

Strengthen ration distribution scheme in tribal dominated areas: Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the work of providing ration to the people in tribal dominated areas should be continuously reviewed. At present, the increase in the number of beneficiaries under the scheme and the lifting of food grains is commendable.



before the implementation of this scheme, while on an average, one lakh 73 thousand metric tonnes of food grains were being lifted, it has now increased to more than one lakh 80 thousand metric tonnes.

The increase in different districts has ranged from 3 to 10 percent. It was informed in the meeting that as per the instructions given earlier by Chief Minister, the proposal has been prepared following the continuous monitoring of the scheme and strict control system at the state level.

distribution, monitoring of material distribution in the designated location by bringing POS machines in 4G mode and study of the plan and assignments given for study of the scheme are included.

CM EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER DEATH OF VP SETHI

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited the residence of Deepak Sethi and Dr. Rajesh Sethi at Arera Colony and expressed condolences on the demise of their father Ved Prakash Sethi.

CM PAYS HOMAGE TO SHAHEED KHUDIRAM BOSE

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to freedom fighter Khudiram Bose on his death anniversary. CM paid floral tributes at his portrait in the auditorium at his residence office.

December 3, 1889 in Medinipur district. After the partition of Bengal in the year 1905, Khudiram Bose jumped into the freedom movement. He joined the Revolutionary Party. He was instrumental in distributing Vande Mataram pamphlets and in many revolutionary activities.

SCHOOLS, COLLEGES WILL HAVE TO INFORM IN ADVANCE TO VISIT RAJ BHAVAN

Bhopal: Schools, colleges will have to inform in advance for visiting Raj Bhavan on Independence Day. The arrangements for the visit will be ensured by the Raj Bhavan Security Office on the advance information given by the principal or manager.

BJP wins, prez, V-P posts in Mandasaur Municipality

Team Absolute | Mandasaur

Bharatiya Janata Party candidate emerged victorious in the state's largest municipality - Mandasaur. At the first meeting of the municipality which was held on Wednesday, Ramadevi Banshilal Gurjar has been elected as the municipality president.

Chawla got 33 votes, while Sharma got seven votes. It is believed that three independent corporators cast their votes in favour of BJP for president and vice-president, while out of a total of eight corporators from Congress, many claimed that two Congress corporators have voted for the BJP president and one voted for the vice-president.

Cheetah relocation: WILD CATS LIKELY TO ARRIVE IN KUNO BY END OF AUGUST

Staff and authorities of Kuno National Park are struggling to keep leopards out of the 500-hectare enclosure made for the cheetahs

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The plan to translocate cheetahs from South Africa and Namibia to India by August 13, before India's 75th Independence Day, has been delayed for around two weeks or more due to a number of difficulties coming in the way of the project, according to media reports.



Varma, divisional forest officer, KNP. Apart from the two caught, three more leopards in the area are managing to slip off from the foot traps and cages, making the authorities wonder about the spotted cats' strategies.

still difficult to predict how long it may take them to capture all three of them. "This is something that is unpredictable. It may happen in one day if luck favours us, or it may take weeks. We are trying our best but cannot put a date or deadline on it.

Financial statement table for WE WIN LIMITED, showing financial results for the quarter ended 30th June, 2022. Includes columns for Particulars, Standalone, and Consolidated figures.



EDITOR'S SPECS

NDA to lose strength in Upper House

BJP-led NDA's strength further reduced in the Rajya Sabha after Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United) left the alliance and formed a government in Bihar with RJD and others. Kumar's JD(U) has five members in the House, including Vice-Chairman Harivansh. The strength of Rajya Sabha is 237 and there are eight vacancies which include four from Jammu and Kashmir, one from Tripura and three to be nominated. The halfway mark is 119 in the House and the ruling NDA strength was 114, which includes five nominated MPs, one independent and five JD(U). The NDA did not have a majority when Kumar's JD(U) was part of the alliance. After the JD(U) left the alliance, the NDA's number was reduced to 109 from 114. Now the NDA is 10 short of the halfway mark. The BJP, which is in power in the state, will win Tripura whenever an election is held and the government can nominate three more members. The NDA's strength will go up to 113, which is still short of the halfway mark. The ruling alliance will need support of smaller parties like BJD and YSRCP to pass the crucial bill in the Upper House. Both the BJD and YSRCP have nine members each, while the BJP has 91 members. During recent President and Vice-President polls, the ruling alliance got support from the BJD, YSRC, TDP, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and BSP apart from NDA partners. After SAD and Shiv Sena, JD(U) became the third party to leave the NDA. The TDP had left the NDA before the 2019 general elections. While in opposition parties, Congress is the largest party with 31 members in the Rajya Sabha followed by TMC with 13 members.

THE MAHATMA'S TIME-KEEPER AND A COPIOUS CHRONICLER OF HIS LIFE

Vishnu Makhijani

Painstakingly written, day-after-day, "Mahadevbhaini Dayari" (Mahadevbhais Diary) chronicles in minute detail the major events in life of Mahatma Gandhi and in the Indian Independence struggle over a quarter-of-a-century from 1917 to 1942 by his personal secretary Mahadev Desai, one of the few individuals who had the closest access to the Father of the Nation during this period.

There are anecdotes about Gandhi's life, his peculiarities and his philosophy of life, comments about the books he had read with a lot of intriguing citations from some books et al, in short, some of the most important elements from Gandhi's life.

"He was much more than that (a private secretary)," Verrier Elwin, the British-born Indian anthropologist, ethnologist and tribal activist, has said of Desai.

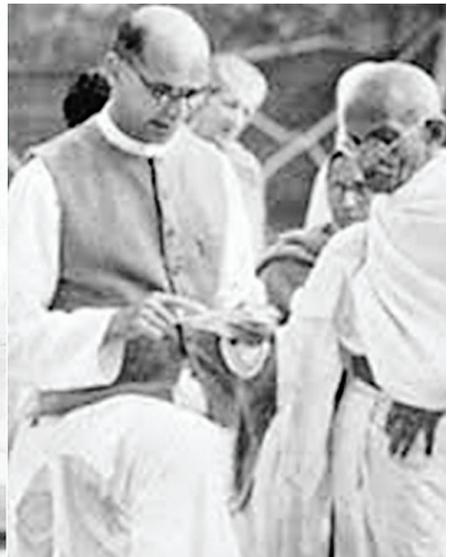
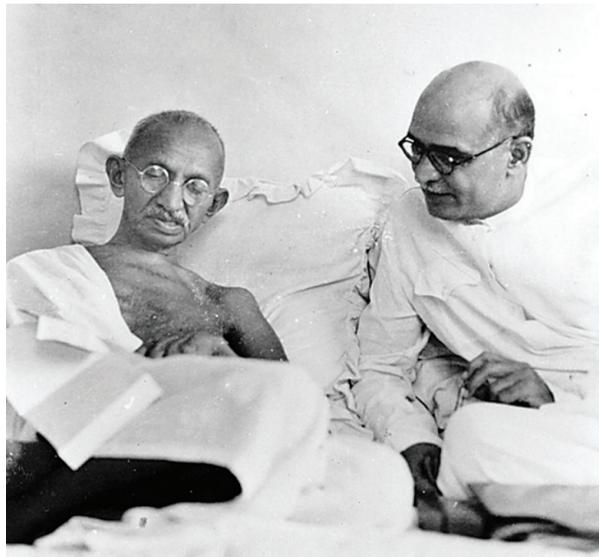
"He was in fact Home and Foreign Secretary combined. He managed everything. He made all the arrangements. He was equally at home in the office, the guest-house and the kitchen. He looked after many guests and must have saved 10 years of Gandhi's life by diverting from him unwanted visitors."

The Mahatma's paternal grandson, Rajmohan Gandhi, goes even further: "Waking up before Gandhi in pre-dawn darkness, and going to sleep long after his Master, Desai lived Gandhi's day thrice over, first in an attempt to anticipate it, next in spending it alongside Gandhi, and finally in recording it into his diary."

It's little wonder that Desai has been described on various occasions as Gandhi's Boswell, a Plato to Gandhi's Socrates and an Ananda to Gandhi's Buddha.

The platitudes are richly deserved for the man who translated Gandhi's autobiography, "The Story of My Experiments with Truth" into English from the Gujarati original and was posthumously conferred the Sahitya Akademi Award for "Mahadevbhaini Dayari".

He was at ease with Gujarati, Bengali and English and is highly regarded as a translator and writer in Gujarati. He wrote several biographies, among them, "Vir Vallabh" and "Be Khudai Khidmatgar" (on Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and his brother Khan Abdul Jabbar Khan). A founding member of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, Desai



was also a regular contributor to Gandhi's publications "Young India" and "Navjivan", and for two years ran the "Independent" newspaper from Allahabad when Motilal Nehru requisitioned his services from Gandhi. Born in an Avani Brahmin family in the village of Saras in Gujarat's Surat district, Mahadev Haribhai Desai (January 1, 1892-August 15, August 1942) was educated at the Surat High School and Bombay's Elphinstone College, earning a BA degree. After obtaining an LLB in 1913, he took a job as an inspector at Bombay's Central Cooperative Bank.

Desai first met Gandhi in 1915 when he sought his advice on how best to publish his book (a Gujarati translation of John Morley's English book "On Compromise") and joined the Sabramati Ashram in 1917.

Beginning his diary on November 13 of that year, he maintained it till August 14, 1942, the day before his death of a massive heart attack at Poona's Aga Khan Palace, where he was interred with Gandhi for participating in the Quit India movement that had been launched on August 8 of that year.

In 1919 when the colonial government arrested Gandhi in Punjab, he named Desai his heir. Desai was for the first time arrested and sentenced to a year in prison in 1921 for his writings.

In prison, Desai was aghast that the jail authorities mistreated prisoners, frequently flogging them. His report describing the life inside an Indian jail, published in "Young India" and "Navajivan", compelled the British authorities to institute some drastic reform measures. Desai took part in the Bardoli Satyagraha along with Sardar Patel and wrote a history of the Satyagraha in Gujarati which he translated into English as "The Story of Bardoli". Arrested and imprisoned for his participation in the Salt Satyagraha, he was released following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and accompanied Gandhi to the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1931 along with Mirabehn, Devdas Gandhi and Pyarelal. He was the only person to accompany Gandhi at the meeting with King George V.

Gandhi resumed the Civil

Disobedience Movement following the collapse of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and the deadlock at the Round Table Conference, and the new Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, determined to crush the movement, ordered a clampdown on the Indian National Congress and its activists.

In 1932, Desai was arrested again and sent to prison with Gandhi and Sardar Patel. He was re-arrested the next year and detained in Belgaum Jail.

He also played a role in organising people's movements in the princely states of Rajkot and Mysore in 1939 and was put in charge of selecting participants during the Individual Satyagraha of 1940.

Desai's final prison term followed the Quit India Declaration of August 8, 1942. Arrested on the morning of August 9, he died six days later on August 15, the day on which India attained Independence five years later.

international

CHINA OVERTAKES US AS WORLD LEADER IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OUTPUT, 'HIGH IMPACT' STUDIES

Tokyo | Agencies

China has overtaken the US as the world leader in both scientific research output and "high impact" studies, according to a report published by Japanese science and technology ministry.

The report, which was published by Japan's National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTP) on Tuesday, found that China now publishes the highest number of scientific research papers yearly, followed by the US and Germany, the Guardian reported.

The figures were based on yearly averages between 2018 and 2020, and drawn from data compiled by the analytics firm Clarivate.

The Japanese NISTP report also found that



Chinese research comprised 27.2 per cent of the world's top 1 per cent most frequently cited papers.

The number of citations a research paper receives is a commonly used metric in academia. The more times a

research was third at 5.5 per cent. China published a yearly average of 407,181 scientific papers, pulling ahead of the US's 293,434 journal articles and accounting for 23.4 per cent of the world's research output, the report found. China accounted for a high proportion of research into materials science, chemistry, engineering and mathematics, while US researchers were more prolific in research into clinical medicine, basic life sciences and physics, the Guardian reported. The report was published on the day US President Joe Biden signed the Chips and Science Act, legislation that would authorise \$200 billion in research funding over 10 years to make US scientific research more competitive with China.

study is cited in subsequent papers by other researchers, the greater its "citation impact", the Guardian reported. The US accounted for 24.9 per cent of the top 1 per cent most highly cited research studies, while UK

8 MIGRANTS DEAD AS BOAT SINKS OFF TUNISIA'S COAST

Tunis | Agencies

Eight migrants died and two remain missing after a boat carrying 30 migrants sank off the Kerkennah Islands near the southeast coast of Tunisia, the Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP) reported.

On Wednesday, security personnel retrieved two bodies off the coast of Kerkennah, adding the total fatalities to eight, said the report published on Wednesday. So far 20 individuals have been rescued and search is still underway for the missing, according to the report.

Located in the central Mediterranean, Tunisia is one of the most popular transit points for illegal migration to Europe, Xinhua news agency reported.

Over 200 major glaciers disappear in Italy due to climate change: Research

Rome | Agencies

More than 200 major Alpine glaciers have disappeared in Italy since record-keeping began in 1895, the country's environmental lobby group Legambiente said in a report.

In its third "Caravan of the Glaciers" report, Legambiente said the latest findings verified "the dramatic regression of glaciers due to the climate crisis".

The group said Alpine temperatures are rising twice as quickly as temperatures are rising at sea level, and the ground snow has decreased every year since 2012, reports Xinhua news agency.

The report was produced as a way to inform policymakers regarding policies of sustainable development, said the Legambiente.

It was produced by the group in partnership with the Italian Glaciological Committee. The phenomenon is thought to have wide-ranging consequences. "The rapid retreat of glacial fronts not only leads to the loss of fascinating landscapes and biodiversity, but it also amounts to the disappearance of important fresh water reserves," the report said.



The lack of fresh water coming from glacial reserves is a major contributor to the drought gripping most of Italy and threatening to reduce agricultural output, especially in northern Italy, where water from glaciers is a key part of the area's ecosystem, noted the report.

Another key impact involves public safety, said the report.

Last month, 11 hikers died when a melting glacier caused a massive avalanche on the Marmolada in Italy's Dolomite Mountains.

Officials and experts attributed the tragedy to scorching temperatures.

EU BAN ON RUSSIAN COAL IMPORTS IN FORCE AFTER TRANSITION ENDS

Brussels: Starting from Thursday, European Union (EU) member states are no longer allowed to import coal from Russia after the transitional period for the bloc's embargo ended at midnight. The embargo was part of the fifth sanctions package agreed by the EU in April and will be in full force from Thursday onwards, reports dpa news agency.

EU countries had agreed on a transitional period of 120 days to give the industry time to adapt to the import ban.

The aim is to weaken the Russian economy amid its invasion of Ukraine. The European Commission said in April the coal embargo could cost Russia some 8 billion euros (\$8.25 billion) annually. Germany's coal importers' association VDKI does not expect supply bottlenecks in Europe despite the ban as coal is available on the world market. The main suppliers going forward will be the US, South Africa, Australia, Indonesia and Colombia. The coal embargo marked the EU's first time sanctioning Russian energy supplies. In a later sanctions package, the bloc agreed to largely ban Russian oil deliveries in order to step up pressure on Moscow. The oil ban is due to come into effect at the end of the year, with exceptions for several countries that are particularly dependent on Russian oil including Hungary, which will be allowed to continue receiving pipeline supplies from Moscow.



China announces \$181mn aid for Nepal

Kathmandu | Agencies

China has announced to provide an 800 million yuan (\$181 million) aid to Nepal for this year.

The announcement was made by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi during his meeting with his Nepal counterpart Narayan Khadka in Qingdao on Wednesday.

Khadka is on a three-day visit to China at the invitation of Wang, who is also the State Councillor.

The trip comes at a time during simmering tensions between China and Taiwan following US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to the self-governing island last week. During the meeting, Khadka reiterated Nepal's unwavering commitment to 'One China Policy' and assured that the Nepali territory will not be allowed to be used for any activity against Beijing.

In his address, Wang reiterated China's continued



and unconditional support to Nepal's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and assured to support in the country's development endeavours as per the priority of the government in Kathmandu, according to a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry here.

Besides providing a new batch of economic assistance to Nepal, both sides also reached several other agreements and under-

standing, the Ministry added. As Nepal is witnessing a crippling shortage of chemical fertiliser, China has agreed to provide it.

Upon Nepal's request, China has assured that it will positively consider providing chemical fertiliser and to study the feasibility of establishing a chemical fertiliser plant in Nepal, said the Ministry. "The State Councillor agreed to assist Nepal's agricultural sector. He also agreed to encourage

Chinese investment in developing manufacturing capacity of Nepal and enhance cooperation in the export of Nepali tea and traditional medicinal herbs," the statement said, adding that Khadka and Wang decided to establish a joint mechanism for Covid-19 control in border ports.

They also agreed to open Rasuwa-Kyerung and Tatopani-Jangmu ports for two-way trade which was hit by the pandemic.

Trump invokes 5th Amendment, refuses to depose before AG in NY

Ashe O | New York

Former US President Donald Trump kept his date with New York Attorney General in Manhattan but declined to answer questions from the letters office, a calculated and yet surprising gamble in a high-stakes legal interview that will likely determine the course of a civil investigation into his company's business practices of whether he has misused tax breaks.

Shortly after questioning began on Wednesday morning, Trump's office released a statement saying he would invoke his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination, explaining that he "declined to answer the questions under the rights and privileges afforded to every citizen under the US Constitution".

Two informed sources confirmed that he was refusing to answer questions, cit-



ing the Fifth Amendment, The New York Times reported. Since March 2019, Attorney General Letitia James's office has investigated whether rump and his company improperly inflated the value of his hotels, golf clubs and other assets.

Trump has long dismissed the inquiry from James as a partisan "witch hunt". In his statement on Wednesday, he cast it as part of a grander conspiracy against him, linking it to the FBI search at Mar-a-Lago, his home and private club in Palm Beach, Florida, on Monday.



Gadchiroli SP Ankit Goyal's community initiative earns top global award

▶ A FORMER TELECOM ENGINEER WORKING FOR AN MNC IN PUNE, GOYAL, 37, HAILS FROM INDORE, MADHYA PRADESH AND IS AN IPS OFFICER OF 2010 BATCH WITH THE MAHARASHTRA CADRE.
▶ GOYAL HAS SERVED IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES WITH WARDHA, THANE AND MUMBAI POLICE.

Team Absolute | Nagpur

The Superintendent of Police of the Maoist-infested Gadchiroli district Ankit Goyal has been selected for the prestigious International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) - 2022, for his unique initiatives in community policing, officials said here on Thursday. Four months after he took over the challenging role of SP Gadchiroli in September 2020, Goyal launched the 'Police Dadalora Khidki' initiative, a single-delivery system for all public services, starting in January 2021. "This is a Maoist affected area and there is a need for such a single-window system delivery of various public services to

the common masses in coordination with other government departments," Goyal told reporter. This service initiative has been recognised globally and Goyal has been named for the "2022 IACP/ Walmart Leadership in Community Policing Award, Large Agency", instituted by the 129-year-old non-profit organisation based in the US. "Your agency is an exemplary form of leadership in the policing profession," commented IACP President Dwight Henninger, who is also the Chief of Police, Vail town in Colorado. Goyal has been invited for the IACP Annual Awards Banquet and ceremony scheduled in Dallas, Texas in October 2022, and he shall also be given a year's complimentary membership of IACP.



GOLD, CASH WORTH RS 390 CR SEIZED IN WEEK-LONG I-T RAID IN JALNA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Income Tax Department has seized cash and valuables worth Rs 390 crore following a raid on the premises of Maharashtra's Jalna businessman, who deals in garments, real estate and in steel. I-T department's 260 officials divided into five teams carried out a week-long raid. The agency used 120 vehicles to carry out this raid.

Sources said that they seized around Rs 58 crore in cash, 32 kg gold and valuable stones. The source also said that it took 13 hours to count the cash. "It was a week-long raid that started from August 1. Our Nasik Branch team got the tip off following which the raids were conducted. Seeing the gravity of the matter we formed teams of 260 officials divided into five teams. We also used 120 of our vehicles in the raid," the source said.

The source said that the cash recovered from the premises of garments and steel businessman was taken to Nasik branch of State Bank of India, where it was counted for hours.



The bank employees started counting the cash at around 11 a.m., which went on till 1 a.m. The I-T department got the tip off that there were irregularities in the accounts of four steel companies after which the teams swung into action. The team of 260 officials raided the factories but they didn't recover anything. Later they raided a farm house where they found the huge cash and valuables.

Skeletons peep out of Maha CM's 'mini-cabinet', 75% ministers face criminal cases

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 18-member 'mini-cabinet' expansion of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Bharatiya Janata Party's Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis have thrown up many facts, including 75 per cent of the total 20 'crorepati' ministers have criminal cases lodged against them.

According to a study conducted by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), a total of 15 ministers have declared criminal cases, including seven from the Shinde Group Shiv Sena and eight from the BJP, in the 'gents only cabinet'.

Of these, 65 per cent -- or 13 ministers -- including seven from Shinde Group and six from the BJP have serious criminal cases filed against them. Of the 20 crorepaties, BJP's Mangal Prabhat Lodha, a reputed builder, is the richest among the ministers with assets worth Rs



441.65 crore and liabilities of Rs 283.36 crore. Though a 'crorepati', the poorest in the lot is also BJP's Sandipnarao A. Bhumre with assets of Rs 2.92 crore in his name. The average assets of the ministers' whose poll affidavits were analysed by ADR comes to Rs 47 crore -- comprising the BJP's Rs 58 crore and

Shinde Group's Rs 36 crore. On the academic front, two ministers (or 10 per cent) have declared their educational track record as SSC pass, six (30 per cent) as HSC pass, 11 ministers (55 per cent) are higher qualified with degrees, and only one Dr. Suresh Khade of the BJP holds a doctorate from a university in Sri

Lanka. As far as the age group is concerned, 16 ministers (80 per cent) fall in the upper echelons aged between 51-70, and four (20 per cent) are between 41-50, said the ADR's Maharashtra Election Watch, coordinated by Ajit Ranade, Sharad Kumar and Satish Khot.

EKNATH SHINDE SNUBS THACKERAY AGAIN, DROPS SHIV SENA FROM BAC MEET

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a fresh snub to ex-CM Uddhav Thackeray, his Shiv Sena faction in the Maharashtra Assembly was dropped from the crucial Business Advisory Committee (BAC) meet to prepare for the upcoming Monsoon Session of the Legislature.

Thackeray faction leader and chief whip Ajay Chaudhari had written to Speaker Rahul Narvekar seeking representation to the BAC, but it was rejected.

However, now two ministers from the faction headed by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde have been included in the BAC -- Dada Bhuse and Uday Samant.

The BAC presided over by Shinde and attended by group leaders of all parties on Thursday decided to extend the Monsoon Session by two days and now it will be held from August 17-25. This was because the legislature



will not function on August 19 (Dahi Handi celebrations) and the weekend, and the two additional days would enable discussions and decisions on various issues. The BAC comprises Assembly

members like Shinde, BJP's Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis, Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar, NCP's Jayant Patil, BJP's Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil, Sudhir Mungantiwar and Chandrakant Patil, and Congress'

Balasaheb Thorat and Ashok Chavan.

Besides, there are other invitees like Deputy Speaker Narhari Zirwal (NCP), Ashish Shelar (BJP), Chhagan Bujbal (NCP) and Amin Patel (Congress) in the BAC.

From the Council, besides Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe, the BAC has newly-appointed Leader of Opposition Ambadas Danve and Anil Parab, both from Shiv Sena, Pravin Darekar and Vijay Girdhar (BJP), Shashikant Shinde (NCP) and Bhaji Jagtap (Congress).

The invitees from the upper house included Chandrashekar Bawankule and Ranjitsinh Mohite-Patil (BJP), Jayant Patil (PWP), Kapil Patil (Lok Bharati) and Vikas Potnis (Shiv Sena).

After the government headed by Shinde and Fadnavis was sworn-in on June 30, the monsoon session was originally scheduled to start on July 17, but was postponed for various reasons.

Rupee depreciates 12 paise to close at 79.64 against US dollar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian rupee depreciated 12 paise at close on Thursday after reversing early gains due to sharp rise in crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, rupee ended at 79.64, after opening strong at 79.2225 from its previous close of 79.52.

The Brent crude oil prices in the international market has risen sharply and at the close of Indian market hours, it was \$98.39 a barrel, up 1.02 per cent. The rupee appreciated in the early trade after the US inflation data for July came in below the estimates, raising hopes that the Federal Reserve may not be that aggressive in hiking interest



rates in its next meeting. "The lower US CPI print did trim the odds of a 75 bps rate hike in September with DXY cooling off below 105.00 levels. But the lower inflation figure is purely because of cooling off in oil & gas prices last month. Food and shelter costs still continues to be sticky. Thus on the contrary of data, Fed members continue to

have their hawkish stance in place and still believe inflation is still unacceptably high," said Kumar Sodhani, Vice President, Global Trading Centre, Shinhan Bank. Meanwhile, Sensex ended up 515.31 points or 0.88 per cent at 59,332.60, while Nifty ended 124.25 points or 0.71 per cent higher at 17,659.00 on Thursday.

I-T dept finds tax evasion by mining, sugar and liquor firm

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Income Tax Department has said that they carried out a search operation on a company engaged in mining, sugar manufacturing and liquor business in Madhya Pradesh and Mumbai, and found that it was involved in alleged tax evasion.

The person holding a top position in the business firm also holds a political post. The search operation carried out on July 14 covered several premises located in Madhya Pradesh and Mumbai.

"During the course of the search operation, a large

number of incriminating documentary and digital evidences have been found and seized. The analysis of seized evidences of sand mining business reveals that the firm has been indulging in tax evasion by not recording sales in the regular books of account," an IT official said.

The official added that the comparison of actual sales as per digital evidence regarding accounted sales of contemporary months clearly exhibits regular large-scale suppression of sales exceeding Rs 70 crore. Evidence of non-payment of royalty on such unaccounted sales has also been found.

As much as more than

Rs 10 crore has been found to be paid in cash by the firm to other business associates, which is outside the regular books of account.

In the case of the firm's sugar manufacturing business, issues pertaining to stock difference have also been found.

Evidence gathered during the search further reveals that some benamidars have been made partners in a firm involved in the sand mining business and were also found to be declaring profits in their income tax returns. However, the money was actually being transferred by them to the beneficial owner of the firm.

I-T questions two Axis Mutual Fund executives in front-running case

New Delhi/Mumbai | Agencies

Sources in the Income Tax department have said that they grilled two serving executives of the Axis Mutual Fund in connection with the alleged front-running case.

Twelve fund managers were on the radar of the I-T department. The sources said that two were questioned in connection with front-running and alleged tax evasion.

Jinesh Gopani, head of equity at Axis AMC and Pawan Jhangiani, a dealer at Axis AMC were also reportedly questioned by the I-T officials.

On July 28, the I-T department had conducted raids at the premises of its former Chief Trader and Fund Manager of Axis Mutual Fund, Viresh Joshi.

Joshi was on the radar of I-T department since May after it was found that the latter was in possession of a Lamborghini and luxury apartments in Mumbai.

It has been alleged that Joshi acquired all these



allegedly through front-running. The I-T department recorded the statement of Joshi and a few more brokers. The department gathered information from SEBI before conducting raids. Joshi has been accused of taking bribes from the brokers in lieu of sharing mutual fund's tips. It

has been alleged that after indulging in such practices he gained financial benefits from the brokers.

It was also alleged that the brokers used to pay him monthly. Joshi allegedly invested in mutual funds by buying many midcap and small stocks to benefit the brokers and himself. The I-T department had in May formed a team of its elite officials to look into the alleged front-running scam of Axis Mutual Fund.

Since then around 12 fund managers, including Joshi, have been on the radar of the I-T department. The Income Tax department was surprised as the alleged accused didn't furnish the information about their real estate in the tax filing which was later detected.

The I-T department in its preliminary inquiry found that the fund managers have a number of commercial and non commercial assets which they allegedly hid in their tax filing. They had even shown that they were not earning from their real estates.

OVERNIGHT FUNDS WITNESS INFLOWS IN JULY AFTER ONE MONTH PAUSE

Manish M. Suvarna | Mumbai

Overnight funds category witnessed heavy inflows in July after registering outflows in the previous month. This is because of the rise in overnight rates which has made this category attractive for most investors.

According to the AMFI data, overnight fund saw inflows worth Rs 19,918.66 crore, as compared to Rs 20,668.02 crore outflows in the previous month. June remained the only month where the overnight funds had witnessed outflows.

"Two things have been happening simultaneously as far as overnight funds are concerned. Liquidity is being drained out as credit off take takes place and repo rate hikes are leading to higher overnight rates, making



overnight funds favourable. Hence the inflow. Also uncertainty and volatility in other asset classes might prompt investors to be in overnight funds for a temporary period before switching to long term debt funds or equity, etc.," said Marzban Irani, CIO - Fixed Income, LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management Ltd.

Overnight funds are debt funds that invest in overnight assets or securities having a maturity of one day.

This fund is considered safest among debt funds with zero interest rate risk and minimum credit risk.

These funds are suitable for risk-averse investors who want to invest their money in a fund, but only for a short time. These funds are better means to utilise one's idle money.

Raju Srivastava is on ventilator: sources

Raju Srivastava, a comedian, experienced a minor heart attack while working out in the gym. According to reports, the comedian's condition has deteriorated and he is now on a ventilator.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After receiving the news, Raju Srivastava's wife hurried to Delhi, and according to a leading news channel, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath contacted Raju's wife Shikha Srivastava and assured her of all 'possible' assistance.

CM Yogi Adityanath has also directed his officials to assist Raju Srivastava's family in whatever manner they can as he battles for his life. Raju

(58) was transported to AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) and had angioplasty surgery. Raju was exercising in a gym in South Delhi. He was walking on the treadmill when he collapsed due to some chest pain. The comedian's trainer rushed him to the hospital, where he received rapid CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

According to a top news outlet, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is in frequent contact with the AIIMS director to inquire about Raju

Srivastava's health. The Minister even contacted Raju Srivastava's wife for the same.

Raju Srivastava rose to prominence as a stand-up comedian through The Great Indian Laughter Challenge and has acted in Bollywood films such as Maine Pyaar Kiya, Baazigar, and Bombay To Goa, to mention a few. One of his well-known stand-up routines is 'Gajodhar Bhaiya.' Raju Srivastava is the current head of the Uttar Pradesh Film Development Council.



'TWENTY FINE'

Kylie Jenner flaunts her curves in a sparkly sheer gown during firework show at her extravagant 25th birthday bash.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kylie Jenner felt 'twenty fine' as she extravagantly celebrated her 25th birthday surrounded by family and friends on Wednesday night. For the special occasion, the makeup mogul slipped into a sparkling sheer white dress that clung to her curvaceous figure, reports dailymail.co.uk. The KUWTK alum appeared to be wearing a soft brown eyeshadow look paired her her signature nude lip and a bronzed matte complexion. She was captured watching her birthday firework show with her back to the camera. For one of the shots, Kylie looked over her shoulder and offered a slight smirk. 'twenty fine,' captioned the mother-of-one, who also included a brief clip of herself giggling and smiling as the fireworks went off. Though it's unclear exactly where Kylie is ringing in her 25th, her sister Kendall Jenner and BFF Anastasia 'Stassie' Karanikolaou confirmed on their own Instagram pages that they joined her for the festivities.

Los Angeles | Agencies



Jason Momoa slams his 'Conan The Barbarian' movie



Hollywood star Jason Momoa has slammed his 'Conan the Barbarian' reboot movie and said it

"turned into a big pile of s***".

Speaking to British GQ for a profile piece, Jason slammed the 2011 film, which he starred in as the sword-swinging character of legend in a remake of the film that featured Arnold Schwarzenegger in 1982, reports deadline.com.

"I've been a part of a lot of things that really sucked, and movies where it's out of your hands," he told British GQ. "Conan was one of them. It's one of the best experiences I had, and it (was) taken over and turned into a big pile of s***." The film did have a somewhat rocky beginning. It was stalled at Warner Bros. before Lionsgate bought the rights. Brett Ratner was prematurely announced as director before German filmmaker Marcus Nispel was enlisted in June 2009. Jason was cast in January 2010.

Before the film's release, he debuted as the Dothraki warlord Khal Drogo in HBO's 'Game of Thrones'. Since then, he's been cast as Aquaman in the DC Comics Extended Universe, appearing in 2016's 'Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice', and then 2017's 'Justice League' and 2018's 'Aquaman'.

He also had a supporting role in 2021's 'Dune', and has a new 'Aquaman' on the horizon with 'Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom'.

Madonna was warned her career would be over

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop icon Madonna was warned her career would be over after she accidentally flashed her derriere at the 1984 MTV Video Music Awards.

The 63-year-old singer was one of the performers at the very first MTV Video Music Awards (VMAs) in 1984 when she caused a sensation when her dress flipped up and she flashed her buttocks while singing 'Like a Virgin', and though the wardrobe malfunction was accidental, her management team were convinced the brief flashing of flesh would spark enough outrage to ensure she'd never work again, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

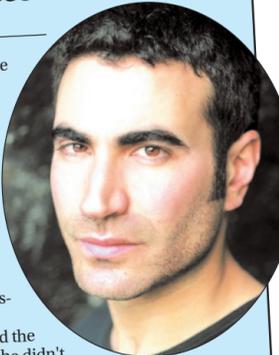
Speaking to Jimmy Fallon on 'The Tonight Show', she said: "I did that show and I walked down the very steep stairs of the wedding cake and I got to the bottom and I started dancing around and my white stiletto pumps fell off." And I was trying to do this smooth move like, dive for the shoe and look like it was choreography. And my dress flipped up and my butt was showing. Can you imagine? Those were the days when you shouldn't show your butt to have a career. Now it's the opposite.

"It happened by accident and I didn't even know my butt was showing. It wasn't even like the whole butt it was just like a butt cheek, like half a butt cheek. Yeah, when I went backstage, my manager told me my career is over." The 'Beautiful Stranger' singer also recalled how much it "blew (her) mind" when she saw people dancing to her music for the first time at a club called Danceteria.

Brett Goldstein is doing '400 push-ups' for Marvel debut as Hercules

Los Angeles | Agencies

Brett Goldstein is all set to join the Marvel Cinematic Universe as Hercules, the 'Ted Lasso' Emmy winner shared that his role was never announced until the character popped up in the post-credits scene in 'Thor: Love and Thunder'. He told The Playlist that the call to join Marvel came "literally out of the blue one night", reports 'Variety'. "They turn around, and they reveal, 'It's Hercules; it's you'. And I went, 'What? Just like, 'Are you serious? Are you f***g with me? Is this a wind-up?'" Goldstein said. "So yeah, it was as surprising to me as I think it has been to other people." The actor continued: "When I spoke to Taika, I said, 'You know I'm basically like a skinny comedian?' I said, 'When is this filming?' It was like in two weeks, and I was like, 'I mean, I'll do my best, but two weeks feels'. I said, 'He doesn't have to be as big as Thor, does he?' And look, on the day, I mean, I'm doing 400 push-ups that day. I was fit to explode. I did the best I could on that day." Goldstein's role was so top secret that he didn't even tell his parents, who found out about his Hercules casting just like the rest of the world when they watched 'Thor: Love and Thunder' on the big screen.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kim Kardashian

BRITNEY SPEARS SAYS HER TEENAGE KIDS ARE 'HATEFUL', 'RUDE' TOWARDS HER

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop star Britney Spears further addressed her relationship with her children, noting that her Instagram posts are not why her kids don't want to visit her. She denied that her nude photos on social media are the reason her two sons, Sean Preston and Jayden, don't want to stay at her house anymore as their issues pre-date her more liberal usage of the photo sharing app since she was released from the 14-year conservatorship that gave her father Jamie Spears control over her financial, health and professional decisions, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In a post on Instagram, the 40-year-old wrote: "As we all know, raising teenage boys is never easy for anyone...it concerns me the fact that the reason is based on my INSTAGRAM...it was LONG before Instagram...I gave them everything...Only one word: HURTFUL...I'll say it...My mother told me 'You should GIVE them to their dad'...I'm sharing this because I can...Have a good day folks!!!" "The situation should have been 100 per cent dealt with privately and definitely not online," she added, taking aim at their father's Kevin Federline's recent tell-all to the Daily Mail.



'I AM GROOT' DIRECTOR KRISTEN LEPORE WAS IMPRESSED BY VIN DIESEL DURING RECORDING SESSION

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood actor Vin Diesel, who lent his voice for the character of Groot in the animated series 'I Am Groot', has been praised by the film's director Kristen Lepore.

Diesel joined the MCU nearly a decade ago and has recorded the voice for Groot, at all ages, in five films, including the 'Guardians of the Galaxy', 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2', 'Avengers: Infinity War', 'Avengers: Endgame' and 'Thor: Love and Thunder'.

Recollecting her experience of listening to Vin during the record session, Kristen said: "I was blown away by Vin in the recording session. He just stepped up to the plate and nailed it. He would run through the whole short after seeing it only once. He's a fantastic actor and gave a subtly different performance with every 'I Am Groot' on every read. He brought so much life to Baby Groot."

Executive producer Brad Winderbaum concurred with Lepore and shared that Diesel's commitment and contribution to the character have been commendable. "Vin is as invested in playing Groot as any of our actors are in playing their characters in the MCU. He's extremely passionate about it. He thinks about the intention behind every scene and how to deliver the line and create the perfect inflection for those three words to convey what the scene needs," said Winderbaum.

Well if you think that voicing Baby Groot is a cakewalk, Winderbaum will tell you that it's not easy as it seems on the face value.





IT IS A SPECIAL FEELING TO RETURN HOME WITH CWG MEDAL: SANGITA KUMARI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian women's hockey team returned home after earning a historic Bronze Medal at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, ending the country's 16-year medal drought in the quadrennial event.

This medal was significantly special for Indian youngster Sangita Kumari because it was her maiden appearance in the prestigious tournament.

When asked about the same, the 20-year-old said, "It is a special feeling to return home with a medal. There are plenty of festivities back home. Everyone in my village is so happy and excited, they tell me it is a proud moment for Jharkhand. I think it will take some time to let the feeling of standing on the podium sink in."

Speaking about playing her first CWG, she said, "I was quite nervous at first, but my senior players said it's only natural to feel this way



particularly at a multi-discipline sports event. I am grateful to have their support."

The Indian Team kicked off their Birmingham 2022 CWG campaign with a stun-

ning 5-0 win over Ghana in Pool A. In their next game, they bettered Wales 3-1 before going down against England by the same margin. Thereafter, the team recorded a hard-fought 3-2 win

over Canada in their last group stage match to finish second in Pool A and qualify for the semifinals.

The Indian squad put up a strong performance against Australia in the semis but were unable to overcome their opponents, losing the match via shoot-out (0-3 SO) after the contest was tied at 1-1 at the end of regulation time. Following that, the side bounced back by defeating New Zealand 2-1 via Penalty Shoot-out in the Bronze Medal match.

Speaking about India's heartbreaking loss against Australia in the Semi-Final, she said, "We played extremely well against Australia, but, unfortunately, we could not be on the right side of the result. In simpler terms, it was not our day. Having said that, we should not detract from Australia's performance, which was excellent. And, of course, we are disappointed with the outcome. But we want to learn from our mistakes and do better in the future."

India to play International friendlies against Singapore, Vietnam



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The senior men's Indian football team will be back in action in September, when they play two international friendlies against Singapore and Vietnam.

The Blue Tigers will travel to Vietnam on September 22, and subsequently play Singapore on September 24, and the hosts on September 27, before making the return journey back to India on September 28.

India are currently placed 104th on

the FIFA Men's World Rankings, while their two opponents are placed at 97th (Vietnam) and 159th (Singapore).

Having qualified for the AFC Asian Cup 2023 almost two months back, India, coached by former Croatia international Igor Stimac, will be looking to prepare for the apex continental tournament next year. Speaking on the two matches ahead, Stimac said, "We are happy about the upcoming challenges, and we're looking forward to maintaining the quality of performances that we have recently dished out."

The coach further mentioned that efforts are being made to provide the Blue Tigers with a substantial preparatory camp, while he also remains hopeful for a practice match against Kerala Blasters ahead of their departure to Vietnam.

India's FIFA Friendlies in September:

September 24: India vs Singapore
September 27: Vietnam vs India

National Bank Open: Andreescu defeats Cornet, to face Zheng in Round of 16

Toronto (Canada) | Agencies

Canada's Bianca Andreescu registered a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win over France's Alize Cornet in 2 hours and 26 minutes to reach the Round of 16 at the National Bank Open, here.

It was Andreescu's first win over Cornet, who had troubled her mightily in the past. After her victory on Wednesday night, Andreescu has now won eight matches in a row at the event when it is held in Toronto, which is the nearest major city to her hometown.

Cornet had defeated Andreescu in straight sets in their two previous meetings, which both came in last year's grass-court season, at Berlin and in the first round of Wimbledon. The third time was the charm for Andreescu as she finally got her first victory over Cornet.

Andreescu had not won back-to-back matches on hard court in nearly a year, with her last consecutive wins on the surface coming at the 2021 US Open. However, the former US Open champion backed up her Top 10 win over Daria Kasatkina from the first round, firing 27 winners past Cornet.

The 22-year-old Canadian had a matching 27 unforced errors in the encounter as well. However, Cornet finished the clash with less



clean numbers than the Canadian, with 21 winners to 30 unforced errors.

Andreescu will now face China's Zheng Qinwen, who beat Ons Jabeur. It will be the first meeting between Zheng and Andreescu.

Fit-again Rahul to lead India in Zimbabwe ODIs, Shikhar Dhawan to be his deputy

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India on Thursday named fit-again KL Rahul as the captain for the ODIs against Zimbabwe after the BCCI medical team cleared the batter to play in the three-match series, starting on August 18.

The 30-year-old Rahul has been out of action for a while with a sports hernia, with Covid-19 extending his stint on the sidelines.

Shikhar Dhawan was initially named as the captain for this tour. But with Rahul being given the go-ahead, he has been appointed as the captain with Dhawan taking deputy duties.

"The BCCI Medical Team has assessed KL Rahul and cleared him to play in the upcoming three-match ODI series in Zimbabwe. The All-India Senior Selection Committee has appointed him the captain of the side and named Shikhar Dhawan as his deputy," the BCCI said in a statement.



After the conclusion of IPL 2022, Rahul was scheduled to captain India

in the home T20Is against South Africa but missed out owing to a groin

injury. The spell on the sidelines was extended after it was revealed that the 30-year-old would require surgery. Consequently, Rahul missed the tour of England and Ireland.

The opener was scheduled to return at the just-concluded tour of West Indies and USA but following a positive Covid-19 result, the BCCI medical team advised him to rest. He has already been named in India's squad for the Asia Cup at the end of this month. All the three ODIs of India's tour of Zimbabwe will be held at the Harare Sports Club.

India's squad for 3 ODIs:

KL Rahul (Captain) Shikhar Dhawan (vice-captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Avesh Khan, Prasidh Krishna, Mohd Siraj, Deepak Chahar.

Benzema makes history as Real Madrid win European Super Cup

Helsinki | Agencies

Real Madrid striker Karim Benzema made history on Wednesday as Real Madrid beat Eintracht Frankfurt 2-0 to win the European Super Cup.

The Frenchman netted his side's second goal of the match to lift his total number of goals for Real Madrid to 324, taking him past Raul Gonzalez to become the second highest scorer in the club's history behind Cristiano Ronaldo.

As promised prior to the match, Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti started with the same 11 that beat Liverpool in the Champions League final in Paris back in May, while Eintracht went into the game on the back of a 6-1 defeat to Bayern Munich at the weekend and without star player Filip Kostic, who is on the verge of joining Juventus.

Madrid had most of the early ball, but



the first big save of the match was made by their keeper, Thibaut Courtois, who continued his form of last season to deny Daichi Kamada after the forward had been set into space. Madrid responded quickly with Vinicius Jr's effort cleared off the line by Tuta after he had beaten Kevin Trapp, who then did well to tip Karim Benzema's shot wide for a corner in the 37th minute, reports Xinhua.

The Eintracht keeper will have been frustrated when David Alaba tapped home from the resulting corner after headers from Benzema and Casemiro had left the Eintracht defense all at sea.

Madrid looked to add to their lead before their break, with Benzema firing wide when put through and Casemiro seeing his shot saved by Trapp.

Trapp was in action again early in the second half after Vinicius' shot took a deflection off Benzema, but Eintracht were seeing more of the ball, with Jesper Lindstrom looking lively, before he was taken off in the 57th minute in a double change that saw Mario Gotze and Randal Kolo Muani get into the action.

Moments after the change, Casemiro rattled the Eintracht crossbar from around 20 meters and despite Eintracht's possession, Carlo Ancelotti's men looked comfortable and dangerous on the break.

BENCIC DEFEATS SERENA WILLIAMS IN EMOTIONAL TORONTO SEND-OFF

Toronto: Belinda Bencic defeated three-time champion Serena Williams 6-2, 6-4 at the National Bank Open to advance to the Round of 16 here on Thursday.

Playing her first match since her essay in Vogue detailing the decision behind her impending retirement, Williams was greeted by a rapturous ovation from the Toronto crowd as she took to the court. Williams was bidding to win her first back-to-back singles matches since 2021 Roland Garros, having won her Toronto opener in straight sets over Nuria Parrizas Diaz. But in a rematch of their memorable semifinal duel on this very court in 2015, Bencic was able to control the match from start to finish with her serve. The 25-year-old from Switzerland faced just one break point in the match, which she saved.



Bangladesh win final ODI, deny Zimbabwe series sweep

Harare | Agencies

An unbeaten 85 from Afif Hossain's 85 and 76 from Anamul Haque propelled Bangladesh to a 105-run victory over Zimbabwe in the third and final ODI at Harare Sports Club.

After Bangladesh made 256/9, Zimbabwe were bowled out for just 151 in 32.2 overs despite a record 68-run stand for the last wicket between Richard Ngarava and Victor Nyauchi. But Zimbabwe had already won the ODI series with a 2-1 scoreline while Bangladesh ended their tour on a winning note, but it didn't coat over the fact that they lost both the T20I and ODI series. Captain Tamim Iqbal and Anamul put on 41 for the opening stand, before in the ninth over they had a mix-up over a possible single and Tamim was run out for 19. Najmul Hossain Shanto and Mushfiqur



were out quickly without scoring, to make the score 47-3.

Brief scores

Bangladesh 256-9 in 50 overs (Afif Hossain 85 not out, Anamul Haque 76; Luke Jongwe 2-38, Brad Evans 2-53) beat Zimbabwe 151 all out in 32.2 overs (Richard Ngarava 34, Victor Nyauchi 26; Mustafizur Rahman 4-17, Tajul Islam 2-34) by 105 runs

NEW ZEALAND DEFEAT WEST INDIES BY 13 RUNS

Kingston (Jamaica) | Agencies

All-rounder Odean Smith put in his career-best performances with both bat and ball in a valiant effort to win the opening contest for the West Indies. But his efforts went in vain as New Zealand registered a 13-run win over West Indies in the first T20I to take a 1-0 series lead.

Playing in front of his home crowd, Smith had impressive figures of 3-32 off his four overs and then smashed a whirlwind 27 not out off just 12 balls, but West Indies fell short of victory. It was a match where West Indies had a brilliant fielding performance. Shimron Hetmyer took a one-handed catch on the ropes at deep point to remove Martin Gupthill (16).

Wicketkeeper Devon Thomas took a great catch to dismiss Devon Conway, and then Hayden Walsh dived full stretch at deep square leg to account for skipper Kane Williamson. All three catches came off the bowling of Smith. Playing in his first international match since the Test series in England in June, Williamson led his side's score of 185-5 with 47 from 33



Brief scores

New Zealand 185-5 in 20 overs (Kane Williamson 47, Devon Conway 43; Odean Smith 3-32, Obed McCoy 1-39) beat West Indies 172-7 in 20 overs (Shamarh Brooks 42, Romario Shepherd 31 not out; Mitchell Santner 3-19, Lockie Ferguson 1-33) by 13 runs.

balls, laced with four fours and two sixes while left-hander Conway smashed 43 from 29 balls and also with four fours and two sixes. Post rain interruption, New Zealand were in trouble at 98-3. Daryl Mitchell made 16, Glenn Phillips couldn't do much. But James Neesham smashed an unbeaten 15-ball 33 to give the Black Caps late impetus in a 36-run, unbroken sixth wicket partnership with Mitchell Santner (four not out).

Will India give visas to Pakistan's cricketers for Legends League Cricket?

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The second edition of the Legends League Cricket (LLC) is set to be played in six Indian cities, with players from many countries participating in the tournament.

The first season of the league was played in January this year in Muscat, Oman between three teams - India Maharajas, World Giants and Asia Lions - and comprised seven games. However, season 2 will have four franchise owned teams. There will be 15 matches, which will be played in six cities -- Kolkata, Lucknow, Delhi, Jodhpur, Cuttack and Rajkot from September 17 to October 8.

Former Indian captain and current BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has also confirmed that he would be participating in a very special match of the LLC.

"Enjoying the training to get ready to play for one



off charity fundraising game for azadi ka mahotsav..75 years of Indian independence and also for women empowerment with the top legends of the legends league cricket @llc20 need to hit some cricket balls soon," wrote Ganguly on Instagram. However, the major concern before the organisers is visa availability for former Pakistan cricketers, who are also set to take part in the tournament. Questions are emerging that has the BCCI or the

Government of India altered its stance vis-a-vis its cricketing ties with Pakistan.

Notably, India and Pakistan haven't played a bilateral series for nearly a decade now and they only face each other in Asia Cup and ICC events due to political tensions between the two countries. The Indian Premier League (IPL) also doesn't allow Pakistan players to take part except in the first season of the league in 2008.

Asked about the situation, few BCCI officials aren't much aware about the visa issue.

"I can't say much. If Pakistani cricketers get a visa from our government, then they will play if not then no. We (BCCI) have no role in the tournament or visa things," the official told reporter.

Another official questioned, "how can Pakistan's players be allowed to play on Indian soil when we have no cricketing ties with Pakistan. I am sure they will not get a visa."



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sonam Kapoor took Arjun Kapoor and filmmaker Karan Johar by surprise after she tagged Kiara Advani as an "underrated" actress during the rapid fire round on 'Koffee With Karan'.

Karan asked her to name an actor she thought was underrated.

Sonam changed the question, and said that she would prefer naming underrated actors. "Bhumi Pednekar, Kiara Advani and Kriti Sanon," she said, to which Arjun instantly replied, "Kiara is not underrated, she is very well-rated."

Sonam Kapoor calls Kiara Advani, Kriti Sanon and Bhumi Pednekar underrated

Karan added: "They think they're very big stars in their head, and you've called them underrated!" He continued, "How

are things on Mars, Sonam?" Arjun also added, "Which world are you in?"

Arjun continued having fun at Sonam, as she, with a poker-face, called 'Ek Villain Returns' a 'thirst trap' film.

"I think they all look hot now. It's a thirst trap of a film."

Arjun cut in, "You haven't seen one shot of the film, and you're just saying things now."

At the end, Arjun tagged his sister as a "pain" and a "mess".



Is Tiger Shroff dating 'Casanova' girl Akanksha Sharma?

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Tiger Shroff's dating life with Disha Patani has been the talk of the town. However, after dating for 6 years, the couple allegedly broke up. Although the two actors have maintained silence over the rumours and have not issued any official statement so far.

Recently it was also said that Tiger is now dating Akanksha Sharma. The two have worked together for two music videos in the past - 'Casanova' and 'I am a Disco Dancer 2.0'.

However, reacting to the reports, Tiger Shroff told an entertainment portal that 'it is not true. The actor did not mention anything about his break-up reports with Disha Patani. He simply clarified that he is not dating Akanksha.

ALI FAZAL CHANGES FITNESS REGIME

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Ali Fazal, who plays Guddu Pandit in the webseries 'Mirzapur', is currently busy with the shoot of season 3 of the show. In a new development, the actor has hired a new trainer to work towards his character's physicality.

Fitness trainer Rohit Nayyar, who has taken the onus, specializes in Jjitsu, MMA and boxing at pro levels. Rohit has taken on the challenge to train Ali with a brand new fitness regime in mind for 'Mirzapur 3'.

Ali has decided to change a lot of things in his appearance. Commenting on the same, Ali says, "I don't think I have it in me to be stifled inside a gymnasium at all times knowing how big the world is and the world fitness is. I experiment a lot to keep myself engaged. For me, it has to be like going back to play school. Even on sets during action sequences, I am like a kid in an amusement park, just trying to have some fun - choreographed fun."

The actor further mentioned that Rohit has been a great addition to his world view.



RAKSHA BANDHAN

FILM REVIEW

BY AAKRUTI BAGLA

Directed by:- Aanand L Rai
Starcast:- Akshay Kumar, Bhumi Pednekar, Sadia Khateeb, Deepika Khanna, Sahejmeen Kaur, Smriti Srikant
Runtime:- 1 hour 50 min
Rating:- 2/5

Story: The film revolves around Lala Kedarnath (Akshay Kumar), the eldest and only brother of 4 sisters, who runs a chaat shop that was started by his father. Lala promises his frail mother on her deathbed that he will get married only after he fulfils the responsibility of marrying his sisters into suitable homes. In pursuit to marry his childhood love Sapna (Bhumi Pednekar) as her father gives him an ultimatum, Lala is hell-bent on getting his sisters married. But, he is unable to collect an exorbitant sum of money for a dowry, which acts as a roadblock in the way to getting his sisters married.

Review: Director Aanand L Rai along with Kanika Dhillon and Himanshu Sharma brings an endearing tale of love, joy, family and the unbreakable bond between siblings on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. The film also attempts to showcase the tradition of

Akshay Kumar yet again fails to leave an impact despite depicting the right amount of humour and emotions



dowry turning out to be murderous for society. During the first half, there are enough moments that crack you up, but things take an emotional turn in the second half of the

film with some grim moments that are sure to leave you moist-eyed.

Our protagonist ultimately realises the social evil that is dowry after selling his kid-

ney and being trapped by an unforeseen catastrophe, and how he should instead be educating his sisters so that they may establish a reputation for themselves.

But once he finally realises making his sisters capable, we see the rest of the three sisters and Lalaji himself getting settled in the last 25 minutes of the film. This portion of realisation is executed without any nuance.

Talking about performances, Akshay Kumar's comic timing leaves you chuckling. The actor also plays emotional parts with conviction. Bhumi Pednekar is reduced to a romantic interest pining to get married to the supposed love of her life. There is absolutely no depth to her character other than this. Out of four sisters, Sadia Khateeb as Gayatri delivers a praiseworthy performance. While, Deepika Khanna, Sahejmeen Kaur, and Smriti Srikant are honest in their roles. Seema Pahwa's character enters on a promising note but disappears midway.

When it comes to music, the background score helps to lift the scenes, however, songs by Himesh Reshammiya are forgettable.

Final words: When it comes to emotions and humour, the film is a perfect festive bonanza. But, it fails to leave an impact as the social message is not conveyed well.

LAAL SINGH CHADDHA : AAMIR'S SINCERE ACT MANAGES TO WARM YOUR HEART, BUT ONLY IN PARTS

FILM REVIEW

BY AAKRUTI BAGLA

Directed by:- Advait Chandan
Starcast:- Aamir Khan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Mona Singh, Naga Chaitanya, Manav Vij, Ahmad Ibn Umar
Runtime:- 2 hours 39 minutes
Rating:- 2.5/5

Story: The film is centred around the life of Laal Singh Chaddha. It traces incidences that occur in his life, but during each period in his life, he thinks back to his childhood love Rupa D'Souza (Kareena Kapoor Khan) and how important she is to him.

He embarks on a journey from Pathankot to Chandigarh to meet Rupa. On his way, he narrates to his fellow passengers the tale of many tribulations throughout his life. From wearing braces on his legs to having a below-average IQ, being shot during a war to losing people close to him every now and then.

Review: Laal Singh Chaddha is an official Hindi adaptation of Forrest Gump starring Tom Hanks.

Directed by Advait Chandan with a screenplay by Atul Kulkarni and Eric, they have



tried their best to keep the film overall engaging while giving us the required rush of emotions. As one after the other events in Laal's life are depicted, the film does get predictable but manages to keep one glued till the end. While the first half takes its own sweet time to build up, the story manages to pick up at the desired pace in the second half.

To cater effectively to the Indian audience, the makers have set it in the backdrop of Punjab, and throughout the film, that essence is effectively maintained. Starting from showing Laal as a child with a low IQ being motivated by his mother. He later gets

bullied in school for wearing braces, that's when he meets Rupa who turns out to be his driving force. Every time Rupa quipped, Bhaag Laal Bhaag, he gets the adrenaline rush to run like the wind blows. However, later she leaves him and goes behind her ambitions of being a model.

Later, in the army, he faces a similar kind of treatment and meets Balaraju who dies during the Kargil war. As the story progresses we see Mohammed Paji (Manav Vij) coming as a ray of hope in his life. But just like always, the streak of people coming into his life and going away from him continues.

Overall, there is a tad few repetitions of events which makes the film an average affair. Initially, it does make one emotional, but after a certain time, the narrative becomes dry as a bone. But, special mention to some of the moments that are really etched in our minds even after the film.

One of them is Shah Rukh Khan's cameo. However, it wasn't with Aamir, but rather with young Laal.

The film which has been shot across multiple locations has engaging visuals and the credit for that goes to cinematographer Satyajit Pande. However, editing has its share of ups and downs.

When it comes to songs, they flow seamlessly in the narrative.

Talking about performances, Aamir Khan's act is sure to blow your mind. Right from his make-up to his body language, the actor delivers a commendable performance.

Mona Singh's stellar act as Laal's strong-headed mother.

However, Kareena Kapoor Khan undoubtedly looked beautiful and charming. The film also marks the debut of Naga Chaitanya, who despite the limited screen time leaves an impact.

Final words: Overall, Laal Singh Chaddha is an earnest attempt to bring the classic piece to the Indian audience, and it is quite palpable.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sharvari Wagh