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FORMER CHIEF MINISTER AND SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER GHULAM NABI AZAD RESIGNS FROM CONGRESS

GHULAM... NOW AZAD

In a big setback for the Congress, its veteran leader Ghulam Nabi Azad has resigned from the party, alleging that "a coterie was running the party" and that the party should exercise 'Congress Jodo' before going ahead with 'Bharat Jodo'. He sent his resignation letter to Congress President Sonia Gandhi. He said for all the reasons mentioned, "especially that the Indian National Congress has lost both the will and the ability under the tutelage of the coterie that runs the AICC to fight for what is right for India."

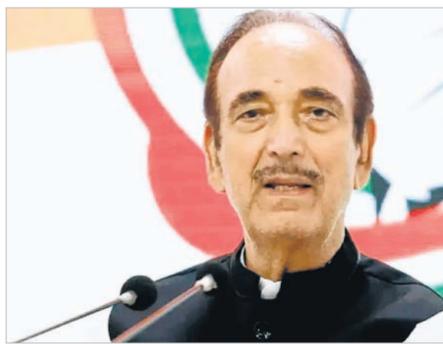
Team Absolute | Jammu

Former Chief Minister and senior Congress leader, Ghulam Nabi Azad on Friday resigned from all positions in the Congress party, including its basic membership as was expected following his differences with the party high command.

Azad had earlier resigned as the head of the Congress campaign committee in J&K. In wake of Azad's resignation, a number of senior party leaders, including former legislators, of the party in Jammu and Kashmir also quit. Azad joined the Congress in the mid 1970s and has held many important positions both in the party and the government. He was a minister in the central cabinet headed by Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, P.V. Narasimha Rao and Dr. Manmohan Singh.

Since 1980, Azad was the general secretary of AICC under every party president during that period. He was the chief minister of J&K from 2005 to 2008.

Azad's parting ways with the Congress is seen as a significant development because of his political clout especially in the Jammu division. He belongs to Doda district. If he chooses to float a new political party steering clear from both the Congress and the regional parties like the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party, Azad could well



"A man who has been treated by the greatest respect by the Congress leadership by his vicious personal attacks which reveal his true character. GNA's DNA has been modi-fied."

Jairam Ramesh, General Secretary, Congress



become the kingmaker depending on the number of seats he can win out of the 43 seats in the Jammu division. In the days to come more Congress leaders from J&K

"When you cannot retain leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad who spent his entire life with the party, there is something terminally wrong with your functioning and the way you treat your senior and seasoned leaders. Party is made by the blood and sweat and hard work of leaders. It cannot be a one-man show."

Capt. Amarinder Singh, Former Congressman

are likely to resign after which Azad is expected to launch a new party that would be headed by him and would participate in the Assembly elections.

AZAD BLAMES RAHUL, SAYS 'PARTY DESTROYED AS NON-SERIOUS PERSON BEING FOISTED FOR 8 YRS'

Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad has blasted Rahul Gandhi and his coterie for the dismal performance of the party and termed the entire organisational election process a "farce and a sham" as the party is going to decide for the schedule of internal elections. "At no place anywhere in the country have elections been held at any level of the organisation. Handpicked lieutenants of the AICC have been coerced to sign on lists prepared by the coterie that runs the AICC sitting in 24 Akbar Road," he said.

Azad alleged that in August 2020 when he and 22 other senior colleagues, including former Union Ministers and Chief Ministers wrote to Sonia Gandhi to flag the abysmal drift in the party, the "coterie" choose to "unleash its sycophants on us and got us attacked, vilified and humiliated in the most crude manner possible". He said at the national level the Congress has conceded the political space available to the BJP and state level space to regional parties.

"This all happened because the leadership in the past eight years has tried to foist a non-serious individual at the helm of the party," he alleged without taking the name of Rahul Gandhi.

"Those (Ghulam Nabi) calling others sycophants were themselves called sycophants in those days. In fact, those who were with Sanjay Gandhi, including Ghulam Nabi Azad were called sycophants. Azad became such a great leader. If Sanjay Gandhi had removed him under pressure at that time, then the people of the country would not know the name of Ghulam Nabi Azad."

Ashok Gehlot, CM, Rajasthan

"What Azad said today is similar to the issues that I had raised when I quit the party in 2015. Everybody knows that Rahul Gandhi is an immature, whimsical and unpredictable man. Sonia Gandhi is not taking care of the party, only projecting and promoting her son. Ultimately, only Gandhis will remain in the party, and all others will leave."

Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM, Assam

Government works on new method of toll collection

The new system will operate through automatic number plate reader cameras, which will read vehicle number plates and automatically deduct toll from the linked bank accounts of vehicle owners.

"We will select the technology. Though we have not taken an official decision, in my view on the number plate technology, there will be no toll plaza and there will be a sophisticated computerised digital system by which we can give relief. There will be no queues and people will get great relief."

Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister, Transport and Highways



accounts of vehicle owners.

Union Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari while talking to a newspaper recently said that a pilot of this scheme is underway and legal amendments to facilitate this transition are also being moved.

The minister mentioned that there is no provision under the law to penalise the vehicle owner who skips the toll plaza and does not pay.

"We need to bring that provision under the law. We may bring in a provision for cars which do not have these number plates to get them

installed within a certain period of time. We will need to bring in a Bill for this," he added.

Earlier, during a Question Hour in the Upper House in the first week of August, the Minister said toll plazas have created many problems like traffic snarls and long queues, which the government wants to end.

He said the government is looking for two options -- satellite-based toll system where the GPS will be there in a car and the toll will be directly subtracted from the passenger's bank account and the other option is through number plates.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The government is working on a new system for toll collection through automatic number plate reader cameras, which will read vehicle number plates and automatically deduct toll from the linked bank

Emotional farewell to CJI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Friday said as a judge, he always wanted his name to be etched on the hearts of the people through his conduct and behaviour, and also as one who recognised, preliminarily, the moral power of a judge.

In his address at his farewell event organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), he said: "I may be remembered as a judge who heard the senior and the junior

alike. As a judge, I always wanted my name to be etched on the hearts of the people through my conduct and behaviour, rather than case law and journals".

"I want to remain in those vibrant hearts which will give me warmth and keep me going forever. I have seen the flow of emotions in courtroom No. 1 this morning. This is a reflection of the strong sense of your belongingness with the institution. I was touched by the display of emotions in particular by Mr. (Kapil) Sibal and Mr. (Dushyant) Dave."

Soren to lose Assembly membership; may quit as CM

Ranchi | Agencies

The Jharkhand Governor has decided to cancel the Assembly membership of Chief Minister Hemanth Soren on which the Election Commission (EC) is expected to issue a notification soon, sources said on Friday.

The development has given rise to speculation that Soren might tender his resignation from the post of Chief Minister soon. Soren found himself in the midst of a fresh crisis after the BJP complained to Governor Ramesh Bais about a stone quarry that he had taken on lease on his name even as he was holding the office of Chief Minister.

The BJP termed it "a case of violation of the Office of Profit and Representation of the People Act".

Following this, the Governor had sought the EC's opinion on the matter.



The EC had then issued a notice to the complainant as well as Chief Minister Soren, seeking their response on the matter.

After hearing both sides, the EC on Thursday recommended the Raj Bhavan to cancel Soren's Assembly membership.

Soren, however, can again take oath as Chief Minister by furnishing a letter of support (of legislators) to the Governor.

FIFA LIFTS BAN ON AIFF, GIVES BACK HOSTING RIGHTS OF U-17 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Bureau of the FIFA Council has decided to lift the suspension that was imposed on the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) due to undue third-party influence.

The decision was taken after FIFA received confirmation that the mandate of the Committee of Administrators that was set up to assume the powers of the AIFF Executive Committee had been terminated and that the AIFF administration had regained full control of the AIFF's daily affairs, the FIFA said in a release on Friday.

"FIFA and the AFC will



continue to monitor the situation and will support the AIFF in organising its elections in a timely manner," the release further said.

As a consequence, the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 scheduled to take place from October 11-30, 2022 will be held in India as

planned.

On August 16, FIFA, the apex body of world football, had suspended the AIFF with "immediate effect due to undue influence from third parties", jeopardizing the country's staging of the U-17 Women's World Cup in October.

MUMBAI POLICE NOW GET MESSAGE TO 'AVOID SOMALIA-TYPE ATTACKS'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For the fourth time in barely a week, the Mumbai Police on Friday received a warning - this time cautioning them to "avoid a Somalia-type attack" in India, in the reference to the attack on a hotel in the African country's capital.

The latest warning was received on the Mumbai Traffic Police helpline number from an international number and the matter is being probed as per established procedures of the Mumbai Cyber Police Cell.

The series of threats, and warnings are being taken seriously particularly in view of the ensuing 10-day Ganeshotsav festival starting from August 31 when lakhs of people troop out on to the roads.

The latest message came after the first potential threat on August 18 when a yacht with 3 AK-56s and ammunition washed ashore in Raigad, followed by WhatsApp messages on August 20 warning of a "26/11-style" attack in Mumbai.

The police again were on high alert after an extortion threat was received by the Hotel Lalit near the Mumbai Airport on August 23, failing which bomb blasts would be triggered at the hotel, but it turned out to be a hoax, followed by the "Somalia-style" attack caution now. On August 19, Islamic terrorist group Al-Shabaab had attacked the Hotel Hayat in the east African nation's capital of Mogadishu, in which at least 21 were killed and around 120 injured.

IN A FIRST, SUPREME COURT LIVE STREAMS PROCEEDINGS

New Delhi: For the first time in history, the Supreme Court proceedings were live streamed on Friday, more than three years after it recommended live-streaming for its hearings.

The live streaming was done for the ceremonial bench of outgoing Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana.

"Please take notice that on the eve of laying down the office of the Chief Justice of India, the proceedings of the Hon'ble Chief Justice Court i.e., Ceremonial Bench on August 26, 2022, 10.30 a.m. onwards shall be live streamed through the NIC Webcast portal," said a notice issued by the apex court, adding that the link could also be accessed from the website of the Supreme Court of India.

As per the custom, Justice Ramana shared the bench with Chief Justice-designate Justice U.U. Lalit on his last working day.

FREEBIES MAY PUSH STATE TOWARDS BANKRUPTCY: SC

THE COURT FRAMED PRELIMINARY ISSUES, WHICH MAY NEED TO BE DELIBERATED UPON AND DECIDED IN THE PETITIONS AS: 'WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF JUDICIAL INTERVENTION WITH RESPECT TO THE RELIEFS SOUGHT IN THE PRESENT BATCH OF PETITIONS? WHETHER ANY ENFORCEABLE ORDER CAN BE PASSED BY THIS COURT IN THESE PETITIONS? WHETHER THE APPOINTMENT OF A COMMISSION/EXPERT BODY BY THE COURT WOULD SERVE ANY PURPOSE IN THIS MATTER? ADDITIONALLY, WHAT SHOULD BE THE SCOPE, COMPOSITION, AND POWERS OF THE SAID COMMISSION/EXPERT BODY?'

THE COURT ORDERED CONSIDERATION OF THE PETITIONS AGAINST FREEBIES ANNOUNCED BY POLITICAL PARTIES AHEAD OF THE POLLS TO INDUCE VOTERS, BEFORE A THREE-JUDGE BENCH AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF COMPLEXITY OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED WITH IT.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday noted that freebies announced by political parties may push the state towards imminent bankruptcy, as it framed preliminary issues which

"Freebies may create a situation where in the state government cannot provide basic amenities due to lack of funds and the state is pushed towards imminent bankruptcy. In the same breath, we should remember that such freebies are extended utilising tax payers' money only for increasing the popularity of the party and electoral prospects."

Supreme Court

require further deliberation before concrete orders are passed, and referred the pleas against freebies to a 3-judge bench.

It emphasised that the issues raised by the parties require an extensive hearing before any concrete orders

can be passed.

The top court noted that it is also necessary to highlight the point raised by some of the intervenors, that all promises cannot be equated with freebies as they relate to welfare schemes or measures for the public good. "Not only are these a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, but are also

a responsibility of the welfare state. At the same time, the worry raised herein, that under the guise of electoral promises, fiscal responsibility is being dispensed with, must also be considered," the bench said.

"Looking at the complexity of the issues involved, and the prayer to overrule a judgment rendered by a two-judge bench in Balaji case, we direct listing of these petitions before a three-judge bench, after obtaining the orders of the Chief Justice of India. List the matter after 4 weeks," the bench said. The top court order came on petitions by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay and others seeking directions to the Centre and the Election Commission to take steps to regulate poll manifestos of political parties and also opposed the practice of political parties giving or promising freebies to induce voters during polls.



'ONE PEOPLE, ONE NATION': NSCN-IM'S MEGA MEET IN DIMAPUR

Kohima | Agencies

Thousands of cadres belonging to National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) led by their leaders on Friday held a mega assembly to reiterate their demand for an 'One people, one nation', the Naga outfit sources said.

The NSCN-IM in a statement said that it was a "historic moment" on Friday when nearly 7,000 Naga national workers from 16 regions of Nagaland, gathered at Agri Expo in Dimapur, under the agenda, "Reaffirming of One people, one nation".

"This coordination meeting of the Naga national workers from Nagaland was necessitated as many divisive elements and groups are 'mouth-lounging' for Naga solution only for Nagaland state and ready to forego the Naga National Flag and Constitution in the name of Naga solution," it said.

The Naga group said that this is tantamount to selling out the Naga national identity "as stoutly defend-



ed by our forefathers".

Significantly, this is against the national principle of "one people one nation" that was laid down by our great Naga freedom fighters, they said. The NSCN-IM said that "in the background of this treacherous turn of development, Naga national workers from Nagaland were compelled to deliberate on the situation in order to save the Naga

nation".

The statement mentioned that NSCN Chairman Ino. Q. Tuccu in his speech said: "Nagas are one wherever they are, one common goal, one issue."

He also made a pointed response to the cry of the public for the delay of the Naga solution. "We cannot give away our rights for the sake of the Naga solution and we can never

compromise the Nagas' rights."

The Naga groups as part of their pressure tactics hoisted the "Naga national flag" and held a large number of programmes in Nagaland and in many villages in the Naga dominated areas of Manipur to celebrate the "Naga Independence Day" on August 14, a day before India's Independence Day.

The Naga groups dominated by the NSCN-IM, celebrating the August 14 events in a big way once again demonstrated that there would be no solution to the Naga issue without a separate flag and Constitution.

Since 1997, the government has held more than 85 rounds of negotiations with the NSCN-IM and other Naga groups. However, the NSCN-IM's insistence on a separate Naga flag and Constitution have become big hurdles. The former government interlocutor and then Nagaland Governor R.N. Ravi, who is now holding the gubernatorial post in Tamil Nadu, had rejected these demands on a number of occasions.

Marriage certificate scam busted in Guj, panchayat secretary head suspended



Anand (Gujarat) | Agencies

A fake marriage certificate racket has been busted in Gujarat's Anand district, which was operating for the past two to three years, officials said on Friday.

If a person was ready to pay a hefty amount for availing a marriage certificate, it was sent to the person's mobile phone.

After preliminary inquiry, a village panchayat secretary (Talati) has been suspended and a department probe has



been initiated against the official.

Congress MLA from Sojitra Assembly constituency, Punambhai Parmar, told IANS, "During a coordination meeting in July, the issue was brought to the notice of the District Development Officer (DDO) that Talati Arvind Makwana has issued 1,470 marriage certificates from the Rela village panchayat, whereas the village's total population is 1,500. The DDO then instituted an inquiry against the Talati."

Marriage certificates in the names of teenagers as well as those living in other districts such as Mehsana, Ahmedabad and even as far as Mumbai.

A village panchayat secretary can issue such certificates only to the residents of the village.

He was issuing such certificates through agents, who used to bring clients for him, charging between Rs 5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh for a certificate, without proof of any wedding or any other evidence verifying the couple, Parmar alleged.

K'taka Cong questions BJP on connection between Lord Ganesh and Veer Savarkar

Bengaluru | Agencies

As Hindu activists and BJP are getting ready to place Veer Savarkar's photo with Lord Ganesh in the upcoming Ganesh festival, Karnataka Congress questioned the ruling BJP on the connection between the two.

State Congress President D. K. Shivakumar on Friday, questioning the connection between Savarkar and Ganesh Ji, stated that if the photo of Bal Gangadhar Tilak is placed, it makes sense as he popularised the celebration of Ganesh festival in the country. "What message do they want to give by placing the photo of Savarkar? They will degrade their own party and they will harm their own principles and ideologies," Shivakumar maintained.

"They don't want development. Their aim is to create chaos and disputes among people. They want polarisation," he stated. Meanwhile, authorities have cleared the flexes featuring Veer Savarkar from the streets of Tumakuru city installed by Bajrang Dal activists. They have argued with the police personnel for their action. They maintained



that even though they had obtained permission to put flexes, the authorities cleared them. The authorities are crossing their fingers over the development, as Hindu activists are preparing to place the photo of Veer Savarkar along with idol of Lord Ganesh during Ganeshotsav.

Quran does not say mosque needed in every nook and corner: Kerala HC

Kochi | Agencies

The Kerala High Court on Friday denied permission to construct a mosque in a locality that has many mosques, observing that the state already has a large number of religious structures and their ratio to the population is very high. Justice P.V. Kunhikrishnan opined that Kerala, that is termed as "God's own country", is crammed full of religious places.

"Because of the peculiar geographical situation of Kerala, it is known as 'God's own country'. But we are exhausted with religious places and prayer halls and we are not in a position to allow any new religious places and prayer halls except in the rarest of rare cases," he said.

The court observed that even though mosques are important to the Muslim community, it is not necessary, as per the Holy Quran, that there be a mosque in every nook and cranny.

"The verses of the Holy Quran clearly highlight the importance of the mosque to the Muslim community. But it is not stated in the above verses of



the Holy Quran that a mosque is necessary in every nook and corner... It is not stated in the 'Hadis' or in the Holy Quran that mosque is to be situated adjacent to the house of every Muslim community member. Distance is not the criteria, but reaching the mosque is important," it said.

The court also referred to a study on religious

structures, based on the 2011 Census, which it termed as "alarming" as it said that Kerala has 10 times the number of religious structures as villages and 3.5 times the number of hospitals.

"Kerala is exhausted with religious institutions and prayer halls... If every devotee... Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Parsi, etc. starts to construct religious places and prayer halls near their residence, the state will face serious consequence including communal disharmony. In this case, the intelligence report and the police report says that if the present conversion of the commercial building to a religious prayer hall is allowed, there is chance for communal disharmony. It is a sensitive issue," it noted.

In the instant case, since 36 mosques were existing within the vicinity in question, the court held that there was no need of another mosque in that vicinity because the adherents of Islam can go to other nearby mosques, especially considering the fact that most citizens have access to some kind of vehicle or public transportation.

STAMPEDE-LIKE SITUATION IN DELHI GIRLS SCHOOL AFTER FIRE

New Delhi: A stampede-like situation was reported at a girls school in the national capital on Friday following a fire incident, officials said.

The fire department officials said they received a call at around 1.30 p.m. of the incident that occurred at the Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Maujpur. Immediately, five fire engines were pressed into service.

The officials said that the fire erupted in an electric panel board and there were no injuries.

The local police also reached the scene to assist in rescue operation.

Sonali Phogat's personal assistant arrested in Goa

Panaji | Agencies

The Goa Police on Friday arrested Sudhir Sangwan -- the personal assistant of Sonali Phogat, along with Sukhwinder Singh, in connection with the murder case of the Haryana BJP leader and TikTok star.

Inspector General of Police Omvir Singh Bishnoi while addressing a press conference on Friday said Sangwan has confessed to the crime. The police officer said that after reaching Goa, he along with Sukhwinder took Sonali Phogat to Curly's restaurant in North Goa on the pretext of partying and he (Sangwan) mixed some obnoxious substance in

drinking water and forced Sonali to drink it. "After drinking the water she felt uneasy and sick in the restaurant. Later she was taken by Sangwan and Sukhwinder to hotel, where they were staying and then to St Antony's hospital, Anjuna where she was declared brought dead," he said.

Police said that Rinku Dhaka -- brother of Phogat, had alleged in the complaint that Sonali Phogat was murdered by her personal assistant Sudhir Sangwan along with Sukhwinder Singh with the intention to take over her properties and financial assets and to finish her political career. Bishnoi said that the case will be investigated from all angle.

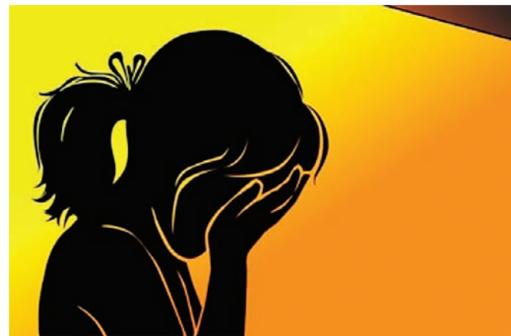
Four Kerala youths arrested for sexually abusing minor girls at convent

Thiruvananthapuram: Four youths were arrested on the charges of sexually abusing three minor girls of a convent after jumping its compound wall in Kerala.

When the two youths were jumping off the convent's compound wall after committing the crime on Wednesday night, they landed in front of the night patrol police team, who took them into custody. On detailed questioning, the police found out that there were two more youths who were involved in the crime.

The police then arrested two more youths involved in the crime, taking the total number of arrests in the case to four.

When the police took the state-



ment of the minor girls, they informed that they were also given by the accused. Kadinankulam Police station

officials, located in the coastal village of the capital city, are conducting a detailed probe into matter.

YOGI'S OSD DIES IN ROAD ACCIDENT

Basti: Motilal Singh, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's Officer On Special Duty (OSD), died on Friday in a road accident. His wife is in critical condition and has been referred to the Gorakhpur Medical College.

In a tweet, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said: "Maharaj Ji (Yogi) has expressed condolences over the sad demise of Motilal Singh Ji of Chief Minister's Camp Office, Gorakhpur in a road accident. Praying for peace to the departed soul, Maharaj Ji has also expressed his condolences to the bereaved family members."

The police said that the accident took place on the NH-28 Khajhaura highway under the Munderwa police station area of Basti district Singh and his wife were on their way to Lucknow when the driver apparently fell asleep and lost control of the vehicle which hurtled into a roadside ditch.

DELHI: 3 HAD HETEROSEXUAL CONTACT OUT OF 5 MONKEYPOX CASES

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Of total five confirmed cases of monkeypox in the national capital, three had the history of heterosexual contact within 21 days of onset of symptoms and two had no contact, revealed a study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

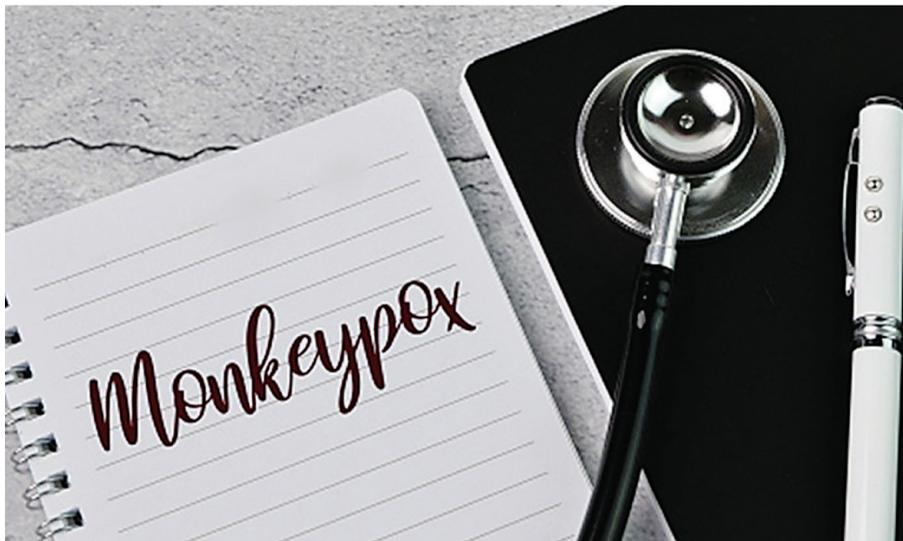
"Cases 2, 3 and 5 shared the history of heterosexual contact within 21 days of onset of symptoms not under influence of drug or alcohol. The cases 1 and 4 had denied any sexual contact. All the cases denied a history of same sex contact or bisexual contact," the ICMR study said.

The ICMR report describes the five cases of human monkeypox infection detected from India without any international travel history.

The assessment of the viral kinetics on the follow up of cases suggests the presence of the viral DNA from 5-24 POD in the lesion specimens compared to other specimens. The presence of high viral load in the lesion specimens of the cases demonstrates it as the best specimen type for the detection of MPXV DNA.

The report has further revealed that the cases did not report international travel history in last one month from the date of onset of symptoms. The Case-5 had given history of sexual contact with a male partner having similar lesions seven days before onset of symptoms, the ICMR study said.

The confirmed monkeypox cases presented between 5-14 days post onset day (POD) of illness. Of five cases, three were male and two female with



mean age of 31.2 years and presented with mild to moderate grade intermittent fever with myalgia.

All the five cases presented with mild to moderate grade intermittent fever, myalgia and lesions on the gen-

itals, groins, lower limb, trunk and upper limb.

Four cases had non-tender firm lymphadenopathy. No secondary complications or sexually transmitted infections were recorded in these cases except for HBV in one case. All the cases were mild and had good recovery.

The clinical specimens of real-time PCR confirmed MPXV cases (n 5) from Delhi were collected sequentially every fourth day post isolation and referred to Biosafety level-4 facility of ICMR-National Institute of Virology, Pune, for the study. The cases were followed up (except case-5) till the lesions were healed and the scabs were fallen off. The specimens including oropharyngeal (OPS) & nasopharyngeal swab (NPS), EDTA blood, serum, urine, lesion samples from multiple sites (lesion fluid, lesion roof, lesion base and lesion crust) were tested to assess the viral kinetics of MPXV using Real time PCR.

The study was approved by the Institutional Human Ethics Committee of ICMR-NIV, Pune, India under the project 'Providing diagnostic support for referred samples of viral hemorrhagic fever and other unknown etiology and outbreak investigation'.

INO. 4581058W/L/Nk UMARNANDKISHOR GULAB S/O GULAB DAGDU UMAR presently residing at gram-panchat javal pargoan, pargan Bhatodi, Maharashtra Pin : 414201 have changed my son's name from SAI to SAI NANDKISHOR UMAR vide affidavit No. 75AA 686184.



CM Chouhan issues instructions:

STATE GOVERNMENT TO RECRUIT ON ONE LAKH GOVERNMENT POSTS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that while efforts are being made to create means of livelihood for the youth through skill development training, self-employment opportunities and loan-grant schemes, information about vacancies in government departments has also been collected. The state government is going to fill approximately one lakh vacant posts by running a campaign this year. In the meeting held in Mantralaya, Chouhan directed to take prompt action to fill up the vacant posts in the departments. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains was present.

Additional Chief Secretary General Administration informed that 93 thousand 681 posts are vacant in 21 major departments. Necessary process will be conducted for their fulfillment. It was told that there are about 30 thousand vacant posts of different categories in the Department of

School Education and Tribal Affairs, as well as recruitment of about one lakh posts can be done by including the vacant posts in other departments including Public Health Engineering and Health Department. Chouhan directed other departments also to inform about the vacancies. Chief Minister directed to conduct the entire operation in a systematic and transparent manner.

Instructions of Chief Minister Chouhan include to start the process of recruitment on the vacant posts in the departments. The work of post filling should be done on mission mode. Do the work of handing over the department's detailed information to the General Administration Department. Filling the vacant posts in the government department will provide employment opportunities. Departmental work will become smoother by filling up the posts and take necessary action by contacting the prescribed recruitment agency.

CHIEF MINISTER CALLED ON BY REPRESENTATIVES OF RMC



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was called on at his residence office by elected corporators including President of Rehti Municipal Council (RMC) of Sehore district Rajendra Meena Patel, Vice President Archana Rajeev Sharma. In the morning The elected public representatives apprised about the five-year development plan of Rehti. Chouhan told the elected public representatives that the state government would provide full cooperation for the development of Rehti town. Prem Narayan Meena and Rajesh Rajput were also present.

BJP to implement UP's winning formula in MP for 2023, CM to organise special Panchayats

Zafar Alam Khan | Bhopal
www.absoluteindianews.com

In Madhya Pradesh, BJP is geared up for the 2023 assembly elections. The party is working on every plan, which is believed to be suitable for 2023. In such a situation, BJP is now preparing to implement the political formula of UP in the state to cater to a particular section. For that Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan himself will soon organize a state-level Panchayat. He has also given instructions for this. What is that formula benefitted the saffron party in Uttar Pradesh.

The Shivraj government will soon organize a state level fisherman Panchayat. In the review meeting of the department on Thursday, the CM directed that the work of branding of the products should also be done to get good price for the fishermen's product as state is leading in Shrimp. Better arrangements should be made in the market for its sale and efforts should be made to provide benefits to the Shrimp farmers. For this, soon there will be state-level fisher-



men Panchayat in Bhopal. The Chief Minister has also directed to make efforts to bring Rohu and other popular fish species to the markets of other states besides Mahasheer.

Apart from this, the CM said that there should be a ban on outsiders for the management and fisheries in the water bodies to provide direct benefits to state fishermen. All other better arrangements for the fishermen were also instructed. For 2023, the fishermen

Panchayat of the Chief Minister in Madhya Pradesh is considered important in the political sense, just as the Nishad community holds great political power in Uttar Pradesh, the fishermen community is considered to have a good hold in Madhya Pradesh. The traditional work of the people of this caste is fishing or their livelihood depends on rivers and water bodies. There are castes like Kewat, Bind, Mallah, Kashyap, Nonia, Manjhi, Gond. Like UP, in MP, this class has a

good influence in more than 30 assembly seats of the state. Fishing communities do their work on the banks of rivers including Narmada. The fishermen community is considered as very important in the politics of Madhya Pradesh. That is why Shivraj Singh Chouhan is up to set up fishermen Panchayat soon.

In Madhya Pradesh, fisheries department has been created separately for this category, although fisheries are known as an important undertaking, but Mahsheer fish has a very special place in it. Mahsheer is called the state fish of Madhya Pradesh. Mahsheer is also known as Tiger of Water due to its merits. The Shivraj government has given instructions for the production of Mahsheer fish and to provide better facilities to the fishermen.

Political experts also say that the effect of CM Shivraj's Machua Panchayat will be reflected in the 2023 assembly elections. Even before this, such events have been organized in the state. BJP does not want to leave any stone turned for the Madhya Pradesh assembly elections to be held in 2023.

Singrauli should be synonymous with development: Chief Minister

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan reviewed the development works and law and order in the remote Singrauli district of the state in detail through video conference in the morning. CM said that for the systematic development of Singrauli, the plans of all departments should be implemented with transparency. The beneficiaries should be benefited from the schemes by regularly reviewing the pending works.

Chouhan said that there should be systematic development of the city and the district. Develop other facilities along with the planned settlement as per the prescribed master plan. Good services should be provided to the citizens by removing the difficulties of implementation of the schemes. The implementation should be clear. Civil facilities should be available in industrial areas and other areas. Singrauli should become synonymous with development. CM said that the cases registered in the CM Helpline should be resolved on priority. In urban and rural areas, the work of proper access to drinking water, housing, ration distribution, health services and other civic services should be done.



Chouhan said that priority has to be given to local youth in employment. He also got information regarding the proposals received during the Employment Day being held this month. Chouhan received information about the works of Jal Jeevan Mission in Singrauli.

It was informed that 12 thousand 179 residential houses have been sanctioned in the district. At present, 62 percent houses have been completed. The plan is being reviewed monthly. Chouhan directed that approved residential houses should be constructed without delay. If the work of construction of house has not

been completed by any beneficiary, then after reviewing such cases, the construction of house should be completed.

It was informed that the construction of 106 Amrit Sarovar is in progress in the district. Recently, the Tiranga was also hoisted on the sarovars (lakes) under the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. With good rains, the water level in the sarovars is also good. In view of the abundant production of Kodo-Kutki in the district, Chief Minister directed for its branding. Discussions were also held on the work of Livelihood Mission and Self-Help Groups. Chouhan said that

the movement of self-help groups in the district should be given impetus with full force. Continuous efforts should be made to benefit the member sisters of the groups.

Chouhan gave instructions to resolve the cases registered in the CM Helpline. Chief Minister said that this is a powerful medium to show the status of services being provided to the public.

Chouhan directed to benefit rural street vendors doing small business in rural areas. At the bank level, efforts should be made by the administration to contact the banks for early approval so that there is no delay in the approval of the cases of the beneficiaries.

The progress of the construction work of National Highway-39 was discussed. Chouhan said that families in the district should be motivated to plant saplings on the auspicious occasion and in the memory of the departed family members.

The progress of Adopt an Anganwadi was also discussed.

Chouhan directed the police officers to strictly maintain law and order situation in industrial areas and general residential areas. Do not go allow drug trade anywhere. Strict action should be taken against the criminal elements.

Congress to reach out to people in MP with 'Gandhi Chaupal' from Oct 2

■ Come October 2 (Gandhi Jayanti) and the Congress will be holding 'Gandhi Chaupal' across Madhya Pradesh, which will continue till January 30, in an effort to reach out to the people of the state.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

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From October 2 to January 30, the Congress plans to reach out to people of all 23,000 villages by holding 'Gandhi Chaupal', during which programmes like Gandhi Bhajan - 'Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye' would be chanted along with villagers.

The grand old party's move is to strengthen party's

base in the state in view of the 2023 assembly elections.

The Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) has directed it districts and block level cadre in advance to get prepared for this purpose.

"It would be mandatory for all Congress leader and workers to attend Gandhi Chaupal. District and block level workers would fix a particular date and will send it to the state committee. Chaupal will be held between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., during which Gandhiji's

mantra and bhajan would be

chanted along with people of villages," MPCC vice president and organisational secretary Chandrababhas Shekhar told IANS.

Besides, Gandhiji's bhajans and Vande Matram, social programmes would also be organised in local dialects.

The 'Nukkad Natak' (programmes) on subjects like freedom fighters belonging to the particular region, struggle of the Congress for freedom of the country, current social and cultural scenario and many more will be organised.

CM plants Peepal, Kachnar and Kadamba saplings

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Kachnar and Kadamba in the Smart City Garden. Bhopal's daughter Sania Batham also planted saplings. Sania has won a gold medal in the International White Water Kayaking Championship held in Kerala this month. Along with CM Chouhan, Neha Bagga also planted saplings on her birthday. Chouhan congratulated Sania and Neha and wished them good luck for achieving fame and making special achievements in life. MLA Pradeep Laria was also present.

Peepal planted today is a tree that purifies the environment. It is also known as shady tree. It also has religious and Ayurvedic significance. Kadamba tree is found everywhere in India. This tree is rich in medicinal properties. Kachnar is a beautiful flowering tree. Nature has made many trees and plants that abound in medicinal properties. Kachnar is one of them. Kachnar is counted among beautiful and useful trees.



Fired over Brahmin remarks, Lodhi turns up OBC-Dalit heat on MP BJP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Three days after being expelled from the BJP over his remarks against the Brahmin community, Pritam Singh Lodhi, OBC leader from Madhya Pradesh's Chambal region, held a "show of strength" rally in Picchore constituency of Shivpuri district, which was attended by over 7,000 people.

At his August 22 rally, Lodhi's supporters raised slogans against state BJP president VD Sharma and home minister Narottam Mishra, both of whom are prominent Brahmin leaders from the Gwalior-Chambal belt.

The following day, Lodhi, a relative of ex-Union minister Uma Bharti, also joined the OBC Mahasabha, an umbrella organisation of state OBC bodies, in Gwalior.

To demand a census for OBCs and press for an increase in their reservation accordingly, Lodhi has given a call for another rally in Picchore on August 28. OBCs are estimated to make up over 50 per cent population of the state.

Hours before the Picchore rally, Lodhi met Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad in Gwalior, who extended his support to him. Wrapping a blue scarf around his neck instead of a saffron one, Lodhi along with supporters reached Picchore for the rally, which was also attended by many Dalit activists, mostly those belonging to the Jatav community.

Lodhi said he discussed with Azad the need to bring OBC and Dalit leaders and activists on a common plat-

form to bring change to the region. "If all communities like Yadav, Gurjar, Baghel, Valiki and Jatav unite, change will start from tomorrow," he told reporters, indicating that he would focus on building such a social coalition ahead of the state Assembly polls slated for late 2023.

Meanwhile, on August 23, the villagers in Chittipur village in Shivpuri's Karera tehsil passed a resolution, deciding not to call any Brahmins for any functions to their homes and that anyone who violate the resolution will be slapped with a fine of Rs 2,100 while those disagreeing with it will be extruded from the community.

Like other parts of Madhya Pradesh, Picchore too is predominantly inhabited by OBCs, where the Lodhi community account for about 45,000 voters. Tribal and Dalit communities account for 30,000 and 25,000 voters, respectively, with 30,000 voters belonging to upper castes including Vaishyas in the constituency. The bulk of the remaining 95,000 voters include various other OBC sub-castes such as Khushwaha, Baghel, Sahu, Rathode and Gadariya.

On August 19, the BJP expelled Lodhi from the party for six years after he made controversial remarks against the Brahmin community while speaking at a students' function in Kharai village in Shivpuri district.

As his remarks triggered a backlash from within the saffron party as well as Uma Bharti, Lodhi tendered his apology, saying he was even ready to apologise to the Brahmin community with "his head at their feet". The BJP

however did not relent and jettisoned him.

Lodhi, who lost the 2018 Assembly election from Picchore on the BJP ticket by about 2,500 votes, attacked the BJP-led state government for failing to take prompt action against an elderly upper caste man for allegedly raping a minor Lodhi girl in Banda tehsil of Sagar district.

The state BJP functionaries justified Lodhi's expulsion as a necessary measure to assuage the perceived bruised sentiments of the upper caste people that account for 12 per cent of the state's population.

The BJP leaders feared that Lodhi's remarks would drive the upper caste voters away from the party as had happened in 2018 after Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, at an event held by an SC-ST government employees outfit in Bhopal in 2016, had said, "Koi mai ka lal aarakshan nahi khatam kar sakta (Nobody can dare to end reservation)."

The ruling BJP camp has sought to brush aside Lodhi's pushback as a "desperate move" following his expulsion from the party. "Lodhi's wife has just lost the panchayat election from their native village of Jalalpur in Gwalior, which is dominated by Lodhis. This goes on to show his hold over the Lodhi community," a party leader said.

Political observers pointed out that Lodhi's removal from the BJP has added fuel to the fire at a time when the party is trying to balance the OBCs' aspirations with the sway that upper castes hold in the state.

TEACHER BURIES WIFE'S BODY INSIDE HOME, SHIFTS AFTER LOCALS' PROTEST

Bhopal: The decision of a government teacher to bury the body of his wife, who died of long-drawn ailment, inside his home as per community custom caused panic and protests in the congested ward number 14 of Dindori town.

This led the district administration to intervene and convince the man to do the last rites at a designated spot.

The body, however, remained buried inside the home of teacher Omkar Das Mogre for over 24 hours, before it was shifted and buried at a designated spot late on Wednesday evening, sources said.

Sub-divisional magistrate (SDM), Dindori, Balvir Raman, confirmed to THE WEEK that residents of ward number 14 had gathered and protested before the Kotwali police station and the district collector office on Tuesday night. "On Wednesday, tehsildar Govind Ram Salame reached the residence of Mogre along with police and though it took some time, Mogre got convinced for the burial of the body at a designated place," the SDM said.

Mogre's wife Rukmini had succumbed to sickle cell anaemia on Tuesday morning. There were reports that the teacher had buried his wife's body inside the home as he could not bear separation from his wife. The couple did not have children. When the relatives and neighbours urged Mogre not to bury the body inside home, he remained insistent and also said that he did not differentiate between human beings and demons.

SDM Raman said that burying bodies of dead family members within the residential campus is a norm among the Panika - an OBC community, to which Mogre belongs.

"It is alright in rural areas where the residential campuses are quite big and there is space for such customs. The house in which the Mogre couple lived in ward 14 is very small and the neighbourhood is very congested with small houses belonging to weaker sections. In such a situation, the burial of a body inside a home caused a panic and people demanded that it be removed," the SDM said.



SPECIAL ON THE EVE OF PARYUSHAN MAHAPARV

Paryushan: The festival of Self-Awareness

Lalit Garg

Paryushan festival is such a great spiritual festival of eight days of Jain society, which not only illuminates our body, but can awaken the mind. This is such a season that not only the atmosphere but also the mind turns into purity. Aadh, Vyadhi and Upadhi are treated and lead to Samadhi, which is celebrated every year all over the world. This festival has its own unique importance in the sacrificial culture of Jainism. It is not only a festival; it is considered a great festival. Because this festival is a spiritual festival, and is the only inspiring festival of self-purification. That is why this festival is not only a festival, it is a great festival. It is the most recognized festival of Jain people. The real meaning and purpose of Paryushana is to reside in nature, in the soul, being confined to the senses. Paryushan festival is an occasion for many types of rituals like chanting, austerity, meditation, worship, anupreksha etc. This great festival is the festival of spiritual brightness. It is a day of introspection; it is time to look within. The Paryushan festival teaches us to look inward. The one watching outside remains on the edge. But one who dives deep finds priceless gems. Man's mind cannot become weightless until it reaches the depths of the inner being and becomes free from weight. Liberation cannot be attained by merely listening to the sermons. It can be attained through the spirit of ultimate meditation or by the classical knowledge of Aradhana-Viradhana.

For this it is necessary to do "Pratikraman". The meaning of Pratikraman is to heal the wounds on daily, fortnightly and samvatsari occasions by treating the mistakes caused due to pramaada and the ulcers or wounds caused by it on consciousness. Pratikraman is the combination of two words, Pra meaning return and atrikraman meaning violation. Literally, it means returning from the viola-



tions. As Jain householders, we are supposed to observe the twelve minor vows to minimize the violence towards other living beings which in turn minimizes the damage to our own souls.

Through pratikraman, the causes of mistakes can be discovered, and they can also be remedied. The essence of Pratikraman is come back to yourself. For example, coming from untruth to truth, from bad to good, moving from enmity to friendship. The root cause of today's man who is so disturbed is the lack of introspection. Everyone is blaming the other, but is not able to take even the slightest initiative in admitting his mistake. Through Pratikraman, mistakes made in one's life or inadvertently can be resolved contemplatively. The main purpose of doing pratikraman is to rectify mistakes. The result of pratikraman is - pratikraman of the past, contemporary to the present and denial for the future. The use of Pratikraman is a spiritual practice for purification of these three times - past, future and present. Soul is the creator of sorrow and happiness and destroyer of them. A soul engaged in good tendencies is a friend and a soul engaged in evil tendencies is its enemy. Therefore, one has to make a friend, find his secret within and destroy his ene-

mies, and then his secret will also be found within. In fact, Paryushana is an infallible remedy for inner cleanliness. The entire Jain society becomes awake and engaged in spiritual practice on the occasion of this festival. In the Digambara tradition, it is recognized as "DashlakshanaParva". Among them, its opening day is Bhadrav Shukla Panchami and the day of prosperity is Chaturdashi. On the other hand, in the Shwetambar Jain tradition, the day of BhadravShuklaPanchami is the day of Samadhi which is celebrated as Samvatsari with complete renunciation, fasting, self-study and abstinence. Even people who are unable to take time out during the year also wake up on this day. Even those who never fast are seen fasting ceremonially on this day. The literal meaning of Paryushan festival is to be situated in the soul. The word Paryushana is formed by adding a prefix and a suffix to it. One of the meanings of Paryushana is the destruction of karma. The enemies of Karma will be destroyed; only then the soul will be situated in its form, so this festival of Paryushan gives inspiration to the soul to reside in the soul.

Paryushan Mahaparva is a spiritual festival; the central element of it is the soul. Paryushan Mahaparva

continues to play an ego role in revealing the pure, luminous form of the soul. 'Adhyatma' means closeness to the soul. This is the festival of connecting human-human and modifying the human heart, it is the festival of opening the windows, skylights and doors of the mind. This is the festival of "Kashaya Shaman". This festival is celebrated for 8 days, in which heat, turmoil has arisen in someone, if a feeling of hatred has arisen towards someone, and then an undertaking is done to pacify him during this time. The 10 gates of religion have been mentioned, in which the first door is forgiveness. Forgiveness means equality. Forgiveness is very important for life, unless there is forgiveness in life, and then a person cannot progress on the path of spirituality.

In this festival, everyone tries to make them as pure as possible. A vow of love, forgiveness and true friendship is taken. The mind is strengthened to maintain the purity of food and the decency of conduct and behavior as an integral part of the lifestyle. Human unity, peaceful co-existence, friendship, socialism without exploitation, establishment of international moral values, support of non-violent lifestyle etc. are the main basis of Paryushan Mahaparva. Efforts are expected to make Paryushan Mahaparva a festival of the people, in order that these elements can become a part of the life of the people.

Whether a man is called religious or not, whether he believes in self-divine or not, whether he believes in past birth and reincarnation, whether he should resort to non-violence as far as possible in solving any of his problems - this is the heart of the sadhna of Paryushan. Violence cannot be a permanent solution to any problem. Those seeking a solution through violence have only exacerbated the problem. Keeping this fact in front, not only the Jain society, but also the common

people should become faithful in the power of non-violence and use it with deep faith. Religion without morality, worship without character and the imagining of a hereafter reform without purification of the present life is a kind of irony. Religion can only be what is moral. The right to worship should be given to those who are of character. The focus should be on the purification of this life before entering the labyrinth of the hereafter. This is the safe way to proceed in the direction of Dharma and this is the basis of the significance of the festival of Paryushan.

The last stage of the Paryushan Mahaparva is Kshasnavani or apology, which is organized in the form of Friendship Day. In this way, Paryushan Mahaparva and Forgiveness Day - it is a festival to bring one person closer to another. It is a festival to end the distance between human beings and consider each other as their own. It is also said in the Gita, "Atmoupanyasvatrah, saam-mepashyatiyorjuna." Shri Krishna said to Arjuna - O Arjuna! Treat the animal as your equal. Lord Mahavira said: "Savvabhavesu in mitti, veramijhanakenai" I have friendship with all beings; I have no friendship with anyone.

Paryushan festival is the festival of worship of the inner soul - it is the festival of self-purification, it is the festival of giving up sleep. In fact, the festival of Paryushan is such a dawn which takes us from sleep to wakefulness. Lead us from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. So, it is necessary to remove the ego of sleep and get absorbed in the inner soul by doing special penance, chanting, worshipping self-study during these eight days, so that our life will be meaningful and successful.

(Author is Writer, Journalist, Columnist based in Delhi.)

international

BIDEN BREAKS SILENCE ON FBI'S TRUMP RAID

Washington | Agencies

US President Joe Biden claimed on Wednesday that he had no advance notice on the FBI raid on his predecessor Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago (Florida) residence that led to the seizure of 11 boxes of classified documents which the Department of Justice considers evidence to book the former President under the espionage act.

Some documents related to the CIA, FBI and intelligence reports of third countries' nuclear threats. "I didn't have any advance notice. None, zero. Not one single bit. Thank you," replied Biden when asked by a journalist about it after he concluded his speech announcing student forgiveness. Fox News White House correspondent Peter Doocy asked the President if he knew about the raid ahead of time. "Mr President, how much advance notice did you have of the FBI's plan to search Mar-a-Lago," he asked. The August 8 raid resulted in the FBI confiscating hundreds of documents allegedly classified that Trump allegedly took when he left office in January 2021. Attorney General Merrick Garland has said that he personally approved seeking the search warrant. The White House has denied being given a heads-up.

The President also extended the moratori-



um on student loan payments for the last time. The moratorium, which was implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic, will end on December 31. He also capped repayment of undergraduate loans at 5 percent of monthly income. An estimated 43 million borrowers can receive some form of relief under Biden's new plan, with nearly half of them seeing their debt completely wiped off. Progressive Democrats criticised Biden's plan because it fell short of wider cancellation. Meanwhile, Biden recalled his college days and his education during the speech on debt forgiveness, when he said in his opening remarks that his father's own struggle to pay his (Biden's) higher education bills informed his decision to grant the relief.

Spain passes law against sexual violence

Madrid | Agencies

Madrid: People in Spain will have to explicitly voice their consent to sexual acts in the future to ensure that they are not criminal, under a legislation passed by Parliament. The conservative People's Party and right-wing populist Vox party voted against the so-called "Yes Means Yes" law, arguing that it goes against the spirit of innocence until proven guilty, reports news agency. The law had already passed lower house scrutiny in May, but was sent back by the Senate with a small suggested change. The new law lifts the distinction between abuse and aggression. Sexual abuse will be regarded as rape by the law regardless of whether the victim actively defends him- or herself. Rape and sexual violence will carry a penalty of up to 15 years in prison. Furthermore, "intimidating" compliments and the spreading of sex tapes will also be criminalized. Equalities Minister Irene Montero called the law "a decisive step to the change of the sexual culture" of the country. It would put an end to a "culture of rape", she said. In May, she had said that "the feminist movement is writing history in Spain". The new initiative against sexual violence is partly in response to a number of high-profile cases of gang rapes, in which perpetrators got off with mild sentences in recent years.

Islamabad | Agencies

The devastating monsoon rain, flash floods and cloud bursts have wrecked havoc across Pakistan with over 70 per cent of the country severely affected and Balochistan remains disconnected from the rest of the country due to the severe deluge. Balochistan has lost all means of connection, travel routes and access from the rest of the country as railway tracks, internet services and telecommunication services have been disrupted due to the extensive damage caused by the continued torrential rain and flash flood in several areas, including the provincial capital Quetta. As per the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the services have been impacted in Quetta, Ziarat, Khuzdar, Loralai, Pishin, Chaman, Panjgur, Zhob, Qila Saifullah and Qila Abdullah because of damage to optical fiber cables. "Efforts are being made to resolve the unprecedented situation. PTA is monitoring the situation and fur-



ther updates will be shared," maintained PTA Balochistan's connection via roads, air and train has also been disconnected as relief activities become close to impossible to reach to the flood affected areas. Disconnection of telecommunication and Internet services has added to the sufferings and severity of the situation as this is the third time in less than a week that cellular and internet services have been disrupted. Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited that due to multiple cuts in the Ghotki, Khairpur

and Sukkur districts, the telecommunication services have been disrupted. One other reason for the cable cuts is because of the use of heavy machinery for the relief and rescue activities being done in Sukkur and its surrounding districts. "Due to extensive flooding, most of the pathways of underground cables have been submerged, as relief workers or locals were trying to divert floodwater by digging trenches on roads and footpaths," said Syed Aminul Haque, Federal Minister for IT and Telecom.

ERDOGAN VOWS TO EXPAND SYRIA INCURSION DESPITE INT'L PROTESTS

Ankara: Turkey is determined to go ahead with a planned military incursion against the Kurdish militia in northern Syria, despite opposition from other countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said. "I once again declare to the whole world that our struggle will not end until we secure our southern borders with a 30-kilometre-deep corridor," Erdogan said at an event on Thursday. Turkey already occupies swathes of land along its border in northern Syria. Erdogan had in April warned of a new offensive to drive the US-backed Syrian Kurdish militia the People's Defence Units (YPG) further south. Turkey considers the YPG to be "terrorists" and a national security threat, linked to insurgents at home and often targets the group. Russia and Iran, Ankara against an incursion. The US had separately warned that a new Turkish offensive could distract from the fight against the Islamic State terror group. "We are aware of hypocrisy of those who launch operations whenever they want and point their fingers at us," Erdogan said, without mentioning any country.

Islamic Jihad leader charged in Israeli military court

Tel Aviv | Agencies

The Israeli Military Prosecution has filed an indictment against an influential senior official in the Islamic Jihad, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) said. Bassam al-Saadi is accused of committing crimes of affiliation with and activity in an illegal association, the Islamic Jihad, reports news agency. He has also been charged with impersonation, incitement and aiding contact with "enemy elements".

According to the indictment, al-Saadi worked alongside additional operatives on core terrorist activities, including receiving funding from an Islamic Jihad operative in the Gaza Strip. In addition, al-Saadi is said to have called for the continuation of violent Palestinian attacks. Moreover, when Israeli security forces arrived to apprehend him, al-Saadi impersonated someone else in an attempt to escape arrest. The Military Prosecution



requested that al-Saadi be detained until the end of the legal proceedings in his case. At the request of the defence attorney to study the evidence, at this stage al-Saadi's detention has been extended until Sunday, at which time a hearing will be held on the prosecution's request to detain him until the end of the legal proceedings.

Al-Saadi has been in detention since August 1. The investigation began follow-

ing intelligence which indicated that he was continuing his activities in Islamic Jihad. Islamic Jihad threatened to attack Israel after his arrest. As a result, the Israeli military launched a large-scale military operation against Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip three weeks ago. Dozens of people died. The militant Palestinians fired rockets at Israeli towns. After three days of fighting, a ceasefire was agreed with Egyptian help.

IRAN UNVEILS 1ST MULTI-PURPOSE GAMMA RADIATION SYSTEM

Tehran | Agencies

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) unveiled the country's first multi-purpose gamma radiation system in the northwestern city of Bonab.

The project of designing and building a portable gamma system for radiating food was launched in January 2022 and became ready for operation in August, Mohammad Eslami, the head of AEOI, was quoted by the News Agency as saying at the unveiling ceremony, news agency reported.

Its application includes radiating food and agricultural products, which can reduce their susceptibility to pests' harm, increase



their storability, and curb 30 per cent of food waste, Eslami said. "I predict that within the next three years we will have a good development in the field of multi-purpose gamma radiation system," he said, urging the private sector and knowledge-based firms to engage in the project.

The Iranian atomic chief also said that the AEOI plans to turn Iran into a hub of nuclear power plant construction in the region.



IN UP SHIV SENA REJIG, MUSLIM WOMAN NAMED GS IN 46-STRONG TOP BODY

A SPARKLING NEW 46-MEMBER UTTAR PRADESH SHIV SENA (UPSS) TEAM HAS BEEN FORMED, INCORPORATING A FIRST -- A MUSLIM WOMAN NAZIA KHAN APPOINTED AS GENERAL SECRETARY (GS) -- ALONG WITH TWO OTHER WOMEN LEADERS, SONU SINGH THAKUR AND SAVITA SHRIVASTAV.



Spokesperson and office head Vishjeet Singh, the 46-member apex body comprises the state President Anil Singh Thakur, 10 Vice Presidents, 6 GS, 11 Secretaries, 6 State Organisers, a 3-member panel of spokespersons, and 8 state executive committee members. The Sena plans to contest all the upcoming civic elections in Uttar Pradesh putting up a maximum number of candidates with possibility of local alliances, as decided by the central leadership, said a party leader in Mumbai. The Uttar Pradesh leaders

are also likely to be deployed for the ensuing Maharashtra civic elections to woo the north Indian voters, particularly in Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Aurangabad and certain other regions where they are in significant numbers, he added. Singh said the new body will launch a state-wide membership drive with a target of over 100,000 people who will be enrolled by December. "Thereafter, in all the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh, we shall launch an intensive membership drive with at

Nearly seven weeks after losing power in Maharashtra, Shiv Sena President and former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has revamped the party in Uttar Pradesh - its second biggest unit outside the home state, officials said here on Friday. According to UPSS Chief

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Happy Ganeshotsav' as Maha scraps road toll for 2 weeks in Konkan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Spelling cheers for lakhs of people travelling to the coastal Konkan region for Ganeshotsav, the Maharashtra government has decided to waive off all road toll taxes from August 27 to September 11, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said here on Friday.

The concession will be applicable on road toll booths on the Mumbai-Bengaluru, and the Mumbai-Goa highways and other state highways ahead of the 10-day festival starting from August 31, he said.

The decision came after Shinde chaired a meeting recently and directed the authorities concerned to provide the toll-tax exemption and other comforts during the festival.

For availing the discount, the vehicles would have to sport a sticker with 'Ganeshotsav 2022, Konkan Darshan', with the full details of the vehicle and its owner's on it, as required by the Transport Department. Every year, during



Ganeshotsav, several lakhs of people from Mumbai, Pune and other major cities troop down to the coastal Konkan districts like Palghar, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg to celebrate the state's biggest public festival. They travel in private cars, SUVs, vans, mini-buses, private or State Transport buses which connect the remotest hilly or coastal villages dotting the Konkan districts, and multiple road toll taxes both ways (return journey) has always remained a major concern.

Mumbai taxi-driver Sushil Uke, who is busy plying on the Konkan route with daily trips, said the concession will reduce the travel costs to the region by a total (two-way trip) upto 20-25 per cent, depending on the route taken by the devotees. "The past two years, Ganeshotsav in Konkan was a very dull affair owing to the coronavirus pandemic. This year since the restrictions have been lifted, the rush is huge with all modes of travel completely booked and some even trying to exploit the situation," said Uke, zooming off to Ratnagiri.

Maha excise sleuths seize spurious IMFL worth Rs 16 lakh

Thane | Agencies

Maharashtra State Excise Vigilance Department swooped on a warehouse in Thane and seized spurious Indian-Made Foreign Liquor (Goa made) of various well-known brands, worth over Rs 16.50 lakh, and arrested one person, officials said here on Friday.



According to Excise Commissioner Kantilal B. Umap, following a tipoff, a team of sleuths raided a premises at Virwadi in Thane district late on Thursday evening.

There, they stumbled upon huge quantities of IMFL bottles or tins stored in almost 123 boxes hidden in the warehouse. The boxes were opened to reveal hundreds of bottles of fake IMFL of several leading Indian or foreign brands (Royal Challenge, Imperial Blue, Royal Stag and other international labels) intended for sale as genuine at exorbitant prices in the local markets. The

spurious liquor was worth a total of around Rs 16.50 lakh and the prime accused Vaibhav P. Shelar has been arrested, said Umap. The Excise Department sleuths have also seized a SUV, a sedan, and other equipment and material used to make the fake beverages and transport them to unsuspecting customers, totally valued at over Rs 10 lakh. Further investigations are on to trace the other associates of Shelar, and how far the racket of brewing and selling such fake liquor is spread out in Maharashtra or across the state borders.

Personal retail loans record impressive year-over-year growth: Report

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Personal loan disbursement grew 42 per cent to March 2022 from March 2021, reflecting an improvement in overall economic and business sentiments, a report by Equifax and Andromeda said.

The number of active loans increased to 6 crore by March 2022, from 4 and 3.5 crore in the March 2021, and 2020, respectively. While, personal loans book size rose to Rs 8 lakh crore in March 2022, from Rs 6 lakh crore in March 2021.

According to report, the highest number of personal loans were disbursed by NBFCs (Non-Banking Financial Company) followed by private banks.

"The retail loans portfolio segment of the Indian lending industry has shown double-digit growth, with personal loan disbursements specifically



recording significant growth. This is a strong indicator of the revival in consumption in the country," said K.M.

Nanaiah, Managing Director, Equifax Credit Information Services Pvt. Ltd and Country Leader, India & MEA,

Equifax.

The total portfolio outstanding of retail industry also increased to Rs 89 lakh crore in March 2022, from Rs 71 lakh crore in March 2020. While, private banks and public sector banks experienced growth of portfolio outstanding of 32 per cent and 21 per cent from March 2020 to March 2022.

The portfolio outstanding of NBFCs showed a growth of 7 per cent from March 2020 to March 2021, and a 13 per cent increase from March 2021 to March 2022.

"If the trend in the growth of personal loans sustains, we can safely assume the economy will do well in the coming years. At the same time, we must keep in mind interest rates are on the rise following three consecutive rate hikes by the Reserve Bank in four months," said Raoul Kapoor, Co CEO, Andromeda Sales and Distribution pvt Ltd.

FORMER MAHA MINISTER ANIL DESHMUKH COLLAPSES IN JAIL, RUSHED TO HOSPITAL

Mumbai: Nationalist Congress Party leader and former Maharashtra Minister Anil Deshmukh suddenly collapsed in jail owing to high blood pressure here on Friday, official sources said.



The 71-year-old Deshmukh was rushed to the government-run Sir J. J. Hospital for treatment around noon.

Following high BP and chest pains, the hospital authorities conducted ECG and other tests at the hospital even as his condition stabilised. After multiple raids on his homes and offices in Mumbai and Naggur, he was nabbed by the Enforcement Directorate on November 2 last year in alleged corruption and money-laundering cases. In custody since then, he had been admitted to hospital on a couple of occasions previously for various ailments.

Rupee ends almost flat at 79.86 against US dollar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian rupee ended almost flat at 79.86 against the US dollar on Friday.



At the interbank foreign exchange market, rupee ended at 79.86, as against 79.88 closed on the previous trading session against US dollar. Dollar index, which gauges the strength of greenback against the basket of six major currencies were at 108.323.

Brent crude oil prices were at \$100.69 a barrel by the closing of Indian market hours. Sensex ended up 59.15 points or 0.10 per cent at 58,833.87, and Nifty ended 36.45 points or 0.21 per cent

up at 17,558.90. About 1,991 shares have advanced, 1,428 shares have declined and 146 shares remained unchanged.

NTPC, Titan, Power Grid Corporation of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Larsen and Toubro, Tech Mahindra were among the major gainers on the BSE. BSE LargeCap ended 0.26 per cent, BSE MidCap and BSE SmallCap ended up 0.40 per cent and 0.35 per cent, respectively.

Indices end higher; Sensex closes over 58,800

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Benchmark indices ended higher for the straight second day, with Sensex rising marginally up with 59 points and Nifty up 36 points.

At close, Sensex ended up 59.15 points or 0.10 per cent at 58,833.87, and Nifty ended 36.45 points or 0.21 per cent up at 17,558.90. About 1,991 shares have advanced, 1,428 shares have declined and 146 shares remained unchanged.

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per cent and 0.35 per cent, respectively.

Asian markets rose on Friday after a Wall Street rally ahead of a speech by Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell that is expected to reiterate his plan to ramp up interest rates to fight inflation. World stocks were narrow-

ly mixed on Friday as traders and investors awaited a speech from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell for clues on the gradient of the US central bank's rate-hike path. Markets will react to the US Fed chair's address at the Jackson Hole symposium in early trade on Monday.

Fliers get nostalgic as Jet Airways talks about 'Imli Candy'

New Delhi/Mumbai | Agencies

Fliers got nostalgic when Jet Airways said that the airline is coming back soon with its Imli Candy.

Jet Airways is set to start operation in the coming days and the first batch of experienced cabin crew has started the service training.

The airline informed on social media platform Twitter that passengers' favourite Imli candy will soon be back as the airline will take off its operation.

"It sure is! Your favourite 'imli candy' is coming back soon on all Jet Airways flights! Tell us what's your 'imli candy' story?" said the airline. Many fliers shared their past experiences about Jet Airways and Imli Candy. Kabir Goswami said: "We fondly remember how me and my sister always insisted our parents to book on Jet Airways for any vacation, just for the cool JetKids stuff. Must continue with the legacy for the next gen."



Viney Kaushal said: "Some preferred you only for these yummy candies but these were originally served on Indian Airline flights."

Responding to this, Jet Airways CEO Sanjiv Kapoor said: "Actually Jet was the first with imli candies."

Aujwalya Jyototi talked about the pending refund saying: "Imli candy is ok. But please try and refund the amount first for which I never took a flight."

Essar signs Rs 19K cr sale pact with Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In one of the largest post-pandemic M&A deals in India, Essar on Friday announced signing definitive agreements with Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) for certain Ports and Power infrastructure assets which are primarily captive to Hazira steel plant operations.

The deal also envisages a 50-50 Joint Venture partnership, for building a 4 MTPA LNG terminal at Hazira, Gujarat, between Essar and ArcelorMittal.

Revant Ruia, Director, Essar Ports & Terminals Limited, said: "With this deal, which yields a multifold return on our investments, Essar Ports & Terminals has unlocked value for all its stakeholders and will continue to focus on building new and modern core infrastructure assets in India and overseas."

Prashant Ruia, Director, Essar Capital, said: "Essar is now repositioned for growth and resurgence. After consolidating our businesses



over the last 4 years, we have now entered the next growth phase focused on helping build a sustainable energy future that will impact lives and livelihoods for a greener world." With this deal, Essar will conclude its planned asset monetisation programme and complete the debt repayment plan of \$25 billion (Rs 2,00,000 crore) with the Indian banking sector being almost fully repaid. Essar's aggregate rev-

enues will stand at \$15 billion (Rs 1.2 lakh crore) and an AUM (Asset Under Management) of \$8 billion (Rs 64,000 crore) comprising of various assets spread across India and overseas. These assets under Energy sector include a 10 MTPA refinery in the UK, 15 TCF reserves (including some producing fields) of Unconventional Hydrocarbons in India & Vietnam and a 1,200 MW Power Plant in India; Infra sector

assets include a storage terminal in UK of 3 million m3 capacity and a 20 MTPA Port in India; Metals & Mining sector assets include a major iron ore mine and pellet project in the US; Technology & Services sector assets include Global EPC business and IT solutions provider with centres across 30 plus countries. By monetizing assets in a planned and strategic manner, that were built with earlier technologies over the last several years, Essar is now poised to reinvest in new assets with the latest, more efficient and ESG-compliant technologies to last the next several decades.

Essar has planned significant investments in its core sectors of energy, infrastructure, metals & mining, and technology & services. While ongoing businesses will provide operational stability, our renewed focus will be to transition existing assets to green and invest in sector-transforming clean businesses around the investment themes of decarbonisation and digitisation.



'Hold Me Closer' tops on iTunes within hours

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Britney Spears' fans around the world are praising the pop star's return to music after she dropped her new single with Elton John.

Spears collaborated with John on 'Hold Me Closer', a new spin on his hit song 'Tiny Dancer'.

The single marks the first music to come from Spears since her conservatorship was terminated in November 2021. Within hours after the track launched online, it already tops sales on iTunes across 29 countries, according to the daily newspaper.

Throughout the conservatorship, Spears recorded music, went on tour and held a Las Vegas residency, but testified last summer that she was forced to work against her will throughout the 13-year court-ordered arrangement.

Spears' legal battle continues, as the singer fights against her father, Jamie Spears, who oversaw her conservatorship, and her former business manager, Tri Star Sports and Entertainment Group.

Spears claims that her father and Tri Star took advantage of her finances throughout the conservatorship and has made damning allegations about their alleged behavior towards her, which she has categorised as "conservatorship abuse". The judge recently sided with the singer, ordering that her father must sit for a deposition this month, and ruling that she would not be deposed.

Welcome Back Britney, say fans

As Spears' attorney, Mathew Rosengart, continues her fight in the courtroom, the singer has been enjoying her newfound freedom and marriage to Sam Asghari, while keeping busy working on projects of her choosing, including a major book deal and recording in the studio with John.

On the heels of 'Hold Me Closer' dropping, Rosengart issued a statement to media, congratulating his client, who he hailed as a "brilliant artist" and "iconic person" who has "been through a lot".

"After our hard-fought court battles and success in removing her father as conservator and then the termination of the conservatorship last year, I was inundated with inquiries about what Britney would do next. My response was simple:

"For the first time in 13 years, that is up to one person and one person only: Britney," Rosengart said in a statement.

"No one should be surprised that her first foray is a smash success. As I've said all along, Britney is a brilliant artist and iconic person. It's been a privilege working with her. She's been through a lot. Regardless of what comes next for her and whatever she chooses, I am so very proud of her." The Grammy-winning pop icon has sold more than 100 million records throughout her career, with numerous No. 1 albums and singles on the Billboard charts, and ranked as Forbes' highest-earning female musician for multiple years.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop punk star Avril Lavigne will be honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Having a string of hits including 'Sk8er Boi', 'Complicated' and 'Girlfriend', the 37-year-old icon will become the

authenticity.

She explained: "It means a lot to me now because the songs have stood the test of time. But I think that honestly, I was just really genuine."

"I wrote the songs. They came from my perspective-

have pivoted directions here and there."

"On my last album 'Head Above Water', it was more dark and introspective and emotional. Then this

Avril Lavigne to get star on Hollywood Walk Of Fame

2,731st

celebrity to receive the sidewalk honour at 6212 Hollywood Boulevard, reports Website.

The star will be unveiled in a ceremony on August 31.

"This isn't Complicated, Avril Lavigne is very deserving of this Walk of Fame star and we are thrilled to be honouring her with this great honour," Hall of Fame producer Ana Martinez commented.

"Avril's fans have been blowing up my phone asking when she will be getting her star. We are thrilled to say that the time is now."

Meanwhile, the Canadian star has given an update on the progress of her movie based on 2002 classic 'Sk8er Boi'. She told Nylon: "It just takes a long time. I'm working on the storyline with the director and the writer right now. I'm really excited to be making 'Sk8er Boi' into a film. It's something I've wanted to do for a very long time."

Lavigne believes the key to her longevity has been her



At the time I was like, geez, like a teenager, what I was going through. And right now, like my new album Love Sux', it's like it evolved. I

'Love Sux' came back out just like full blown, rocking out, loud guitars, live drums. And I feel like this album is so me, and I have different sides to me."

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Eva Mendes, a mother of two, has learned to accept that her home is not always tidy because of her kids.

Sharing two daughters - Esmeralda and Amada - with her partner Ryan Gosling, the 48-year-old actress said that it's been a struggle to keep the house tidy with two young kids in the house but Eva tries not to let it bother her because it's "impossible" to keep a home looking perfect, reports Website.

"My house is not always clean. I open my closet and it's messy and it's okay! I have two children so it's impossible," She told a daily newspaper.

"Having kids, you have to be okay with a mess. But the point is when my house is clean, I feel better. My mental wellness is literally connected to how clean my house is. I just don't like dirty - there's a difference for me."

Mendes has taken a step back from Hollywood in recent years to focus on being a mum and is taking on more business projects outside of acting.

The actress said of her career: "It's one of those things where it's the same way I was when I was 23 going into the business becoming an actress."

"I stay open to things, and when an opportunity presents itself - or now I'm at the point where I can create opportunities - I just follow what



Eva Mendes focusing on becoming a mum

I'm passionate about."

She added that

her partner and kids now

represent home to her, explaining that "Wherever they are, that's just what it is." Ryan is currently playing Ken in the new 'Barbie' movie with Margot Robbie and he recently said he chose the role for the sake of his children.

Becoming Catholic saved me from suicidal thoughts: Shia LaBeouf

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Shia LaBeouf, who has been engulfed in legal issues over the past few years, confirms he's now a Catholic and a member of the Roman Catholic Church after studying for his upcoming film 'Padre Pio'.

In 'Conversations at the Crossroads' with Bishop Robert Barron, LaBeouf said how his connection to the religion at the lowest point in his life saved him. He says his "life was on fire" prior to familiarising himself with the religion, reports a website.

"I had a gun on the table. I was outta here," he opens up about his suicidal thoughts.

"I didn't want to be alive anymore when all this happened. Shame like I had never experienced before - the kind of shame that you forget how to breathe. You don't know where to go. You can't go outside and get like, a taco." "I didn't want to be an actor anymore, and my life was a complete mess. I had hurt a lot of people, and I felt deep shame and deep guilt," LaBeouf confesses of his shame, before adding, "But I was also in this deep desire to hold on."

After connecting with 'Padre Pio' director Abel Ferrara, LaBeouf began staying at a seminary in San Lorenzo, California, living out of his car in the parking lot, to prepare for the role.

"The reach-out had happened. I was already there, I had nowhere to

go. This was the last stop on the train. There was nowhere else to go - in every sense," the 36-year-old shares.

"I know now God was using my ego to draw me to Him, was drawing me away from worldly desires. It was all happening simultaneously. But there would have been no impetus for me to get in the car and drive up (to the monastery) if I didn't think, 'Oh, I'm gonna save my career.'"

Calling his past actions "disgusting" and "depraved," the 'Constantine' actor says he felt unworthy of seeking out religion, but as he read the gospel he felt an "invite" to "let go."

But it wasn't until he met with other people who had gone through similar struggles that he was able to fully embrace the religion.

"It was seeing other people who had sinned beyond anything I could even conceptualise also being found in Christ that made me feel like, 'Okay, that gives me hope,'" he explains. "I started hearing experiences of other depraved people who had found their way in this, and it made me feel like I had permission."

In 'Padre Pio', LaBeouf plays the title character. The biopic is based on the real life of the Italian Franciscan Capuchin friar, who became famous for showing stigma, or crucifixion wounds like those on the body of Jesus Christ.

He died in 1968 at the age of 81, was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1999 and then canonised in 2002.



'STAR TREK' STAR NICHELLE NICHOLS' ASHES WILL BE LAUNCHED INTO SPACE

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Star Trek' star Nichelle Nichols' ashes will be launched into space. The late actress, who died in July aged 89, will have her remains jetted up into space on the Enterprise Flight's Vulcan Rocket later this year to honour her iconic role as Lt. Nyota Uhura in the 60s sci-fi series that also starred William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy, reports Website.

Kyle Johnson, Nichelle's son, who will include his DNA on the mission, which will depart from Florida's Cape Canaveral, to be with his mother, said of the mission, "My only regret is that I cannot share this eternal tribute standing beside my mother at the launch."

"I know she would be profoundly honoured for this unique experience and enthusiastically encourage all of her fans to join us vicariously by contributing your thoughts, affections, memories, (Nichelle Nichols-) inspired successes, dreams, and aspirations via email to be launched with her on this flight!"

The news of her death was announced by Kyle and the official 'Star Trek' Twitter account, which posted: "We're deeply saddened to report the passing of Nichelle Nichols - a trailblazer, an inspiration, and so much more. She will be deeply missed."

Nichelle's career had a deep impact on many other Black stars, such as Whoopi Goldberg, who labelled the actress a 'trailblazer' and starred on the 80s edition of the same series.



Demi Rose



BWF World Championships

CHIRAG-SATWIK ASSURE INDIA'S FIRST MEN'S DOUBLES MEDAL

India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty on Friday created history by becoming the first Indian pair to reach the semifinals of the men's doubles event at the BWF World Championships, thus ensuring a medal.

Tokyo | Agencies

Chirag and Satwiksairaj beat reigning world champions and second seeds Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi 24-22, 15-21, 21-14 in a three-game thriller in the BWF

"We're so happy and excited. We want to finish this on a big note. It's a revenge match for us tomorrow, we've never beaten them (Aaron Chia/Soh Wooi Yik). We just want to go there and enjoy the pressure. It's going to be a big match."

Rankireddy



World Championships 2022 quarterfinals.

Of India's 12 medals at the world championships, only one has come in the doubles when Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponnappa won women's doubles bronze in the 2011 edition.

Chirag-Satwik, the Commonwealth Games champions, will now take on sixth-seeded Malaysian duo Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik in the semifinals next. However, the other Indian pair M.R Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, who became the first Indian men's doubles

pair to make the quarterfinals at the World Championships, bowed out after losing 8-21, 14-21 to third-seeded Indonesian veterans Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan.

Later, in the men's singles, H.S Prannoy also fell short of assuring himself a first medal as he lost 19-21, 21-6, 21-18 to China's Zhao Jun Peng. Prannoy, who had beaten former World Champion Kento Momota and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Lakshya Sen in the preceding rounds, fought hard to take the first game and after losing a slew of points in the second, he decided to conserve his energy for the crucial decider.

In the third game, both players were evenly matched until 11-11 but the Indian shuttler committed a few unforced errors to allow Jun Peng to win seven of the next nine points and take an 18-13 lead. The 30-year-old Prannoy fought back with some sublime smashes and point construction to get the gap down to 19-17 and later at 20-18.

Adani Group -acquired franchise in Legends League Cricket as Gujarat Giant



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Multinational conglomerate Adani Group on Friday named their newly-acquired franchise in Legends League Cricket (LLC) as 'Gujarat Giants'.

On Thursday, it was announced that the Ahmedabad-headquartered company had bought a franchise in the competition, making this their second investment in T20 leagues after acquiring a franchise in the UAE's IIT20 named as

'Gulf Giants'.

"For those of us who have lived through different eras of cricket, nothing stirs our passions like watching our favourites back in action. These are giants of the game and there is no doubt that the spiritual home of Legends League Cricket is in India, in our fantastic cricket stadiums in front of our fantastic crowds."

"And we call our team of Legends as Gujarat Giants. Make no mistake, this is competitive cricket at the highest level between teams

that are playing to win," said Pranav Adani, Director, Adani Enterprises.

The upcoming edition of the Legends Cricket League will be a four-team franchise model, marking a change from the three-team format in its last season, where India, Rest of Asia and Rest of the World were the teams. The league had earlier announced that the upcoming season of LLC has been dedicated to the 75th year celebration of India's Independence.

Ultimate Kho Kho: Ruthless Odisha Juggernauts clinch thriller against Rajasthan Warriors

Pune | Agencies

Riding on Nilesch Jadhav's remarkable all-round performance, Odisha Juggernauts clinched a sensational come-from-behind win against Rajasthan Warriors by six points at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, here on Thursday.

Jadhav recorded 3.22 minutes in the defense and also scored 16 points in the attack including six dismissals. Another top performer of the match, skipper Dipesh More led Odisha Juggernauts from the front with a timely defence of 3.58 minutes as Odisha Juggernauts won by a 51-45 margin and claimed the top position in the points table with their fourth successive victory.

For Rajasthan Warriors, Akshay

Ganpule impressed the most by defending for 5.32 minutes, including 2.57 minutes in the second innings.

Jadhav started the game with a good defence technique in the opening turn but Rajasthan Warriors grabbed 21 points. Continuing their hunt for a maiden win of the season, Rajasthan Warriors looked equally strong when they switched to defence as they restricted the in-form Odisha Juggernauts to just 17 points.

Dilraj Singh and Akshay Ganpule contributed brilliantly, winning bonus points for defence time of 3.25 minutes and 2.35 minutes respectively. They ended the first innings with the score of 27-21 in their favour. However, More came to the rescue of Odisha Juggernauts as he bagged six bonus points for his defence of almost four minutes.

BASKETBALL: INDIA LOSE 64-80 TO JORDAN IN ASIAN QUALIFIERS FOR 2023 WORLD CUP

Amman (Jordan): The Indian men's basketball team lost 64-80 to Jordan in Group E of the second round of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2023 Asian Qualifiers at the Prince Hamza Hall, here.

Amarendra Nayak was India's best performer, scoring 15 points while Dar Tucker led the way for Jordan with 18 points on Thursday night. India's Pranav Prince opened the scoring in the game with a dunk in the very first minute. It set the tone as Seijin Mathew and Muin Bek Hafeez also scored to help India to an early 13-8 lead.

Jordan found their rhythm towards the end of the quarter and levelled it up at 17-17. In the early parts of the second quarter, the Indian hoopsters went toe-to-toe with Jordan but the host's superior quality ensured that they led 40-27 by half-time, an olympics.com report said. Jordan never gave up their lead thereafter and despite a late fightback from India in the final quarter, the gap proved to be too big to close as India went down.

Benzema beats De Bruyne, Courtois, wins UEFA Men's Player of the Year

Berlin | Agencies

Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema has been named the 2021-22 UEFA Men's Player of the Year, beating team-mate Thibaut Courtois and Manchester City playmaker Kevin De Bruyne to the gong.

The France international solidified his status as the frontrunner for this year's Ballon d'Or with victory over the pair, with the award bestowed following the Champions League group-stage draw in Istanbul on Thursday, reports DPA. Benzema, top scorer in both the Champions League and



La Liga last term as he guided Madrid to a double, netted 44 goals in 46 games across all competitions.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti also was feted at the ceremony, beating Manchester City boss Pep

Guardiola and Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp to be awarded the UEFA Men's Coach of the Year Award.

But the headline prize was that handed out to Benzema, who will now be targeting the most notable individual

prize in football. The 34-year-old was named among the 30 Ballon d'Or nominees earlier this month, with the long-time Madrid star seemingly the outstanding favourite.

Benzema scored 27 goals in 32 games as Madrid won LaLiga, and he also netted 15 in 12 Champions League outings en route to Los Blancos lifting their 14th European crown in Paris in May.

This year's Ballon d'Or winner is due to be confirmed on October 17, with the mid-season World Cup resulting in an early announcement.

U.S Open draw

Serena Williams to face Kovinic in first round; Swiatek to meet Paolini in opener

New York | Agencies

In what is set to be her final tournament, 23-time major champion Serena Williams will face Montenegro's Danka Kovinic in the first round of the U.S Open, the organisers announced on Thursday.

Earlier this month, Williams announced her impending retirement after the U.S Open. A champion in New York six times, she will face No.80 Kovinic for the first time.

The 27-year-old Montenegrin reached a career-high ranking of No.46 in 2016 and became the first woman from her country to win a WTA Tour title last year at Charleston.

In January, Kovinic broke new ground for Montenegro at the Australian Open after defeating Emma Raducanu to become the first woman



from her country to reach the third round of a Slam.

The winner of that opener will face either No.2 Anett Kontaveit or Romania's Jaqueline Cristian. World No.1 Iga Swiatek tops the draw and will face Italy's Jasmine Paolini in the first round. The winner will face either 2018 champion Sloane Stephens or Belgium's Greet Minnen.

Also drawn into Swiatek's top quarter are three former major champions in No. 9 seed Garbie Muguruza, No. 16 Jelena Ostapenko, and No.21 Petra Kvitova, as well as the highest-seeded American, No. 8 Jessica Pegula.

The no. 24 seed Amanda Anisimova and two-time quarterfinalist Elise Mertens also landed in Swiatek's quarter.

Ostapenko faces a tough opening draw against 19-year-old Chinese talent Zheng Qinwen.

KOHLI'S HEARTFELT MESSAGE TO DHONI AS HE PREPARES FOR PAKISTAN CLASH

Dubai: India cricketer Virat Kohli has written a heartfelt message on social media, paying tribute to Mahendra Singh Dhoni and reminiscing the days when he was deputy to the legendary skipper.



Kohli, who is returning to the side for the Asia Cup here after taking a month-long break, tweeted that being MSD's deputy was the "most enjoyable and exciting period" of his career and it will have a "special" place in his heart. "Being this man's trusted deputy was the most enjoyable and exciting period in my career. Our partnerships would always be special to me forever. tweeted Kohli late on Thursday night as he prepares for the Asia Cup clash against arch-rival Pakistan on August 28. The '7' and '18' in the tweet signify the jersey numbers of Dhoni and Kohli respectively. Kohli, 33, was Dhoni's long-time deputy in all formats before taking over as Test captain in 2014. Kohli then became skipper in all three formats in 2017. Kohli made the special mention to the jersey numbers, as '7' and '18' add up to '25', the day (August 25) he wrote the emotional message.

Durand Cup 2022

Rajasthan United hold East Bengal to a goal-less draw

Kolkata | Agencies

East Bengal were held to a goal-less draw by Rajasthan United in a Durand Cup 2022 match at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan (KBK), here on Thursday.

Rajasthan who had got the better of ATK Mohun Bagan in their first match, produced another impressive result as they got a point against the other Kolkata giant on their own patch. For East Bengal, it was a similar story to their previous game where they failed to convert the chances that came their way and had to settle for a point. The first opening came in the 15th minute when Aniket Jadhav sent in a dangerous cross in the box but it just evaded VP Suhair. Suhair then tested the Rajasthan goalkeeper Niraj Kumar with a shot from



distance 12 minutes later but he was equal to the task. Suhair had another chance to open the scoring in the 37th minute when

he was fed inside the box by Tuhin Das but he could not keep his effort on target. The game remained deadlocked at 0-0 at the interval with East Bengal doing most of the attacking in the first half. The Red and Gold brigade came really close to taking the lead in the 56th minute when Lalchungnunga hit the crossbar after some great work from Jadhav to send in his cross. East Bengal then had goalkeeper Kamaljit to thank as he saved a penalty from Rajasthan United's Remsanga in the 61st minute.

With a quarter of the hour to play, Rajasthan United came close again through Martin Chaves whose free-kick flew narrowly wide. Rajasthan finished the game strongly 'ut couldn't find the winner as the points were shared.

East Bengal next face ATK Mohun Bagan in the Kolkata derby on Sunday.

Dubai | Agencies

India women's team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana has joined young opener Shafali Verma in the International Cricket Council's "100 per cent Cricket Superstars" list released on Friday.

Shafali Verma, England's Sophie Ecclestone, New Zealand's Amelia Kerr, West Indies' Hayley Matthews and South Africa's Laura Wolvaardt were the first crop of what will ultimately be a "100 per cent Cricket Superstars" squad that fans can pick from to decide on a final XI.

On Friday, the ICC added five more players who are part of the initiative -- Mandhana,



Fatima Sana (Pakistan), Ashleigh Gardner (Australia), Sophia Dunkley (England), and Gaby Lewis (Ireland). Mandhana, 26, is close to completing a decade in international cricket. She has established herself as one of the most complete all-format players around the globe. Her record speaks for itself, combining aggression at the top of the order along with a heavy

penchant for scoring some big runs.

Mandhana has played 74 ODIs, aggregating 2,892 runs at an average of 42.52, with five centuries and 23 fifties. In T20I cricket, she has 2,192 runs in 92 games, with 16 half-centuries to her name. Mandhana has also played four Tests and has one century and two fifties in the format. Mandhana has also emerged as a leader in Indian women's cricket, as it moves on from the era of Mithali Raj and Jhulan Goswami.

Her consistency has seen her being named the 2021 ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year while being ranked 10th and fourth in the ICC Women's Player Rankings for batters in ODIs and T20Is respectively.

BHAICHUNG BHUTIA FILLED NOMINATION FOR THE AIFF PREZ

New Delhi: After filing his fresh nomination for the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) president post, former India captain Bhaichung Bhutia on Friday said that it's a great opportunity for him to give back to the sport.

Amid the hectic activities in the AIFF over the filing of nomination for the Executive Committee polls, the 45-year-old Bhutia on Thursday filed his fresh nomination for the post of president. His nomination was proposed by the president of the Andhra Football Association Gopal Krishna Kosaraju and seconded by Manvendra Singh, president Rajasthan Football Association.

"I am there for the betterment of Indian football. I want to be a part of the administration and want to work for Indian football. The sport needs reforms in the country. Today, what I've become is only because of football. I'm a Padma Shri because of it. I played for India for 16 years; this is my moment to give back to my sport. It needs reforms with the (FIFA) bans happening," Bhutia said during a press conference on Friday. Bhutia who has played more than 100 international matches for India was all praise for former India cricket captain Sourav Ganguly who is doing extremely well as the president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).





Akshay's energy on set is to bring everyone together: Rakul Preet

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Rakul Preet Singh, who will be seen sharing screen space with Akshay Kumar in the upcoming film 'Cuttpullii', has been a fan of the Bollywood star's work. She says that she had only heard of his discipline but got to witness it on the sets of the movie.

Speaking about her experience working with Akshay, Rakul said: "I have always been a huge fan of Akshay sir, I had only heard of his discipline but now I witnessed it."

"I think he is amazing when it comes to

loving his work, respecting his work, and being diligently involved in every process of it. Also what I love about Akshay sir is that his energy on set is to bring everyone together and that's something I learned, so, all in all, it was an amazing experience."

Akshay plays Arjan Sethi, a dutiful sub-inspector who vowed to keep the people of Kasauli safe. However, fate has other plans as the killer strikes from the shadows of terror, leaving behind no trace of evidence, except a body. Produced by Vasu Bhagnani and Jacky Bhagnani, Deepshikha Deshmukh and Pooja Entertainment, Directed by Ranjit M. Tewari 'Cuttpullii' will be released exclusively on Disney+ Hotstar on September 2.

Kangana: Most gratifying job in the world is to make movies

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Kangana Ranaut shared a string of photographs from the sets of her upcoming movie 'Emergency' and said that the most gratifying job in the world is to make movies.

Kangana posted the images on her Instagram story. The first picture has Kangana explaining a scene to a person. It also features an ambassador car. "Most gratifying job in the world is to make cinema this morning on emergency shoot," she wrote. She then shared a picture of her standing and looking at a scene. "And ofcourse my favourite directing pose," she wrote. Kangana added: "Filmmaking my first love"

'Emergency', as the title suggests, is all about the state of national emergency declared by Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975. It lasted till March 21, 1977, when Janata Party was voted to power in a historic election. The film also stars Anupam Kher, Shreyas Talpade, Mahima Chaudhry and Milind Soman. Manikarnika films presents 'Emergency' which is written and directed by Kangana Ranaut. The film is produced by Renu Pitti and Kangana Ranaut. The film dialogues are by Ritesh Shah, who was previously associated with celebrated films such as 'Kahaani', 'Pink', 'Raid' and 'Airlift'.



BHUVAN BAM TO STAR IN A ROMANTIC COMEDY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

YouTube sensation Bhuvan Bam will be seen in a romantic comedy based on the story of a young married couple.

The project, which will be a part of a leading OTT platform, is not only going to see him as the lead but is also being produced by his production house, BB Ki Vines production No 3 which is helmed by Rohit Raj.

Bhuvan says: "It is a story about a young couple and the banter they share. It is light-hearted, which can be watched by the whole family. The characters are funny and quite relatable."

"Anyone watching it will always know that one person will be exactly like that person. The project also gave an opportunity to work with veteran actors like Atul Srivastava sir and Rakesh Bedi sir. These are the people I grew up watching on screen and now sharing screen space with them is like a dream come true.

He added that just being around them is a huge learning experience for him. "Not just as an actor but also as a person."

The other actors in the show are Srishti Rindani Ganguly, Kamini Khanna and veteran actors like Atul Srivastav and Rakesh Bedi.

Apart from this, next is his OTT debut with 'Taaza Khabar', which is a show for Disney+ Hotstar with Shriya Pilgaonkar.

His maiden acting debut was 'Dhondora' for YouTube.



HOLY COW : A SANJAY MISHRA SHOW



BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Director: Sai Kabir
Runtime: 1 hours 17 minutes
Cast: Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sanjay Mishra and Sadiya Siddiqui
Rating:- 2/5

Synopsis: The movie 'Holy Cow' is all about a missing cow and a string of events happening in the life of Salim (Sanjay Mishra).

Review : The film begins with Sanjay Mishra's character as a mast Maaula, a local politician who is content with his middle-class life. Salim, Mishra's character, is oblivious about almost anything.

The real story begins when Salim's wife informs him that their cow, Ruksaar, has gone missing.



The story is set during a period when riots against Muslim killing cows were at their height. In these

circumstances, Ruksar's disappearance could lead to Salim's death, forcing him to engage in illegal

activities such as stealing someone else's cow.

The film is divided into two sections, each with its own intertwined story. The first half of the film is filled with more comedic and dramatic activities. In the second half, the filmmaker attempted to depict a serious situation.

Although the film begins on a lighter note and continues to engage with the storyline, the film graph drops drastically in the last 30 minutes and you feel as if you have wasted 1 hour 30 minutes of your life. The movie's ending is incomprehensible. When you first start watching the film, you will feel like there is a strong message that the director is attempting to convey, but as the film progresses, everything seems quite unrealistic and senseless.

Concerning the film's music. The songs stand out for the audience because they are more like back-

ground music, adding to the humour factor.

Nawazuddin Siddiqui also makes a brief cameo appearance in the film.

Hands down, the film was a Sanjay Mishra show; the man carried the entire film on his shoulders. The epic comic timing, dialogue delivery, and body language will never make you believe he is acting; he appears to be a real character. Sadiya Siddiqui did a good job in a supporting role, but there isn't much to say about her character.

In terms of technical aspects, the film succeeds in capturing your attention with some scenes. The editing was overall clean, with no unnecessary pans or close-ups.

Conclusion : The only wonderful thing about the film was Sanjay Mishra.

LIGER : FROM VIJAY DEVERAKONDA, ANANYA PANDAY TO MIKE TYSON, NOTHING CAN SAVE THE LOUSY LIGER



BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Cast- Vijay Deverakonda, Mike Tyson, Ananya Panday, Ramya Krishnan, Ronit Roy, Vishu Reddy and Makarand Deshpande
Director: Puri Jagannadh
Runtime: 2 hours 18 minutes
Rating: 1.5/5

Synopsis : A kickboxer (Vijay Deverakonda) with boxer shorts and a bronzed, muscled chest has two distinguishing features: a mother (Ramya Krishnan) and a stammer. The mother is a modern-day Mother India, brimming with fire and brimstone. Liger's speech impairment makes him a slow speaker but he jabs and kicks, feints and lunges, perfectly. The hero prepares for his big break, which will allow him and his mentor (Ronit Roy) to represent India in



the international arena.

Review : The film begins with the character's introduction, but to be honest, nothing made sense from start to finish. Wondering what made a star like Vijay believe that Liger was the right film to launch his Hindi film career with. He puts in a lot of effort, but the

film is far too shaky to take off and fly.

Over the past few weeks, the film's lead actors, Vijay Deverakonda and Ananya Panday have aggressively promoted it. What did the duo see in Liger that compelled them to travel across the country to promote the film with

such zeal is yet to be figured out.

In terms of performances, the lead actor, Vijay Deverakonda, gave his all, but his newfangled physique and action chops couldn't save the massive mess. The other actors in the cast, on the other hand, were competing to mock and ridicule each other. Ananya Panday

appears to have been inserted into the film solely to showcase her glitz and glam.

Throughout the film, Ramya Krishnan is seen pulling Sivagami Devi. It appears that somebody has changed her costume and has paraphrased her dialogues from Bahubali.

Tyson appears as the film nears its conclusion, and nothing the former heavyweight champion of the world does can add weight to the film. In fact, he only drags it down to the level of his own shoe laces.

The songs were meaningless and were placed in the least expected places.

Technically speaking Liger has nothing to recommend, in terms of story, emotional depth, convincing mixed martial arts action or genuine high drama. It's deplorable. There isn't a single scene in the haphazard film that suggests any thought went into its creation.

Conclusion
Best is to avoid watching Liger no matter which language one chooses to see - or say - in.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Mrunal Thakur