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NEERAJ CHOPRA

First Indian to clinch Diamond League Trophy

► THE ACE JAVELIN THROWER STARTED HIS NIGHT OFF WITH A FOUL THROW. HOWEVER, HE REGISTERED A THROW OF 88.44M IN HIS SECOND ATTEMPT AND THAT WAS ENOUGH FOR HIM TO SEAL THE CONTEST FOR HIMSELF.



Zurich | Agencies

Neeraj Chopra clinched the historical Diamond League Trophy here on Thursday, becoming the first Indian to win the trophy. The Tokyo Olympics gold medalist registered an 88m throw in his third attempt and 86.11m in his fourth attempt. His fifth attempt was 87m while his last attempt was 83.6m. Olympic silver medalist Jakub Vadlejch of the Czech Republic finished second with a best throw of 86.94m. Rounding off the podium places was Julian Weber of Germany, with a best throw of 83.73m. Earlier, Chopra had made a spectacular return from a one-month injury lay-off by winning the Lausanne leg of the Diamond League series and qualifying for the two-day finals. He had missed the Birmingham Commonwealth Games (July 28 to August 8) due to a minor groin injury he had suffered during his silver-winning performance

in the World Championships in the US in July. The 24-year-old Indian superstar hit form immedi-

ately on return as he hurled the spear to 89.08m in his first attempt to seal the win in style in Lausanne on July 26.

Supreme Court grants bail to Kerala journalist Siddique Kappan

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

■ Kappan along with others was arrested on October 5, 2020 by the Uttar Pradesh Police under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), while on their way to Hathras, to report on a 19-year-old's gang-rape and murder.



The Supreme Court on Friday granted bail to Kerala journalist Siddique Kappan, jailed in Uttar Pradesh for nearly two years, saying "every person has freedom of expression". A bench, headed by Chief Justice U.U. Lalit, noted that Kappan has been in custody for two years. Senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, representing the Uttar Pradesh government, submitted that an ID card was found on him, allegedly associating Kappan with PFI and also certain liter-

ature, which was alleged to be provocative and also potentially dangerous. He referred to it as a toolkit for riots, and added the whole purpose of going there was to incite violence. The bench queried how the literature was

provocative and did the accused make any attempt to use this literature. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Kappan, said there were pamphlets titled 'Justice for Hathras girl'. He pointed out that after his apprehension

in the present matter, the proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 have also been initiated against the appellant, in connection of which the appellant may be required to attend the proceedings or to apply for bail. Granting bail to Kappan, the bench said he has to report to the police in Delhi for the next six weeks and in Kerala after that. Kappan will be produced before a trial court in three days, which will release him on bail subject to conditions.

'STRAY DOGS FEEDERS COULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTACK'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday suggested people who routinely feed stray dogs could be made responsible for their vaccination and also liable to bear the costs if those animals attack people, while emphasising on a need to find a solution to the stray dogs' menace. "They will be responsible for vaccinating them and bearing the cost if a person is attacked," he said. The bench emphasised that it is essential to find the solution of stray dogs' menace and need to create a balance between people who feed stray dogs and also protect innocent people from being attacked by stray dogs.

'COURT FOUND HIM INNOCENT': KAPPAN'S

"The court has found out that Kappan is innocent and hence the bail was given. It's been two years and it was very tough for us and we faced it with deep emotions and sufferings.

Bilkis Bano case

FILE RECORDS FORMING BASIS OF RELEASE OF 11 ACCUSED

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday granted the Gujarat government two weeks' time to file response on pleas challenging the release of 11 men convicted for the gang-rape of Bilkis Bano and multiple murders during the 2002 Gujarat riots. A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and B.V. Nagarathna directed the Gujarat government to file all records, which formed the basis for granting remission to all the accused in the case. It asked the state government to file its response within 2 weeks and also asked advocate Rishi Malhotra, representing some of the accused, to file a response. During the hearing, the top court asked if notice was required to be issued in the second matter if it's a similar petition, having the same cause of action. Malhotra submitted "multiple petitions were being filed by people with no 'locus' and I am against this impleadment business... They are just multiplying petitions and impleadment applications in every matter." The bench said matters can't be disposed of without issuing notice, and issued notice to Malhotra in the matter and also asked him to take instructions if he could appear for the other accused in the case.



"See, every person has the right to free expression and therefore he is trying to propagate an idea that there is this victim who requires justice. Is that something like a crime in the eyes of law?"

Whether I contest for party president's post or not, only poll will tell: Rahul Gandhi

Nagercoil | Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday said that whether he contests for the party president's post or not will be clear when the poll takes place.

"It is a different way of thinking about things. It is a different way of looking at things, but, hopefully I will get some understanding about myself and some understanding about this beautiful country from this Yatra and I think some months later, I will be a little wiser."

Addressing the people on day two of his 3,570 km-long 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', he asked the people to wait for the elections. "Whether I become president or not will become clear when the elections for the president's post happen. I have clearly decided what I will do, there is no confusion in my mind."

Gandhi said: "The election is scheduled to take place after a few weeks and if I don't contest, then ask me and I shall answer." He was responding to questions on his candidature in the poll.

As per sources, the party is in the process of chalking out strategies for the presidential elections. However, a final decision would be taken only after Sonia Gandhi returns from abroad after her medical check-up.

The significant development comes weeks ahead of the Congress President elections. Veteran leaders Shashi Tharoor and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan are the probable candidates, as per sources. However, there is no clarity on it.

BJP TAKES DIG AT RAHUL GANDHI OVER 'RS 41K' T-SHIRT

Chennai: The BJP in Tamil Nadu has taken a dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly wearing a costly T-shirt during his 'Bharath Jodo Yatra'.

The BJP tweeted, "Bharat, dekho (India look)," and posted two photos, one of Rahul Gandhi wearing a T-shirt and the other showing the price of a T-shirt similar to the one he was wearing. The BJP claimed that the Burberry T-shirt cost Rs 41,257. Burberry, which is a British luxury fashion brand, is not available in India and it has to be purchased internationally if needed.

The Congress, meanwhile, hit back at the BJP with tweet in Hindi that read: "Hey, are you scared seeing the crowd gathering for the Bharat Jodo Yatra? Talk about issues... Speak about unemployment and inflation. If we have to discuss clothes, Modi's Rs 10 lakh suit and Rs 1.5 lakh glasses will also be discussed."

INDIA-CHINA TO COMPLETE DISENGAGEMENT IN LADAKH BY SEP 12

New Delhi: The Indian and Chinese troops will complete the disengagement process in the Gogra-Hot Springs area (PP-15) along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh by September 12.

Both the countries started the 16th round of Corps Commander-level talks on July 17, 2022, at Chushul Moldo meeting point in eastern Ladakh. Following this meeting, the two sides continued the dialogue to resolve related border issues.

Both India and China have now agreed to move towards their respective borders in the Gogra-Hot Springs area, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

All temporary structures erected in the area by both the countries will be demolished, the Ministry added.

Drone show on Netaji's legacy at India Gate

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Culture Ministry on Friday organised a drone show to showcase the legacy of legendary freedom fighter Subhas Chandra Bose and celebrate his newly-unveiled grand statue at the India Gate.

As per information, total of 250 drones were used to showcase his life and the legacy. The drones also formed in the sky an image of the new grand statue, unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday.

In total, the drones made eight different formations in a phase-wise manner in the sky. The show started around 8.35 p.m. and lasted for 10 minutes.

It was held by the same team which had run the 1,000-drone show at the Beating the Retreat ceremony early this year.

The 28-feet-tall statue of Netaji is one of the tallest, realistic, monolithic, handmade sculptures in India.



CENTRE TARGETS TO REDUCE ROAD ACCIDENTS, DEATHS BY 50% BY 2024

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre has called upon all the state transport ministers and officials to work in tandem towards reducing road accidents and deaths by 50 per cent by the end of 2024.

Union Minister for Road, Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said the issue of road safety should not be taken lightly. Road accidents should be reviewed constantly and measures worked out to combat it. The Minister proposed training engineering students for conducting safety audits of the roads on the basis of which action can be taken by the Ministry.

In an interactive session with the state transport Ministers in Bengaluru on Thursday, State Transport and PWD Ministers raised their issues related to highway infrastructure and shared their problems and urged the Central Government to resolve them.

State Ministers who attended the session included Govindas Kounthujam (Manipur), Prafull Kumar Mallik (Odisha), Satpal Maharaj (Uttarakhand), Harbhajan Singh (Punjab), Bhajan Lal Jatav (Rajasthan), Samdup Lapcha (Sikkim), A.V. Velu (Tamil Nadu), Nilesh Kabra (Goa), Arvind Chauhan (Maharashtra). Kounthujam said 90 per cent of the area are hilly and there are problems with land acquisition with regard to National Highway projects. "But we are trying to solve these problems and soon we



will be able to get land," he said. He said we want to develop highway infrastructure at par with other states.

Talking about the issues of Sikkim, Samdup Lapcha said state faces resource crunch and tourism is the only source of economy. "We survive on tourism. It will be good if get an alternate road from Bankura to Sikkim. This will also be good in terms of security," he said. Tamil Nadu Minister Velu spoke about the steps taken by the state government to make the state accident-free. "More than 300 engineers have been trained. We have also launched sensitization programme for school students in the state," he pointed out. Talking about Uttarakhand, Satpal Maharaj said: "In

view of incidents of landslides, which damage the highways, a landslide and mitigation centre has been set up to look for ways to minimize these damages," he said. Gadkari said he is getting full support from the Uttarakhand Government in the Char Dham Pariyojana.

"There is a need that we have to shed our differences, come together and formulate future policies so that the transport system can be run on the energy produced in the country. At present roads are used to transport 70 per cent of the goods. It is necessary to adopt comprehensive methods to reduce it. There is a need to not rely solely on road transport but also water transport, railways and airports which need to be interlinked seamlessly."

Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road, Transport and Highways

TRS LEADER CONFRONTS ASSAM CM AT HYDERABAD RALLY

Hyderabad: Tension prevailed during the Ganesh procession at MJ Market in Hyderabad on Friday when a Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leader confronted Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on the stage and tried to dislodge the mike.

A leader of Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Samiti (BGUS) was addressing the gathering when a local TRS leader stepped on to the stage and confronted Sarma, taking objection to the remarks he made earlier about Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu, popularly known as KCR. The TRS leader, later identified as Nand Kishore, also tried to dislodge the mike. But BGUS leaders caught hold of the TRS leader and whisked him away. The incident led to tension in the area, which was completely filled with devotees participating in the annual procession. Raising slogans against each other, the BJP and TRS workers nearly came to clashes. However, the police intervened to defuse the situation. Later, Kishore was arrested and taken to the police station. He alleged that Sarma was called to create hatred among people. He said the BJP and BGUS leaders are trying to disrupt communal harmony in Hyderabad.



CAN'T LET THE SC BECOME 'TAREEKH PE TAREEKH' COURT: JUSTICE CHANDRACHUD

► CRITICISING LAWYERS' PRACTICE OF SEEKING ADJOURNMENTS IN CASES, SUPREME COURT JUDGE JUSTICE D.Y. CHANDRACHUD ON FRIDAY SAID THE TOP COURT WILL NOT BECOME A "TAREEKH PE TAREEKH" COURT (HAVING DATE AFTER DATE FOR MATTERS).



"We don't want the Supreme Court to be a 'tareekh pe tareekh' court. We want to change this perception," Justice Chandrachud said. The bench asked the lawyer to

argue the matter, instead of seeking an adjournment and pointed out that the lawyer is appearing before the highest court. The bench said judges go through the matters listed before

them and burn the midnight oil to prepare the next day, while lawyers appear before them and seek adjournment.

In another matter, the bench declined to expunge the remarks made against a lawyer by a high court.

It pulled up the lawyer for filing the petition under Article 32 of the Constitution, which is the right to move the apex court for enforcement of fundamental rights. The bench said such frivolous petitions are making the apex court dysfunctional and it is time to send a strong message, as 5-10 minutes spent on such petitions deprives a genuine litigant, who is waiting for justice.

The top court said these days nearly 60 cases are listed for hearing before each court on miscellaneous days. Expressing displeasure at lawyers who do not argue their matters, Justice Chandrachud said he had to wake up till late in the night to go through the case files and judges are working hard.

Prez Murmu launches campaign to eradicate TB by 2025

Team Absolute | New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday launched an anti-TB campaign and exhorted the people to unitedly strive towards eradicating Tuberculosis (TB) from the country by 2025.

"When a welfare scheme is made in the interest of people, chances of its success increase manifold", said the President while launching the 'Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan' campaign.

The President also launched the Ni-kshay Mitra initiative to ensure additional diagnostic, nutritional, and vocational support to those on TB treatment, and encouraged elected representatives, corporates, NGOs, and individuals to come forward as donors to help the patients complete their journey towards recovery. The Ni-kshay 2.0 portal will facilitate in providing additional patient support to improve treatment outcome of TB patients, augmenting community involvement in meeting India's commitment to end TB by 2025 and leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) opportunities.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Minister of State for Health Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar were present at the launch event along with Union Ministers, Governors and Lt. Governors, State Health



Ministers and other dignitaries. The virtual event, also attended by state and district health administrations, representatives from corporates, industries, civil society, NGOs, and TB Champions, reiterated India's commitment to eliminate the high-burden infectious disease by 2025, five years ahead of the global goal of 2030.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bench of Justices Chandrachud and Hima Kohli, declining to accept the request of a lawyer to adjourn the matter, said the court will not adjourn the matter, instead it can be passed over and taken up at the end of the board.

17 children, 2 teachers in UP fall ill as foul smell comes from gaushala

Noida | Agencies

As many as 17 students and two teachers from a school in Dankaur area of Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Budh Nagar suddenly fell ill on Thursday.

All of them were admitted to the Dankaur Primary Health Centre as their health deteriorated.

The Swami Vivekananda Vidyaapeeth school Director alleged that due to the lack of cleanliness in the nearby cowshed, a foul smell was enveloping the school. As a result, 19 people have fallen ill. The school is located near Shri Drona gaushala in Dankaur town. All the 19 people were rushed to the hospital where first aid was given to them after which they were sent home.

However, due to their deteriorating health, the two female teachers were admitted to the GIMS hospital in



Greater Noida. The school director alleged that the school is full of filth and a foul smell. Complaints have

been made to the school committee many times in this regard but no action has been taken as yet.

ASSAM POLICE BUST FAKE CURRENCY NOTE RACKET, ARREST FOUR

Guwahati: Assam Police recovered two fake Indian currency note printing machines and a large number of fake currency notes from two separate locations in Nagaon and Hojai districts, officials said on Friday.

Four persons were also arrested in this connection by the police in an operation late Thursday night.

The arrested persons were identified as Jalal Uddin, R. Vanlalruati, Zoramchhani, and Abdul Jalil.

Abdul Jalil was nabbed by police from the Mikirati area in Hojai district while police arrested the other three from the Kachua area of Nagaon. Vanlalruati and Zoramchhani are residents of Mizoram. A police officer connected with the operation said that police launched the operation based on a tip-off. "We received information that persons were dealing with fake currency notes and we sent some police personnel in civil dress as customers. Later we apprehended the persons and recovered fake currency notes, and notes-making machines," he said.

Uma Bharti takes u-turn on MP govt's excise policy

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former Union Minister Uma Bharti, who has been vocal against the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government's excise policy, took a surprise u-turn on Friday over the issue of liquor policy.

Speaking to the media at her official residence in Bhopal's Shyamla Hills area, Bharti said a complete prohibition won't be possible, but it should not be part of the state government's revenue generation plan. Bharti said though she would support a complete prohibition in Madhya Pradesh, it won't be possible.

Bharti said that rather the state government should formulate a new liquor policy next year which should be made in consultation with people's opinions.

"I never said to put a complete ban on sale of liquor. I have spoken to (Chief Minister) Shivraj Singh



Chouhan and advised him to frame a new liquor policy for the next year after taking into consideration the views of all sections of the society, especially the women, because women are most affected by liquor related issues," she said.

The former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister defended the state government on the issue of liquor, stating that the state's liquor policy is not like that of Delhi government's excise policy.

"At least, I have not noticed any kind of corruption or financial irregularities in Madhya Pradesh government's excise policy," Bharti said.

She added that the Centre can't formulate a uniform excise policy as the subject falls under the jurisdiction of the state governments, but Madhya Pradesh should make a unique policy which other states could follow.

However, Bharti said she would continue her fight against the use of drugs and liquor across the state and on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti (October 2), she would hold a peaceful protest march for this purpose.

Over the past six months, Bharti has been taking on Chouhan over the liquor policy, and had even threatened that the BJP would face public wrath if her voice was not heard.

A couple of months back, she had even pelted stones at a liquor shop in Bhopal and protested before a wine shop until the police closed it down.

Saffronisation row hits B'lore Varsity as protests against Ganesha temple construction erupt

Bengaluru | Agencies

The students of Bangalore University (BU) have alleged that the ruling BJP government was trying to saffronise the university campus by allowing the construction of a Ganesha temple inside the campus.

The students have been staging protests for the past three days against the construction.

The issue took a serious turn when the university officials filed a police complaint against the protesting students.

Dr Jayakara Shetty, Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University has stated that the decision to construct the temple was not taken during his tenure. "The decision was made earlier and the construction work has begun now. The students can't protest about the matter of the



temple," he said. Shetty had directed to stop the

construction work of the temple in the backdrop of protests by students.

However, when the construction work continued, he visited the spot and got the work stopped.

The students and organisations, including Najja Horatagaarara Vedike, Post-Graduation and Research Students' Federation, have warned the university officers that if they continued with the construction of the temple they would file a police complaint against them. The student organisations have also been enraged with the filing of a police complaint against them for attempting to preserve the property of the university.

The agitating students allege that it was an attempt to saffronise the campus and implement a "hidden agenda" by ruling BJP. The students said the UGC guidelines and law did not permit the construction of places of religious worship like temple, church and mosque.

Man, in relation with niece, chops off her head on suspicion

Dahod (Gujarat) | Agencies

A man in Gujarat's Dahod, who was in an illicit relationship with his niece, was arrested for killing her brutally, police said on Friday.

Sagtala police officer N.J. Panchal said that on Wednesday, police were informed about a beheaded body of a woman lying in a farm, some 100 metres off the district road, in the Bamroli village.

"Police saw that the woman was murdered brutally... her head was lying some 25 metres away from her body."

During the primary investigation, police learned from local villagers that the 20-year-old victim was having an



illicit relationship with her uncle Jayantibhai Rathva. Questioned by police, he initially denied having any relationship, but when confronted with evidence, accepted it.

He is said to have told the police that he suspected that

his niece was in relationship with another man and he had asked her to break all other ties, but she did not agree and so he murdered her. Following this, Rathva was arrested on Thursday night.

Bihar varsity issues admit card with Governor Phagu Chauhan's photo

Patna | Agencies

The Lalit Narayan Mithila University (LNMU) in Bihar's Darbhanga has come under the spotlight again after issuing an admit card with Governor Phagu Chauhan's photo for the BA part 3 examination.

The incident came to light after a photo of the admit card went viral on social media and became the talking point. This was, however, not the first time when the university had shown inattention its work, causing it embarrassment.

The university had issued an admit card to Ravish Kumar Sanu, a student of the affiliated BD College in Begusarai, on Thursday. While his name, father's name, and address are correct, the photograph of Governor has been used.

Earlier, the same university had given 151 marks to a student while the total number



of questions was 100.

Besides the LNMU, the Muzaffarpur University also figured in controversy after it last year issued an admit card to a student where film actor Emraan Hashmi was named the father and porn star Sunny Leone the mother. Moreover, the address of the student was shown as Muzaffarpur's infamous red light area Chaturbhuj Asthan.

Income Tax survey was undertaken without giving reason: Oxfam India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a latest development in connection with the Income Tax raids which were going on for three days at multiple locations and at the offices of Centre for Policy Research, a think tank, Oxfam India, Bengaluru-based non-profit Independent and Public-Spirited Media Foundation (IPSMF) in connection with the alleged tax evasion, all the firms submitted they did not do anything unlawful.

Oxfam India on Friday issued a statement and said that the Income Tax department officials conducted an Income Tax 'survey' at its Delhi based office from September 7 to September 9.

"During these 35 plus hours of non-stop survey, the Oxfam India team members were not allowed to leave the premises; the internet was



shut down and all the mobile phones were confiscated. The Income Tax survey team took away hundreds of pages of data pertaining to finances and programmes of Oxfam India. They also took all the data by cloning the Oxfam India server and the private mobile phones of the senior leadership team and the finance lead," it said in the statement.

The Oxfam alleged that the Income Tax survey was undertaken without giving a

reason. It said that in January 2022 they had a detailed week-long audit of the FCRA accounts by the auditors appointed by the FCRA division.

"The past eight months have been distressing for Oxfam India. In December 2021, the renewal of FCRA licence was denied by the Ministry of Home Affairs," it said.

Think Tank CPR said that they were cooperating with

the Income Tax officials in their raid.

"The Income Tax Department visited our office to undertake a survey of CPR on 7th and 8th September 2022. We have extended full cooperation to the department during the survey, and will continue to do so in the future," said Yamini Aiyar.

The sources said that tax evasions of crores of rupees in the guise of donation of political parties have been detected.

Entry operators were on the radar of IT officials. The IT team learnt from a report of Election Commission that a few political parties were given donations through data entry operator by flouting rules.

"This was basically fraud cum tax evasion which was done in the name of donations to political parties," the source said.

Student suffers 40% burn after teacher throws hot water



Bengaluru | Agencies

A Class 2 student has suffered 40 per cent burn after a teacher threw hot water on him for relieving himself in the school uniform.

The incident took place last Friday at a primary school run by a body called Ghanamatheshwara Grammeena Samshe at Santekallur village in Karnataka's Raichur district.

The student, Akhith, been admitted to Lingasaguru taluk hospital, and his condition is said to be serious. After finding out that Akhith had defecated in his uniform, Huligeppa, the

teacher, turned furious and poured piping hot water on the child. Sources said the boy's family has been threatened against complaining about the incident. Akhith's parents got phone calls from local leaders. Meanwhile, the police said unless a complaint is lodged, no action could be taken. Women and Child Welfare Department officials have not visited the hospital and turned a blind eye towards the plight of the boy. The accused teacher has stopped coming to the school after the incident.

A source said the authorities should take a suo motu stand to investigate the matter.



ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE NAME OF RELIGION WILL NOT BE TOLERATED-CM CHOUHAN

► EOW WILL INVESTIGATE THE IRREGULARITIES AND ACTIVITIES OF BOARD OF EDUCATION CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA JABALPUR. IT WILL BE INVESTIGATED IN THE ENTIRE STATE WHETHER THE LANDS ALLOTTED TO THE INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING USED ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE GIVEN. CHIEF MINISTER SHRI CHOUHAN GAVE INSTRUCTIONS



Irregularities, the EOW raided the residence of the Chairman of the Board of Education Church of North India, Jabalpur on September 8. They were started after seeing fraud in the lease of trust institutions, non-payment of tax and 17 property documents, 48 bank accounts, cash amount of one crore 65 lakh, 18 thousand 342 US dollars and 118 pounds, which were revealed in the

raid. Also eight four wheelers have been recovered. Large scale irregularities and frauds have come to the fore. The state government will get it probed whether the money was being used for illegal purposes. It will also be checked if conversion of religion and other illegal works were being carried out through the trust. EOW will investigate this, the district administration will have its own

role. Chief Minister Chouhan said this in a message issued to the media after a meeting with the officials regarding the action in Jabalpur.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that there have also been complaints of fraud, non-payment of tax or misuse of trust by changing name, irregularity in stamp duty or renewal of lease in the institutions of the trust. All these cases are also being handed over to the EOW. The district administration will also investigate this. Conversion or other illegal activities in the name of religion will not be tolerated at any cost.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the conditions for giving land on lease to the trust are fixed by the government. Land is given on lease for educational purpose, medical related work, hospital and religious place. There are complaints from all over the state that instead of the purpose for which the land was allotted, it is being commercialised at many places. It will also be investigated in the entire state.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that on the basis of complaints of irregu-

Our state is amazing under Shivraj government: Kamal Nath

In Jabalpur division of Madhya Pradesh, Congress state president Kamal Nath has taken a jibe at the Shivraj government after the disclosure of urea fertilizer reaching private places instead of the fixed place.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

He has said that our state has become wonderful under the Shivraj government. Kamal Nath tweeted and said, "Our state is amazing in Shivraj government. Sometimes lakhs of saplings disappeared from the banks of Narmada, sometimes sand disappeared from rivers in the dark of night, sometimes rations disappeared, sometimes poor pensions disappeared."

Earlier, the nutritional food of innocent children and pregnant women is missing and urea is missing from the way even before reaching the farmers.

Taking a strict stand in the matter of urea in Jabalpur on Friday morning itself, Chief Minister Chouhan has given directions for arrest by registering a case against the transporters.

In the meeting of officers with the Chief Minister on Friday morning, it has come to the fore that urea was transported in Jabalpur



division between August 28 and 31, but urea did not reach the designated place but was supplied at private places.

No injustice to garlic producing farmers as they are unorganised-CM Chouhan

■ Garlic grading machines to be installed in the mandis of Dewas, Dhar, Mandasaur, Neemuch, Ratlam and Ujjain. CM Chouhan took a meeting in context of arrival and price of garlic in the mandis



Farmers Welfare Ajit Kesari and other officers were present.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the system of grading should be established in the mandis to ensure that the farmers get the right price for their produce. Also, in the states where there is demand for garlic, including West Bengal, Karnataka, a delegation should

be sent by the state government. It was informed in the meeting that grading machines would be installed in the mandis of Dewas, Dhar, Mandasaur, Neemuch, Ratlam and Ujjain. In the ongoing year 2022-23, the arrival of garlic in the mandis during the period from April to September has been more than the previous years.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that all possible efforts should be made to provide suitable price for the crop to the garlic grower farmers. Injustice should not be done to garlic producing farmers as they are not organised. The district administration should take action at its level to get the right price of garlic. CM Chouhan was discussing the arrival of garlic in the Mandi Samitis of the state and its price situation in a meeting at the residence office. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary

4 MEN OPEN FIRE AT STREET DOGS IN INDORE, CASE REGISTERED

Indore: Four unidentified persons allegedly opened fire at street dogs using air guns at a locality in Madhya Pradesh's Indore, police said on Friday.

A case was registered after the video of the incident went viral on social media, Bhanwarkuan police station in-charge Shashikant Chourasia said.

The video shows unidentified men firing shots at street dogs. No canine was injured in the firing, he said, adding that efforts are on to identify the accused. Indore unit president of welfare organisation 'People for Animals', Priyanshu Jain said locals had informed him about the firing that took place in Vishnupuri area on Thursday.

Activists of the organisation are trying to find out if any animal was injured in the incident, he said.

Chief Minister Chouhan plants Peepal, Moulshree, Gular and Kachnar saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Moulshree, Gular and Kachnar in the Smart City Garden at Shyamla Hills. Madhya Pradesh chief of UNICEF Margaret Gwada also planted a sapling. UNICEF is conducting various activities in collaboration with the state government in the field of school education, health and climate change in the state.

Importance of plants Moulshree planted today is a medicinal tree, it has been used in Ayurveda for centuries. The fruits of Gular are like figs, this is also important from the point of view of Ayurveda. Kachnar is a beautiful flowering tree. Nature has creat-



ed many plants and trees that abound in medicinal properties, Kachnar is one among them. Peepal is considered a

tree that purifies the environment. It is also known as a shady tree. It also has religious and Ayurvedic significance.

Bhopal to host ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol stage in March 2023

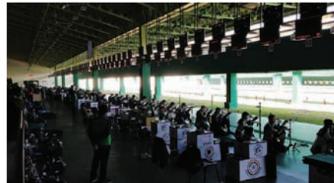
Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bhopal will host an International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol stage, between March 20-31, 2023, as per the updated calendar of the global governing body of the Olympic sport of Shooting.

The calendar was published after the conclusion of the executive committee meeting, which took place recently in Larnaca, Cyprus and was attended by the president of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), Raninder Singh.

It will be almost two years to the date that an ISSF World Cup stage will be held in India and for the first time in the city of Bhopal. The M.P. Academy Shooting range will play host to the global event, where ranking points for qualification to the Paris 2024 Olympics, can also be collected.

Commenting on the development, Singh said, "It is extremely satisfying for us to be able to add yet another city in India to the world Shooting map. It is due to the untiring efforts of the Government of Madhya Pradesh



and in particular Minister of Sports, Yashodhara Raje Scindia, that this was made possible. It has always been the endeavour of NRAI to spread the sport to different parts of the country and such events help to do that immensely. It also helps our own shooters to get a leg up in their personal sporting ambitions and we hope that they take full advantage of this as they target the Paris Olympics." The Indian Rifle, Pistol and Shotgun squads are currently preparing for the World Championships coming up later this month in Osijek (Shotgun), Croatia and next month in Cairo (Rifle/Pistol), Egypt, which will present them with the first opportunity to win quotas for the Paris 2024 Olympics.

TAX SAKHIS FACE CITIZENS' DISCONTENT IN RURAL BHOPAL

Sanavver Shafi | Bhopal

You approach anyone regarding tax payment and they instantly get angry. They will claim villages do not have the kind of taxes that we want them to pay. Only with time and effort can we make them pay their dues," Sonam Bai talks from her experiences as a 'tax sakhi' in Fanda Kalan village panchayat.

In a new initiative launched in April, the Bhopal district panchayat has employed members of women's self-help groups to collect taxes. Known as tax sakhis, two women from each village panchayat are put on the task. Going door-to-door, they collect Rs 200 in property tax, Rs 50 in swachhta (cleanliness) tax, Rs 1,400 in commercial tax from shops, fairs and markets and Rs 100 for water supply from every household. They start collection around the 10th of every month, with their working hours dependent on how fast they are able to convince the people to pay up. The entire process gets over within five to 10 days in some



places, while it can take 15 to 20 days in others.

From the total amount collected, the tax sakhis receive 10 per cent commission, which can be from Rs 3,000 to Rs 10,000 a month.

In many villages of Fanda and Berasia blocks, tax collection is still a challenge. Several villagers

101Reporters spoke to complain that besides lack of basic amenities, taxes compound their miseries. Rupesh Ahirwar and Pankaj Meena of Mengra Kalan panchayat in Berasia block work as labourers, and can barely afford to miss a day's work. "Daily expenses are rising. On top of that, we are expected to pay up. These taxes are said to be

for water supply and sanitation, but both are missing here," they lament.

But tax sakhis have a different viewpoint. Rani Mewada of Fanda Kalan says villagers are still getting used to the idea of taxes. "When they do start paying, they can put forward their issues before the administration," Mewada explains.

IRREGULARITIES IN UREA TRANSPORT IN JABALPUR DIVISION, INSTRUCTIONS TO REGISTER FIR

Bhopal: A major disturbance has come to the fore in the transportation of urea in Jabalpur division of Madhya Pradesh. The manure which was to be sent to the designated place for distribution was sent to private places. So the farmers are facing problems. On the disclosure of this matter, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has given directions for arrest by registering an FIR against the transporters. In the official information, it has been told that Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan called Principal Secretary Agriculture, Principal Secretary Cooperative, Principal Secretary Chief Minister, MD Markfed along with Commissioner IG Collector SP of Jabalpur Division at the Chief Minister's residence on Friday morning. Officials from Jabalpur joined the video conference sing.

The Jabalpur Divisional Commissioner told the Chief Minister that the responsibility of allocation of urea fertilizer was with KRIBHCO. On August 25, 2600 metric tonnes of rakes were installed in Jabalpur, Kribhco was told that how much allocation has to go to which district. Chief Minister Chouhan has directed to arrest the culprits immediately and take strict action against them. The commissioner said that there has been a violation of the Fertilizer Movement Control Order on diverting manure. FIR will be registered in this matter.

No relief for Madhya Pradesh malnourished children amid big ration scam

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The massive financial irregularities over BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh's take-home ration scheme, a story that NDTV broke last week, has brought into focus the issue of malnourishment of children, which is yet to be tackled by the state government.

The opposition parties Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) have demanded Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's resignation and a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation into the alleged scam.

Chouhan has said the findings of the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) report, is only half the picture as the state government is "yet to present its side".

Nonetheless, malnourishment among children in Madhya Pradesh

continues to be high.

Chouhan, who also heads the Women and Child Development Department, had in written reply to the assembly said the state has over 65 lakh children up to five years old. Of this, 10.32 lakh are malnourished. Some 6.3 lakh are under "severely malnourished" category, 2.64 lakh suffer from stunted growth and some 13 lakh are rickety, a symptom of weak bones.

Records show Madhya Pradesh continues to have the third-worst maternal mortality ratio and the worst child mortality rate. According to a 2021 Sample



Registration System report, the state had the highest infant mortality rate of 46 per thousand live births in India, compared to the national average of 36. In Satna, one of the eight districts where the audit showed massive fraud in delivery of take-home ration, some 6,000 children are malnourished.

Doctors said she is underweight by 15 kg. The child, a resident of Chitrakoot, has been admitted to the paediatric intensive care unit of Satna District Hospital after she was found with severe malnourishment a few days ago.

When her mother was pregnant three years ago, her father left them.

A nine-year old malnourished tribal girl, Sunaina Mawasi, died two weeks ago. She was admitted thrice to a nutrition rehabilitation centre but did not recover.

Another severely malnourished tribal child, a 7-year-old orphan, weighs only 7 kg.

Her mother too left her soon. The child grew up with her daily labourer aunt, who doesn't earn much.

Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath alleged ration worth crores of rupees have been distributed in the names of children who do not go to school. "Madhya Pradesh has been a topper in malnutrition for years. Yet, this kind of fraud is happening, exposing the thoughts and intention of the government...There should be a detailed high-level investigation into this scam and action should be taken against the culprits, responsibility fixed," Kamal Nath said.

The last-mile health delivery staff, or Angawadi workers under the government's Integrated Child Development Scheme in rural areas, have alleged they have not been getting full salary for the last five months.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Microplastics make its way to water trapped in plant leaf

Microplastics, an ubiquitous pollutant, is found in almost every ecosystem on the planet. They have been detected near the peak of Mount Everest, in the Mariana Trench, Antarctica's snow and even in human blood. But researchers have now found a new vessel for microplastics, water trapped in plant leaf axils. "The first finding of microplastics in small short-term water reservoirs created by plants is further evidence that contamination of this kind spreads through various pathways and probably no environment on Earth is safe," said the researchers from University of Presov in Slovakia. The study was based on organisms living in the little water puddles forming in teasel leaf axils. Teasels of the genus *Dipsacus* have characteristic opposite leaves that grow on the stem above each other in several levels. They clasp the stem and form cup-like structures that collect water, known as telmata. "Teasel phytotelmata are a relatively common but overlooked aquatic microcosm with a very short-term occurrence of only 3 to 4 months," said the researchers. During the study, the researchers found differently coloured fragments and fibres with some reaching 2.4 mm in length, which were identified as microplastics. "These phytotelmata are very small and have a short lifespan," according to the study published in the journal *BioRisk*. "Since there were no other sources of contamination, the fragments and fibres were most likely from polluted atmosphere," revealed the researcher. "Another theory is that snails may have transported them from the soil or from other plants, in or on their bodies," they added. Due to their abundance and theoretical ability to capture microplastics in several ways from the environment, teasel phytotelmata could be a good indicator of microplastic presence.

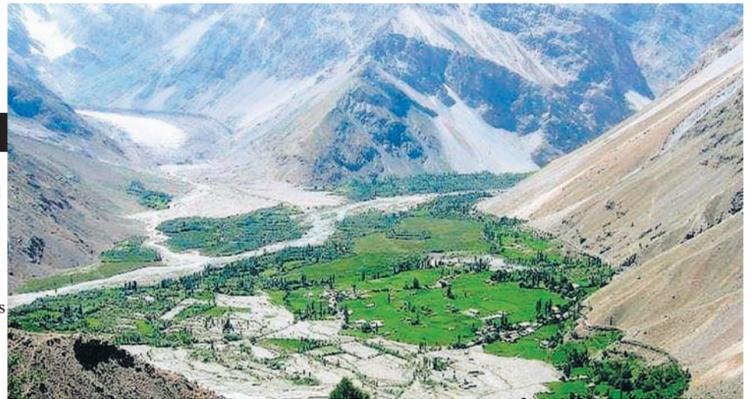
CHINA IS USING COMMERCE TO CONQUER GILGIT-BALTISTAN

Dr Amjad Ayub Mirza

The Great-Game as we know it today began around early 1800s when in 1801 Russian Tsar Paul I sent Napoleon Bonaparte a secret letter proposing a joint invasion of British India. Considering the expedition too ambitious, Napoleon turned down the offer. However, Russian attempts to conquer India did not end there. Due to the strategic location of both Iran and Afghanistan as the gateway to British India, they were dragged into the Great-Game. In 1801, Russia annexed the Kingdom of Georgia and the Persians saw it as a direct invasion of their regional sphere of influence in Central Asia. Three years later, Russia continued with its imperial expansion and laid siege to Yerevan (the capital of Armenia). This military maneuver drew Iran into an alliance with the British. Fast forward to 1979 when troops of the former Soviet Union entered Kabul to protect the communist government which was faced with an insurgency supported by the US, British and their western allies as well as China. For the next 10 years, Pakistan became the frontline state among the contending players of the Great-Game. Finally, in 1989 the Soviet troops were forced to withdraw ushering a period of civil war and uncertainty that continues to this day. Flashback to the 1800s when Russia began to build trading posts all across Central Asia as a means of using commerce to conquer the independent kingdoms of Central Asia. Edward Law, 1st Earl of Ellenborough,

served as a member of the British Cabinet and was appointed president of the Board of Control for India in 1828 and later as governor general of India between 1842 and 1844. He observed the Russian expansion toward India very closely and reported that Russia was using commerce as a means to conquer central Asian republics by setting up trading posts.

Today, the China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) which is part of a greater China's Belt and Road Initiative should be seen as a vital economic expansionist program initiated to conquer a key geographical location on the cusp of Central Asia, India and China namely Pakistan occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB). Sold to the people of PoGB as a landmark project to uplift the lives and infrastructure of the poverty stricken people of PoGB CPEC has in fact deepened their colonial subjugation. Considering China's ambition to extend CPEC right down to the deep sea port of Gwadar in Balochistan, the project is in actuality an illegal economic encroachment on a territory that is part of Jammu Kashmir and therefore of India. Thirty-seven special economic zones (SEZs) are to be established along the route of CPEC in Pakistan. Nine are to be established on priority basis in all the provinces including PoGB. Moqpondass Special Economic Zone is one such SEZ being built in PoGB. The other is being built



in my city and is called Mirpur Industrial Zone. These economic zones are to be linked together right up to the port of Gwadar. Moqpondass SEZ borders with Afghanistan to the North, China to the Northeast and PoJK to the South. No wonder PoGB is referred to as "the life line of CPEC". Moqpondass is rich in precious stones and all the mining contracts in the region are already being pounced by China or their sponsored private contractors. This has caused displacement of thousands of residents and resulted in wave after wave of protests in PoGB. As promised earlier Gilgit-Baltistan has not been made a stake holder in CPEC. The 1.8 million jobs promised to be generated by CPEC for PoGB never materialised and China sent thousands of its own workers instead to work on CPEC projects in the region. As the Great-Game enters a new era with

Chinese imperialist expansion and India taking her place as world's fifth largest economy the old strategy of using commerce to conquer has come alive again. Manoj Gupta, group editor of security affairs at CNN-News 18 reported on June 15, 2022, that China has asked Pakistan for permission to setup military outposts in Balochistan for CPEC security. Soon we might witness Chinese military outposts in Gilgit-Baltistan in the name of providing security to Chinese personal working on CPEC projects. How the new players in the Great-Game will manifest their manoeuvres only time can tell but till then PoGB seems to have become the first fatality of Chinese policy of using commerce to conquer. (The writer is an author and a human rights activist from Mirpur in PoJK. He currently lives in exile in the UK)

Queen Elizabeth II lived an extraordinary life

Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland on Friday offered tributes to Queen Elizabeth II, who died the previous day aged 96, describing her an extraordinary person who lived an extraordinary life and her devotion to duty was only matched by her skill as Head of the Commonwealth of Nations. In a tribute, Scotland said: "It is with the greatest sorrow and sadness that we mourn the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. After a long life of faith, duty and service, a great light has gone out. Her Majesty was an extraordinary person, who lived an extraordinary life: a constant presence and example for each of us, guiding and

serving us all for as long as any of us can remember." Throughout her reign, and seven decades of extraordinary change and challenge, Her Majesty was the epitome of duty, stability, wisdom and grace. "Her Majesty loved the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth loved her. During her reign she travelled more than any monarch in history, visiting every part of our family of nations. Between 1971 and 2018, she missed only one Heads of Government Meeting. Her devotion to duty was only matched by her skill as Head of the Commonwealth of Nations, always a generous host and consummate diplomat." The Secretary-General said in Her Majesty's final

Commonwealth Day message, she described "our family of nations as a modern, vibrant and connected Commonwealth that combines a wealth of history and tradition with the great social, cultural and technological advances of our time". The growth and vibrancy of our modern Commonwealth is a credit to her and testament to her dedication, wisdom and leadership. "In 1947, before she ascended to the throne, she stated that 'whether my life be long or short I will dedicate it to the service of the Commonwealth. Her Majesty honoured that promise.'" Scotland added. As the sixth Secretary-General of the

Commonwealth, she said she would always be "grateful for her warmth and kindness to me". "Our interactions were a delight, and it was wonderful to see her passion and animation whenever discussing anything relating to the Commonwealth. Her long years of interaction and partnership with generations of world leaders and their people, particularly the young, gave her extraordinary insight, which brought ever-more life and meaning to her service," the Secretary-General added.

international

TRUMP'S FUNDRAISING GROUP UNDER US GOVT INVESTIGATION: REPORT

Washington | Agencies
A US federal grand jury is investigating former President Donald Trump's Save America fundraising group, a media report said, citing subpoenas. The Times reported that the leadership of the political action committee received subpoenas, as the U.S. Justice Department (DOJ) looks into the group's spending. Xinhua news agency reported, citing the New York Times. Mid- and low-level aids who had been employed in the White House during Trump's presidency were subpoenaed earlier this week. Trump's office did not respond immediately to



requests for any comment on the matter. The former president founded 'Save America' just days after the 2020 elections, in which Trump was defeated by Joe Biden. The political action group has since collected more than \$100 million.

The investigation comes just a month after Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents raided Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida. Earlier, a federal judge in Florida ordered a so-called "special master" to be appointed, in order to

examine over 11,000 documents taken from Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence. The search and seizure were part of a DOJ investigation into whether the former president illegally retained documents on national defense at Mar-a-Lago, and whether he obstructed government moves to get hold of the documents. Taking to social media, Trump said the FBI raid had turned the US into a "banana republic", rather than a rule-of-law nation. The FBI claimed it had "probable cause" that warranted a raid, as the bureau believed it would find "evidence of obstruction" -- a crime in the US -- at Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence.

UN DECIDES TO ESTABLISH YOUTH OFFICE

United Nations: The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to establish the United Nations Youth Office. The resolution, which was adopted without a vote, decides that the Youth Office will lead engagement and advocacy for the advancement of youth issues across the United Nations, in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development and human rights; and promote meaningful, inclusive and effective engagement of youth and youth-led and youth-focused organisations in the work of the world body, Xinhua news agency reported. The Youth Office is also tasked to encourage greater UN system-wide collaboration, coordination and accountability on the advancement of youth issues, including UN support to member states in promoting the effective and meaningful engagement, participation and empowerment of youth.

KIM JONG-UN VOWS NOT TO GIVE UP NUKES

Seoul | Agencies

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un publicly expressed his determination not to give up the country's nuclear weapons, accusing the US of seeking the collapse of his regime, not just denuclearization, state media reported on Friday. He made clear that Pyongyang has no intention of resuming negotiations for denuclearization, as the North's rubber-stamp parliament approved a new nuclear force policy during a key session earlier this week, according to Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). "The aim of the US is not just to eliminate our nuclear weapons themselves but also ultimately to bring down our regime anytime by forcing (North Korea) to put down nuclear weapons and give up or weaken the power to exercise self-defence," Kim was quoted as saying in his speech at the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) meeting on Thursday. Kim added the North should incessantly expand the scope of its "tactical nuclear operation" in order to bolster its nuclear combat



posture, reports Yonhap News Agency. His strong message came as the SPA adopted a new law that allows the regime to launch an "automatic nuclear strike" if it is attacked. Under the law, a nuclear strike can be automatically and immediately carried out to destroy the origin of a provocation if the command and control system of the nuclear forces is in danger of an attack by "hostile forces", the KCNA said. The North also staged a large night-time event in Pyongyang on Thursday to celebrate the 74th anniversary of the country's foundation. Nuclear talks between the US and the North have remained stalled amid little progress in inter-Korean reconciliation since the Hanoi summit between former President Donald Trump and Kim ended without a deal in 2019.



Russian airstrikes in Syria kill 120 rebels

Damascus: Russian airstrikes on positions of the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front in northwestern Syria has reportedly killed 120 rebels. The Russian warplanes attacked a Nusra Front training camp in the Sheikh Youssef area of Idlib province and destroyed observation points, drones, and missile launchers, state news agency SANA cited Russian military sources in Syria as saying, Xinhua news agency reported. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based war monitor, also reported the Russian airstrikes in Idlib, saying the Russian warplanes carried out 14 airstrikes on Thursday and fired one surface-to-surface missile on rebel-held areas in the province. Occupied by a number of rebel groups, including ultra-radical ones like Nusra Front, Idlib has emerged as the last major rebel stronghold in Syria.

Pakistan drops 7 places in Human Development Index

ISLAMABAD | Agencies

Pakistan has dropped seven places in the Human Development Index (HDI), ranking 161 out of 192 countries in the 2021-2022 period, according to a UNDP report. According to the report, titled 'Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World', Pakistan's life expectancy at birth is 66.1 years and expected years of schooling are eight. The gross per capita national income is \$4,624. The report has identified that different climate shocks are affecting world order, pushing back the growth that was achieved in the past few years. While doing so, it has categorised the floods in Pakistan as "an example of the climate shocks seen around the world", The News reported.



Switzerland leads the way on the latest HDI, while Norway and Iceland enjoy second and third positions. Among the South Asian countries -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal,

Pakistan, Sri Lanka -- only Pakistan and Afghanistan (180th position) are in the low human development category, The News reported. Bhutan (127), Bangladesh (129), India (132) and Nepal (143) are in the medium human development

category, and the crisis-hit Sri Lanka has managed to improve its position by nine points, reaching the 73rd position on the index, finding itself in the high human development category. Meanwhile, Maldives at the 90th position. The report has found out that around 90 per cent of countries have seen "reversals in human development" in the year of the survey, pointing to a world stuck in a never-ending cycle of crisis after crisis, causing global disruptions. The two major factors responsible for these disruptions were the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, The News quoted the report as saying. The HDI is a measure of countries' standard of living, health and education. This is the first time in the last 30 years that human development in a majority of countries has gone in reverse for two consecutive years.

Death toll of 6.8-magnitude quake in China reaches 88

Beijing | Agencies

A total of 88 people have been killed, and 35 remain missing after a 6.8-magnitude earthquake jolted Luding county in China's Sichuan province earlier this week, local authorities said on Friday. The rescue headquarters said that among the deaths, 50 were killed in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and 36 others in the city of Ya'an, reports Xinhua news agency. According to the Sichuan provincial public security department, its rescue forces have searched and rescued more than 1,500 people trapped in the quake that struck on Monday and evacuated 5,782 others to safety.



The department has mobilised 1,695 police officers and auxiliary personnel to join the earthquake relief effort, and sent more than 2,300 others to help out with the traffic in the quake-affected areas. The playground of a school has been transformed into a helipad that can accommodate two helicopters at the same time. Unmanned aerial vehicles and 5G-connected ambulances have also been deployed to assist with rescue operations.



'GANAPATI BAPPA MORYA, PUDHCHA VARSHI LAUKAR YA'



Devotees attend the procession heading for idol immersion to bid colour full farewell on the last day (On Anant Chaturdashi) of Ten day Ganesh festival, with great zeal and fervour.

YAKUB MEMON'S GRAVE 'BEAUTIFICATION' CHARGE, CHIEF MINISTER VOWS ACTION

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Thursday assured strict action in the matter concerning the "beautification" of 1993 Mumbai blasts convict Yakub Memon's grave in the Bada Qabristan of Mumbai.

The Chief Minister said that an investigation has been initiated after the order of an inquiry into the matter. "An inquiry has been ordered. The investigation has also been started. Strict actions will be taken against those responsible," said Shinde.

Meanwhile, according to the sources, the Mumbai Police has been directed to do a proper inquiry into the mat-



ter and also submit a report. After the lighting arrangements at Yakub Memon's grave were removed from Bada Qabristan, Maharashtra Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Ram Kadam asked if this was former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's patriotism to convert the grave of a terrorist into a

"mazaar". "The grave of terrorist Yakub Memon who executed the 1993 Bombay bombings at Pakistan's behest, was converted into a Mazar when Uddhav Thackeray was the Chief Minister. Is this his love for Mumbai, patriotism?" said BJP MLA Ram Kadam, seeking Thackeray's apology. He also sought an apology from

National Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Memon was the lone convict in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case who was hanged.

On March 12, 1993, Mumbai (then Bombay) was rocked by a series of bomb blasts that killed 257 persons, injured more than 700 persons, and destroyed property worth approximately ₹ 27 crore. The case was handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at the request of the state government. Several others convicted in the case includes Mustafa Dossa and Abu Salem. The attacks were allegedly planned by wanted terrorist Dawood Ibrahim.

I-T DEPT UNEARTH'S RS 100 CR BLACK INCOME DURING RAIDS ON 2 GROUPS IN MAHA

Mumbai: The Income Tax Department on Friday said that it unearthed Rs 100 crore during a search and seizure action on August 25 on two groups engaged in sand mining, sugar manufacturing, road construction, healthcare, running of medical colleges in Maharashtra.

The search action covered more than 20 premises spread over Solapur, Osmanabad, Nashik and Kolhapur districts of Maharashtra. During the course of the searches, a large amount of incriminating evidence, in the form of hard copy documents and digital data were found and seized. "These evidence reveal various modus-operandi of tax evasion adopted by the group, including booking of bogus expenses, undisclosed cash sales, unexplained loans, credit entries," said the official. In the case of the group engaged in sand mining and sugar manufacturing, documentary evidence of unaccounted cash sales of sugar exceeding Rs 15 crore were found and seized. The search action revealed that the group introduced its unaccounted income in the form of bogus unsecured loans in its books of accounts. Several lenders to the group, as well as promoters of the group admitted that unaccounted cash generated by the group exceeding Rs 10 crore was routed in its books of account in this manner.

US education delegation coming to enhance academic ties with India

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Close on the heels of the US issuing a record -- 82,000 visas -- to Indian students for this summer, a US Department of Commerce Education Trade Mission arrives in India next week to further enhance academic relations between the two countries, a top official said here on Friday.

The US Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will explore partnerships with Indian education sector during the delegation visits to Mumbai, Bengaluru and New Delhi between September 12-16.

The delegation will comprise representatives of 21 US HEIs from 15 US states which will go around the three major Indian cities, against the backdrop of India's New Education Policy-2020. The development is considered significant with the US mission in New Delhi, and consulates in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and

Hyderabad issuing visas to over 82,000 Indian students for this summer. Officials said that Indian students account for nearly 20 per cent of all foreign scholars pursuing studies at various levels in the US. "US schools are very interested in learning more about the enormous opportunities that exist in India... This program will help them develop their understanding of the sector and how they can best partner and collaborate with Indian institutions," said Mike Hankey, US Consul-General in Mumbai.

He added that the theme of the upcoming trade mission would be to "identify and promote" avenues for collaboration between the HEI's of the two countries.

India's NEP-2020 has outlined an aggressive plan to revamp and expand this country's higher education system, including providing a fillip to research, experiential learning and internationalisation of the curricula.

Indian firms must adopt new payment security standard in 5G era

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As Indian organisations prepare to implement the new global payment security standard in the 5G era, a Verizon report said on Friday that the financial sector continues to be victimised by motivated organised crime, with servers being involved in 90 per cent of financial breaches.

Despite the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) compliance improving significantly in 2020, the cybersecurity threats organisations face are more cunning and evasive than they were even two years ago, according to the 2022 Verizon Payment Security Report (2022 PSR).

The PCI SSC, a global payment security forum, has published version 4.0 of the payment security standard.

To provide organisations time to understand the changes in version 4.0 and implement any updates needed, the current version of PCI DSS, v3.2.1, will remain active for two years until it is retired on March 31, 2024.

"Despite compliance improvements, we know that bad actors are still out there and stronger than ever," said Sampath Sowmyanarayan, CEO, Verizon Business.

"To remain safe in today's heightened cybersecurity climate, organisations will need to approach their objectives and goals at a project, program and strategic level," Sowmyanarayan added.

The report found that overall, PCI DSS compliance improved significantly in 2020, with 43.4 per cent of organisations maintaining full compliance, compared to 27.9 per cent in 2019.



Additionally, while over half (56.7 per cent) of organisations failed their interim validation assessment due to one or more security controls omissions, the security control gap still improved substantially, from a high 7.7 per cent in 2019 to a low 4.0 per cent in 2020.

"Key changes to the standard focus on meeting the evolving security needs of the payments industry, continuously promoting security processes, increasing flexibility for organisations using different methods to achieve security objectives, and enhancing validation procedures," said Lance Johnson, Executive Director of the PCI Security Standards Council.

The report said that the CISOs and their teams will need to apply a logical, coordinated process to evaluate requirements and constraints of PCI DSS v4.0, while navigating their way through the changes.

4-YEAR-OLD FOUND DEAD IN FLOODED DRAIN

Thane: The body of a four-year-old boy, who was washed away in a flooded nullah at Kalwa in Thane city of Maharashtra, was recovered on Friday, an official said.

The boy, Aditya Mourya, had got washed away in the swollen water body around 7.30 pm on Thursday from the Bhaskar Nagar area of Kalwa, he said. The body of the minor was found in the nullah near Mafatal company around 9 am by a team of local fire brigade personnel and the Regional Disaster Management Cell (RDMC) of the Thane civic body, said Avinash Sawant, chief of the cell. The body was handed over to the Kalwa police personnel, who sent it to a local civic hospital for post-mortem. Police said they are in the process of registering a case of accidental death. Meanwhile, the fire brigade and the RDMC have been getting calls seeking assistance following heavy rain. The city received 89.41 mm of rainfall, of which 71.12 mm was received in an hour between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm on Friday. During the ongoing monsoon season, the city has so far received 2,291.38 mm rainfall as against 2,981.68 mm in the previous year.

Mumbai's famed 'dabbawalas' mourn the demise of Queen Elizabeth II

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

The famed 'dabbawala' (tiffin-carrier) community of Mumbai mourned the passing away of Great Britain's Queen Elizabeth II at 96 after a brief illness, here on Friday.

As a token tribute, the dabbawalas paid homage to the Queen at the Borivali railway station in north Mumbai, since Friday is a public holiday, NMTBSACT spokesperson Ritesh Shantaram Andre told correspondence.

Maharashtra and Mumbai are currently immersed in the immersion ceremonies of gigantic, big, medium and small idols of Lord Ganesh on the occasion of Anant Chaturdashi, marking the curtains on the 10-day long Ganeshotsav festival.

The dabbawalas enjoyed a close rapport with the British royalty ever since the Prince of Wales -- now King Charles -- visited and interacted with them first in 2003.

Highly impressed by their work and sheer dedication, later the British royal family had invited the dabbawalas' leaders to Prince Charles and Camilla's wedding in April 2005.

Two dabbawalas' representatives -- Raghunath Medge and Sopan Mare -- attended the royal wedding, rubbing shoulders with other VIPs from across the globe.

At the wedding, the dabbawalas



had gifted a kurta set to Prince Charles and a sari to his wife Camilla, plus one trademark 'dabba' (tiffin).

In April 2016, during the first visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Mumbai dabbawalas had welcomed them as warmly as they would welcome a 'mulga' (son) and 'suon' (daughter-in-law).

At that time, the dabbawalas presented the Duchess with a coveted Paithani sari, considered an auspicious gift for a Maharashtrian bride,

and a 'pheta' (headgear), a picture and statuette of Lord Vitthoba and his consort Rukmini.

Later, in May 2018, during the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the dabbawalas sent a gift of a traditional 'pheta' (turban) for the groom and a special kurta-lehenga for his bride.

In May 2019, another body, the Mumbai Dabbawalas Association had presented a special set of silver jewellery to Prince Archie -- the son of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.



SHE'S EARNED HER REST

London | Agencies

The loss of Queen Elizabeth II was felt across the entertainment industry as well, with Sir Elton John, Sir Michael 'Mick' Jagger and Sir Paul McCartney leading the celebrities who mourned the loss. Sir Elton John, who has been very close to the British royal family, and was close associate of Princess Diana, articulated the sentiments of many when he wrote on Instagram: "She was an inspiring presence to be around and led the country through some of our greatest and darkest moments with grace, decency and a genuine caring warmth."

Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger tweeted: "For my whole life Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II has always been there. In my childhood I can recall watching her wedding highlights on TV. I remember her as a beautiful young lady, to the much beloved grandmother of the nation. My deepest sympathies are with the Royal family."

Harry Potter's creator J.K. Rowling put the outpouring of grief in her country in perspective, when she tweeted: "Some may find the outpouring of British shock and grief at this moment quaint or odd, but millions felt affection and respect for the woman who uncomplainingly filled her constitutional role for seventy years. She did her duty by the country right up until her dying hours, and became an enduring, positive symbol of Britain all over the world. She's earned her rest."

Sir Elton, Mick Jagger, J.K. Rowling pay homage to Queen



CAMERON DIAZ TAGGED 'RUDE, NASTY' AFTER SHE HOPED MAG WOULD 'GET CANCER'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Cameron Diaz has been branded rude after Rolling Stone founder Jann Wenner claimed that the actress once hoped a magazine staffer would "get cancer". Jann seemingly dissed the 50-year-old star in his upcoming to me, "Like a Rolling Stone", per Page Six, reports a website.

Jann reportedly writes in his book that in the mid-2000s, the celeb-heavy magazine was part of the zeitgeist. He goes on to say that one of the magazine's earliest scoops was a paparazzi photo of "an actress" sharing a kiss with Justin Timberlake on a surfboard. Cameron and Justin were a Hollywood A-list couple. The actress and the NSYNC alum met in 2003 at the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards where they hit it off. However, the two eventually broke things off in early 2007.

Jann, also describes the unnamed actress as "unpleasant to deal with," claiming this person even told one of the magazine's researchers at the time, "I hope you get cancer." Upon learning of the news, social media users poured their thoughts on Twitter. "Isn't she known to be rude and nasty? Guess this confirms the rumors from people that have met her," one person wrote. Another chimed in, "She seems a nasty piece of crap. Terrible thing to say. It is a devastating disease." Jann's memoir, 'Like a Rolling Stone', is set to hit the bookshelves on September 13. In the upcoming memoir, he also makes a bombshell claim about Tom Cruise, alleging that the "Top Gun: Maverick" star is secretly gay. In addition to that, Jann claims that Angelina Jolie was behind the beach photos that confirmed her secret relationship with Brad Pitt.

A hug could have stopped Oscar slap: Kenan Thompson

Los Angeles | Agencies

In a few days Kenan Thompson will host his first Primetime Emmys show, but he's not afraid of an 'Oscar slap', he says. Speaking at an Emmy preview event in LA, the SNL comic reflected on the infamous physical clash between Oscars host Chris Rock and Will Smith, and on the pitfalls of 'roasting' at awards shows in general.

"I think a good comic is supposed to be aware," Thompson said. "I mean I'm not calling Chris a bad comic, he just wasn't necessarily aware of that situation, so it's not fair to lump him into that conversation. But overall those kind of roast-y kind

of people, you have to be smart, because you know, there's a way to jab at people without offending, like for real for real. I don't think offense necessarily gets us anywhere as a society."

In July, Smith posted an apology video online, but last weekend, during a stand-up show in London, Rock compared that recording to a 'hostage video'.

In Thompson's opinion, that (literally) show-stopping moment could have potentially been quickly resolved.

"I feel like a hug moment would have stopped all of that, you know what I'm saying?" Thompson said.

"But it was so unfathomable that (Rock

didn't know that was even coming. He would have never in his wildest dreams have imagined his friend of 30-plus years would attempt some s**t like that."

When he takes the stage at the Microsoft Theater on Monday night, for the Emmys' first return to that venue since the pandemic, Thompson intends to make sure everybody gets - and enjoys - the joke. "You know, I'm not going out there like hurting anybody's feelings for the sake of other people laughing," he said. "We're supposed to all be laughing together, even that person the joke is about."

I care passionately about my songs

Los Angeles | Agencies

Musician Elton John has turned down "head-spinning" offers to offload his back catalogue. Deciding against following the likes of Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen by handing over the rights to some of his biggest hits, the 75-year-old singer says he doesn't need the money and still "cares passionately" about his songs. "He cares passionately about his songs, the whole notion of giving up control

over that very important part of his life is something he doesn't want to entertain, at the moment," Elton's husband, David Furnish, said. "Unless you really, genuinely needed the money, why would you get out now? Effectively you are get-



Elton John refuses to sell rights to his songs

ting out of the game when you sell your publishing. That would be a shame because we're having so much fun celebrating his catalogue and the opportunities new media offers."

But the couple haven't ruled out following ABBA and sending an Elton hologram out on stage.



Los Angeles | Agencies

"The world belongs to the weird," so says the tagline for 'Weird: The Al Yankovic Story'. The wee hours of Friday morning belonged to Daniel Radcliffe as the comedy made its world premiere when the clock struck midnight at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Radcliffe stars as the beloved parody musician in the upcoming Roku original film, which made its world premiere at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, kicking off TIFF's

Daniel Radcliffe cheered at Toronto Film Fest

Midnight Madness programming line-up.

It was a full house at the theatre and the crowd ate up every second of the parody biopic, cheering loudly for every surprise cameo (of which there were many) at the first "backstory" behind Yankovic's biggest hits from 'My Bologna' to 'Eat It'.

Some of the most raucous applause was saved for the Radcliffe-fronted rendition of 'Amish Paradise'. It also marks Appel's feature directorial debut, born from his 2010 viral video that depicted Yankovic's life story as far more scandalous than it really was, skewering the stereotypes of typical biopics.

Yankovic, Appel, Radcliffe and Wood took the stage after the screening to break down everything the audience had just consumed and answer their pressing Weird Al questions. So, how did Radcliffe learn to play Yankovic's iconic accordion?

I learned to fail and flourish from dad: Denzel's son



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Denzel Washington's actor-son John David Washington has credited his

dad with giving him the 'freedom to fail' as he embarked on a career in show business.

When asked what he learned from his dad, John said: "The freedom to fail, to

Denzel Washington gave actor-son John 'freedom to fail'

find out, flourish in that failure. In that being uncomfortable, you'll find the greatest parts of yourself as an artist."

He's about to make his Broadway debut in August Wilson's 'The Piano Lesson', 12 years after his dad won a Tony Award from his role in the playwright's Pulitzer Prize-winning 1985 work 'Fences', reports a website.

Speaking at a press conference for the play, John said: "Am I nervous when [my father is] watching me on stage? I don't know yet. Maybe. I might not even be thinking about it because I'm thinking about the notes from my director. I don't know if I have time to be nervous about what he thinks." John is playing the role of Boy Willie which was originated by Jackson when the play was first performed back in 1987.



Jessie J



'FEELING LONELY, WE NEED MORE INDIAN ATHLETES AT TOP EVENTS'

Indian Athlete Neeraj Chopra Chopra after winning Diamond League Final

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Olympic gold medallist in javelin throw Neeraj Chopra on Friday urged the national federation and other stakeholders to encourage more track and field athletes to participate in international events and against the top-class competition, so that he does not remain the lone Indian participating in events abroad.

Chopra, the World Championships silver medallist, capped his superb season by winning the title at the Wanda Diamond League Final in Zurich on Thursday evening, becoming the first Indian to win the Diamond League Final Trophy.

Chopra fouled his first attempt as Olympic silver medallist Jakub Vadlejch took an early lead, throwing 84.15m and 86.00m in the first two rounds. But Chopra then hurled his spear to 88.84m in round two to take the lead.

The 23-year-old from Panipat in Haryana followed it with throws of 88.00m and 86.11m, while Vadlejch improved to 86.94m in round four. Chopra remained in the same



range and had an 87.00m effort on his penultimate round, his throw of 88.84 proved enough to seal the title.

Though he was elated with his performance and happy that he became the first Indian to win the Diamond Trophy, Chopra said he misses having more Indian athletes participate in top events abroad.

"It is quite unusual that despite Indian athletes doing well in the

Commonwealth Games and the World Championships, I was the only Indian competing in Zurich. I see other countries have a team of athletes competing in various disciplines and I want India too should send a big contingent for such events," Neeraj said on Friday during a virtual interaction from Zurich facilitated by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI).

"It feels good that other Indian athletes are also doing well, like at CWG and our guys did well in the World Championships too, though they did not get into podium position.

"Facilities are improving in India; we will soon have indoor competition and training facilities. So, we should be able to reap the rewards at the international events," said Chopra.

Chopra has had a superb season as he won silver in the World Championships in Oregon (USA) and excelled in the Diamond League, capturing it off with the trophy in the Diamond League Final, in which he was participating for the third time.

AFI president Adille Sumariwalla said Chopra is the first Indian to win the Diamond League Trophy though woman long jumper Anju Bobby George had won its precursor -- the World Athletics Finals -- in 2005.

"At that time it was called the World Athletics Finals and Anju initially won silver in that but her medal was upgraded to gold a few years later as the Russian winner of the event had a doping violation. So, Neeraj is the first Indian to win the Diamond League Trophy," he said.

Asia Cup 2022: Sri Lanka beat Pakistan by five wickets

Dubai | Agencies

Sri Lanka produced a clinical all-round performance to beat Pakistan by five wickets in a Super Four match of the ongoing Asia Cup 2022 at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, here on Friday.

Spinners Wanindu Hasaranga (3/21) and Maheesh Theekshana's (2/21) impressive bowling performance helped Sri Lanka bowl out Pakistan for 121 in 19.1 overs. Apart from Hasaranga and Theekshana, Pramod Madushan (2/21), Chamika Karunaratne (1/4) and Dhananjaya de Silva (1/18) also bowled with discipline and did a decent job for Sri Lanka. On the other hand, Babar Azam (30 off 29) and Mohammad Nawaz (26 off 18) were the top-scorers for Pakistan. Chasing a small target, opener Pathum Nissanka slammed a fine unbeaten half-century (55 not out off 48) to lead Sri Lanka to a convincing victory. Apart from Nissanka, Bhanuka Rajapaksa (24 off 19) and Dasun Shanaka (21 off 16) also played vital knocks as Sri Lanka chased down the target in 17 overs, with five wickets in hand. Haris Rauf (2/19), Mohammad Hasnain (2/21), Usman Qadir (1/34) were the wicket-takers for Pakistan.



Brief scores

Pakistan 121 all out in 19.1 overs (Babar Azam 30, Mohammad Nawaz 26; Wanindu Hasaranga 3/21, Maheesh Theekshana 2/21) lost to Sri Lanka 124-5 in 17 overs (Pathum Nissanka 55 not out, Bhanuka Rajapaksa 24; Haris Rauf 2/19) by five wickets



BHAVNA TOKEKAR BREAKS FOUR RECORDS IN WORLD POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIP

New Delhi | Agencies

Bhavna Tokekar, the wife of a serving Group Captain in the Indian Air Force (IAF), has secured the top spot in her category in the World Powerlifting Championship at Manchester, UK, currently underway.

Participating as a Master 3 athlete (age 50-54) in the under-75kg weight category in Full Powerlifting and Bench Press events, Bhavna made four world records.

She squatted with 102.5kg, a world record (previous record 90kg), did a bench press of 80kg (previous record 40kg), then had a dead lift of 132.5kg (previous record 105kg). Her total lift of 315kg was also a world record.

SAFF U-17 Championship: India lose 1-3 to Nepal

Colombo | Agencies

The India U-17 national team was handed a 1-3 defeat by Nepal in their second match of the SAFF U-17 Championship at the Racecourse International Stadium, here on Friday.

Danny Meitei put India in the lead in the 25th minute. But Nepal crawled back into the game with Saroj Darlami equalising before half-time. Second-half goals by Unesh Budathoki (49'), and Subash Bam (68') sealed the issue for Nepal in the second half.

In what looked like a slow start to the game, Bobby Singh and Niraj Karki got a chance each in the early exchanges for India and Nepal respectively, but both failed to convert. Minutes later, Danny Meitei made the best of an opportunity, as he latched on to a stray ball inside the Nepal penalty box and slotted it home to give India the lead. India grew in confidence after taking the lead, making more forays into the opposition area. However, seconds before the half-time whistle, Saroj Darlami scored an



absolute scorcher from long range to put things back on level terms. Spotting the India goalkeeper Sahil slightly off this line, Saroj struck one on the volley as it dipped into the top corner.

Changing over, Nepal came out with a lot of impetus in the second half. A fortunate rebound fell at the feet of Budathoki, who duly slotted it into the net to hand Nepal the lead in the 49th

minute.

Winger Subash Bam struck the final nail when he was played through behind the Indian defence via an aerial through ball, which he duly brought down, and chipped past an on-rushing Sahil under the Indian bar.

India looked to make a number of forays into the Nepal area from then on, but the opposition defenders held firm.



POLE POSITION FOR SARVESH BALAPPA AT NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Chennai | Agencies

Hubballi's Sarvesh Balappa (Axxor Sparks Racing), with five wins this season, warmed up for the weekend's double-header by grabbing pole position in the Novice (Stock 165cc) class as the fourth round of the Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship 2022 commenced at the Madras International Circuit, here on Friday.

Leading the championship in the Novice category, the 23-year-old Balappa came up with a hot lap of 02.08.591 secs in the qualifying session in the blazing afternoon sun. Filling up the front row were Mumbai's Kayan Zubin Patel (Axxor Sparks Racing, 02:08.616) and Bengaluru's 12-year-old Shreyas Hareesh (Rockers Racing, 02:08.839).

Meanwhile, Petronas TVS Racing's KY Ahamed was the quickest in both the premier categories, the Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open and the Pro-Stock 165cc Open during the free practice sessions earlier in the day.

VANSHITHA WRESTS AITA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT TITLE IN BENGALURU

Bengaluru: Local girl Vanshitha Pathania captured the title in the Topspin AITA Women's Rs 1 lakh prize money tennis tournament, defeating Adhithi Are from Hyderabad.

In the finals played at the Topspin Tennis Academy here on Friday, Vanshitha, who was seeded third and the only seed left in the tournament almost blanked her opponent 6-0, 6-2 to emerge victorious.

In a minor upset, the second-seeded Maharashtra pair of Bela Thamarak and Pooja Ingale defeated the host state's top-seeded sister-duo of Pratibha and Pragathi Prasad Narayan to wrest the doubles title. Bela and Pooja won the final 6-2, 7-6(1).



SAFF Women's Championship

India need to be more aggressive against Maldives, says coach Suren Chettri

Kathmandu | Agencies

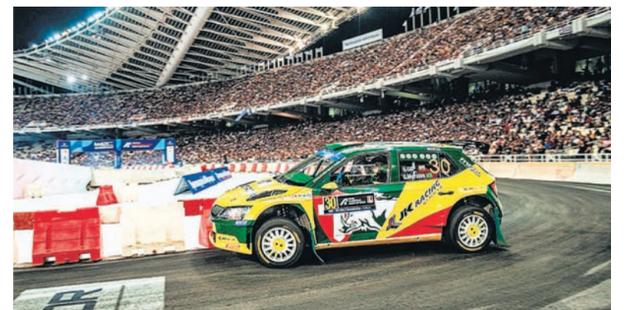
After collecting three points in the opening match against Pakistan, Indian Women's Team Head Coach Suren Chettri feels the "team needs to improve on certain areas to get the job done." India are next slated to play Maldives tomorrow (September 10) at the Dashrath Stadium in Kathmandu. "We dominated a larger part of the game against Pakistan. But there is still a lot of room for improvement," Suren said. "We need to work on our passing, and penetration." At the practice session, coach Suren meant serious business. The girls were put through certain drills, and repeated them. Though India had more of the domination and possession against Pakistan, Suren wants them to be more penetrating against Maldives. "We will make more of the ball possession which is very important. The girls need to have more passion on the field," Suren said. "They (Maldives) don't play much attacking football. But it is very hard to break them down as they defend in numbers. Hence, we need to be more aggressive." Captain Ashalata Devi, a perfectionist, is the role model for the younger lot. She has also been the leader both on the off the field, getting them to stay close. The job, she understands, is not yet done. Ashalata had played against Maldives in the SAFF Women's Championship in 2019 where India won by 6-0. Maldives will come into the match on the back of a 0-3 loss against Bangladesh in their first match. Head Coach Ahmed Dunga Shareef feels the girls are "ready for the challenges despite being drawn in a tougher group."

GAURAV GILL OFF TO FLYING START IN ACROPOLIS RALLY GREECE FINISHES 3RD IN WRC2 CATEGORY

New Delhi | Agencies

Indian driver Gaurav Gill was off to a brilliant start, finishing 3rd in the WRC2 category and 6th overall, only 1.3 seconds off the overall leader T. Neuville, and 1.2 seconds off WRC2 leader T. Suninen respectively in Super Special Stage (SSS) in the Acropolis Rally Greece at the Athens Olympic Stadium on Thursday. Driving on the twisty gravel mountain roads of Greece, combined with high temperatures and choking dust, the only Indian on the grid of 70 of the world's best rally drivers started with the speed of approximately 10-15 seconds of his leader every 5kms

Clubbed with his years-long expertise behind the wheels on the home soil and abroad, the 3-time Asia Pacific Rally Champion and 7-time Indian National Rally Championship title holder, Gill made his presence felt going ahead with the rally. As WRC Rally starts with a shakedown wherein teams and drivers get an opportunity to test their machines for the forthcoming rally stages, Gill in his maiden outing in Acropolis Rally was only 1.5 seconds off



the WRC 2 quickest car. Driving the magnificent Skoda Fabia R5 Rally2 car, Gill is visibly in great shape competing with the WRC leaders in one of the most gruelling and challenging rallies in the WRC calendar. Speaking on his performance, Gaurav Gill said, "We are happy with the start we've got right from the Shakedown up till now. This rally is a true test of patience and endurance. The tracks are really challenging and it gets tougher. We are pumped up to give our

best to tackle the obstacles and maintain consistency."

The Acropolis Rally Greece will cover a total distance of 1192 km including 16 Special stages of 303 kms (for reference domestic rallies run a SS of approx. 100kms). With soaring summer temperatures in Acropolis, the stages of Elatia, Bauxites, and Tarzan will become even more daunting as the drivers and their cars can succumb to the twisty, dusty, rock-strewn mountain roads.

IOC approves new qualification system for boxing for Paris 2024; quotas can be earned at Asian Games in Hangzhou

Lausanne | Agencies

The Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has approved a new boxing qualification system for the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024, making the regional multi-sports events like the Asian Games, Pan-Am Games, European Games as qualification events.

Due to various concerns raised by IOC, boxing has not been currently included in the sports programme for the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028. After stripping the International Boxing Association (IBA) of the right to host boxing qualification events and competitions at Paris 2024, the IOC Executive Board (EB) in its meeting on Thursday



approved a new qualification model. "Designed by the IOC in close collaboration with boxing experts, the new qualification system is based on direct qualification through selected competitions, including the use of National Olympic Committee (NOC)

regional multisport events as Olympic boxing qualification tournaments," the IOC said in an online press conference after the EB meeting on Thursday. As the qualification events will be part of the multi-sport event, "the responsibility for the boxing competitions in the events will therefore not lie with the IBA, and alternative arrangements will be put in place with the respective event organisers", the IOC said. After the Continental phase of quota place allocation, two world qualification tournaments are planned to be held in 2024, giving the boxers from all regions a chance to try and secure their berths in Paris.

It said concerns regarding IBA's financial dependence on a State-owned Russian oil major are still valid and the boxing's interna-

tional federation has been unable to find new sponsors. "The IOC EB today received a report on the issues related to competition management and refereeing and judging processes highlighted by independent experts during the boxing competition at the recent Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

"It also noted that no clear efforts have been made by the IBA to respect and fully implement the roadmap set out by the IOC EB in December 2021 with regard to the IBA's governance," the IOC said in a release.

Thus suspension of IBA will continue and the IOC will soon send a letter to IBA informing it of the IOC's ongoing grave concern. This letter will be shared with the NOCs and national boxing federations.



SHRUTI HAASAN'S LATEST TRACK FOCUSES ON THE TRIUMPHS OF WOMEN

Team Absolute | Chennai

After the success of her first single 'Edge', actress-singer Shruti Haasan has now released her next track titled 'She Is A Hero'. Penned, composed and sung by Shruti herself, the track, which also features popular rapper MC Altaf, was released on the actress's official YouTube channel. Commenting on the release of her second original track 'She Is A Hero', Shruti said: "I'm so glad to finally put out my second single and that too with such talented musicians and with something that I care deeply about being a woman myself". "She Is A Hero" brings together varied artists and a mix of genres to shine a light on the struggles and triumphs of women. A true musical collaboration, the track brings together MC Altaf's unique flavour of music which complements Shruti's singer-songwriter energy beautifully. "The track has been produced by Karan Kanchan and Karan Parikh while visual artist Santanu Hazarika has donned the creative director's hat for this special track. Screenwriter and lyricist Niranjan Iyengar has penned the additional Hindi lyrics for Shruti's part," said a source. "The video of the song features girls from the NGO Shiksha Seva Foundation, which has made this track all the more special," the source adds.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Over twenty years after they were seen together in 'Kasauti Zindagi Kaya', actors Shweta Tiwari and Manav Gohil are all set to share screen space once again in the upcoming how 'Main Hoon Aparajita'.

Talking about her character, Shweta said: "I am very excited to play the character of Aparajita as she's a happy-go-lucky woman who always knows her way to deal with tough situations in life."

"The show and its narrative is also thought-provoking and I am sure each and every person will be able to relate with my character and her struggle. It is a raw and powerful part, which I am truly looking forward to." Shweta is excited to reunite with Manav after nearly 20 years.

She added: "I still remember, we were very young when we both started our journey on television. Now, after 15 years, we are coming back together for Main Hoon Aparajita. He is an amazing professional, and I am sure we will have a gala time shooting with each other."

The show will follow the heartwarming journey of Aparajita, a doting mother of three, who is preparing them for the roller coaster ride called life. Manav will be seen playing the role of Akshay, who is a dominating man, who wants it all in his life. Coming from a wealthy family, he has a flourishing business and though he has very few words to express himself, he always displays solid emotions and conveys his thoughts in precise hard-hitting words. Manav said: "In fact, the best part is that my character has several layers, which will unfold over the course of the show. It is quite different from any character I've played till now, and I feel the intensity of this character requires me to portray an array of emotions, which has been equally interesting and challenging for me. "I am equally thrilled about reuniting with Shweta Tiwari."

I AM EXCITED TO WORK WITH MANAV AFTER 15 YEARS: SHWETA TIWARI

SONAL CHAUHAN UNDERGOES INTENSIVE TRAINING FOR MOVIE WITH NAGARJUNA

Team Absolute | Chennai

Turning into India's very own Lara Croft, Sonal Chauhan is all set to woo the audience as an Interpol officer in Akkineni Nagarjuna's upcoming film, 'The Ghost'. Sources said that the actress, who plays tough cop Priya in the film, has been undergoing intense training to get under the skin of her character. Apart from training for the action sequences, the actress has also been working on her fitness and flexibility for the high octane stunts. Pointing out that she has been putting in hours of practise at the shooting range, sources claim that Sonal also suffered injuries during her intensive preparations. However, the injuries don't seem to have slowed her down or stopped her! A video of the actress training for her role is now out and is generating a lot of interest among fans. 'The Ghost' has been amongst the most anticipated films ever since its announcement. Sonal Chauhan will be seen alongside Nagarjuna for the very first time in her career and the glimpses of the two in the trailer has already generated much curiosity among fans.

I AM EXCITED TO BRING MY NEVER SEEN AVATAR FOR AUDIENCE: DISHA PATANI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Disha Patani, who will be seen starring in upcoming periodic action film 'Suriya 42', is over-the-moon to be a part of a project of such larger-than-life elements. Disha said: "I am super kicked to announce my next with Suriya sir and Siva sir. It feels great to be a part of such a huge project that has got all the larger-than-life elements for the audience to experience on the big screen." She added: "Moreover, the character that I am playing is also quite unique and I am also excited to bring my never seen before avatar to the audience." The film is being produced by Studio Green Gnanavel Raja and has music by Devi Sri Prasad. Disha Patani plays the female lead in this film, which has cinematography by Vetri Palanisamy, who had shot superhits like Ajith-starrer 'Veeram' and 'Vedalam'. Disha has ignited the excitement among the audience with the announcement of her lead in 'Suriya 42' upcoming film, the actress will also be seen in Karan Johar's 'Yodha' co-starring Sidharth Malhotra and 'Project K' alongside Amitabh Bachchan, Prabhas, and Deepika Padukone.

Strength & willpower of a pregnant lady shown in Samantha's next release

Team Absolute | Chennai

The unit of directors Hareesh Narayan and Hari Shankar's much awaited pan-Indian film, 'Yashoda', featuring Samantha Ruth Prabhu, on Friday released a hard-hitting teaser of the film in all languages. The gripping teaser begins with Samantha, who plays Yashoda, learning that she is pregnant. The doctor gives her a series of instructions. She tells her: "In the first three months, you have to be very careful. You have to eat on time and sleep peacefully. You have to walk carefully and mind every step. You cannot lift weights. Whatever you do, make sure you don't get hurt. You should not get shocked or scared suddenly. Be happy and keep smiling always."

Every instruction of the doctor is followed by a flitting

glimpse of an action sequence that shows Yashoda doing exactly the opposite of what the doctor advises her. The thrilling teaser gives the impression that Yashoda is in some kind of mortal danger and that she has to fight for her survival.

Needless to say, the teaser has got fans excited. Samantha, who released the teaser on social media, wrote: "Strength, willpower and adrenaline!" The Pan-Indian film, apart from Samantha, also features Unni Mukundan and Varalaxmi Sarathkumar in pivotal roles. Produced by Sivalenka Krishna Prasad under the banner Sridevi Movies, the film has music by Mani Sharma and cinematography by Sukumar.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Reem Sameer Shaikh