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POST-PANDEMIC SPENDING SPIKE MADE HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS DIP TO 5-YR LOW IN 2021-22

SCOURGE OF INFLATION

A high rate of inflation hurts the poor, hits demand for consumer goods and adversely impacts investment demand. High inflation hits the poor people harder as their income is low and they are not able to afford regular consumer items. For savers, optically the interest income rise, but inflation being high, their purchasing power is adversely impacted.

▶ ACCORDING TO A CONSULTANCY FIRM, HIGH INFLATION HAS BEEN THE MAJOR REASON BEHIND FALL IN SAVINGS AND IN ORDER TO INCREASE INVESTMENTS, SAVINGS NEED TO BE ENCOURAGED.

▶ INDIAN HOUSEHOLDS ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 60 PER CENT OF THE COUNTRY'S SAVINGS, BUT THIS IS FALLING GRADUALLY. LOWER DOMESTIC SAVINGS EXPOSES BORROWERS TO OVERSEAS MARKETS, WEAKENING INDIA'S EXTERNAL POSITION AND RAISING EXTERNAL DEBT.

▶ INDIA'S SAVINGS RATE HAD TOUCHED A 15-YEAR-LOW AS GROSS DOMESTIC SAVINGS STOOD AT 30.9 PER CENT OF GDP IN FY20, DOWN FROM A PEAK OF 34.6 PER CENT IN FY12.

▶ HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS FELL FROM 23 PER CENT OF GDP IN 2012 TO 18 PER CENT IN 2019.



NO SIGNS OF INFLATION COOLING, RATE HIKES PREDICTED

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), during the last meeting of its monetary policy committee (MPC) on September 30, had hiked repo rates by 50 basis points for the fourth consecutive time since May.

As retail inflation in India continues to remain above the RBI's comfort zone for the past 10 months, analysts feel that more hikes are expected in future.

After four hikes, the RBI has now raised rates by a total 190 basis points since its first unscheduled mid-meeting increase in May. In this scenario, economists expect further hikes by the central bank.

cal years, it was 12 per cent.

Though initially during the lockdowns, people saved their funds, keeping in mind the possibilities of having to spend on healthcare, once the restrictions eased, they went on a spending spree, what economists termed as "revenge spending".

This led to depletion of their savings and a situation arose when spendings exceeded income and there were cases when despite having no jobs, expenditures rose, and savings bore the brunt of this excess or revenge spending, economists explained.

GOVT HIKED DEPOSIT RATES TO TAME INFLATION; BABY STEPS

New Delhi: Concerned over rising inflation, the government, aiming to tame price rise, had hiked interest rate for senior citizen savings scheme by 20 basis points from 7.4 per cent to 7.6 per cent on September 30 through a notification.

The interest rate for Kisan Vikas Patra is now 7 per cent for the maturity period of 123 months, compared to the earlier rate of 6.9 per cent for a maturity period of 124 months.

A three-year time deposit with post offices will now give 5.8 per cent interest compared to 5.5 per cent earlier. For a two-year time deposit, however, the rate hike was only 20 basis points from 5.5 per cent to 5.7 per cent.

Interest rates though were not changed for more popular

schemes like Public Provident Fund (where the interest rate is 7.1 per cent), Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (7.6 per cent), savings deposits (4 per cent) and National Savings Certificate (6.8 per cent).

The rates of one-year and five-year term deposits were also kept unchanged at 5.5 per cent and 6.7 per cent, respectively.

All these hikes came into effect from October 1, 2022 and are valid till December 31, 2022. Experts point out that inflation cannot be controlled unless term deposit rates and rates of small savings schemes are not hiked. They add, however, that these are baby steps and these rates need to be hiked on a regular basis to bring about a semblance of sanity on rising inflation.

INDIAN STOCK MARKETS TOUCH NEW HEIGHTS

Chennai: The Indian stock markets flared up on Monday with the Sensex of BSE and Nifty of NSE touching record highs. The Sensex of BSE on Monday touched a record high of 62,701.40 points after opening at 62,016.35 points and touched a low of 61,959.74 points during the day. The Sensex finally closed at 62,504.80 up by 211.16 points over the previous close of 62,293.64. At the NSE, the Nifty opened 18,430.55 points after previously closing at 18,512.75 points. Then the Nifty rallied up to 18,614.25 points and touched a low of 18,365.60 points and finally closed at 18,562.75 points.



Mother-son arrested in Delhi for chopping & dumping husband's body



Team Absolute | New Delhi

In another bone chilling incident similar to the gruesome killing of Shradha Walkar, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police has arrested a woman and her son for the killing of her husband, chopping his body into 10 pieces and dumping the remains in a New Ashok Nagar drain and near the Ramlila ground in Pandav Nagar.

According to the police, the murder occurred on May 30 and so far, six body parts have been recovered while a search is underway for the missing remains. The accused have been identified as Poonam and her son Deepak.

Sources said that after chopping Anjan Das's body, the duo had stored the body parts in their fridge and started gradually disposing them.

The police said that on June 5, after noticing a foul smell in the Ramlila ground, the police inspected the premises and recovered the human remains.

Yadav went on to say that after the police teams conducted door-to-door verification, the body was finally identified.

Poonam was narrowed down as a suspect after it was revealed that her husband was missing for the last 7 to 8 months and no complaint was also filed.

The CCTV cameras in the neighbourhood showed Deepak walking with a bag in his hand late at night. His mother Poonam was seen following him. They were captured in CCTV cameras several times while disposing off the body remains in plastic bags, said the police. Both were interrogated and they confessed to the crime.

"On interrogation, it was revealed that the mother and son had hatched a conspiracy to kill the victim in March and then on May 30, after giving him sleeping pills mixed in alcohol, the duo stabbed him to death with a knife and dagger, at several vital parts of the body, including the neck," said Yadav.

According to the police, Poonam alleged that her husband had illicit relations and was also eyeing Deepak's wife, adding that he even sold her jewellery.

"Poonam, a native of Bihar was first married to Sukdev Tiwari. However, Sukdev had come to Delhi. Poonam came looking for him but was not able to locate him. After some time, she married Kalu in Delhi and both had a son, Deepak. After Kalu died due to liver failure, she married Anjan Das in 2017," said Yadav. The victim, a resident of Kalyanpuri, used to work as a lift mechanic and had eight children back in Bihar.

'Kasab' jibe on Muslim student lands teacher in trouble

Bengaluru | Agencies

Following a public outcry and internet fury, an engineering college professor in Karnataka has been 'debarred from classes' and a probe ordered into the matter by college authorities, two days after he allegedly addressed one of his students, a Muslim, as 'Kasab' in the classroom. The controversy broke out after a 45-second video showing the student calling out the professor over being called a terrorist, went viral on social media.

The issue reportedly occurred in the Manipal Institute of Technology in Manipal on November 26, the anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. "Being a Muslim and facing this everyday is not funny," the student can be heard saying angrily

in the video which was seemingly recorded by another student in the class.

Even as the contrite professor tried to apologise and mollify him by saying he is like his son, the student refused to relent saying it wasn't funny.

Meanwhile, without divulging details but confirming that the said incident had taken place, the college authorities have said that action has been initiated in the matter.

"The concerned staff has been debarred from classes till the inquiry is over. We would like everybody to know that the institute does not condone this kind of behaviour and this isolated incident will be dealt with in accordance with the laid down policy," the Manipal Institute of Technology stated on Monday.

MEHRAULI MURDER: MEN WITH SWORDS ATTACK POLICE VAN CARRYING Aaftab

New Delhi | Agencies

New Delhi: A police van carrying Aaftab Amin Poonawalla, who is accused of the ghastly murder of his live-in partner Shradha Walkar in Delhi's Mehrauli area, was attacked by a group of men armed with swords outside the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Rohini when he was being taken back to Tihar jail after a polygraph test. A group of people even tried to enter the van carrying swords. However, the police sprang into action to take control of the situation. A policeman also waved a gun at the attackers to disperse them.

In a video doing rounds on social media, the men could be seen chasing the van carrying Aaftab and managing to open the van's rear door to find a policeman standing inside, in an apparent attempt to attack Aaftab.

According to G.S. Sidhu, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Rohini), two persons, Kuldeep Thakur and Nigam Gujjar, both residents of Gurugram, have been detained.

Thakur runs a car sale and purchase business, while Gujjar works as a truck driver. Meanwhile, Vishnu Gupta, the national president of Hindu Sena, denied the organisation's role in the matter.

'I Have Electric Dreams' wins IFFI's Golden Peacock award

Panaji | Agencies

The 53rd edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI) concluded on Monday with Spanish film 'I Have Electric Dreams' directed by Valentina Maurel winning the 'Golden Peacock award'. The closing ceremony of IFFI was held at the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee indoor stadium in Taleigao on Monday.

The 53rd edition of IFFI witnessed participation of filmmakers and cinema lovers from across the globe.

Megastar Chiranjeevi was conferred the Indian Film Personality of the Year award on concluding day of International Film festival of India. Vahid Mobasser, lead actor of 'No End', was honoured with Silver



Golden Peacock Awards

Peacock for Best Actor (Male), while Daniela Marin Navarro, lead Actor of Best Film 'I Have Electric Dreams' is honoured with Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female).

Iranian writer and director Nader Saeivar gets Silver Peacock for Best Director for No End, Filipino filmmaker Lav Diaz bagged Special Jury Award for 'When the Waves are Gone'. Award for Best Debut Feature Film of a Director has been snatched by Asimina Proedrou for Behind the Haystack and Praveen Kandregula has received Special Mention for 'Cinema Bandi'. Legendry Actress Asha Parekh, Akshay Kumar, Ayushmann Khurana were felicitated on the occasion.

KERALA MAN GETS 107 YEARS JAIL TERM FOR RAPING MENTALLY CHALLENGED DAUGHTER

Thiruvananthapuram: A Pocco court at Pathanamthitta in Kerala on Monday sentenced a man to a staggering 107 years in jail for raping his mentally challenged young daughter who was living with him.

The man's wife had separated from the family for long.

The incident happened in 2020, and the police filed a case and launched the probe after the girl narrated the ordeal to her neighbours and teachers at her school.

The medical examination revealed the girl was seriously injured by her father.

As some of the punishments can be served together, the convict has to undergo jail term of 67 years. The court also imposed a penalty of Rs 4 lakh on the convict.

'IT'S A MENACE': CENTRE TO SC ON FORCED RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that the issue of forced religious conversion "is a menace", and it is cognizant of the gravity and the seriousness of the issue.

The bench at the beginning of the hearing, said "this is a serious issue". Citing Centre's reply in the matter, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, this "is a menace".

Senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, appearing on behalf of an intervenor, submitted that the petition is not maintainable and pointed out that the same petition was filed twice earlier and then withdrawn.

Petitioner advocate Ashwini Upadhyay opposed the plea for intervention saying that there will be a flood of applications if the



present application is allowed.

The bench scheduled the matter for further hearing on December 5, as the matter came up for hearing when court was rising for the day.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, in an affidavit, said it is cognizant of

the gravity and the seriousness of the issue raised in the present writ petition and enactments are necessary for protecting cherished rights of vulnerable sections of the society including women and economically and socially backward classes.

NOTICE TO CENTRE, STATES ON PLEA SEEKING FREE SANITARY PADS FOR SCHOOL GIRLS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought response from the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) on a plea seeking direction to provide free sanitary pads to girls studying in Classes 6 to 12 in government schools across the country. The bench said the plea has raised an important issue of sanitation and hygiene of girl students. The plea said that adolescent females between the age group of 11 and 18 years, who come from poor backgrounds, face the insurmountable difficulties in receiving education on account of lack of access to education, which is a right under Article 21A of the Constitution and it is free and compulsory under the Right to Education Act, 2009. The plea has been filed by Jaya Thakur, a Madhya Pradesh-based doctor.

No ransom demand brought to notice by AIIMS authorities: Delhi Police

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After some reports surfaced on Monday evening claiming that hackers have allegedly demanded around Rs 200 cr in cryptocurrency from AIIMS-Delhi, whose server is out of order for six days now, Delhi Police said in a statement that no such demand has been brought to their notice by the AIIMS administration. "In AIIMS Delhi Computer Incident: No Ransom Demand as being quoted by certain sections of the media has been brought to notice by AIIMS authorities," Delhi Police said in the statement.

Meanwhile, on restoring normal services, AIIMS said in a statement

that data restoration and server cleansing is in progress.

"The data restoration and server cleansing is in progress. It is taking some time due to the volume of data and the large number of servers for the hospital services.

"Measures are being taken for cyber security. All hospital services including, out patient, in patient, laboratories continue to run on manual mode," the AIIMS statement said.

However, AIIMS did not say anything about the ransom demand in the statement. At 7 am on Wednesday (November 23), the primary and first backup servers of AIIMS were corrupted and it was later found to be a ransomware attack.



GOVT LAUNCHES SCHEME TO PROCURE 4,500 MW ELECTRICITY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Power Ministry has launched a scheme for procurement of 4,500 MW of aggregate electricity for a period of five years.

The provision of procurement of electricity would be conducted under the ministry's Scheme for Harnessing and Allocating Koyala (Coal) Transparently in India (SHAKTI) policy.

"Ministry of Power kicks off a scheme for procurement of aggregate power of 4,500 MW on competitive basis for five years on finance, own and operate (FOO) basis under SHAKTI Policy," a statement issued by the Power Ministry said. PFC Consulting Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Power Finance Corporation (PFC Ltd), has been made the nodal agency by the power ministry for the



scheme. Under the scheme, PFC Consulting Ltd has invited bids for the supply of 4,500 MW of electricity. The supply will commence from April 2023 and the coal ministry has been requested to allot around 27 million tonnes per annum of dry fuel for it.

Some of the entities which have shown interest in the scheme are Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd, Maharashtra State Electricity

Distribution Company Ltd, Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company Ltd, New Delhi Municipal Corporation and Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Ltd. The last date for bid submission is December 21, 2022.

The scheme is expected to help those states which are facing power shortage and will also help increase capacity of generation plants, official sources said.

Dailyhunt & Josh parent firm VerSe Innovation lays off 150 employees

Team Absolute | New Delhi

VerSe Innovation, the parent company of Dailyhunt and short-form video platform Josh, has laid off nearly 150 employees in a bid to "streamline" its costs and teams.

The layoffs impacted about 5 per cent of a 3,000-strong workforce at VerSe Innovation, which in April raised \$805 million from global investors, taking its valuation to \$5 billion.

Sources told reporter that given the current economic climate, the company evaluated its strategic priorities, and conveyed the decision during a town hall meeting addressed by the company's co-founders, Virendra Gupta and Umang Bedi.

"Considering the long-term viability of the business and our people, we have taken steps to implement our regular bi-annual performance management cycle and made performance and business



considerations to streamline our costs and our teams. This has impacted 5 per cent of our 3,000-strong workforce," according to a

company statement issued on Monday.

VerSe Innovation has also reduced salaries by up to 11 per

cent for employees who earn over Rs 10 lakh per annum, the sources added. VerSe Innovation registered a loss of Rs 2,563 crore in FY22, which increased from Rs 808 crore in FY21.

In June this year, the homegrown local language technology provider announced the launch of its vernacular content platform Dailyhunt in the Middle East region.

Dailyhunt rolled out its offering in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait with its headquarters in Dubai, with over 5,000 content partners.

Bedi had told reporter that there is a growing opportunity in local language content globally that they aim to tap.

Dailyhunt then offered more than 1 million new content every day in 15 languages, licensed and sourced from a creator ecosystem of over 50,000 content partners and a deep pool of over 50,000 creators.

It lastly served over 350 million monthly active users.

SOUTH DELHI SCHOOL RECEIVES BOMB THREAT IN EMAIL

New Delhi: An email regarding a bomb being placed on a school campus in south Delhi was received on Monday. However, no bomb was found during the search operation by the police, said an official.

According to Chandan Chowdhary, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (South), on Monday at around 1:19 p.m. an email was received on the official email ID of Indian Public School, Sadiq Nagar that there is a bomb in the premises of the school.

"The school administration immediately informed Defence Colony police station following which bomb disposal squad, dog squad along with police teams reached the spot," said the DCP.

"The school was evacuated and a thorough search has been made. But no bomb has been found," said the Chowdhary, adding that the email is also being verified by the cyber team.

3 MLAs including 2 of NPP quit Meghalaya assembly; likely to join BJP



Shillong | Agencies

In a major political development, three sitting MLAs of Meghalaya, including two from the ruling National People's Party (NPP) resigned from their respective parties and the state assembly on Monday. They are likely to join the BJP soon.

NPP MLAs Benedict R. Marak and Ferlin C.A. Sangma and Trinamool Congress MLA H.M. Shangpliang submitted their resignation to Assembly Speaker, Metbah Lyngdoh.

The state would go to assembly polls along with two other northeastern states -- Tripura and Nagaland -- in February next year. Shangpliang, while talking to the media,

said: "We want development in the state and the BJP is for development. In neighbouring Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma while undertaking massive all-round development of the state, gave job letters to 25,000 youths in one day... why cannot the Meghalaya government do this?" With two MLAs, BJP has recently announced that it would contest the next year's assembly polls on its own, and field candidates in all the 60 seats.

Former Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma (2010-2018), along with 11 Congress MLAs joined the Trinamool Congress in November last year. The party is now the main opposition party in Meghalaya.

Assam's Dibrugarh University rusticates 18 students for ragging

Dibrugarh (Assam) | Agencies

The authorities at Assam's Dibrugarh University on Monday rusticated at least 18 students for their alleged role in ragging a student who eventually jumped off a two-storey building of the varsity hostel "to save himself from mental and physical harassment". The incident happened on Saturday evening. The harassment meted to the student -- identified as Anand Sharma, an M.Com first semester student, continued till Sunday morning. Sharma was later admitted to a hospital on Sunday afternoon.

The accused students have also been expelled from the university hostel. An FIR lodged by the Registrar of the university in the incident mentioned that Sharma was mentally and physically assaulted from 4.30 p.m. on Saturday at Padmanath Gohain Baruah hostel at the campus. The assault continued until 5 a.m. in the morning on Sunday.



An official of the Dibrugarh University said that at around 10.30 a.m. on Sunday, Anand Sharma, in the pretext of going to the bathroom, jumped off the B block of the hostel to save himself from the "extreme mental and physical torture". He sustained serious injuries.

"A few students of the hostel took him to a nearby hospital in critical condition. Later, the varsity authority shifted Sharma to another hospital for advanced treatment," the official added. The university authorities have named accused five in the FIR including a former student of the uni-

versity in the alleged ragging incident.

Police have detained four accused in this case. But the alumnus Rahul Chetri is still absconding.

Sharma is a student in M.Com's first semester. He is undergoing treatment in ICU at a private hospital in Dibrugarh. The victim's mother Sarita Sharma said: "My son was mentally and physically tortured, forced to drink liquor. He was not allowed to take food. The seniors used to send him for bringing liquor for them. He told me earlier to leave the hostel... I insisted him to stay at the hostel as we cannot afford a rented house. But, I never imagined the such level of torture he was facing at the hostel. The seniors also threatened him not to complain anything to the authority."

However, she claimed that the family earlier lodged a complaint with the university administration but no steps were taken to stop these activities.

Meanwhile, the university students have staged a protest on Monday and demanded stern punishment to the accused students.

SHARMILA'S ARREST, ATTACK ON CONVOY TRIGGER TENSION

Hyderabad | Agencies

Attack on YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) leader Y. S. Sharmila's convoy allegedly by the supporters of ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) and her subsequent arrest by the police triggered tension during her padyatra in Warangal district on Monday.

Police stopped Sharmila's padyatra and arrested her and YSRTP leaders and workers accompanying her in Chennaraopeta mandal.

YSRTP cadres tried to resist the arrests and raised slogans against the police and the TRS government. The police used mild force to control the situation.

Sharmila, sister of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, was arrested after she allegedly made certain objectionable comments about TRS MLA P. Sudershan Reddy.

Sharmila wanted to know from police why were they taking her into custody instead of arresting those



who attacked her bus.

YSRTP alleged that the bus which Sharmila is using to rest during her ongoing Praja Prasthanam padyatra was attacked and burnt down by the members of the ruling TRS party.

The mob also damaged cars belonging to YSR Telangana Party leaders. The incident happened near Lingagiri village, under Chennaraopeta mandal in Warangal district.

Sharmila was participating in the padyatra on 223rd day when a group of men chanting pro-TRS slogans and hailing KCR, reached the place where the caravan was halted and torched it.

"For the past 223 days, me and my Party leaders and representatives are holding a peaceful Padyatra to highlight the plight of various sections of people in Telangana. Our rising popularity has jolted Chief Minister KCR and his party men, who want to stop me at any cost," she said.

Daughter of former chief minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy said that it is highly unfortunate that some police officers are siding with the ruling party and disrupting 'our efforts to reach the people and raise their issues.' The Praja Prasthanam padyatra has so far crossed 3,500 kms mark, covering 75 Assembly segments in the State. She has covered 1863 villages under 208 mandals and 61 Municipalities along with 4 Municipal Corporations, so far.

J&K POLICE BUSTS TERROR MODULE; ARMS, AMMUNITION RECOVERED

Team Absolute | Srinagar

The Jammu & Kashmir Police along with 22 RR of the Army busted Ansar Gazwatul Hind (AGuH) module by arresting North Kashmir's AGuH handler and four terrorist associates at Sopore in North Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said on Monday. According to the police, incriminating materials, huge cache of arms and ammunition have been recovered from their possession. "Upon an information by sister agency regarding movement of main terrorist handler, Sopore Police alongwith 22RR established an MVCP grid in Sopore," the police said. "During MVCP two individuals identified as Mushtaq Ahmed Bhat (main handler) of Chanapora, Srinagar and Ishfaq Ahmed Shah resident of Budgam were arrested."

Police said incriminating material, arms and ammunition including one Pistol, one magazine, 10 rounds and three grenades were recovered from their possession.

"On further interrogation and development of the information, two more terror associates identified as Abdul Majeed Kumar resident of Bernate, Baniyar and Abdul Rashid Kumar



resident of Pattan were also arrested," the police said. The police said that preliminary investigation revealed that the busted terrorist module of AGuH was being handled by Ahsaan Dar and one individual named Chaudhary from across the border (PoK).

"The module was instructed to ensure continuous supply of arms and ammunition in Kashmir Valley for conducting attacks on outsiders, civilians and security forces to instil fear in the minds of general public. The timely and effective action by Sopore police and 22RR by busting the terrorist module have resulted in averting a possible major tragedy," the police said.

Couple burnt alive in Begusarai; wife dies, man critically injured

Team Absolute | Patna

A woman died while her husband is fighting for his life after they were set afire by miscreants over a property dispute in Bihar's Begusarai district, an official said on Monday.

According to the official, the victim Sanjay Yadav has a property dispute with one Ramesh Yadav in the village Barihari under Chakia police station in the district.

"We were sitting inside our grocery shop on Sunday, when Ramesh Yadav, along with around half a dozen accomplices, came and doused us in petrol. As there was no power and a candle was burning inside, it caught fire immediately. Soon, the fire engulfed the entire shop. I somehow rushed out and managed to pull my wife, but she lost consciousness due to severe burn injuries," said Sanjay Yadav.

The neighbours rushed them to the primary health centre in Chakia where the woman succumbed to her injuries.

Sanjay's brother Rajesh Yadav said: "The accused had attacked my brother Sanjay Yadav and his wife five years ago with sharp edge weapons. An FIR of attempt to murder



was also registered in Chakia police station. The accused applied pressure and forced them to compromise. Sanjay eventually compromised on that case. Sanjay has a dispute of 0.30 Katha land with Ramesh Yadav. The latter wanted to grab the land for which he was continuously threatening him," he added.

Vizhinjam Adani Port issue: Situation under control

Team Absolute | Thiruvananthapuram

After tension gripped Vizhinjam port area following the fishermen community's protest against the Adani Group restarting work on a \$900 million transhipment port, the situation on Monday eased with police releasing four of the five people it took into custody.

In protest against the police action on Sunday, the local fishing community led by the Latin Catholic Church went on a rampage and attacked the Vizhinjam police station and injured 35 police officials.

In the violence that hit the area, a damage of Rs 85 lakhs



has been reported. An FIR against the Archbishop of the Latin Archdiocese of Thiruvananthapuram, Thomas J. Netto, naming him as the first accused had further escalated the tension.

Fifty priests, including Auxiliary Bishop, Christudas,

and Vicar General, Eugene Pereria have also been named in the new FIR.

Apart from this, the police also registered cases against 3,000 people.

Senior priest Eugene Pereria on Monday told the media that a judicial probe

has to be done as some untoward things have now happened. "The protests were going on a peaceful note and suddenly there appears to be some external influences which led to all the acrimony. Priests and women who came to express solidarity with the protesters came under duress. A judicial probe is the need of the hour," said Pereria.

Dismissing the allegations, State Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkovil said the protesters give scant respect to the judiciary, which had asked the protesters to maintain calm and not to disrupt the ongoing works. "The state government has been very considerate and in the numerous talks that we have had with them,

they came up with seven demands. We are unable to give them an assurance on one demand seeking free supply of kerosene as it comes from the Centre.

Another demand is they want the ongoing work in the port to be stopped. That's not possible at all," said the Minister. "The protesters are coming up with new demands every now and then with new demands adding to the confusion," he added. The port project was cleared and work began during the fag end of the Oommen Chandy government in 2011-16. When the Ockhi waves hit the port site in 2017, lot of damage was caused, throwing the work into a limbo.



3 GREEN CORRIDORS SET UP TO TRANSPORT ORGANS OF BHOPAL YOUTH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The family members of a 25-year-old youth in Bhopal, who died in a road accident, has donated his organs which will give new lease of life to six persons.

The organs were sent to Indore and Ahmedabad, for which green corridors were set up from the Siddhanta Hospital to the Raja Bhoj Airport by Bhopal police on Monday afternoon.

The youth, Anmol Jain, met with a road accident in Bhopal on November 17 following which he was rushed to the Narmada Hospital in a critical state. Later he was shifted to Siddhanta Hospital, where the doctors declared him brain dead on Sunday after a week's treatment. Anshul Taran from Siddhanta Hospital said that Anmol had received injuries on his head and there was hardly 15 per cent chance of his survival. In the last seven days, the doctors tried their best but his condition continued to deteriorate. He could survive for one week despite multiple injuries because he was young and healthy.

"Being a doctor, I knew that there was very little chance of his survival because of the serious nature of his injuries. We knew that Anmol being a healthy person, his organs could give new lease of



life to others. So I discussed the matter with the senior doctors of the hospital, who said it would be good if the parents agree to donate his body.

"After Anmol was declared brain dead, I spoke to Anmol's sister and she agreed with my thought. Then I spoke to

Anmol's father, Abhishek Jain, who said if the organs are functional, they should be donated," said Taran, who happens to be a cousin of the deceased.

Subsequently, the process to donate organs was initiated, for which some mandatory procedures had to be followed. A request proposal was sent to Bhopal's organ society for fulfilling the procedures after which the operational process was done at Siddhanta Hospital on Monday.

According to Taran, Anmol's eyes were sent to Gandhi Medical College in Bhopal, while one of his kidneys was kept at Siddhanta Hospital. The second kidney was given to Chirayu Hospital in Bhopal. His liver was sent to Chirayu Hospital in Indore, while the heart was sent to SIMS hospital in Ahmedabad.

Notably, three green corridors were set up in the city for the timely transfer of the organs from the hospital. One green corridor was set up to Chirayu Hospital, and another corridor for Indore. One route was set up till Bhopal airport to send the organ to Ahmedabad. The deceased person's elder brother, Aditya Jain, said that it was Anmol's desire that his organs be donated. "We are proud that people will get a new lease of life because of our Anmol," Aditya said.

RAHUL GANDHI RODE A BICYCLE ON THE ROAD OF INDORE



Team Absolute | Indore

Monday is the sixth day of Bharat Jodo Yatra of former Congress National President Rahul Gandhi in Madhya Pradesh. Rahul Gandhi's yatra is moving from Indore towards Ujjain. On Monday morning, when he was continuing his journey, he also cycled. Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra had entered Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh on November 23 and this yatra has reached Indore via Khandwa, Khargone, now moving towards Ujjain.

When Rahul Gandhi set out on his journey on Monday morning, a cyclist coming close to him, Rahul Gandhi also could not stop himself and he rode a bicycle. While Rahul Gandhi was cycling, MLA Jitu Patwari was running with him.

Rahul Gandhi had taken a bike ride on Sunday and when he saw the cycle on Monday, he did not miss to ride it. Yes, it happened so much that Congress leaders had to run with Rahul Gandhi.

Gehlot & Pilot are assets of Cong: Rahul

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Reacting to the escalating rift between Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot, Rahul Gandhi on Monday said that both leaders were assets to the party. He made this remark while addressing a press conference in Indore during the Bharat Jodo Yatra on Monday.

The Congress leader, however, said he would not want to create any controversy by making any comment on this particular issue, he said, and added, "What I can say is that both Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot are assets for the Congress."

Notably, the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which is in Madhya Pradesh right now, will enter Rajasthan on December 4, as per the schedule. While responding to the Congress MLAs who shifted to the BJP that had resulted in the collapse of Kamal Nath government in 2020, Gandhi said they should not be given a place in the party again and are not trustable.

FIR BECAME A POLITICAL WEAPON FROM THE VIDEO OF BHARAT JODO YATRA



Team Absolute | Bhopal

An alleged video of former Congress National President Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra passing through state has created a stir in politics and now FIR has become a political weapon. Congress and BJP have filed cases against each other. A video went viral on November 25 during Rahul Gandhi's BJY. Slogans of 'Pakistan Zindabad' were allegedly heard in this video. Now both the political parties Congress and BJP have come face to face regarding this video and reports have been lodged in the police station against the heads of each other's media department.

After the video went viral, the first report was lodged by the Congress in Raipur, the capital of Chhattisgarh. There, this report has been lodged by the Law Cell of the Congress, in which it has been said that BJP's media in-charge of MP Lokendra Parashar tried to provoke, conspire, incite riots by tampering with the video of Rahul Gandhi's Yatra. Parashar is accused of retweeting a doctored video in which the slogan of Pakistan Zindabad has been added.

On the one hand, while a complaint was lodged by the Congress against Parashar, in the police station, on the other hand, a case has been registered in Bhopal, against Congress' state media in-charge Piyush Babele and IT department head Abhay Tiwari were lodged.

BJP spokesperson Pankaj Chaturvedi and co-media in-charge Narendra Shivaji Patel have lodged this complaint with the crime branch, stating that Congress's Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Kamal Nath and the entire Congress party have organized the Bharat Jodo Yatra in the entire country. Anti-national acts are being done and slogans of Pakistan Zindabad are being raised during the yatra so that the public peace of the country can be disturbed.

Political analysts believe that assembly elections are going to be held in the state next year and both the political parties realize that it is not very easy for them to win the next elections, so no one should hold back from trying political tactics.



2 Arrested For Robbing Gold Worth Rs 5 Crore From Bank

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Police have arrested two members of a gang from Bihar that allegedly robbed gold worth around ₹ 5 crore and ₹ 3.5 lakh in cash from a bank in Madhya Pradesh's Katni district, an official said on Monday.

Six members of the gang on Saturday looted the valuables and cash at gunpoint from the gold loan offering bank in Bargawan area, he said.

"We have arrested two men who have given their names as Subham Tiwari (24), a resident of Patna, and Ankush Sahu (25), a resident of Buxar, on Sunday from Mandla with the help of police from that district," Katni Superintendent of Police (SP) S K Jain told PTI over phone.

"They have been trying to mislead us. We are verifying their names. A police team has been rushed to Patna to check their dossier," he said.

Efforts are on to arrest four other members of the gang, the official said. According to inputs gathered from police in different states, the gang in the past allegedly robbed 300 kilograms of gold from institutions offering loans against the precious metal, he said.

Investigations suggest the gang, whose key member is lodged in the Beur jail in Bihar, allegedly robbed 24 kg of gold and ₹ 11 lakh cash from a bank in Udaipur on August 29, the SP said.

The gang has also committed gold robberies in Dhanbad, Agra, Howrah and other places in the country, he said.

Body of MP woman found in Odisha's Puri: police

Team Absolute | Puri/Bhopal

The family members of a woman from Madhya Pradesh on Monday demanded a high-level probe into the mysterious death of their daughter at the sea beach here.

The 18-year-old woman's disfigured body in underwear was found on the sea beach near the Penthakata area in Puri on November 26, police said.

While police suspect it to be a case of drowning, the family members alleged that their daughter was killed.

They alleged that their daughter was kidnapped from hotel and killed by pouring acid on her face so that she could not be recognized.



The family members said that the woman went missing after going outside her hotel room to bring wet clothes on November 23, her body was found on November 26. The father identified his daughter's body from the earring, gold nose pin, red ribbon on her hand, and a black ribbon on her ankle.

The family members alleged that after the post-mortem was conducted the police told them about a body found on the sea beach. When contacted, Superintendent of Police, Puri, VK Sing said: "I am looking into the incident. The police will give details after 5 PM."

Bestowing us with the great constitution, Baba Saheb tied the entire society in one thread: VD Sharma

- Constitution Gaurav Yatra" imparts the importance of the constitution.
- Starting from MHOW, the birthplace of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and culminating at BJP State Office Bhopal, about 600 workers with 200 cars participated in the yatra.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Giving the tribute to father of the Constitution, the Scheduled Castes Front of BJP organized a "Constitution Gaurav Yatra" on the occasion of Constitution Day. The march started from Baba Saheb Ambedkar's birthplace MHOW on Sunday morning and culminated at the BJP State Office, where CM



attended the closing ceremony, where other leaders were also present. BJP Scheduled Caste Front's state minister and March coordinator, Baljit Singh Chauhan informed that the March was flagged off by sanitation workers from MHOW in the morning with about 800 workers and 200 cars. The procession, carrying a tableau of Baba Saheb Ambedkar writing the constitution, passed through Indore, Dewas and Sehore

on the way finally culminating in Bhopal. Along with this, a beautiful picture of PM Modi saluting the Constitution was also the centre of attraction in the yatra with a pancharth of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and many other works shown by the central government.

He added that the rally was organized to create the awareness among people about the Indian Constitution, which governs the Indian democracy and educated them that it is the holy scripture of the world's largest democracy.

BJP State President VD Sharma said, "Constitution Day is a very important day for all of us and Constitution Gaurav Yatra shows the respect, youth have towards the Constitution and Babasaheb Ambedkar.

One gets goosebumps thinking about the incidents, Babasaheb Ambedkar passed through. Not only India remembers Babasaheb, but the whole world praises him. Babasaheb, after facing so much disdain in the society, firmly decided to end this discrimination in the society. The copy of constitution clearly shows the big heart and mind of Babasaheb. Today, if the credit for India's unity and integrity goes to anyone, it is Babasaheb."

Seven and a half thousand teachers will be recruited in state

Team Absolute | Bhopal

selling will be done when the infor-

A campaign is being conducted for recruitment in government jobs in Madhya Pradesh.

The government has decided to make more than one lakh appointments. In the same order, seven and a half thousand teachers are going to be recruited in the school education department. Commissioner of Public Education Abhay Verma said that the candidates qualified in the Primary Teacher Eligibility Test, 2020 by the Professional Examination Board will fill the vacant posts due to the retirement of public servants in the school education department in the years 2022-23 and 2023-24. The process of filling up the posts will be started from March 2023. Joint coun-



mation about the vacant posts is provided by the Tribal Affairs Department. The number of posts can be reduced or increased.

School Education Department will recruit 7 thousand 500 primary teachers in the state. Age will be calculated as on 1 January 2023. The minimum age of the candidate is 21 years and the prevailing instructions of the General Administration Department regarding the maximum age shall apply.

MP FOREST MINISTER'S AFRICA TOUR BEFORE CHEETAH TRANSLOCATION UNDER SCANNER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Nearly three months after eight cheetahs were successfully transported from Namibia and released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his birthday (September 17) at Kuno National Park (KNP) in Sheopur district, a controversy has arisen over a tour by state forest minister Kunwar Vijay Shah and two senior officials to Tanzania and South Africa in August. The project translocation of cheetahs, which was processed and completed under the supervision of the Centre, but, state forest minister Kunwar Vijay Shah and two senior officials' Tanzania (East Africa) and South Africa tour in August (around one month before eight the cheetahs were transported from Namibia) still remains a puzzle here in Madhya Pradesh. Vijay Shah was accompanied by senior forest department officials, including chief of forest -- R.K. Gupta, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, and Shubhranjan Sen, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests of Madhya Pradesh.

A Right to Information (RTI) reply available revealed that the 10-day long study tour has cost Rs 35 lakh to the state government, which was more than double from an estimated amount for the same tour. Documents revealed that the proposal for study tour was made in April and had estimated



that it would cost around Rs 15 lakh. Out of total expenses (around Rs 35 lakh) on so-called study tour, Rs 31,71,500 were spent on air tickets, accommodation and local visiting.

Madhya Pradesh based wildlife activist Ajay Dube claimed he sought the details of the 'study report'. "If it was a study



tour, then why that study report was not made public domain, the first question arises? Dube said.

Dube further said, "Besides all these, this tour is also questionable because translocation of cheetahs was the Centre sponsored project with Indian Oil funds under CSR (corpo-

rate social responsibility). And, more importantly, the Supreme Court (SC) is monitoring this project. They (MP government) claimed it was a tourism project tour, then questions arise, why even after 90 days of the visit, no development took place on translocation of African cheetahs. It was against the SC's guidelines for the cheetah translocation project and I am going to file a petition in the issue," Ajay Dube added.

He further claimed that the MP government has no role in this cheetahs translocation project, except that cheetahs were released at Kuno National Park, then why MP's forest minister and officials were on study tour in Africa? "If they really did some study, then that study report should be in the public domain," Dube asked.

Contrary to that, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, R.K. Gupta, who was one of the officials on the study tour with MP forest minister Shah, while talking he claimed that the study report has already been submitted to Madhya Pradesh Wildlife Society. "It was a study tour and the study report was submitted within one or two weeks after coming from Africa. It is a mandatory procedure to follow and it was done," Gupta added. Reporter also tried to seek a reply from MP Forest Minister Kunwar Vijay Shah on this matter; however, calls were not answered.



EDITOR'S SPECS

PRESIDENT RAISES ISSUE OF OVERCROWDING IN PRISONS

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday raised the issue of overcrowding in prisons and emphasised that there is a need to do something for the poor people in jails. "It is said that jails are getting overcrowded and there is a need to set up more jails," the President said. "Are we moving towards development? What is the need to set up more jails? We need to reduce their numbers. Poor people incarcerated for many years for petty crimes need help," Murmu said. She pointed out that people are even jailed for slapping somebody or for some other minor offence, while there are people who do many things, even kill others, but are roaming free. The event was attended by the Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud, Law Minister Kiren Rijju, Attorney General of India R. Venkataramani, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, judges of the Supreme Court and members of the Bar. The President emphasised that there are poor people in the prisons and there is a need to do something for them. "You need to do something for these people. Who are these people in jail? They do not know the fundamental rights or the fundamental duties," Murmu said, as she recommended decongesting the jails. The President said that people do not act to release their family members, who are languishing in jails, as they feel that they would have to sell their utensils and property. The President said the legislature, the executive and the judiciary need to have "one thinking" for the country and its people, adding that checks and balances need to be there, but somewhere "we need to work together". "Our job is to think about people (poor undertrials languishing in jails). We all have to think and come out with some way... I am leaving it all on you," she said.

BIS MOVES IN ON FRAUD PRODUCT REVIEWS: MUST INCLUDE FILMS

Vinod Mirani

You want to buy some product and when you visit its website, there are a number of reviews related to it, mostly adorned with four or five stars. Do you trust the four or five stars? How do you know if these reviews and stars are genuine? You don't, you have no way of knowing if they represent genuine feedback about the product. Also, you have no way of finding out if the people who posted the reviews really exist or have been created for the job, or have a vested interest in the product. In the good old days, when there was no internet, you went to your trusted vendor in the bazaar to buy what you wanted. Local traders and vendors built a reputation and repeat customers were his five-star ratings. Now you love to buy online, sitting in the comfort of your home. Also, in the good old fashion days, if a newspaper or a magazine published an article promoting a product, a professional person, a service provider, just about anything the publication did not endorse, the page carried a disclaimer with the four letters ADVT in one corner of the material published. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) wants a similar system to be in place in e-commerce businesses. Rarely do you find the letters ADVT in most publications plugging a product or service, except a few that still have a conscience as well as the interest of readers in mind. Most of them let it pass off as part of the editorial content. The reason is that there are no regular checks on what thousands of print publications and online portals carry, and with the volume of social media platforms, tracking has become well nigh impossible. Actually, the burden of bringing frauds or misinformation to light is on the public, especially the aggrieved ones who grumble about

fraud but never report it. Certain influential and affluent publishing houses have devised special sections to accommodate, promote and cash in on those products that need unabashed paid plugs or promotions. The sections are so named that if you are smart enough, you are not expected to take the matter printed in them seriously. They are called advertorials or promotional sections. Looks like the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has caught up with these fraudulent practices carried out blatantly without any fear of action. And the Bureau is not wasting time implementing its decision to bring order to this exploitation of the consumer. Starting November 25, all those promoting or sponsoring a product or a service against payment will have to describe it as such. Portals that offer food delivery, travel or ticketing services will no longer be able to publish paid reviews about their product or service and, in case it is done, such reviews will have to carry a disclosure of being a paid review. Not complying with the BIS directives will invite action against the Consumer Protection Act. How does this move by the BIS matter to the film industry? The BIS' move to stop such fraudulent acts include fake reviews by independent third-party entities. This is what happens on a regular basis, unabashedly, in the case of film reviews posted on social media. The one who posts false reports, reviews and box-office collection numbers does not need to apply his mind. He simply posts what is drafted by the PR person concerned. Some film critics have become touts of filmmakers and the deal is that their posts in favour of a film earns them a few thousand. This is a grand fraud played on the moviegoer who falls prey to the publicity, not knowing that they are paid reviews.



Though the frauds regarding paid movie reviews are not mentioned specifically, I am sure the definition of fraudulent reviews and posts on e-commerce platforms and social media also covers this aspect. After all, a movie is a consumer product and a fraud is a fraud anywhere.

No Joyride For Joyland

Many years ago, a prominent daily newspaper carried a column where For and Against views were sought from two sides. The theme was whether India and Pakistan should get into a joint venture to produce films. Not strangely, as things work in our profession, the side I chose was already committed to the Pakistani representative, a lady filmmaker. I was left to debate against her point of view which was that India should enter into joint ventures to produce films with Pakistan. Why? My stand was that the Indian film industry was thriving and had no need for a Pakistani co-production. Also, it was not our job to promote or prop up the Pakistani film industry with joint productions. For most of its life, the Pakistani cinema chains have survived on Indian

films when they are not banned in Pakistan off and on. So, by promoting the Pakistani film industry, should we compromise our own interests? My final summation was that if Pakistani filmmakers really wanted to join hands, they had better start with their counterparts in our Punjab. After all, Punjabi is a language spoken on both sides. Also, our Punjabi industry was comatose in those days, and both made loud and crude films. Pakistan still makes such crude films full of gore and violence and they are lapped up by the audience. Imagine, 'The Legend Of Maula Jatt', a remake of the 1979 film, 'Maula Jatt', was the biggest Pakistani hit in Pakistan as well as in the overseas market, where it is matching the box-office figures of Indian films such as 'RRR'. If the original was a huge hit, the 2022 version is even a bigger hit. No wonder, in that country, a contemporary new film, 'Joyland', has to struggle even to get a decent release. The film is about a married man falling in love with a transgender dancer.

Pakistan is not ready for such a theme. To think that the film has won awards at various international festivals and is Pakistan's nomination for the Oscars does not help. The film has fallen prey first to the fear of mullahs and now to politics. A mutilated version (thanks to the Censors in Pakistan) has been released in all provinces except Punjab, which is controlled by the PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) headed by the country's deposed Prime Minister, Imran Khan. Whereas India has one censor certification authority with regional offices serving the other language film industries, Pakistan has five, each independent of the other. Pakistan is no country for creativity and it had better stick to making 'Maula Jatt' kind of films. Because the audience there still loves what it loved in 1979. Malala Yousafzai has lent her name to 'Joyland' and while Pakistan is proud to have a Nobel Prize winner of Pakistani origin, her endorsement of the film carries no weight.

international

'A4 REVOLUTION' IN CHINA

BLANK SHEETS OF PAPER HAVE BECOME ICONIC IN PROTESTS

Beijing | Agencies
Blank sheets of paper have become an iconic item during the protests, which many now refer to as "white paper revolution", "blank sheet revolution" or "A4 revolution", as per reports. During various demonstrations across the country, people were seen holding a blank sheet of paper. Some say it's a way to avoid censorship. In a viral video said to be from Saturday, a woman in the Communication University of Nanjing held a blank piece of paper before an unidentified man took it away, BBC reported. In another video from last that night, dozens of more students were seen on the campus holding pieces of white paper, standing in silence. Similar scenes occurred in other major cities



over the weekend. "There was definitely nothing on the paper, but we know what's on there," a woman who participated at protests in Shanghai on Saturday night told the BBC. Paper maker Shanghai M&G Stationary has denied rumours that it has taken all A4 papers off shelves for national security reasons. Blank pieces of paper have become a symbol of defiance for protesters in China, especially among students at uni-

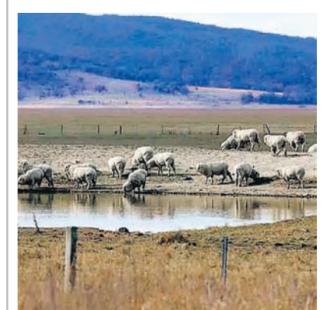
Zelensky warns against new Russian strikes

Kiev | Agencies
After last week's large-scale Russian attack that disconnected Ukraine's all four nuclear power plants and other major power facilities from the grid, President Volodymyr Zelensky warned that Moscow is "preparing new strikes" and the coming days "may be difficult". In his nightly video address to the nation on Sunday, he said: "We understand that terrorists are preparing new strikes and as long as they have missiles, they won't stop." The upcoming week can be as hard as the one that passes. Our Defence Forces are preparing. The whole state is preparing. We work out all scenarios, including with partners. "Zelensky also urged the people to "please pay attention to the air alerts during the week". He further as of Sunday evening, most regions in Ukraine were having only rolling power cuts, adding that "the situation is under the control of the energy authorities". The President noted that the situation at the front remains "very difficult", especially in the Donetsk region. The latest warning comes days after Russia launched another large-scale missile attack on Ukraine's critical infrastructure on November 23, which also led to the deaths of 10 people. Ukraine's anti-aircraft defence systems shot down 51 out of 70 Russian cruise missiles and five kamikaze drones, Ukrayinska Pravda reported. The attack resulted in temporary power outages at all nuclear power



plants and most thermal and hydroelectric power plants, while power transmission facilities were also damaged. Due to the widespread power outage, water and heat supply to households was also interrupted. The continued Russian attacks have damaged almost half of Ukraine's energy system and millions of people are without power as temperatures drop for winter. Blackouts, both scheduled and unscheduled, have become common in many parts of Ukraine, as Russia aims regular waves of missile attacks at parts of the energy infrastructure. At least seven people were killed and more than 20 million others were left without electricity on November 8 when Russia carried out over a 100 missile strikes in what is believed to be Moscow's biggest wave of missile strikes since the invasion began on February 24.

AUS FACING DISASTROUS SUMMER OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS



Canberra: Australia's climate council on Monday warned that the nation is facing a disastrous summer of extreme weather events. In a report, the council and Emergency Leaders for Climate Action (ELCA) identified floods, cyclones and outbreaks of the mosquito-borne Japanese encephalitis virus as major risks faced by Australians through the summer, reports Xinhua news agency. The report said climate change has rendered Australia's disaster planning not fit for purpose, calling for a boost in resilience funding and a national disaster strategy. "There is nothing natural about these disasters, they are being unleashed on Australians by decades of reliance on fossil fuels," Lesley Hughes, a leading climate scientist and author of the report, told local media. "These same companies are enjoying billions in public subsidies. It's high time we end fossil fuel subsidies and use the savings to create a climate disaster fund so we can help communities deal with the fallout of compounding and worsening disasters," said Lesley. Most of Australia has received higher than average rainfall in 2022 due to a La Nina event while the country is not expecting a severe bushfire season. However, wet weather has created ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes and not allowed the east coast to recover from catastrophic flooding through winter and spring. The report found that weather-related disasters cost Australia A\$35 billion in the 2010s, more than the previous two decades combined. Disasters have cost the state of Queensland more than A\$30 billion since 1970, significantly more than any other state or territory.

S.Korea approves mass production plan for light armed helicopters

Seoul | Agencies
South Korea on Monday approved a mass production plan for light armed helicopters (LAH) to replace decrepit choppers, the country's arms procurement agency said. The 5.75-trillion-won (\$4.3 billion) plan was endorsed to produce the homegrown LAH from 2022 through 2031, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA). The domestically-developed LAH will replace the military's aging fleet of 500MD and AH-1S Cobra attack helicopters. According to Yonhap news agency, the DAPA would sign a deal with Korea Aerospace Industries Co., South Korea's sole aircraft manufacturer, later this year for the mass production that is likely to begin early next year. The first batch of the LAH could be deployed in late 2024, Yonhap reported



citing an unnamed DAPA official. Plans were also approved to locally develop a 130 mm guided-rocket system from 2022 to 2033 and a 155 mm precision-guided artillery munition from 2024 to 2036. A 3.3-trillion-won (2.5 billion dollars) plan was also endorsed to purchase heavy attack helicopters from abroad from 2023 to 2028.

Syria retrieves 35,000 stolen artifacts during 11-yr war: Official

Damascus | Agencies
Around 35,000 stolen Syrian artifacts have been retrieved by the authorities since the beginning of the 11-year war in Syria, an antiquities official. Firas Dadoukh, Director of Cultural Relations and Head of the Professional Development Department at the Directorate of Antiquities and Museums, on Sunday said that the retrieved artifacts have been restored with the help of local communities and relevant authorities. Speaking at the sideline of an exhibition of recovered archaeological treasures at the Syrian national museum, Dadoukh added that a large portion of the retrieved pieces have already gone through a process of identification -- calculating the age of each piece and validating its authenticity -- before going through a rehabilitation work to prepare it for display at the museum, Xinhua news agency reported. Laila Al-Sammak, the curator of the Museum of Ancient Syrian



Antiquities, told Xinhua that most of the plundered pieces belong to the northern region, particularly in areas controlled by the rebels. She said that the Syrian army has managed to confiscate many pieces and prevented their smuggling outside the country. "In fact, the war on Syria was a war on the Syrian heritage in order to destroy the Syrian identity, which is known for its originality and greatness," she added. The exhibition of the retrieved treasures will last for two months from November 24.



CLAIMING 'MISINTERPRETATION', CHASTENED RAMDEV REPENTS SLUR ON WOMEN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Three days after his sexist comments on women ignited a massive row, Yoga guru, Swami Ramdev tamerly expressed regrets and apologised for his remarks, officials said here on Monday. Ramdev has sent an email to this effect to the Maharashtra State Commission for Women Chairperson Rupali Chakankar, in response to her missive of Friday demanding an explanation for his utterances within 72 hours. Confirming the development, the MSCW head informed that Ramdev has sent the response to her, expressing both regrets and tendering an apology, but also claiming that his remarks were allegedly twisted out of context.



gathering, largely comprising females: "Women look good in saris, they look great in salwar suits and in my view, they look good even if they don't wear anything."

The blatant statements rocked the state with calls to "slap, kick, tonsure" Ramdev and threats to storm his next programme, from various quarters in Maharashtra and other parts of India. Furious senior leaders of various

parties, including Sanjay Raut, Dr. Manisha Kayande, Kishore Tiwari, Mahesh Tapase, farmers, feminists or women activists like Trupti Desai, Aparna Malikar, and others pounced on Ramdev, seeking an unconditional apology, booking him for degrading womenfolk and other demands, even as the MSCW slapped a notice. In his reply to the MSCW within the deadline period, Ramdev con-

tended he has not flouted any rules of the state panel, and has always campaigned at the global level to help women get dignity and equality in all spheres. "I have also supported, encouraged various policies of the government like 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao', and worked with several organisations to strengthen these initiatives. I categorically state that I have not insulted any women nor had any intentions to do so," Ramdev wrote.

He added that the (Thane) programme was themed for women's empowerment but video clips of his comments of a few seconds from the hour-long speech were purportedly 'twisted' out of context to convey a wrong impression.

"I have the highest regards for Mother and mother-power... The comment on attire was meant for 'simple clothes'. If it has hurt anybody's sentiments, I deeply regret the same. I also apologise to them for causing any distress," said Ramdev. MSCW officials hinted that it would treat the matter as 'closed' but if they received any fresh complaints against the Yoga guru, the women's panel would not hesitate to launch a full-fledged investigation.

Stop maligning national icons, MNS chief Raj Thackeray tells Congress and BJP

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray asked the Congress and BJP to stop maligning national icons like V D Savarkar and Jawaharlal Nehru and instead focus on important issues facing the country. Addressing party workers at a convention here, Thackeray said criticising national heroes who fought for Independence was unwarranted as everyone has "positive and negative aspects".

"Does Rahul Gandhi have the stature to talk ill about Savarkar who was sentenced to 50 years of rigorous imprisonment? There is something called strategy to come out of prison. How can it be termed as surrender or mercy? He asked. Gandhi had stoked a row by claiming Savarkar had written mercy petitions to the British from the Andaman cellular jail.

"The BJP has been maligning Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and this should stop. There are important issues facing the country which should be addressed to. You will not benefit by criticising national heroes who had fought for Independence. Everyone has positive and negative aspects. There is no need to highlight the negative side now," the MNS chief said. Meanwhile, the Congress hit back at Thackeray saying the people have lost faith in him as he keeps changing his political stand. Thackeray also criticised Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari over his remarks about



Chhatrapati Shivaji and accused him of being "anti-Marathi" who insulted the 17th Century king. Mumbai Congress president Bhai Jagtap said, "Thackeray had no right to criticise Rahul Gandhi. Forget India, Thackeray may not have seen the whole of Maharashtra. MNS as a political party is finished. He (Thackeray) mimicked Rahul in his speech, but he (Thackeray) is giving a voice over in movies these days. The MNS chief was upset at the huge response Rahul Gandhi's Yatra".

Drugs worth Rs 20Lakhs seized, one arrested

Mumbai | Agencies

A drug peddler was arrested and MD drugs worth Rs 20Lakhs were seized from his possession from Dindoshi, Mumbai, police said on Monday. The peddler has been sent to Police custody till



December 1. Further investigation is underway, said Dindoshi Police. Dindoshi police had received secret information that a peddler was coming to Santosh Nagar in the Goregaon area to sell drugs, after which the accused peddler was arrested by laying a trap. MD drugs, commonly known as ecstasy, were recovered from the accused. Further investigation is underway regarding where he brought the drugs and to whom he was going to supply them. Earlier in another incident, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) recovered 8 kg of heroin worth Rs 40 crores in the

international market at Mumbai airport and arrested two foreign nationals.

According to DRI Customs, at Mumbai Airport on Sunday, DRI officials took in custody two foreign nationals with drugs worth Rs 40 crores. The team had received intelligence that two passengers were about to come to Mumbai to smuggle drugs, after which the officers laid a trap and interrogated the accused by taking them into custody. After this, the officers checked their luggage and found two packets of white powder each weighing 4 kg which was later found to be heroin.

MAHARASHTRA-KARNATAKA BORDER ROW

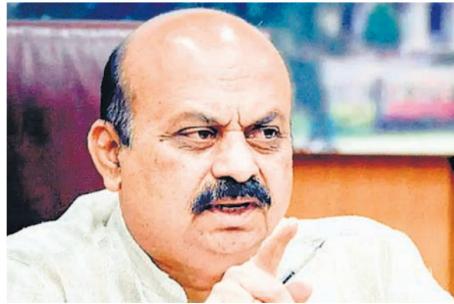
COORDINATING MINISTERS TO VISIT BELGAUM ON DEC 3, HOLD TALKS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra ministers Chandrakant Patil and Shambhuraj Desai will meet activists of the Madhyavarti Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti in Belgaum on December 3 and hold talks with them on the decades-old border dispute with Karnataka.

Patil and Desai have been appointed as the coordinating ministers for the border row with a mandate to coordinate with the legal team regarding the court case on the border dispute between the two states. Taking to Twitter, Patil said there was a demand from the Madhyavarti Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti to hold discussions on the border issue.

Accordingly, coordinating Minister Shambhuraj Desai and I will visit Belgaum on December 3 and hold discussions. Let's meet up.



Discussions surely will lead to a way; the minister tweeted with a letter from the Samiti seeking a meeting with him and Desai.

As per a recent government resolution, the ministers will be responsible for coordination with the Samiti that roots for merging of the Marathi-speaking areas in Karnataka with the state. Patil and Desai will also

look into the problems faced by residents of 865 villages in Karnataka over which the Maharashtra government has staked its claim in this decades old issue, the resolution said.

Patil is a senior state BJP leader, while Desai is a member of the Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena faction of the Shiv Sena. Both hail from western Maharashtra.

This is a fight for Maharashtra's pride, says Aaditya Thackeray

Mumbai: Wading into the Maharashtra-Karnataka border row, Yuva Sena chief and former state minister Aaditya Thackeray dubbed the Karnataka chief minister's remarks as a "scripted move". This, he said, was done to divert public ire from the controversy sparked by the recent remarks on Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj made by Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari and BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi. Thackeray Junior, speaking at a party function in Borivli on Saturday, said that one should see the timing of a statement made by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai claiming rights on a few villages from Maharashtra's Sangli and Solapur districts. "Recently a BJP leader [Trivedi] and Maharashtra governor made derogatory remarks against Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.



Admirers and followers of the great Maratha King in Maharashtra and across the globe are upset with such derogatory statements. Aware of escalating public ire on this issue, a section of people have consciously raked up Maharashtra-Karnataka border row to divert the public attention from the controversy over Shivaji Maharaj remarks," Thackeray said. The issues, however, served as an opportunity to corner the Shinde-Fadnis government. In view of this, Aaditya Thackeray urged all political parties to oppose the derogatory remarks against the Maratha warrior as well as Karnataka CM's claim. "Both the issues-insulting our idol and territorial claims made by the Karnataka CM-are against Maharashtra. All should come together as this fight is about Maharashtra's pride," said the grandson of late Sena founder Bal Thackeray.

Murder accused who escaped on bike from Vasai court held

Mumbai | Agencies

The sacked Axis Bank manager, Anil Dubey, who had escaped from the clutches of police from Vasai court, while he was brought for a hearing in a murder and robbery case last week, has been arrested by the crime branch sleuths on Monday, the police said.

Dubey, on pretext of going to washroom near court premises had fled away on a motorcycle. The rider of the bike, Chand Badshah Aziz Khan was waiting for him as planned by the duo for over six months ago.

"We have arrested both of them and seized the motorcycle used in the crime," said a MBVV police officer.

After escaping from the custody, Dubey and Khan were hiding in slum pockets of Nalasopara East. The cops were on high alert as Dubey could have escaped to either Nepal or Punjab. He knew some people in Nepal and Punjab since he had completed his studies, official sources said.

The night patrolling and security arrangements of MBVV police foiled Dubey's plan, sources added.

Dubey was arrested last year in June for killing his former colleague and seriously injuring other at ICICI bank in Virar East.



Police said Khan and Dubey met each other at Thane Central jail. Khan, who was imprisoned for theft case, got out of jail around six months ago, said police.

MBVV police formed various team to track down

Dubey and Khan. Crime branch sleuths were also roped in to search for the duo.

The DCP Avinash Ambure had been closely monitoring the case and inspector Pramod Badakh with his team managed to trace and arrest the duo.

Abusive group of youngsters assault cop, his friend at restaurant; 2 held

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Objection to an abusive caller sitting on the next table in a Navi Mumbai restaurant resulted in a brutal assault case involving a police official. The incident took place on Wednesday night at Koparkhairane in Navi Mumbai in which 11 to 12 youngsters assaulted a police constable and his friend. Following the incident, the police arrested two youngsters and are now in search for the rest of the suspects, the police said.

According to the police, 41-year-old police constable Deepak Kolhe, a resident of Ghansoli, had reached the restaurant in sector 14 of Koparkhairane with his friend, Sandeep Taware. A group of youngsters were present at the restaurant and at around 12.45 am, one of the youngsters received a call. He began to abuse the caller on the other end.

"Deepak objected to the youngster and told him there are others in the restaurant too and he should behave himself. This enraged the youngster and he started arguing with Deepak and his friend Sandeep," said a

police official from Koparkhairane police station. He said, the argument turned ugly when around 1.04am, a youngster assaulted Deepak and his friend Sandeep. The group of youngsters joined him and started hitting them with plates, glasses and then chairs and beer bottles. During the assault, the youngster allegedly snatched Deepak's mobile phone and Sandeep's 11 gram gold chain; he threatened them of dire consequences if they register a police complaint. The group of youngsters then fled away from the restaurant. The entire sequence of events was caught on the CCTV camera of the restaurant.

Later, Deepak and Sandeep visited the Koparkhairane police station and registered an FIR against them. On their complaint, against the suspects under IPC section 395 (dacoity), 397 (dacoity with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt) and 506 (criminal intimidation) during few hours of November 24. The Police have managed to arrest two suspects in connection with the case while search for the rest of them is on, the official added.



NMMC CUTS 850 ILLEGAL WATER CONNECTIONS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has been cracking down on unauthorised water connections. The civic body has cut around 850 such connections this month and has launched a survey of housing societies that are consuming more water than required. According to a civic official, there were complaints of low-pressure water supply in some parts of the city. "When our officials visited these areas, they found some illegal connections. Subsequently, the NMMC cut nearly 850 of them," he stated. Sanjay Desai, city engineer of NMMC, said action would also be taken in

societies where water is misused. The civic authority has warned 700 housing societies that are allegedly misusing or consuming extra water. The official said, "At some places, we found booster pumps and that most of the societies were using potable water for gardening and washing cars. We have warned them that if they do not stop wasting potable water, we will make their water bills steeper. "Water is supplied to Navi Mumbai residents at the rate of Rs 4.35 per thousand litres. NMMC officials and staff visited Vashi, Turbhe, Kopar Khairane, Ghansoli and Airoli. They found unauthorised connections mainly in gaothans and slums. Eighty booster pumps have been seized. Sanjay Gurav, a Mumbai-based civic activist, said, "All municipal corporations should take strict action against the wastage of water. There is always a shortage of water in South Mumbai's chawls. However, water is being wasted in many parts of Mumbai. The situation is similar in other cities. Therefore, all civic authorities should take this kind of action."

Money laundering case: Special court grants bail to ex-Maha minister Anil Deshmukh's son

Mumbai | Agencies

Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh's son Hrishikesh Deshmukh on Monday appeared before a special court here in connection with a money laundering case and was granted bail.

A special court designated to hear cases related to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) recorded his appearance and then granted him bail. The court had in February this year issued summons to Hrishikesh after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) submitted its complaint (chargesheet) in the case.

Hrishikesh was arraigned as an accused in the chargesheet. After appearing before the court, Hrishikesh filed an application



through his advocate Aniket Nikam requesting the court to accept his appearance and grant him bail.

In his application, Hrishikesh pointed out that the accusations in the ED's case were confined to the

alleged acts of omission and commission by his father in his capacity as the then home minister from January 2020 to April 2021.

The plea cited that Anil Deshmukh had already been granted bail in the

case by the Bombay High Court. The ED began its probe against Anil Deshmukh after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered a case against him over allegations of extortion made by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh. The probe agency claimed that the former minister had misused his official position and collected Rs 4.70 crore from various bars and restaurants in Mumbai.

The money was channelled to Nagpur-based Shri Sai Shikshan Sansthan, an educational trust controlled by the Deshmukh family, it alleged.

Although Anil Deshmukh has been granted bail in this case, he continues to remain in jail in the case lodged against him by the CBI on corruption charges.



NICOLE KIDMAN BIDS \$100,000 FOR HUGH JACKMAN'S SIGNED HAT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Nicole Kidman received a warm welcome on Broadway Saturday evening when she made an appearance at a performance of Hugh Jackman's 'The Music Man' revival.

During an auction for the charity Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Kidman made her presence known when she bid a hefty sum of \$100,000 for a hat signed by Jackman, reports.

Jackman shared a video of the meeting on Twitter, thanking his fellow Australian thespian for her support.

"I love you. I love Broadway. And I love what they do, Broadway Cares, but I also want to say this show is extraordinary," Kidman said, taking the microphone after approaching the stage at the Winter Garden Theatre.

"I've known Nic for almost 30 years. I've worked with her. I can tell you this is not a surprise to me. She is one of the most generous souls I know," Jackman said. "You're a beautiful person. I love you. Thank you."

According to the reports, Kidman's shouted bid of \$100,000 drew an enthused response from the crowd, leading Jackman to joke "I just want to be clear, this is not Australian dollars." (Under current conversion rates, Kidman's bid amounts to \$148,744 Australian dollars.)

The 'Music Man' cast had been raising funds for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS at the conclusion of recent performances.

"Ms Kidman's remarkable support of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS on Saturday night was wonderful to see and her extraordinary generosity will be deeply appreciated by the entire Broadway community," Kate Horton, producer of 'The Music Man', shared in a statement.

"Donations made at 'The Music Man', all across Broadway, Off-Broadway and at national touring productions will provide meals and medication, health care and hope this holiday season," Viola noted.



Emma Corrin bats for gender-neutral award categories

Los Angeles | Agencies

English actress Emma Corrin, who played Diana Frances Spencer, Princess of Wales in Season 4 of the streaming series 'The Crown', has called for genderless categories at major entertainment awards shows, as per the reports. The actress shared the above sentiment in an interview. In particular, Corrin, who identifies as non-binary as she uses they/them pronouns, noted that nominations for best actor and best actress should be merged into one, gender-neutral category. According to reports, Corrin has earned praise for their supporting performance in Michael Grandage's new period drama 'My Policeman' but the actress shares that they feel discomfort at the prospect of campaigning in a gendered category. "It's difficult for me at the moment trying to justify in my head being non-binary and being nominated in female categories," Corrin told a news channel. "When it comes to categories, do we need to make it specific as to whether you're being nominated for a female role or a male role?"

"I hope for a future in which that happens," Corrin continued, speaking on the prospect of gender-neutral categories. "It's about everyone being able to feel acknowledged and represented." Source adds that Corrin received an Emmy nomination last year on 'The Crown' for outstanding lead actress, though that came while the actor was still accepting she/her pronouns. "You can discuss awards and the representation there, but really the conversation needs to be about having more representation in the material itself, in the content that we are seeing for non-binary people, for queer people, for trans people, because then I think that will change a lot," Corrin said. She added: "When those parts come up, meaning more people and more actors are playing those roles, then I think there will be more of an urgency with which these questions will be addressed."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Costume, production and set designer and producer Catherine Martin will be honored for her outstanding global contribution and influence on film, with the Australian Academy's most prestigious award the Longford Lyell Award. The prize is made as part of the AACTA Awards and will be presented on Dec. 7. Martin is the most awarded Australian in Oscar history with 4 Oscars, 5 BAFTAs and a Tony Award. She has worked alongside husband director, producer and writer, Baz Luhrmann on titles including "Strictly Ballroom," "Romeo + Juliet," "Australia," "The Great Gatsby" and "Elvis." "Baz and I often joke that we are just getting started, so I hope this 'lifetime achievement award' is not a full stop, but a comma; heralding the beginning of new and exciting creative adventures to be shared with both long-time collaborators and new artists alike, in front of and behind the camera," Martin said in a prepared statement.

CATHERINE MARTIN TO RECEIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



HARRISON FORD, HELEN MIRREN SADDLE UP FOR ANOTHER PROJECT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Paramount+ has released the first full trailer for '1923', its upcoming spin-off series of the 'Yellowstone' franchise from returning creator and executive producer Taylor Sheridan, reports.

The limited series features a new generation of the Dutton family, who are no less plagued by violence. Helen Mirren and Harrison Ford star as husband and wife Jacob and Cara Dutton, respectively.

"Men kill quick with a bullet or a noose," Cara, the Dutton family matriarch, says in the trailer. "But their fight is with me, and I kill much slower."

Set on the expansive rural terrain of Montana, '1923' spans over three decades before the birth of 'Yellowstone' protagonist John Dutton (played by Kevin Costner) and 40 years after the events of '1883', the first 'Yellowstone' prequel series, notes source.

Other series regulars include Brandon Sklenar as Spencer Dutton, Darren Mann as Jack Dutton, Michelle Randolph as Elizabeth Strafford, James Badge Dale as John Dutton Sr, Marley Shelton as Emma Dutton, Brian Geraghty as Zane Davis, Aminah Nieves as Teonna Rainwater and Jerome Flynn as Banner Creighton.

The show is being produced by MTV Entertainment Studios, 101 Studios and Bosque Ranch Productions.



Dwayne Johnson convinced makers to onboard Henry Cavill

Los Angeles | Agencies

Dwayne Johnson, who is celebrating the success of 'Black Adam', fought hard for Henry Cavill's cameo as Superman as Warner Bros was not initially keen on bringing back the actor. In a video posted on Twitter, the DC star said that he wanted to establish 'Black Adam' "as the most powerful, unstoppable force in the DC universe," reports. To manage the latter, Johnson said: "We have to bring back the most powerful, unstoppable force of all time in any universe. And you guys know who I'm talking about? Of course, that is Superman. And that's Henry Cavill." According to the reports, Johnson then revealed that the studio "inexplicably and inexcusably" did not want to bring back Cavill but he was not going to take no for an answer and his team got to work. "This has been years in the making regarding bringing Henry Cavill back and years of strategic conversations and we were not going to take no for an answer," he said. "There was no way, there's no viable logical way that you can attempt to build out the DC Universe without the most powerful force and the greatest superhero of all time sitting on the sidelines. It's impossible to do," he added. Johnson continued: "It all comes back to where Superman you have to have Superman in the mix. So that's why we fought hard to bring Superman back, Henry Cavill, and there was no other Superman, by the way, to bring back Henry Cavill is our generation Superman and in my opinion, the greatest Superman. And I mean that respectfully to the other actors, especially Christopher Reeve, but the greatest Superman of all time." Reports notes that with Cavill back in the DC Universe, the 'Black Adam' star said that they can "now build out the DC Universe, properly, strategically and smartly." Johnson also pointed out that since the film came out, the "hierarchy of power in the DC Universe has changed and, of course, now we have new leadership at DC and at Warner Bros."

Chloe Sims puts on a busty display in a racy red crop top

Los Angeles | Agencies

Chloe Sims looked hot to trot as she stepped out in Los Angeles on Sunday. The reality star, made sure all eyes were on her wearing a racy red outfit and tiny crop top that put her ample assets on display. Chloe joined her sisters Demi and Frankie Sims on the outing, who wore PVC leather, with the girls filming their £1m Only Fans reality show, House of Sims in America. Chloe looked like the ultimate blonde bombshell in her outfit, wearing a bright red crop top and high-waisted trouser that flashed her abs. She teamed the look with a red jacket that she wore off the shoulder and a pair of red and white high-top sneakers. Chloe wore her long locks out and around her shoulders wearing a beret, and carried a small red handbag.



Ana De Armas

**FIFA WORLD CUP**

GHANA BEAT SOUTH KOREA 3-2 IN A THRILLER

Doha | Agencies

Defender Mohammed Salisu and midfielder Mohammed Kudus gave Ghana a surprise 2-0 lead over South Korea at halftime in Monday's Group H match as the African nation bid to keep their World Cup hopes alive. Against the run of play, Ghana went ahead in the 24th minute when Salisu struck from close range after South Korea failed to clear a free kick and 10 minutes later Kudus doubled the lead with a glancing header. South Korea pulled one back. Cho had to tweak his body low to head the ball into the Ghana net just

before a defender's boot was about to clear it away in the 58th min. Valiant effort. Another goal for Cho Gue-Sung in the 61st min. This time Cho headed home a high ball from the edge of the six yard box into the back of the Ghana net.

Kudus doubled the lead for Ghana with a fine header from close range. Jordan Ayew whipped a delightful cross from the left into the South Korea penalty area and Kudus got the faintest of touches with his forehead on the edge of the six-yard box to guide the ball into the Korea net in the 34th min.

Salisu broke the deadlock at Education City stadium to give Ghana the lead in the 24th minute.

CAMEROON RALLY TO HOLD SERBIA IN SIX-GOAL THRILLER

Doha (Qatar) Cameroon came back from a two-goal deficit to force a 3-3 draw with Serbia in a FIFA World Cup Group G thriller at the Al Janoub Stadium here on Monday. With the draw, arguably the most exciting game of the World Cup in Qatar so far, Cameroon kept their hopes alive of reaching the World Cup last 16 Stage.

Jean-Charles Castelletto opened the scoring in the 29th minute for Cameroon. Thereafter, two quick goals from Strahinja Pavlovic and Sergej Milinkovic-Savic just before the break, in injury stoppage time, saw Serbia head into half-time with a 2-1 lead. Mitrovic then added a third in the 53rd minute as Serbia appeared to be cruising to victory with a 3-1 lead against their name.

But Cameroon had other ideas and staged a remarkable second-half comeback. The Indomitable Lions bounced back, scoring twice to level. Substitute Vincent Aboubakar scored an outrageous lob that was initially ruled offside until VAR intervened to award the goal for Cameroon in the 63rd minute. Two minutes later, Aboubakar drove down the right and passed it to Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting who equalized to make it 3-3. But all eyes will be on the Switzerland-Brazil tie which takes place today with the winner qualifying for the next stage, having won their respective first round matches against Cameroon and Serbia respectively.



FULLKRUG'S STRIKE HELPS GERMANY TO 1-1 DRAW WITH SPAIN

Al Khor (Qatar) Substitute Niclas Fullkrug's goal seven minutes from end helped Germany to a 1-1 draw against Spain in a FIFA World Cup Group E match at Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, Qatar, on Sunday evening. The close range strike gave the Germans the first point of the competition having lost their first match to Japan 2-1. Fullkrug, who is playing his first-ever World Cup, came from the bench to the rescue with a fine turn and finish to level in the 83rd minute, smashing home a loose ball inside the box. The goal by Werder Bremen striker cancelled out the 62nd minute strike by Spanish substitute Alvaro Morata, who beat his marker Niklas Sule and flicked the ball in at the near post past goalkeeper Manuel Neuer following a low cross from Jordi Alba to give Spain the lead. The one-all draw has left the group still wide open with Spain needing just a point against Japan to qualify for the knockouts. A win will guarantee them top spot. Germany stays bottom for now, but they can jump to second and qualify for the next phase if they beat Costa Rica and Japan lose to Spain. However, it gets a little bit trickier for Germany if Spain and Japan draw. If Japan draw it would come down to goal difference or goals scored by Germany and Japan.

INDIAN RACING LEAGUE Hyderabad Black Birds dominate 2nd-weekend races

Team Absolute | Chennai

Hyderabad Black Birds dominated the 2nd-weekend race of the Indian Racing League at the MIC Chennai, emerging on top at the end of the proceedings. The Indian Racing League successfully completed its 2nd weekend race at MIC Chennai on Sunday with a Sprint race and a Feature race on day two. It was Hyderabad Black Birds that emerged victorious in the Chennai leg.

Hyderabad Black Birds represented by Neel Jani, Akhil Rabindra, Lola Lovinfosse and Anindith Reddy took the top spot in Sprint race 2 with Akhil Rabindra putting up a lap time of 1:32.108 and again, in the feature race standing tall at the summit was the Hyderabad Black Birds



reserving their top spot with a comprehensive win (00:36:55.401) to dominate the Chennai leg.

Reserving the second and the third spot at the feature race were Godspeed Kochi and Goa Acers respectively with their overall lap timing being 00:37:07.957 and 00:37:23.507, the organisers informed in a release.

Chennai Turbo Riders and Speed demons Delhi are yet to make a mark despite finishing on the podium in both sprint races. The two teams would have to revisit strategies to make a stronger comeback in the coming legs.

The third leg of the Indian Racing League will be conducted on December 3 and 4, 2022 at the MIC, Chennai.

UNNATI HOODA TO LEAD 36-MEMBER SQUAD FOR ASIA JUNIOR BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rising shuttler Unnati Hooda will be among country's youngsters to battle it out for the titles as a 36-member Indian contingent left for Nonthaburi, Thailand to compete in the Badminton Asia U-17 & U-15 Junior Championships 2022, scheduled from November 29 to December 4.

The Odisha Open champion Unnati will lead the charge in the U-17 women's singles alongside Jiya Rawat and Anmol Kharb whereas Tanvi Sharma, who topped the trials, will compete in the women's U-15 singles along with Ishita Negi, Suhasi Verma and Sampriti Pal.

India's Tasnim Mir and Tara Shah had clinched gold and silver medal respectively in the U-15 women's singles in the last edition of the championships, held in 2019. The prestigious continental event will be conducted after a two-year break,



forced due to the pandemic.

The players have been selected through the selection trials which took place in Hyderabad last month. Mohammad Ali Mir, Gnana Dattu, Abhinav Garg and Anish Thoppani will be the players to watch out for in the U-15 men's singles. Dhruv Negi, on the other hand, will shoulder the responsibility in the U-17 men's singles along with Ansh Negi, Prajwal Sonawane and Neer Nehwal. As a part of their preparations ahead of the tournament, the selected players also participated in a 12-day national camp in Raipur from November 14-25.

In the doubles section, pair of Arsh Mohammad and Sanskar Saraswat, and Divyam Arora and Mayank Rana will be India's best bet in the men's U-17 category while Arjun Birajdar and Aryan Birajdar will compete in the men's U-15 along with the pair of Bjorn Jaison and Aatish Sreenivas PV.

Vennala K and Shriyanshi Valishetty will play in the U-17 women's doubles category along with the pair of Navya Kanderi and Rakshita Sree S. Aanya Bisht and Siddhi Rawat, and Tanvi Andluri and Durga Kandrapu are part of the women's U-15 doubles team.

P.T USHA ELECTED AS INDIAN OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

New Delhi | Legendary Indian athlete PT Usha on Monday elected as the president of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA). Union Law Minister and former Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju congratulated the veteran sprinter on her appointment as the president of IOA. On November 26, the 58-year-old took to social media to inform everyone that she has filed her nomination for the top post in next month's IOA elections.



The deadline to file nomination papers for the IOA elections ended on November 27. IOA elections returning officer Umesh Sinha did not receive any nominations for the top post till November 27. However, 24 candidates filed nominations for various posts on Sunday. One of the most decorated athletes in India, Usha won four gold medals and seven silver medals at the Asian Games. Usha is among the eight sportspersons of outstanding merit (SOMs) picked by the newly-elected Athletes Commission to vote during the December 10 elections for the new executive committee of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA). The other seven SOMs are Yogeshwar Dutt (wrestling) M.M. Somaya (hockey), Rohit Rajpal (tennis), Akhil Kumar (boxing), Suma Shirur (shooting), Aparna Popat (badminton) and Dola Banerjee (archery).

VIJAY HAZARE TROPHY

Team Absolute | Ahmedabad

Right-handed opener Rituraj Gaikwad on Monday hit a mind-boggling seven sixes in an over, the first time it's happened in List A cricket, while on the way to smashing 220 not out for Maharashtra in a Vijay Hazare Trophy quarterfinal match against Uttar Pradesh at the Narendra Modi Stadium B Ground in Ahmedabad.

Gaikwad, who is captaining Maharashtra in the match, achieved this feat in the 49th over of the innings. The over was bowled by Uttar Pradesh's left-arm spinner Shiva Singh, operating from around the wicket. Gaikwad smashed sixes over deep mid-wicket, straight down the ground, and deep square leg.

Shiva then went in with a change in the trajectory, but the result was the same as Gaikwad smashed consecutive sixes over the long-off fence. A no-ball was signalled and Gaikwad smacked the ball from Shiva over long-on



for another six, also getting the right-handed batter his maiden double century in List A cricket in 153 balls. For the last ball, Shiva went for over the wicket angle, but it made no difference as Gaikwad sent it soaring over deep mid-wicket to take 43 runs. Gaikwad eventually finished on 220 not out off 159 balls, with ten fours and 16 sixes, as Maharashtra made 330/5 in their 50 overs, as 58 runs came off the last two overs.

Gaikwad taking 43 runs from that over off Shiva made it to the record books as the most expensive over in List A cricket, equalling the combined effort of Brett Hampton and Joe Carter, off Willem Ludick, for Northern Districts against Central Districts in a Ford Trophy game in New Zealand in 2018.

He also became the first Indian batter to make 43 runs off an over in List-A cricket.

KARNATAKA BEAT PUNJAB, SAURASHTRA DEFEAT TAMIL NADU; SET UP SEMIFINAL MEETING

Ahmedabad | Karnataka opener R Samarth slammed a match-winning half-century to help his side beat Punjab by four wickets in the first quarterfinal of Narendra Modi Stadium Ground 'A'. They will now meet Saurashtra in the semifinal, which entered the last four stages on the back of Chirag Jani's all-round performance toppling Tamil Nadu by 44 runs at the GS Patel Stadium in Nadiad on Monday. With the wins in quarterfinals, Karnataka and Saurashtra will now meet in the semifinals, touted to be a clash of the heavy-weights. For Punjab, opener and all-rounder Abhishek Sharma hit a brilliant century, a 123-ball 109, laced with 12 fours and two sixes. He was the lone as rest of the recognised batters failed to fire, though Anmol Malhotra (29) and Sanvir Singh (39) did chip in with some handy contributions. In reply, Karnataka skipper Mayank Agarwal was out for just one run by Siddharth Kaul. But Samarth scored 71 off 106 balls, hitting five fours and added crucial partnerships of 51 and 58 with Nikin Jose (29) and Manish Pandey (35). In the other quarterfinal, Jani was the star for Saurashtra, hammering 52 not out off 31 deliveries and then claimed four wickets to send Tamil Nadu out of the tournament. Apart from him, Harvik Desai (78-ball 61) and Arpit Vasavada (49-ball 51) hit half-centuries, while Jay Gohil, Samarth Vyas, Prerak Mankad, and Jaydev Unadkat made contributions with the bat. For Tamil Nadu, Sai Kishore and M Mohammed took two wickets each, while Sandeep Warrier, M Siddharth and B Aparajith had a wicket apiece. In the chase of 294, Tamil Nadu lost their in-form openers Sai Sudharsan and N Jagadeesan inside first seven overs and could never recover from that. Aparajith and Dinesh Karthik, coming in for an injured Shahrulkh Khan, failed to get a big score. Baba Indrajith (69-ball 53) and Sai Kishore (92-ball 74) put up some fight through a 113-run stand for Tamil Nadu. But after the duo fell, Tamil Nadu's resistance was falling and despite Sanjay Yadav and R Sonu Yadav getting a pair of 20s, they were bowled out for 249 in 48 overs.





WITH GOOD CONTENT COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY: NITHYA MENEN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Two years since it left audiences clutching at a cliffhanger in its first season, 'Breathe: Into The Shadows Season 2' is ticking again. Most of the cast members have been vocal about their characters in Season 2; now, South Indian multilingual star Nithya Menen, who reprises her role as Abha Sabharwal, shared her views on the second instalment of the franchise. Menen said: "First, I feel lucky to have been a part of the Breathe franchise and work with immensely talented people on set. I have been a part of the team for a few years now and the first instalment of 'Breathe: Into the Shadows' was a special experience undoubtedly."

"Audiences from across the globe showered immense love and appreciation, but while we were soaking it all in, the pressure of making the sequel even better was something that had all our focus on because, with good content comes great responsibility."

"In Season 2 every character has evolved beautifully, adding to the mysteries and suspense that kept the audiences hooked to the series," Menen continued. Menen thanked Mayank Sharma for "making my character Abha Sabharwal so impactful that even after two years my character is being recognised and lauded by the audience."

And she added: "This season sees Abha caught up in mind games as she tries to untangle the threatening mystery set up in the series and to keep her family safe." Apart from the plot that kept fans fascinated and engaged, its star-studded cast has also won hearts with their solid performances.

PODCASTS ARE AN EXTENSION TO MY CRAFT:
POOJA GOR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Pooja Gor, who is currently part of the podcast 'I Can't Hear You', spoke about doing an audio series for the first time. She said: "My first audio experience was on radio. I remember my grandparents used to listen to the radio a lot and then my mother and grandmother used to request a change in station. It had a great impact in my life. In fact there was a time in my life when I wanted to become a radio jockey. I am glad that now I am part of 'I Can't Hear You'. Podcasts are an extension to my craft."

She shares about the differences between dubbing and podcasts: "As actor, we are enacting a scene according to the script with audio and video. And while dubbing you just have to replicate the emotions. Video plays a huge role there." "In podcasts you have to do everything with your voice only. I feel with every medium, the challenges are new. You need to learn a new way to adjust to that format. While doing this podcast I have learnt when you breathe between words that also can be an expression."

Silence is also a tool in podcasts." In 'I Can't Hear You' Pooja is playing a character called Dhvani who is an Acoustic Scientist. As an actor, voice is a big tool and Pooja talks about the two voices that have impacted her life. "Two voices which are very powerful in our industry are Amitabh Bachchan and Amrish Puri. No one can match their voices." On the work front, Pooja is looking forward to her next project, the Netflix series 'Guns & Gulaabs', which is a comedy crime thriller. "I am eagerly waiting for its release," Gor said, signing off. "It's an entertaining series. Currently television is in a zone where experimental stuff is not happening. What I am being offered I have already done so I am waiting for something new."



Ram Charan back with yet another pan-India project

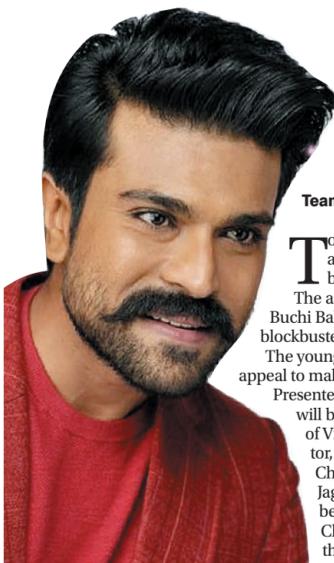
Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Tollywood star Ram Charan, who became a household name across India with the S.S. Rajamouli's multi-starrer 'RRR', will be back with yet another pan-India project.

The as-yet-untitled movie announced on Monday is to be helmed by Buchi Babu Sana, who made his directorial debut with the sensational blockbuster 'Uppena'.

The young director has readied a powerful script, which has universal appeal to make it a pan-India entertainer, according to some sources.

Presented by the leading production house Mythri Movie Makers, film will be mounted on a huge scale with a big budget under the banners of Vriddhi Cinemas and Sukumar Writings, which is 'Pushpa' director, Sukumar's company. This upcoming movie will be Ram Charan's 16th project since he made his debut with Puri Jagannadh's 'Chiruta' in 2007. He is now busy with his 15th movie being directed by Shankar. Ram Charan is Tollywood Mega Star Chiranjeevi's son. The makers of the upcoming movie are still in the process of finalising the names of the other cast and crew.



Fitness plays a very crucial role in my life:
Yukti Kapoor

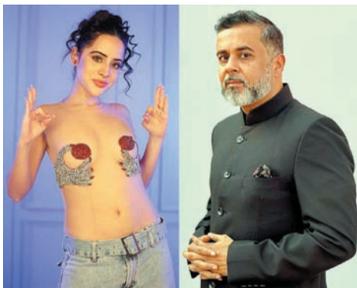
UORFI CALLS CHETAN BHAGAT A 'PERVERT' AFTER HE QUESTIONS HER DRESS SENSE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Internet personality Uorfi Javed took on popular writer Chetan Bhagat as a result of a comment made by the latter in which he called her a "distraction" for boys. Although Bhagat later clarified that he'd been quoted out of context, Uorfi went after him, all guns blazing.

After drawing attention of her followers to the allegations against Bhagat, Uorfi reacted to the author's comment: "Guys, let's not forget how so many women accused him during #MeToo case!!" She added that men like Bhagat only blame women and said there was no need to drag her into the conversation and make comments on the kind of clothes she chooses to wear. "Men like him will always blame women than accept their own shortcomings!! Just because you are a pervert does not mean it is the girl's fault or what she is wearing!" Uorfi said.

"Unnecessarily dragging me into a conversation, commenting on how my clothes are distracting young boys is such a f***ed thing to say! You messaging young girls isn't a distraction for them, though?" she continued.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

TV actress Yukti Kapoor, who is known for her role of SHO Karishma Singh in the popular sitcom 'Maddam Sir', said that it is important for actors to maintain their fitness, which helps their overall health. Yukti begins her day by having a glass of methi (fenugreek) water. She then works out, beginning with planks for 10 minutes followed by 10-12 minutes of yoga practice.

She shared: "Fitness plays a very crucial role in my life. Acting as a profession, on the other hand, requires long hours of non-stop shooting with

no clear idea of when one would get free in the day. During days when I am on set and I am informed that there is some time for the shot to be set up, I make it a point to utilise that time for a relaxing yoga session." She spoke further: "There are effective yoga asanas that not only help you relax, but also benefit your body. I also make sure to meditate for 15-20 minutes on set, which helps me to regain my calm and inner peace. This is about being present with myself, mind and body. During long shooting days, this 'me time' allows me to recharge my body and continue positively the rest of the day."

Delhi will add its magical touch and make my film a stand-out: Arjun

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Arjun Kapoor has begun shooting for his next movie in Delhi. The actor had earlier shot three of his films in the national capital, all of which he describes as "special films".

For the same reason, the actor feels that the city is lucky for him. The yet-to-be-titled film will be reportedly directed by Mudassar Aziz of 'Pati Patni Aur Woh' fame. Talking about shooting in Delhi, Arjun said: "Delhi has always been special for me and it has been a hugely lucky charm for me. I shot '2 States', 'Ki

& Ka', 'Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar' in the national capital and all these films turned out to be some of the most special films in my filmography and gave me tremendous recognition that I'm grateful for." The actor is "excited to be back in Delhi" and hopes that Delhi will add its magical touch and make this film again a stand-out one for his career in cinema. Arjun is on a strict diet and is looking forward to attaining a certain physical transformation. But he can't stop himself from having a cheat day for the Delhi delicacies.

He said: "I'm very fitness forward

these days and want to achieve a certain body type soon, so I won't be able to gorge on the Delhi delicacies but I have convinced my trainer to allow me a day of cheat meals in Delhi."

He signed off by saying: "I am waiting for the day when I can have my Bua's ghar ka khana and the local chaat. I'm looking forward to this outdoor schedule in Delhi where I can relive my childhood summer holidays and enjoy my cheat and treat meal and spend time with my family here." Apart from Arjun, the untitled film also stars Bhumi Pednekar and Rakul Preet Singh.



Sayani Gupta