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MARITIME ROUTES, DIGITAL TOOLS, DARK WEB

HOW DRUGS FIND THEIR WAY INTO INDIA

India's drug trafficking problems have been exacerbated by its proximity to two notorious narcotics domains, the Golden Triangle, and the Golden Crescent. In the past few years, there has been a 70 per cent increase in narcotic substance consumption in India. Indian authorities have intensified their efforts to curb drug trafficking in the region, with the government of India and Myanmar signing a memorandum of understanding to combat drug trafficking in 2020.

“Maritime routes used by international drug syndicates based in Pakistan and Afghanistan are expected to increase,” said a senior NCB official. The NCB report also states that heroin is the most trafficked drug through the sea route, while marijuana, cocaine and other drugs are also seized.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Golden Triangle refers to the area where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar meet at the confluence of the Ruak and Mekong rivers. Myanmar is the world's second-largest illicit supplier of morphine and heroin, producing 80 per cent of the world's heroin, which is then smuggled into the US, the UK, and China via sea routes in Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and India. As per sources, Guwahati and Dimapur have seen a significant amount of heroin seizures that originated from the Golden Triangle. Myanmar's heroin and meth are smuggled into India at two entry points, Moreh in Manipur, and Champai in Mizoram. Interestingly, precursor chemicals such as ephedrine, acetic anhydride, and pseudoephedrine are sourced from locations in South India, including Chennai, and then transported to Kolkata and Guwahati via Delhi before being smuggled across the border to Myanmar, due to domestic security gaps. However, according to the annual

Syndicates now use couriers, parcels, and postal services to smuggle drugs and deliver them. The increased use of couriers or postal services is directly linked to increase Dark Web activity in India.



The Golden Crescent, on the other hand, is a major global opium production site in Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, from where drugs are smuggled into India through Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

report by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) issued in 2022, drug trafficking through sea routes in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal accounts for about 70 per cent of the total illegal drugs smuggled into India, posing a significant challenge for the law enforcement agencies. The drug smugglers have made potential markets and supply chain catalysts of hashish and heroin through these routes. Syndicates in these bordering areas are now using new digital tools and drones to smuggle drugs. “One of the major drugs, heroin, is basically sourced from Afghanistan via the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle. India's geographical location, sandwiched between the two, makes it an ideal route for the transportation of heroin. It infiltrates the country through the international, land and maritime bor-

ders, with the western international border along Pakistan being a focal point,” said a senior NCB official. The quantity of drugs in parcels is usually limited to a few grams to avoid suspicion and interception by the law enforcement agencies. The Indian government has intensified its efforts to curb drugs trafficking in the region, with the Border Security Force and other law enforcement agencies carrying out regular anti-drug operations along the borders. The drugs trade in these regions has significant implications for India's security and well-being. Drug addiction has a detrimental effect on the physical and mental health of individuals, and drugs trafficking often fuels violent crime and corruption. It also has a destabilising effect on countries and regions, with drugs traffickers often using their profits to

fund terrorist activities. Efforts to combat drug trafficking in these regions have been ongoing for several years, with the Indian government and international organisations working together to disrupt drugs trafficking networks.

These efforts include measures such as drugs interdiction operations, improving border security, and providing drugs treatment and rehabilitation services to those struggling with addiction. However, the drugs trade in these regions continues to thrive, with traffickers adapting to law enforcement efforts and finding new ways to smuggle drugs.

“There is a need for a multi-pronged approach that not only focuses on law enforcement, but also addresses the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to drugs production and trafficking,” said Gurmeet Nehra, research scholar at the Indian Law Institute.

Last year, the NCB had arrested 22 individuals, including software engineers, a financial analyst, an MBA, and one of their own personnel, who were part of a pan-India drugs trafficking network using the 'darknet' and cryptocurrency to courier narcotics to homes.

Their arrests exposed three major drug markets, DNM India, Dread and The Orient Express, running on the hidden web world, after a four-month operation in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, Punjab, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Rajasthan.

They were delivering LSD blots, psychotropic tablets, heroin, paste and liquid cannabis, cocaine, Alprazolam tablets, charas, capsules of Spasomoproxyvon, and imported ganja, sourced from countries such as the US, the UK, the Netherlands and Poland, using courier services and India Post.



World's tallest pier railway bridge to be part of Jiribam-Imphal railway project

Team Absolute | Guwahati/Imphal

The world's tallest pier railway bridge, with a height of 141 metres, is being constructed as part of the Jiribam-Imphal railway project which has already achieved physical progress of 93.30 per cent, officials said on Sunday.

With the completion of the 111-km-long Jiribam-Imphal railway project by December this year, Manipur capital would come onto the Indian Railways network, making Imphal the fourth capital city in the northeastern region to have a rail link.

Northeast Frontier Railway's (NFR) Chief Public Relations Officer Sabyasachi De said that the Rs 14,322 crore projects is one of the crucial connectivity projects for the northeastern region and it is at an advanced stage of completion.

He said that construction of the railway project involves multiple tunnels and bridges in tough terrain with the total length of tunnels in this project being 61.32 km, out of which 59.11 km of tunneling work has already been completed.

The project would have total 11 major bridges and 137 minor bridges, out of which work for five major bridges and 101 minor

bridges have been completed so far.

The section from Jiribam to Khongsang has already been commissioned earlier for train service.

After completion of the entire project, the present road journey time of about 10 hours to reach Imphal from Jiribam would be reduced to 2.5 hours by railways.

The NFR has been putting their full effort by working 24x7 for the completion of this project dealing with all the challenges including heavy rainfall and other logistic hindrances, De said.

The CPRO said that the Jiribam-Imphal rail project would provide enhanced connectivity to the people of Manipur, help grow small scale industries in the area and boost tourism of the state.

It would also help in receiving essential commodities faster by the state and help the state local producers to export their products outside the state faster.

The economy of the state would receive a boost, the official stated.

Assam's main city of Guwahati (adjoining capital Dispur), Tripura capital Agartala and Arunachal Pradesh's Naharlagun (adjacent to capital Itanagar) are already on the railway network.

RAHUL TO BE PRESENT IN SURAT COURT ON MONDAY FOR FILING OF APPEAL

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will be present in a court in Gujarat's Surat on Monday as an appeal is filed against his conviction and sentencing in a criminal defamation case while party workers and leaders are reaching there.

The legal team has done all the preparation for the appeal, party sources said.

Gandhi was convicted on March 23 in the defamation case and sentenced to two years jail, following which he was disqualified from the Lok Sabha.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday had said that a legal team was working on the case.



PARLIAMENTARY PANEL EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER DELAY IN DATA PROTECTION BILL

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A Parliamentary panel has held that the delay in the enactment of the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 - which was withdrawn by the government in August 2022 for further scrutiny amid concerns raised by stakeholders and political parties owing to several loopholes in it - will have an adverse impact on the economy.

It has asked the government to formulate a separate policy for personal and non-personal data.

The Rajya Sabha's Standing Committee on Commerce, in its report on "Promotion and Regulation of E-commerce", which was recently tabled in Parliament during the ongoing budget session, while noting the delay in the Personal Data Protection Bill, said: "The delay in enactment of the bill will have an adverse impact on economy on account of failure to capitalise on the virtual treasure trove that data has provided."

It further noted that any "absence of a clear cut data regulatory framework could also hinder the maximum exploitation of data which is considered



as the new oil".

The panel, which is headed by Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi, added that the delay in having a dedicated data protection regulation has occurred at a time when there is an urgent requirement for a robust data policy.

It has therefore recommended that the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology should make concerted efforts to formulate a data policy on personal and non-personal data.

The government had withdrawn the Personal Data

Protection Bill 2019 from the Parliament in August last year after a joint parliamentary panel had recommended 81 amendments in it and 12 recommendations were made towards a comprehensive legal framework for a digital ecosystem.

While withdrawing the bill, Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw had said that the bill was being taken back in order to bring a legislation that fits into the comprehensive legal framework, as suggested by the joint parliamentary panel.

FORMER INDIA CRICKETER SALIM DURANI PASSES AWAY AT 88

Jamnagar (Gujarat) | Agencies

Salim Durani, one of the finest all-rounders that have played for India, passed away at his home here after a prolonged battle with cancer, on Sunday. He was 88, according to a family source.

Born in Kabul, Afghanistan, Durani had Pashtun origins and was known for his batting and bowling prowess that left the spectators thrilled.

"He will always be remembered for hitting sixes when spectators demanded. Hitting sixes during that period was rare," remembered



a family friend in Mumbai.

A slow left-arm orthodox bowler and left-handed batsman, Durani was the hero of India's series victory

against England in 1961-62, claiming 8 and 10 wickets in India's Tests, respectively. He also played a key role in India's maiden Test win against the West Indies in 1972, taking the wicket of key batters Clive Lloyd and Gary Sobers. He is the first cricketer to receive the prestigious Arjuna Award and was awarded the C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award by the BCCI in 2011.

In 29 Tests, Durani scored 1202 runs at an average of 25.04 hitting one century and seven half-centuries. In his 50 innings, Durani scalped 74 victims at an average of

35.42, claiming 5 wickets in an innings on five occasions and 10 wickets in a match once. He had a best haul of 6/73 in an innings.

Durani played for Gujarat, Rajasthan and Saurashtra in domestic cricket and scored 8,545 runs at an average of 33.37 in 170 first-class matches, hitting 14 centuries and 45 fifties and had a top score of 137 not out.

What added to his aura and popularity was the film-star-like good looks that got him a lot of attention from female fans. He appeared in the film Charitra with Parveen Babi in 1973.

NYT loses Twitter Blue badge, Koo founder invites it to join platform

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Elon Musk-run Twitter on Sunday removed the Blue badge of The New York Times, barely a week after he announced a new policy for keeping verification badges.

On the other hand, Aprameya Radhakrishna, CEO and Co-founder of Koo, has invited leading US newspaper and all other news organizations around the world to join the platform.

"Inviting @nytimes and all other news organisations around the world to join Koo where there is no price for your voice. Koo

provides free lifetime verification for all notable personalities and organisations. Fake news is a menace around the world," he tweeted.

Moreover, commenting on the removal of The New York Times' Blue Badge, Musk tweeted: "The real tragedy of @NYTimes is that their propaganda isn't even interesting".

"Also, their feed is the Twitter equivalent of diarrhoea. It's unreadable. They would have far more real followers if they only posted their top articles. Same applies to all publications," he added.

Twitter's 'Verification for Organisations' service is now available globally.

The platform last month tweeted from its 'Twitter Verified' account: "Verified Organisations are available globally. We are now sending email invitations to approved organisations from the waitlist."

The company also announced to remove all legacy Blue verified checkmarks for both individual users and organisations from April 1. Twitter Blue is now available globally and the users can get Blue Verified for \$7 a month if they sign up via web browser.

GOOGLE FACES \$4.2 BILLION ADVERTISING LAWSUIT

San Francisco: A new lawsuit has been filed against Google seeking 3.4 billion pounds (\$4.2 billion) in compensation for publishers for lost revenue. According to the claim, made by ex-Guardian technology editor Charles Arthur, Google illegally used its dominant position in online advertising to reduce publishers' profits, the BBC reported. Google stated that it would vigorously oppose the "speculative and opportunistic" action. In the lawsuit, Arthur claimed that because of Google's abuse of its position, ad-tech services were inflated, and publishers' ad sales revenues were unlawfully reduced, the report said. "The UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is currently investigating Google's anti-competitive conduct in ad-tech, but they don't have the power to make Google compensate those who have lost out."



HINDU OUTFITS' MEMBERS BOOKED FOR INCITING RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS DURING 'SHOBHA YATRA' IN GURUGRAM

Gurugram | Agencies

Cases have been filed against members of various Hindu outfits for allegedly inciting religious sentiments in Gurugram district during an unauthorised 'Shobha Yatra' on Sunday, police said. Gurugram police said that the 'Shobha Yatra' was organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal without prior permission from the authorities.

When the participants were crossing Gurugram's Jama Masjid, they made objectionable statements in front of it, waving swords, and inciting religious sentiments by using abusive language against a particular community. "A rally was taken out by some persons illegally without permission. When this rally reached Sadar Bazar, some anti-social



elements shouted slogans and demonstrated by waving swords etc. with the intention of disturbing social harmony and peace. Taking cognizance of the matter, Gurugram police has registered a case under Sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race), 144 (unlawful assembly

armed with a deadly weapon) and 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) at the city police station. "We have registered a case against members of different Hindu outfits. Appropriate action will be initiated against them as per the law," Gurugram police spokesperson Subhash Boken said.

'If CM's wife runs pvt school...': Kejriwal's dig at his Assam counterpart

Guwahati | Agencies

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday criticised his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma at a rally here over a multitude of issues including education, health and governance. Kejriwal also criticised the Assam Chief Minister for his wife's decision to open a private school in the state. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convener said: "I have heard that the Assam Chief Minister's wife has opened a private school where lakhs of rupees in fees were taken. This is very dangerous. If the Chief Minister's wife herself runs private schools, the state education system would soon collapse entirely."

He also claimed that these things earlier were happening in Delhi also. "Every MLA and minister used to run private schools in Delhi once upon a time. They paralysed the education system and forced people to take admission to private schools



with high fees. But we have changed the entire scenario, and you can see how Delhi government schools are performing now," Kejriwal said. The Delhi Chief Minister also claimed that not a single MLA in the

AAP is involved with private school businesses.

"If AAP comes to power in Assam, we will develop schools in this state like we did in Delhi," he said.

Kejriwal also drew a comparison

between the performance of the BJP government in Assam and the AAP government in Delhi.

"In 2015, our party formed the government in Delhi, and Himanta Biswa Sarma came to power in Assam in 2016. You can see how we developed Delhi in all these years. We have built world-class schools and opened Mohalla clinics. The treatment and medicines are now free in Delhi. Nobody has to think about the treatment, whether he is rich or poor," the Delhi Chief Minister said.

Kejriwal further alleged that Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma has not done anything for the people of Assam in all these years except promoting 'Mafia Raj'.

"A paper leak happened in Assam a few days ago, but no punishment was given. This is because a syndicate is going on under the BJP's rule here. From coal to betel nuts, everything is controlled by mafias who have links with the ruling dispensation," the Delhi Chief Minister alleged.

78 students of pvt varsity in Lucknow fall ill after having hostel food

Lucknow | Agencies

As many as 78 students of Babu Banarasi Das (BBD) University in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh's state capital, fell ill after they allegedly consumed food in the hostel on their return to the campus after a late-night event, said university authorities.

In all, 42 students were taken to Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences (RMLIMS) and 36 to a private hospital in Chinhat.

A team from the state Health department also visited the students and the hostel inside the BBD campus.

S.M. Kamil Rizvi, Dean (Student Welfare) and Chief Proctor of the BBD Educational Group, said, "There was an event in the



campus that continued till late in the night. On their return to their hostel, the students had dinner. Hours later, we received news about some of them having stomach-ach problem. They were taken to the hospital."

The Superintendent of the Chinhat community health

centre (CHC), said, "The students said they had salad, rice, dal, chapati, and sweet dish. According to them, the chapati and the sweet dish tasted bad. We are also getting the water tested in the lab. Most of the students have been discharged while others are stable.

PHD SCHOLAR AT IIT MADRAS COMMITS SUICIDE, THIRD INCIDENT AT IIT-M IN 2023

Chennai: A 32-year-old research scholar at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras committed suicide by hanging at his residence at Velachery in Chennai. The deceased, Sachin Kumar Jain, was a native of West Bengal.

Police said that on March 31, he had put a WhatsApp status: "I am Sorry, not good enough." His friends reached home upon seeing this and found him hanging in the room.

Sachin was a PhD research scholar at the Mechanical Engineering Department of IIT, Madras. This is the third incident of suicide here in the year 2023 and demands have begun for conducting mental health surveys among the students in the premier institution. According to police, Sachin was staying at Brahmin street, Velachery along with two of his friends. He allegedly committed suicide on March 31 afternoon. The body has been sent to Royapettah government hospital for postmortem. The IIT, Madras issued a condolence statement saying: "We are deeply anguished to convey the untimely passing away of a PhD research scholar from the Mechanical Engineering Department on the afternoon of March 31 at his residence in Velachery, Chennai. A student with an exemplary academic and research record is a big loss to the research community."

Jaishankar's class on foreign policy at Bengaluru park

Bengaluru | Agencies

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday interacted with the youth at a park here on Sunday.

On a visit to poll-bound Karnataka, the minister along with Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya met the youth at Cubbon Park on Sunday.

Jaishankar fielded questions from youth on topics like India's foreign policy, G20 summit and the upcoming Assembly elections in Karnataka.

The External Affairs Minister lauded Bengaluru's youth for understanding India's standing in the world and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'game-changing' foreign policy.

Tejasvi Surya shared pictures of Jaishankar's meeting with young lads on Twitter.

"Bengaluru's youth, started Sunday with a class on PM @narendramodi's foreign policy at Cubbon Park. EAM Sri @DrSJaishankar was flooded with wide ranging questions on India's foreign policy. Modi's foreign policy is not distant & dry. It's a hot topic even at public parks,"



tweeted the MP.

Bengaluru Central MP P.C. Mohan and important functionaries of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, Bengaluru were also present.

"The enthusiasm among Bengaluru's young to understand India's standing in the world, our leadership role in G20 and PM Modi's game-changing foreign policy is impressive," tweeted Surya. Jaishankar is on a two-day visit to Karnataka. He will be visiting Hubballi and Belagavi districts after Bengaluru.

'MIDNIGHT MARCH' BY WOMEN STUDENTS AT DU'S FACULTY OF ARTS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Over 130 women students of Delhi University defied the curfew timings of their hostels and PG accommodations to join the Women's March organised by the Students Federation of India (SFI) on April 1 midnight at the Faculty of Arts, a student and SFI activist Mehina said on Sunday.

"The march on April 1 midnight was aimed at reclaiming the night (hours) and the streets that were previously kept away from women, and to raise awareness about women's safety," she said.

According to Samaa, a member of SFI Delhi state committee, the Women's Night March was organised entirely by women to give them a platform to voice their concerns and to empower them to take back their freedom to move around at night.



The march began with a rally around the Faculty of Arts at midnight, with participants singing songs to celebrate the strength and resilience of women, she added.

The women then gathered at the Faculty of Arts gate, where a range of cultural events were held to showcase the talents of female students and to promote unity and solidarity

among women.

"The event was a resounding success and received widespread support from the Delhi University community," the SFI said.

"As a progressive students organisation, we see the Women's Night March as a testament to the resilience and strength of women in the DU, and the SFI hopes that the event will inspire more women to speak out against gender-based violence and work towards creating a safer and more inclusive society," the SFI added. "It is empowering to see women breaking curfew and reclaiming their right to move around at night. The Women's Night March is a strong statement that women demand the right to live without fear and to occupy public spaces without any restrictions," a woman student said.

Gurugram: Seven booked for selling fake NCERT books

Gurugram | Agencies

A day after the Chief Minister's Flying Squad and NCERT officials raided several book depots here, a case of cheating, copyright act and conspiracy has been registered against seven booksellers of Sadar Bazar, an official said on Sunday.

The case was filed on a complaint filed by NCERT officials on Sunday.

The shops raided by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) officials and the Chief Minister's Flying Squad include Bansal Book Depot, Jain Book Depot, Saraswati Book Depot, among others.

Chief Minister's Flying Squad Inspector, Harish, said: "The raids continued till late Saturday night. After that, on the statement of the NCERT officials, a case has been registered against different booksellers under the Cheating and Copyright Act."



During the investigation, it was found that even as the books were being sold at the rates fixed by NCERT, the sellers were getting 50 per cent profit on fake book material. "Stalls are also set up by the same booksellers in reputed schools of the city. The angle of nexus with school management and between the book depot is also being probed," a police officer said.

SHARMILA WRITES TO TELANGANA'S OPPOSITION PARTIES FOR JOINT FIGHT

Hyderabad: YSR

Telangana Party chief Y.S. Sharmila on Sunday wrote to the opposition party leaders of Telangana, requesting them for a joint fight for the sake of the unemployed youth. Sharmila said that it was a historic



necessity to set aside political differences and demand justice from the 'insincere' and 'insensitive' government that had failed to release notifications and fill up posts, in the last nine years.

The letters were addressed individually to state Congress chief Revanth Reddy, state BJP president Bandi Sanjay, TDP's Kasani Gnaneshwar, TJS leader Kodandaram, MRPS founder Manda Krishna Madiga, CPI-M leader Tammineni Veerabhadram, CPI leader Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, JSP's Shanker Goud, and AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi.

"Your party's fight against KCR government's attitude towards the unemployed is commendable. Added to his failures is the paper leakage scam that has derailed the hopes of the youth who were waiting for the notification for ages. Your fight in this direction has been crucial and we always extend our solidarity. While we do this, we also feel the time has come where we all join together and form a Joint Action Committee to wage an intense battle against the BRS rule and ensure justice to the jobless," wrote Sharmila.

"From Biswal Committee's recommendation to fill up 1.91 lakh vacancies, to ensuring fair investigation in the TSPSC paper leak, together we have to put pressure for the sake of the youth whose sacrifices had paved the way for the formation of Telangana.

TN prepared to handle Covid-19, says Health Minister

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian on Sunday said that the state Health Department was prepared to handle Covid-19 even though the disease was surging in the country, and was following all the guidelines set by the Central government.

Chennai | Agencies

Addressing media persons here, he said that the state had adequate oxygen facilities, beds, and medicines to handle any surge in cases. With the experience gained during the second wave of Covid-19, several precautionary measures have been taken, he added.

Ma Subramanian said that the infection was increasing in the country and Omicron mutated infections are on the rise. He said that Omicron variants like XBB and BA2 are spreading in various parts of the world but added that these were low impact ones and people should not panic.

After inspecting the Mettupalayam government hospital in Coimbatore on Saturday, he said that all the health workers were wearing masks, following the directive given by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin.

The minister said that 1,000 beds were set up in the ESI hospital in Coimbatore and a special ward with 20 beds has been set up in Mettupalayam.

He said that as per the Central government guidelines, random screening of 2 per cent of international passengers were being carried out in airports in Tamil Nadu. He added that at least two or three people were found to be infected at international airports like Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, and Tiruchi in the last 15 days.



Ma Subramanian said that eight to ten people have been diagnosed with the disease when passengers from Dubai and Singapore were tested and added that all those infected were directed to isolate themselves at home and to take medicine as per the advice of the doctors.

Muslim man beaten to death by cow vigilantes in Karnataka

Bengaluru | Agencies

A Muslim man was beaten to death by alleged cow vigilantes in Karnataka's Ramanagara district, near Bengaluru.

Idris Pasha, a cattle trader, and his two associates were assaulted by self-styled cow protectors led by one Puneet Kerehalli on Friday night.

The cow vigilantes intercepted a container vehicle in which Idris and others were transporting cattle.

Though the traders told them that they purchased cattle from the market and showed the papers, the gang demanded Rs 2 lakh. When Idris refused to pay, they asked him to go to Pakistan and attacked him and two others.

While some of the attackers chased Idris and Irfan, others assaulted container driver Syed Zaheer. A police constable intervened and took Zaheer and Kerehalli to the nearby police station.

Kerehalli lodged a complaint against Zaheer and others for illegally transporting cows. Zaheer and his associates were then booked under sections of the Karnataka Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Cattle



Prevention Act, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, Transportation of Animals Act, and Motor Vehicles Act. During the investigation, police found that Idris died after being assaulted by Kerehalli and other cow vigilantes.

On a complaint by Zaheer, police booked a murder case against Kerehalli and his associates. The accused were reported to be absconding.

The killing triggered protests by relatives of Idris and members of the Muslim community in Ramanagara. They demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.



IMPLEMENT LADLI BAHNA YOJANA IN MISSION MODE WITH FULL DEDICATION: CM CHOUHAN

This mission is to change the life of women, CM appeals to members of Gram Sabha, issues guidelines to the collectors

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Ladli Bahna Yojana is not an ordinary task. It is a mission to change the lives of women. All public representatives, social workers, officers-employees should join wholeheartedly in the implementation of this scheme in mission mode, which is being introduced to reduce the everyday problems of the women of poor, lower middle class, labourers, farmer families, to increase their self-confidence and to make them financially strong. The publicity of the scheme should be ensured till every village and ward. Every possible help should be given to the women for applying in the scheme. This scheme started for women will prove to be beneficial for the welfare of the families and the society. Like Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Ladli Bahna Yojana will be popular not only in the state but also in the country. Chief Minister Chouhan was interacting virtually with the members of all the Gram Sabhas of the state from the residence office regarding the scheme. The country, state and society become empowered only when the women become strong and self-dependent. CM said that our state is continu-



ously moving forward on the path of development and progress. The light of development has reached every village. The country, state and society become empowered only when the women become strong and self-dependent. It has been a belief in our country that God resides where women are respected. Several schemes run for the empowerment of women. Chief Minister Chouhan said that several decisions were taken by the state government for the empowerment of women. For political empowerment, arrangements were made for 50 percent reservation in teacher recruitment and 30 percent in police recruitment, along with

reservation for women in elections to Panchayat and urban bodies, to provide opportunities in government services. With Ladli Laxmi Yojana, books, cycles and scholarship were made available to the daughters for studies. FIR should be lodged against those who demand money from women for e-KYC. CM informed the members of the Gram Sabha about the eligibility, necessary documents and rules and regulations of the Ladli Bahna Yojana. He said that the scheme should be publicized in all wards and villages. Funds are being made available by the state government for the e-KYC of the women. For this, on getting information about

asking money from any person, an FIR should be lodged immediately. Posters should be put up at the application centers to the effect that e-KYC will be free of cost, no money has to be paid for it. Information about application dates. Giving information about the dates related to the application, Chief Minister Chouhan said that the applications will be filled online till April 30. The provisional list will be pasted at public places. If anyone has any objection, he can register an objection on the portal or in writing in the Panchayat or by calling on 181 number. The objections will be resolved from May 15 to 30 and the final list will be displayed on the portal and pasted in the gram panchayat offices on May 31. From June 10, Rs 1000 will be transferred to the women's accounts. District administration will arrange vehicle to go to other village for e-KYC. CM instructed the District Collectors to make proper seating arrangements and drinking water arrangements for the women at the application centers. In villages and wards where there is a problem of e-KYC due to network, the district administration should arrange for a vehicle to take the women to other villages or wards to get e-KYC done.

Cheetah from state's national park strays into nearby village



Team Absolute | Sheopur

A cheetah strayed into an agricultural field adjoining a village near Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district on Sunday morning, an official said. Oban, one of the eight cheetahs brought from Namibia in September last year, strayed into the field near Baroda village, some 15-20 kilometres from KNP, from the free range area of the park into which he was released last month, Sheopur divisional forest officer (DFO) P K Verma said. "As per the signals from its collar device, the cheetah was moving towards the village from Saturday night. It is

sitting at the spot and a police team is monitoring the situation and keeping villagers away. Forest department staffs are trying to send it back into the park area," he said. Forest department officials also shared a video in which staffers can be seen trying to coax Oban to get back into the forest. So far, four out of eight cheetahs brought from Namibia to KNP in September, 2022, have been released in the wild (free range area) from hunting enclosures. Oban and Asha were released into the wild on March 11, while Elton and Freddie, also known as "rockstars" due to their

names, and were allowed to move into the free range area on March 22. Eight Namibian cheetahs, comprising five females and three males, were brought to KNP as part of an ambitious reintroduction programme of the species and were released into special enclosures on September 17 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. One of them, Sasha, died of a kidney ailment on March 27, while another, Siyaya, gave birth to four cubs, which were first spotted on March 29. A set of 12 cheetahs, comprising seven males and five females, were brought in from South Africa on February 18 this year.

Man killed in tiger attack in Madhya Pradesh reserve

Team Absolute | Umariya

A 22-year-old man was mauled to death by a tiger in a buffer zone of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh's Umariya district, an official said on Sunday. The incident took place between 8 pm and 9 pm on Saturday at Kumbhai village in Manpur buffer zone of the reserve, Manpur police station in-charge Sundresh Singh Maravi said. The victim, identified as Anuj Baiga, had gone out to answer nature's call near Chamkui drain when the tiger, apparently hiding in the bushes nearby, attacked him, the official said. When locals ventured out of their homes at around 5



am on Sunday, they found the man's body near the drain and informed the police and forest department, he said. The victim's upper body parts were mauled by

the tiger, he said. Forest officials reached the spot and are conducting an investigation into the incident, he said.

BSF OFFICER DIES OF BULLET INJURY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Jammu: A Border Security Force (BSF) personnel died of a bullet injury in J&K's Kathua district on Sunday, official sources said. As per the sources, Assistant Sub-Inspector Sukhmandan Prasad, of Madhya Pradesh, died of a bullet injury from his service rifle on the international border in Kathua. "He was posted at Gurnam border outpost in Hiranagar sector when he was found in an injured condition. "He was shifted to hospital where doctors said he was dead on arrival," a source said. It was not clear whether Prasad had died of accidental fire from his service rifle or had he committed suicide.

Tel Ghani Board to be formed in the state: Chief Minister Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Sahu Rathore Sakal Tailik Samaj is a hard-working, patriotic and nationalist community. The state government will leave no stone unturned for the welfare and development of the community. CM Chouhan was addressing the social Mahakumbh of Rathore Sahu Sakal Tailik community at Jamboree Maidan. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the blessings of Maa Karma Devi should remain on the country and the state and may the Maa provide happiness and prosperity in everyone's life. On the



demand of the representatives of the community, Chief Minister Chouhan said the Tel Ghani Board would be formed in a week. He said

that every possible effort will be made to develop Maa Karma's pilgrimage place Narvargarh, Mandsaur's Telia Talab and other places and

fulfill other demands. Chief Minister Chouhan invited the delegation of the society to the CM's residence to discuss the demands.

Horrific accident in MP: 3-year-old decapitated after tractor rams into bike in Guna

Team Absolute | Guna

In a horrific road accident in Guna, a 3-year-old girl was killed after her head got cut off from torso when a high speeding tractor rammed into a stationary bike on Sunday afternoon. Four others have been injured in the accident. The accident happened on Guna-Ashoknagar road in Rusalla village. A motorcycle was parked on the side of the road when a speeding tractor went out of control and rammed



into it killing the 3-year-old and injuring the other four on the bike. All the injured are residents of Raghogarh area and have been admitted to Aaron Civil Hospital. The police have registered a case in the matter and sent the girl's body for postmortem. The tractor has also been seized by the police. The name of the deceased is Vandana Bai Sapera (3), while the injured include Sona Bai (23), Govind Singh (5), Sharmath (25), Siddhunath (20).

COLLECTORS SHOULD ENSURE THAT AHATAS ARE NOT OPERATED ALONG WITH LIQUOR SHOPS: CM CHOUHAN

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that all the district collectors should check that there should be no operation of ahatas anywhere in the urban and rural areas of the district. It has been decided to close the ahatas adjacent to liquor shops from April 1. While ensuring cent percent implementation of the provisions of the new excise policy, the operation of the ahatas should be legally stopped. CM Chouhan gave these instructions to the District Collector who attended virtually in the meeting organised at the residence office.

Governor Mangubhai Patel called on by Union Minister of State Dr. Bharti Pawar

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Dr. Bharti Pawar paid a courtesy call on Governor Mangubhai Patel at Raj Bhavan today. Various topics of health and family welfare were discussed during the meeting. Governor Patel welcomed Dr. Bharti Pawar on her arrival at the Raj Bhavan by presenting her with a shawl. Dr. Bharti Pawar felicitated Governor Patel with a shawl.



INDORE COLLEGE STAFFER BOOKED FOR POCKETING RS 2.31 LAKH ADMISSION FEE OF STUDENTS

Indore: A 35-year-old staffer of a private nursing college in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh has been booked for allegedly pocketing Rs 2.31 lakh admission fee of four students, police said on Sunday. The accused is in-charge of the admission cell of the college situated on the Rau- Pithampur road. He was charged with cheating four students on Saturday night, Rau police station officer Narendra Singh Raghuvanshi said. As per the FIR, the accused had taken a fee of Rs 2,31,000 from four students but didn't deposit the money in the college's account. The students had paid the fee in 2021 but as they failed to secure admission, they approached the college administration and the police, the official added. A case was registered under Indian Penal Code sections for cheating and criminal breach of trust.

Bhopal-New Delhi Vande Bharat Exceeds 160 kmph Speed Limit On First Run

Team Absolute | Bhopal | New Delhi

The maximum speed of the Bhopal-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express reached 161 kilometres per hour during its launch run on Saturday, breaching its expected speed limit of 160 kmph, officials said. The train that cuts the travel time between Bhopal and New Delhi by an hour, touched the speed of 161 kmph between Raja ki Mandi in Agra and Mathura, they added. A small stretch of the track between the Agra Cantonment and Nizamuddin railway stations has been designed in a manner to fit the speed limit. Earlier, the Ministry of Railways had said in an order that the Rani Kamalapati-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express train can run up to a

maximum speed of 160 kmph over the Agra Cantonment-Tuglakabad section. Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the 11th Vande Bharat Express train on Saturday. The semi-high speed train was flagged off from the Rani Kamalapati railway station in Bhopal in the afternoon in the presence of Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan



AIIMS Bhopal Convocation

Union minister Bharti Pravin Pawar urges students to be good human beings along with good doctors

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union minister of state for health and family welfare Dr. Bharti Pravin Pawar called upon students to be good human beings along with good doctors, while addressing the 2nd convocation ceremony at AIIMS Bhopal on Sunday. She further said, "97 percent UG MBBS seats increased from 2014. Similarly, 110 percent seats increased in PG courses in the country. Medical colleges increased from 387 to 660 from 2014 amounting to a 71 percent hike." The union minister also conferred degrees to MBBS,



M.Sc Nursing, MD/MS, PDCC and DM/MCH students. A total of 64 gold medals were awarded in which 40 were given to MBBS students and 24 to the students of B.Sc Nursing course. Foundation stone laid for 150 bed critical care unit. On this occasion, Pawar also performed bhumi puja and laid the foundation stone for the establishment of a 150

bedded critical care unit under PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission. Apart from this, a human milk bank, ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) machine facility, 27 bedded NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit), ART centre, Cardiac Cath Lab facility were also inaugurated by the minister.

3.6 MAGNITUDE TREMOR FELT IN PACHMARHI DISTRICT

Pachmarhi: A low-intensity earthquake of magnitude 3.6 on the Richter scale jolted in Pachmarhi on Sunday, the National Center for Seismology informed. According to the NCS, the epicentre of the earthquake was 23 km deep. "Earthquake of Magnitude:3.6, Occurred on 02-04-2023, 11:00:36 IST, Lat: 23.22 & Long: 80.40, Depth: 23 Km, Location: 218km ENE of Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh, India," the NCS tweeted. Earlier on March 22, north India including Delhi and adjoining areas witnessed a major earthquake jolt. Tremors at night made many people come to open spaces as a precautionary measure. That time NCS had said that the earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 on the Richter Scale hit 133km SSE of Fayzabad, Afghanistan at 10:17 pm.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Reduce screen time for autistic children

Autistic children should be kept away from TV screens, tablets and mobile phones as far as possible since this exposure is said to aggravate symptoms.

Medical experts say that this flare-up of symptoms due to screen exposure is called 'virtual autism' and cases are on the rise in the post pandemic era, especially in children under the age of five.

Prof Vivek Agrawal, head of psychiatry department in the King George's Medical University (KGMU), said children below the age of five are spending six-ten hour watching screens. "We are seeing five-six such cases in the OPD which used to be one-two earlier during pre-pandemic era. Luckily, it is reversible if identified in its early stages and corrective measures taken," said Prof Agrawal.

He said traits like social interaction, communication and behavioural challenges among children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are getting flared up.

Renowned pediatric neurologist from Lucknow, Dr Rahul Bharat, said, today gadgets are used a lot in homes. Parents give these gadgets to kids during infancy, which is a critical time for brain development when children learn by observing others, exploring their surroundings and learning through free play. "Since these ASD kids have strong visual memory and have limited interests, letting a child see screens for too long makes the situation worse," he said. He also said the rise in virtual autism cases is being recorded all over the world in the post Covid phase. He cautioned parents about the dangers of exposing young children to four or more hours of screen use every day. "Lack of communication among parents leads to issues affecting children. In most cases, aggressive behaviour and tantrums shown by children can be addressed.

ORGANISATION IS AN INTEGRAL CONCEPT

D.C. PATHAK

Corporate house, a government establishment or a professional agency - all represent an 'organisation' run on a set of principles that makes it an integral body performing as a single human unit.

The organisation is a collectivity of human beings working with or without a hierarchical order but sharing a commitment towards achieving what the organisation stood for.

Five paradigms are essential for getting the organisation to measure up to the definition of a single entity in terms of efforts and goals that it pursued in a planned fashion. These include a multi-body leadership that set the strategy of the organisation, the workforce that executed the plans of the organisation under appropriate guidance wherever this was required, an understanding of the working ethics that would among other things, provide for a transparent system of credit sharing, formal or informal arrangements for garnering the tacit knowledge that members of the organisation carried with them about the workplace that could help to improve productivity and a style of management that fostered organisational loyalty.

It is ironic that despite this clarity, organisations so often ran into internal disorder and consequent failures - not connected with the basics of 'funding', 'profitability' and 'compliance with the law' of the land. The failure is always attributable to flaws in adhering to one or the other of these principles.

Leadership is easily the most important determinant of the success of an organisation for it sets the agenda, direction and time frame for achieving an objective with awareness of its accountability for the results.

The leadership 'packaging' can be described in the mnemonic DRINKS which stands for Decisiveness, Reliability, Initiative, Nerves, Knowledge-based approach and Saving of time.

An indecisive person can never be a good leader and in the 'Age of Information', knowledge-based decision-making alone can bring in success.

A leader has to be trustworthy and to gain that position he or she must be given to acting on reliable information - not rumours - and be free of tainted thinking which will be made possible only when a certain value system was practised.

To be a leader means taking the lead in deciphering the way forward and this means retaining the initiative. Again, personal courage is the hallmark of leadership - there is a saying that 'courage is the love affair with the unknown' - which is why a leader rides a challenge not merely copes with it. Finally, in the highly competitive world, we live in today, time is a new resource and the leader makes it a point to ensure that the organisation understood that.



A competent leadership would not by itself be able to ensure the success of the organisation unless it had the benefit of a workforce comprising persons who were trained, who felt inspired and who were loyal to the employing entity.

Since efficiency is a measure of output in relation to time, an employee who worked with concentration and an awareness of the value of time will in all likelihood produce the best results.

The trait of efficiency in an organisational setting travels down the vertical hierarchy and the weak spots are easily detected - for whom constructive guidance must come from the supervising senior.

Organisations run the risk of failing if they did not have a strong tradition of participative supervision and if they allow a culture in which bosses were believed to be there only for passing orders.

Leadership and the workforce are linked somewhat like the brain-body relationship in making for an integral organisation - it is a division of labour and not a case of subservience of one to the other.

Taking the brain for evolving the right strategy and carrying out the implementation of that policy are both equally important for maintaining 'profitability' or 'advancement' - that was the final goal of the organisation.

For organisational coherence, the next important factor is a clear awareness down the line of the do's and don'ts that the ethics of the organisation would prescribe. These range from an outright violation of legal norms to unacceptable interpersonal misbehaviour borne out of malice or the desire to score over others.

Leading corporates assign the role of overseeing organisational ethics to one of their Directors. Orientation programmes, briefings and a functional Vigilance cell are provided for, to smoothen this function.

Ethical conduct is an outcome more of self-discipline than a fear of punishment. It is fostered by the sense of unity within

the organisation on doing what was prescribed and also what was right. The stamp of ethical working is defined by the transparency that exists in credit sharing. The employee has to have confidence that he or she would receive appreciation for showing a level of dedication to work that was out of the ordinary. A senior does not have to usurp the recognition due to a junior because part of that credit implicitly went to the supervising hand in any case. Somewhere an ethical body inspires a sense of being part of a family that the organisation came to symbolise.

Providing such an environment is an unstated responsibility of the leadership. In the unsafe world that we live in today and the distracting influences playing on the employees outside of the workplace, a recognised working principle of management is that the top man of the enterprise should also consider himself as the head of security and vigilance function even as the actual day to day work in this regard would be delegated to one of the seniors of the organisation.

In the age of knowledge, a successful organisation makes arrangements for keeping itself well informed on matters relevant to its objectives and activities. Well-established business houses invest in creating an 'Intelligence & Analysis' unit to study the external environment, analyse the situation of the industry and access information that would bring in competitive advantage. What they often miss out on is the fact that a significant amount of information was available with the employees of the organisation - high or low - that by and large went unutilised.

It is rightly said that 'nobody knows everything but everybody knows something'. In the days of 'machine learning', it is ironic that the tacit knowledge acquired by the men at work about the operations handled by them remained unavailable to their organisation because a system might not have been created by it to gather this information at least informally. This is a new task of management that can be usefully assigned to HRD people who should be logically interacting with employees to ascertain their well-being, morale and aspirations. They should in any case do this during the conduct of re-skilling and up-skilling programmes which are now considered an important segment of their charter.

From all this, it is clear that an organisation is a total of its interdependent parts and functions and it would succeed only if it organically and operationally linked them.

Organisations represent coordinated human activity and it is no surprise that a business body could even be called a 'Corporate citizen'.

international

21 KILLED, OVER 130 INJURED AFTER TORNADOES, STORMS HIT MULTIPLE US STATES

Washington | Agencies

At least 21 people have been killed and more than 130 others injured after strong tornadoes and deadly storms struck multiple mid-western and southern US states Friday into early Saturday, authorities said on Sunday.

According to CNN, more than 50 preliminary tornado reports were recorded on Friday in at least seven US states.

Four people died and dozens more were hurt when a confirmed strong tornado tore through Wynne, the county seat and largest city of Cross County, Arkansas, according to local media outlet Region 8 News.

There was "total destruction throughout the town" and dozens of residents were trapped following the tornado, Xinhua News Agency reported quoting Wynne Police Chief Richard Dennis.

One person died and at least 50 people were sent to hospitals in Little Rock, Arkansas, after a violent tornado caused severe damage on Friday afternoon, according to Pulaski County officials.

"Close to 2,600 structures have been impacted," Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott Jr. told CNN on



Saturday.

At least seven people were killed in McNairy County, which is located in southwest Tennessee, State Governor Bill Lee said in a statement.

A 50-year-old man was killed on the scene when the roof of the Apollo Theatre in Belvidere, northern Illinois collapsed on Friday night. Up to 40 others were taken to hospitals, with at least two of them in critical condition, officials said.

Three others were killed following the collapse of a residential structure in Crawford County, southern Illinois, according to Illinois Emergency

Management Agency spokesperson Kevin Sur.

Also on Friday night, three people died while multiple residences and the volunteer fire department were damaged in Sullivan County, Indiana, State Police Sgt. Matt Ames said.

Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb on Saturday declared disaster emergencies for Sullivan and Johnson counties.

Fatalities were also reported in Alabama and Mississippi, and tornadoes also caused damage in eastern Iowa. From northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, including Chicago and Milwaukee, tornado watches extend nearly 1,000 miles all the way to Mississippi and Texas, affecting tens of thousands of people on Friday, according to AccuWeather. It could take days to determine the exact number of tornadoes, said Bill Bunting, chief of forecast operations at the Storm Prediction Center.

There were also hundreds of reports of large hail and damaging winds, said Bunting, adding that "that's a quite active day ... but that's not unprecedented." Just one week ago, a massive tornado leveled a town in the southern U.S. state of Mississippi, claiming 25 lives.

Pakistan's traders to launch protests against inflation

Islamabad | Agencies

The traders association in Pakistan will launch protests against the country after Eidul Fitr against the rising inflation and worsening economic conditions, media reports said on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference, Markazi Tanzeem Tajran President Muhammad Kashif Chaudhry said that traders all over Pakistan would organise conventions and demonstrations if issues were not resolved, the News reported.

He regretted that the government did not pass on a reduction in crude oil prices in the international market to the people and on the other hand, it was not ready to bring



down its non-development expenses, it said.

Criticising the government, Chaudhry said that the issues could be addressed if the government was serious and sincere in doing so. "Neither the politicians, ministers nor bureaucracy is ready to cut their expenses and are getting free fuel and other benefits as usual," he added.

He said the government should immediately announce a reduction in non-development expenses by 50 per cent. Chaudhry also asked

the government to stop the humiliation of poor masses in the name of the provision of free flour, The News reported.

"Poor women, elderly people and children are made to suffer and die while standing in queues for hours," he said, adding that five people had lost their lives in attempts to get poor-quality flour.

He alleged that the mafia responsible for the flour crisis were sitting in parliament.

He said the government had cancelled wheat permits for flour mills, which resulted in a hike in the price of the commodity. Chaudhry asked the government to review its Ramadan package so that poor masses were not humiliated in the name of so-called relief and free flour, The News reported.

3 KILLED, 3 WOUNDED IN BAR SHOOTING IN US STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Washington: Three people were killed on the scene and three others wounded at a bar shooting on in Oklahoma City, the capital city of midwestern US state Oklahoma, authorities said.

Police responded to the shooting at the Whiskey Barrel Saloon around 9 p.m. local time (0200 GMT Sunday), according to local media, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The wounded were hospitalised, with one in critical condition and the other two having non-life-threatening injuries, the Oklahoma City Police Department said.

A suspect has been reportedly in custody. An investigation is underway. No more details are available so far.

SL President requests India's help to integrate IT in country's civil service

Colombo | Agencies

The head of Indian Institute of Good Governance shared India's experience to improve the performance of civil service using information technology with Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who expressed interest in replicating this in his country.

The President met Bharat Lal, Director General of the Indian Institute of Good Governance, who visited Sri Lanka to discuss potential ways to enhance the country's civil service and improve government institution performance by implementing effective monitoring measures.

At the meeting at the President's official residence on Saturday, Lal "shared how India was successful in integrating information technology into civil service", the President Media Division (PMD) stated.



"India's success in incorporating information technology into public service delivery, has resulted in significant progress and cost savings," he told the Sri Lankan head of state.

During the discussion, President Wickremesinghe urged Lal's assistance in establishing a University of Governance and Public Policy in Sri Lanka.

On Friday, launching a master plan to digitalise the country's economy by 2030, the President vowed to build

a digitalised modern Sri Lanka by digitalising the government sector. He said that a Committee of Cabinet Ministers would be set up to ensure that the government sector digitalisation would be done speedily.

He said that it is a duty of the government to accelerate the digitalisation.

During the Saturday discussion with President Wickremesinghe, Lal was accompanied by Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Gopal Baglay.

FOREST FIRES BREAK OUT ACROSS SOUTH KOREA

Seoul | Agencies

Forest fires broke out across South Korea on Sunday due to dry and windy weather in spring, a media report said.

According to the KFS real-time forest fire information website, a total of 30 forest fires broke out across the country at 3:30 p.m. local time (0630 GMT), Yonhap News Agency reported.

Among the total, 15 fires had been extinguished. The government issued a special dry weather warning.

A relatively large fire occurred at 11:53 a.m. local time (0253 GMT) on Mount Inwang in Seoul, a mountain near the previous location of the country's presi-



dential office, Xinhua News Agency reported quoting the KFS.

The firefighting authorities had tried to bring it under control for over three hours, mobilising hundreds of officials, nine helicopters and other equipment.

No casualty had been reported yet, but

residents of about 120 households had been evacuated.

The wildfire destroyed some 0.23 square km forest land, or the size of 32 soccer fields. Another large forest fire broke out at 11:00 a.m. local time (0200 GMT) from a mountain in Hongsong, around 110 km south of Seoul.

The blaze spread to nearby private houses, but no casualty had been reported. It burned some 200 hectares of forest, destroying six private houses, one livestock farm and one grain warehouse.

The fire authorities dispatched 17 helicopters and over 1,600 officials to put it out, but only 30 per cent of the blaze was extinguished at 4:00 p.m. local time (0700 GMT).

WORLD BANK PRESIDENT CONCERNED ABOUT CHINA'S LOANS TO AFRICA

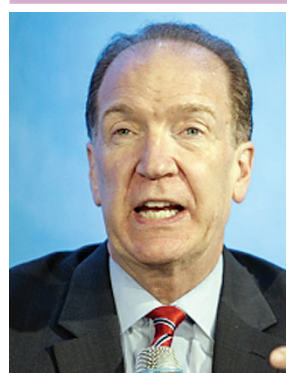
London | Agencies

World Bank President David Malpass has said he is concerned about some of the loans China has been making to developing economies in Africa, according to a media report.

David Malpass says the terms and conditions need to

be "more transparent", BBC reported. It comes amid worries that countries including Ghana and Zambia are struggling to repay their debts to Beijing, BBC reported. China says that any such lending is done within international rules. Developing countries often borrow money from other nations or multilateral bodies to finance sectors that

will grow their economies such as infrastructure, education and agriculture. However, steep increases in interest rates in the US and other major economies over the last year are making loan repayments more expensive because lots of that borrowing is done in foreign currencies such as US dollars or euros, BBC reported.





CM EKNATH SHINDE TAKES PART IN 'SAVARKAR GAURAV YATRA' IN THANE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday took part in 'Savarkar Gaurav Yatra' in Thane in which hundreds of people took part to honour late Hindutva ideologue V D Savarkar. The aim of the 'Savarkar Gaurav Yatra' is to spread awareness about the works of V D Savarkar among people and mark their protest against those who are speaking against the freedom fighter. The Bharatiya Janata Party and Shinde-led Shiv Sena had last month announced that Savarkar Gaurav Yatras would be taken out in each district of Maharashtra to honour Savarkar's contribution to the country and to counter Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's criticism against him.



related to Savarkar was also part of the yatra.

Shinde and some other leaders of the ruling Shiv Sena-BJP coalition participated in the yatra on a makeshift 'chariot' and waved to citizens as the yatra moved to cover four Assembly segments in the city.

Flowers were showered on the participants as several of them moved around Thane city using more than 200 motorbikes and around 100 auto-

ricksaws raising slogans in praise of Savarkar and the country.

BJP leader Dr Vinay Sahasrabudhe, Thane MLA Sanjay Kelkar, Thane BJP chief and MLC Niranjan Davkhare, former mayor Naresh Mhaske, Shiv Sena MLA Prapat Sarnaik and many other local leaders of the ruling coalition participated in the yatra.

Huge hoardings of Savarkar were put up in the city, patriotic songs

were played during the yatra and rangolis (colourful patterns) were made at various places. A number of women in colourful attire and carrying lezims also participated in the yatra.

Last week, Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde targeted Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray over Rahul Gandhi's remarks on late Hindutva ideologue V D Savarkar.

Shinde, who was addressing reporters alongside Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis, asked Thackeray to show "courage" to oppose these remarks.

Shinde said the Thackeray-led outfit had crossed all limits when they joined the Congress in opposing Rahul Gandhi's disqualification as Lok Sabha MP last week.

Gandhi was disqualified on March 24 after a court in Surat in Gujarat sentenced him to two years in jail in a defamation case.

"What are you (Thackeray) going to do when you say you are not going to tolerate Savarkar's insult. You need to show that courage," Shinde told reporters.

"They Know Nothing About Savarkar": Sanjay Raut Slams Shiv Sena's Roadshow

Maharashtra MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday launched an attack against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena stating that there was no match between the ideologies of RSS and Veer Savarkar.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Talking to reporters, the Uddhav Thackeray faction leader said, "Today the first rally of Maha Vikas Aghadi is being held in Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar. 14 more rallies will also be held in the state. Leaders like Uddhav Thackeray, Nana Patole, and Ajit Pawar will attend them. The entire preparation for the rally is being done rigorously".

On being asked about the Savarkar Gaurav Yatra being taken out by BJP and Shiv Sena in Thane, Raut accused them of doing the yatra only for "political benefits".

"Veer Savarkar has always been ideal for us. But they (BJP-Shiv Sena) are doing this only for political benefit. Those who are taking out the Gaurav yatra, what do they



know about Savarkar? About Savarkar ji's scientific view of Hindutva? About his thought on cows?" he said.

Raut said, "There was no match between the ideology of Savarkar Ji and RSS. RSS

did not accept Savarkar ji's Hindutvad. Savarkar was against growing a beard, and he used to say that beard only suits Chhatrapati Shivaji and no one else. Will Eknath Shinde cut his beard?"

Maharashtra Budget: Museum on Shivaji Maharaj to come up on Shivneri Fort

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A museum dedicated to the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj would be set up on Shivneri Fort, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had earlier announced while presenting the state's Budget for 2023-24 last month. Fadnavis, who holds the finance portfolio, had also announced allocation of Rs 300 crore for the conservation of forts built by the iconic 17th century ruler.



Shivneri Fort in Pune district is the birthplace of Shivaji Maharaj. Presenting the Budget in the Assembly, Fadnavis had said Rs 350 crore will be made available for the Shiv Rajyabhishek Mahotsav to celebrate Shivaji Maharaj's 1674 coro-

nation from June 2 to 9 this year. Rs 50 crore will be provided for setting up the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Theme Park at Ambegaon in Haveli taluka of Pune district.

Public parks with audio-

visual media facilities will be developed in Mumbai, Amravati, Nashik, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar and Nagpur where Shivaji Maharaj's life story will be exhibited and Rs 250 crore have been allocated for this purpose, Fadnavis said.

Day 2: NMACC FROM 'GALLAN GOODIYAN' TO INDIA'S INFLUENCE ON GLOBAL FASHION

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Social media critics may have carped over Varun Dhawan's antics with Gigi Hadid at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) Day 2 after party the actor claims it was all planned but they just loved Ranveer Singh and Priyanka Chopra reprising their 'Gallan Goodiyan' song from Zoya Akhtar's 2015 romance drama 'Dil Dhadakne Do'.

Priyanka, who's awaiting the release of the sci-fi action drama series 'Citadel' later this month, looked clearly out of touch with Bollywood moves she was in 'Dil Dhadakne Do' when Ranveer and she were much younger. Nonetheless, she sportingly tried to keep pace with Ranveer Singh, who was his usual sprightly self.

At the end of the performance, Ranveer planted a kiss on his old co-star, who's now an international celebrity. The stars and their gigs may have grabbed the media's attention, but the big event coinciding with the NMACC opening that has got the international fashion world talking is the exhibition showcasing the global influence of Indian art and fine fabrics since the 1600s.

In the words of the show's curator, 'Vogue' magazine's global editor at large, Hamish Bowles, "The treasury of India's sartorial and textile traditions have provided inspiration that led to imitation at the court of Louis XVI and the couturiers of Jazz Age Paris, the sportswear designers of midcentury America, and the hippies of the Summer of Love."

Unsurprisingly, the exhibition drew high praise from people in the know, one of them being Radhika Rajee Gaekwad of the House of Baroda.

"The exquisitely represented and mounted exhibition by @hamishbowles on India-inspired world fashion spanning centuries is not to be missed," wrote Radhika Rajee on her Instagram.

Her comments accompanied pictures from the exhibition, including one of her with Hollywood star Penelope Cruz.

Rajee added: "From Chintz from the Tapi Collection to @ysl and @chanelofficial runways, this one is a feast for craft, textile and fashion lovers."



Man with two girls on bike performs dangerous stunt in BKC; held

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Police on Sunday said that a 24-year-old man was arrested by the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) police for allegedly performing a dangerous stunt on a bike along with two girls sitting on it. A video of his stunt had gone viral on social media platforms after which the police registered a case in the matter and had launched a manhunt to nab the suspect. According to the police, the man who has been identified as Faiyyaz Qadri, a resident of Antop Hill was captured in a video in which he can be performing a 'wheelie' on a bike while two girls are sitting on it. In the video, one of the girls can be seen



sitting in front of him and facing towards him while the other can be seen riding pillion. The biker was found to be not even wearing a helmet while he was performing the stunt. Mumbai Police said, initially, the video that went viral on

social media platforms was tweeted to the Mumbai Police by 'Pothole Warriors'-an organisation working for social services following which the police registered a case and began investigations in the matter. The police said, during

the investigations, the police found that there were police records against the suspect in Antop Hill and Wadala TT Police stations, meanwhile, a team of police officials began to trace him and using technical clues and information from their sources, the team of police officials found that he had been allegedly constantly changing his locations.

"The team finally traced him to Sakinaka and found that he would be visiting Andheri's Sakinaka following which he was nabbed by the police," an official said.

He added that the accused has been booked under relevant sections of the IPC and Motor Vehicle Act. Further investigations in the case are being done.

NEWLYWED COUPLE KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENT

Mumbai/ Bengaluru: A newly married couple from Maharashtra returning home after visiting a pilgrimage centre in Karnataka was killed in a road accident on Saturday in the southern state's Belagavi district, an official said.

The incident took place in Halluru village near Mudalangi taluk.

The deceased were identified as Indrajith Mohan Dammanagi (27) and Kalyani Indrajith Dammanagi (24).

According to the police, they were married for 10 days and hailed from Maharashtra.

They were returning after visiting Banashankari temple in Badami. The accident had taken place on the state highway between Nippani and Mudhol.

The couple was travelling in a car and a tanker had collided with the vehicle.

Duo replace fake with real diamonds worth crores in Gujarat

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Police on Sunday said that its crime branch has nabbed two suspects from Kandivali and Lalbaug areas respectively for allegedly cheating a prominent diamond trader in Gujarat by making away with real diamonds by replacing them with fake diamonds and glass pieces.

According to the police, the duo had in February approached the diamond trader for buying diamonds from him and had allegedly carried fake diamonds and glass pieces along with them. The police said the incident took place on February 18 afternoon between 12 pm to 1 pm when the duo approached the diamond trader on the pretext of buy-

ing diamonds from him after a brief conversation. They asked the trader to show them diamonds and while he was in the process to do so, they asked for tea, while he was ordering the tea for them, the suspects allegedly used this as getting attention away from the diamonds and quickly replaced the real diamonds with glass pieces and fake diamonds. The two then made away with real diamonds. After the diamond trader realised that the real diamonds were replaced with fake ones and he had been cheated by the duo, he reached out to the local police in Gujarat that registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and began to investigate the matter.

"The Gujarat Police inves-

tigators got information that the suspect had fled away to Mumbai and reached out to the Mumbai Police for their assistance to nab the culprits," an official said.

The police said Mumbai Crime Branch began to trace the culprits and by using technical clues and their sources information found that one of the suspect was in Kandivali and the other in Lalbaug. The crime branch officials formed two teams to nab the suspects. The officials were successful in nabbing both of them within just seven hours of receiving their information from their Gujarat counterparts.

After nabbing the suspects, they were handed over to the Gujarat Police for further investigations, the police said.

1.1M LIKELY RISE IN SEA LEVELS SPELLS DISASTER FOR MAHARASHTRA'S 720-KM COAST

QUAID NAJMI | Mumbai

Amid all the gloomy predictions of the 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the Maharashtra coastal areas are also on the caution list for possible disasters with global warming leading to rising sea-levels, experts warned.

The western Indian state has a straight coastline of 720 km from Palghar (bordering Gujarat) to Sindhudurg (bordering Goa), and with a likely increase of 1.1 metres (3.7-feet) in the Arabian Sea levels, coastal communities will be gravely threatened, warns Dr. Anjal Prakash, Research Director of Indian School of Business.

He, along with other experts was the Coordinating Lead Author and Lead Author of two of the six reports of IPCC-2023 in the 6th Assessment Cycle synthesised.

Dr. Prakash cautioned that important cities and hundreds of villages dotting the coastal districts of Palghar, Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, and other infrastructure dotting the seashores, could be at higher risk of floods, coastal erosion and other onslaughts by



the turn of the century as the Earth warms.

"Maharashtra will witness higher temperatures with more heat waves leading to major health problems, severe water scarcity for agriculture, industries and homes as the state depends largely on the monsoon. Flooding will be a common occurrence, agriculture could be hit in many ways with serious implications for crop yields and food security owing to changing

temperature-rainfall patterns," said Dr. Prakash. "Due to global warming, we are seeing that oceans have warmed up to a level of 0.8 degrees Celsius in the past around 175 years, or since the pre-industrial era (1850). Due to this ocean warming, it has given rise to an active water cycle leading to an increased frequency and severity of cyclones," he explained.

Here he cited a recent study of the Indian

Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, which has documented and indicated that there has been "a substantial rise in the number of cyclones and associated extreme weather events along coastal areas as compared to previous years". Though this is very recent phenomenon - like the Cyclone Tauktae (2021), Cyclone Nisarga (2020) - they have caused havoc and will continue to have a devastating impact on Maharashtra, especially the Konkan coast including Mumbai, the creeks estuaries, nearby islands, big and small ports, forts and other monuments, with more like a nuclear power plant and a petrochemicals complex in the offing. These extreme weather conditions along with more pre-and-post monsoon cyclones in the Arabian Sea will hit the state's coastal populations more severely in the coming decades, and impact over 40 crore (400 million) Indians, said other experts of Association for Scientific & Academic Research (ASAR).

"The short-term measures include a Climate Adaptation Plan to address problems at the sub-district level, meaning we need to comprehend the impacts of climate change within Maharashtra's districts, downscale the climate scenarios for each district and sub-districts,

and then determine what interventions are needed. It must be a bottom-up strategy in which we assess adaptation and mitigation plans after analysing the effect of climate change on people's livelihoods," Dr. Prakash said.

On the long-term measures, he feels it must include a top-down strategy in which climate scenarios and predictions at the global scale are brought down to the local level, at the very least to the sub-district level.

"An overall comprehensive plan is needed as a long-term measure, with the next 15 years in mind at least, to consolidate short, medium, and long-term planning in order to guarantee climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts," Dr. Prakash added. ASAR experts said the recent bouts of unprecedented unseasonal rain in different parts of India, was predicted by IPCC reports and climate models, and point out how massive rains just before crop harvesting was "never expected". This has resulted in huge crop losses for farmers who need to be compensated and such extreme weather events play havoc with the lives and livelihood of people dependent on climate-related agriculture or similar jobs.



Desi kids who speak Hindi in second-hand Brit accent are annoying: Kangana

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut, who does not shy away from speaking her mind, said that she finds English speaking "desi kids" who speak Hindi in a tacky second hand British accent irritating.

Kangana took to Twitter, where she was replying to a tweet by a social media user. The user had shared a link to an article which talks about Italy introducing a bill in Parliament seeking ban on English and other foreign languages for formal communication.

The user wrote: "Hate me but we need to do the same, kids in Gurugram only speak in English but they only barely understand Hindi and forget about speaking Hindi."

Kangana re-shared the tweet and shared her opinion to it as well. "I know I will invite trolling but honestly English speaking desi kids who speak Hindi in tacky second hand brit accent are simply annoying and irritating. While kids who have authentic desi accent/swag and who speak Hindi/Sanskrit fluently are top tier," she wrote.

On the work front, Kangana has just wrapped up shooting for 'Chandramukhi 2'. She also has 'Emergency', 'Tejas', 'Manikarnika Returns: The Legend of Didda' and 'The Incarnation: Sita' lined up.



'It was planned'

Varun replies to criticism for lifting Gigi Hadid & kissing her on stage

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Varun Dhawan has reacted after he was criticised for picking supermodel Gigi Hadid on stage and giving a peck on her cheek. The Bollywood actor said that it was planned for her to be on stage.

Varun faced severe backlash online after a video of his dance performance at Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) went viral on social media. The video shows him picking Gigi up, spinning her and giving her a peck on the cheek as she was leaving the stage.

Reacting to a tweet by a woman, this read: "If you are a woman, you are not safe anywhere with anyone. Even if you are Gigi Hadid, invited to a party with an 'elite' crowd, guys like Varun Dhawan will randomly pick you up and kiss you without your consent, all in the name of fun. Disgusting."

The actor reacted and said: "I guess today you woke up and decided to be woke. So lemme burst ur bubble and tell u it was planned for her to be on stage so find a new Twitter cause to vent about rather then going out and doing something about things. Good morning."

Gigi also later thanked Varun and shared the viral video of Varun's action on her Instagram Stories and wrote: "Varundvn making my Bollywood dreams come true".

The supermodel was attending the opening of the NMACC on Friday. Other celebrities who attended the gala included Tom Holland, Zendaya, Penelope Cruz, Karlie Kloss, Salman Khan, Alia Bhatt, and global icon Priyanka Chopra and her husband Nick Jonas, Kareena Kapoor, and Saif Ali Khan.

I MADE SURE I NEVER LET GO OF ANY OPPORTUNITIES THAT CAME MY WAY: SONALI BENDRE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sonali Bendre has shared her learning experience and how she became successful in the industry.

The actress said she tried to grab all the opportunities that came to her as she never wanted to miss any chance of becoming successful. Sonali said: "You must be stupid if you do not seize the possibilities that come your way. So I made sure I never let go of any opportunities that came my way and learned everything from that, and that is how I am here today."

She made her acting debut with the movie 'Aag' which was released in 1994. However, she got major success with the 1996 film 'Diljale' opposite Ajay Devgn.

Sonali also acted in several successful movies such as 'Duplicate', 'Major Saab', 'Zakhm', 'Sarfarooshi', among others. The actress appeared on 'The Kapil Sharma Show' as a celebrity guest and shared her success story.

During the show, Kapil also played a video of Divya Dutta in which she shared a memory with Sonali.

In the video, the 'Delhi-6' actress said: "When I was doing an acting course with Sonali, the shooting for the film 'Andaz Apna Apna' was happening close to our college. We used to climb the wall to view the shooting in the nearby bungalow. When I invited Sonali to join me, she refused to watch them from a distance and mentioned that she would work with them one day."

'STILL ALIVE, STILL SMILING'

Aditya Narayan feels grateful for a wonderful life after recovering from covid for the third time



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer and host Aditya Narayan has expressed his happiness as he recovered from Covid-19 for the third time.

Aditya who is currently hosting the 13th season of the singing reality show 'Indian Idol' revealed that he is happy that he recovered before its finale.

He took to his Instagram handle and shared that his journey on the show 'Indian Idol' has been wonderful and it is always full of fun and enjoyment.

Aditya also shared his gratitude for his co-judges on the show Vishal Dadlani, Neha Kakkar, and Himesh Reshammiya, and the entire team for making it successful throughout the season.

He shared a couple of pictures with the caption: "Beat COVID for the third time! Still alive, still smiling and still grateful for this wonderful life. Hosting Indian Idol has been a top notch experience all these years. We have witnessed unprecedented success and love from our audience."

Aditya further said that he is glad to recover before the finale so he will not miss hosting it.

"In almost 20 years and 13 seasons of its run on Indian television, it has had about 320 episodes. In just the past three and a half years and three seasons that I've been a part of, I have hosted about 200 of them! We've had a great run. Thank you team. Thank you to my big brothers real-himesh & Vishal Dadlani for everything. You are real ones. Thank you dearest Neha Kakkar. I will miss this but most importantly, I will miss you all dearly. Glad that I recovered just in time to host the finale!" he added.



Are badshah & Isha Rikhi planning to get married?

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rapper Badshah, whose real name is Aditya Prateek Singh Sisodia, is said to await his wedding with his longtime girlfriend and Punjabi actress Isha Rikhi whom he met at a party of a common friend.

As per the media reports, the couple is planning a gurdwara wedding in north India this month which will be attended by close family members and friends.

However, neither Badshah nor Rikhi has commented anything about their wedding plans. Badshah was rumoured to be dating her since last year after they met at a party and shared similar interests.

Badshah was married to Jasmine Masih in 2012 and in 2017; the two became parents to their daughter Jessemey Grace Masih Singh. However, they separated in 2020.



Heli Daruwala



IPL 2023

KOHLI, DU PLESSIS POWER RCB TO THUMPING 8-WICKET WIN OVER MUMBAI INDIANS



Bengaluru | Agencies

Scintillating half-centuries from Faf du Plessis and Virat Kohli powered Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) to a thumping eight-wicket victory over Mumbai Indians in an IPL 2023 match, marking a happy homecoming at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, here on Sunday.

As RCB took the field in Chinnaswamy Stadium after 1247 days, chants of the franchise engulfed the whole arena. To their credit, RCB didn't disappoint at all, as bowlers got wickets in power-play and middle overs to keep Mumbai to 171/7, though young Tilak Varma shined with an outstanding 84 not out off just 46 balls.

In reply, du Plessis and Kohli put out an exhibition of majestic stroke-play and rattled Mumbai's bowling attack to enthrall home fans. While du Plessis made 73 off 43 balls, including five fours and six sixes, Kohli was in sublime touch to be 82 not out off 49 balls, laced with six fours and five sixes

and long-on, first of which took him to his fifty in 29 balls.

Kohli then danced down the pitch to whack Chawla over long-on for six, and bring up the century of the opening partnership in the 11th over, before reaching his fifty in 38 balls. He then welcomed Behrendorff with a pull through cow corner for four, before du Plessis pulled and flicked for four and six respectively.

Kohli hammered sixes off Archer and Arshad through the leg-side to keep Mumbai under the pump. They had a breakthrough when du Plessis holed out to long-on, breaking the 148-run opening partnership. After Dinesh Karthik fell for a three-ball duck, Glenn Maxwell slapped sixes over extra cover and fine leg, with Kohli whipping and lofting for four and six respectively to complete Bangalore's chase with 22 balls remaining. Despite wickets falling around, Varma continued to march forward. He began with a six over long-on off Deep which came right off the middle of the bat. When Harshal Patel pitched down leg, he came on top of the bounce to pull past short fine leg. He reached his fifty in 32 balls with a terrific heave over deep square leg for six off Deep. When Harshal gave some width, Varma freed his arms to slash through point for four. He then lofted and pulled Siraj for a brace of boundaries in the 19th over where the fast bowler gave four wides.

to chase 172 in 16.2 overs to get their IPL 2023 campaign off to a winning start.

In defence of 171, Mumbai brought in Jason Behrendorff as an impact player in place of Suryakumar Yadav to share the new-ball with Arshad Khan. After making a watchful start, du Plessis cut down on the swing by dancing down the pitch to hit a four and two sixes on both sides of the wicket off Behrendorff.

Jofra Archer put down Kohli on his first ball of the match. Kohli then followed it up by placing a steer between backward point and short third man for four, and smacked a six over long-off. Kohli and du Plessis took a boundary each off Piyush Chawla and Archer to bring the fifty of their opening partnership in the power-play.

Du Plessis continued to be unstoppable -- timing his drives through the off-side against Cameron Green twice and ended the over with a scooped six to take 17 runs off the eighth over. He welcomed off-spinner Hritik Shokeen with consecutive sixes over mid-wicket

Brief scores

Mumbai Indians 171/7 in 20 overs (Tilak Varma 84 not out; Karn Sharma 2/32) lost to Royal Challengers Bangalore 172/2 in 16.2 overs (Virat Kohli 82 not out, Faf du Plessis 73; Arshad Khan 1/28, Cameron Green 1/30) by eight wickets.

Chahal's 4/17 lead RR to 72-run win over SRH



Hyderabad | Agencies

An impressive batting display from top-order batters followed by Yuzvendra Chahal's superb four-fer (4/17) lead Rajasthan Royals to a resounding 72-run victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the fourth match of the IPL 2023 at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Sunday.

Riding on the half-centuries from Jos Buttler, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sanju Samson, RR posted a massive total of 203/5 on the board. In response, SRH suffered early batting collapse as they managed to score 131/8 in their 20 overs with Abdul Samad top scoring with 32 runs. Chasing a big total of 204, Sunrisers got early blows as Trent Boult dismissed opener Abhishek Sharma and Rahul Tripathi for ducks.

Harry Brook and Mayank Agarwal cautiously took the innings forward with RR bowlers keeping a tight leash and managed to score 30 for a loss of two wickets in the powerplay.

In the first over after pow-

erplay, Yuzvendra Chahal put another dent on SRH's batting as he cleaned up debutant Harry Brook.

Nobody stayed for long, and wickets kept falling as RR's bowlers were on fire. Though the match was out of SRH's hands, Umran Malik cleared his front leg and crunched it over mid-off for four and hit a massive hit off the next ball as he smeared it over deep mid-wicket for six.

Samad collected two back-to-back boundaries and a single off the final delivery, taking 23 off the final over to end the innings as Royals picked up a huge 72-run win.

Brief scores

Rajasthan Royals 203/5 in 20 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 54 off 37, Jos Buttler 54 off 22 and Sanju Samson 55 off 32; Fazalhaq Farooqi 2/41, T Natarajan 2/23) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad 131/8 in 20 overs (Abdul Samad 32 off 32, Mayank Agarwal 27 off 23; Yuzvendra Chahal 4/17, Trent Boult 2/21) by 72 runs

Anything could have happened had rain not come, says Nitish Rana

Mohali | Agencies

Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Nitish Rana feels that anything could have happened in the outcome of their first match in IPL 2023 had rain not arrived and the match would have lasted for a full 40 overs.

"The over in which Venky (Venkatesh Iyer) got out, we needed to score 12 without losing a wicket. After that over, rain stopped play. Because the rain wasn't in our hands, our game plan was to achieve the DLS target over by over.

Personally, I felt that if it had been a full match, then they would have fallen one over short (in over-rate). In that case, you never know what might have happened with the result. We could have bagged the 2 points,"



said Rana in a video posted by the franchise on Sunday. "I think there was a lot to learn. This is a marathon of matches; there are 14 games in total; not just 3 or 4. We'll talk, recollect, and hopefully we'll bounce back in the next game," he signed off by saying this. Kolkata will now play their first home game of IPL 2023 at the Eden Gardens on April 6 against the Royal Challengers Bangalore.

KANE WILLIAMSON RULED OUT WITH INJURY, TO FLY BACK TO NEW ZEALAND

Ahmedabad | Defending champions Gujarat Titans suffered a big blow on Sunday as Kane Williamson was ruled out of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 after suffering an injury during Friday's tournament opener against Chennai Super Kings. "It is sad to lose Kane to injury so early in the tournament. We wish him a speedy recovery, with the hope of seeing him in action very soon," said Gujarat Titans' Director of Cricket of Gujarat Titans Vikram Solanki said.

Williamson will now head home to New Zealand for further assessment. The Gujarat Titans will finalise a replacement for the right-handed batter and an announcement will be made in due course, the franchise said in a statement on Sunday.



Spain Masters 2023

PV Sindhu loses to Gregoria Tunjung in final

Madrid | Agencies

Ac Indian shuttler PV Sindhu fell short of the Madrid Spain Masters badminton 2023 women's singles title following an 8-21, 8-21 loss to Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung in the final, here on Sunday.

For Sindhu, the world No. 11 in the badminton rankings and second seed at the tournament, it was her first final appearance of the year.

Heading into the BWF Super 300 tournament in Madrid, the 27-year old Indian had failed to progress beyond the second stage in any of the BWF World Tour 2023 tournaments she participated in.

Up against world No. 12 Tunjung, who stunned top seed and former Olympic champion Carolina Marin in the semi-finals, Sindhu made a slow start and committed a couple of unforced errors, allowing her opponent the



upper hand in the early exchanges.

The 23-year-old Indonesian shuttler, chasing her maiden BWF World Tour title, took full advantage of Sindhu's lapses and showcased some fantastic badminton of her own to take the opening game with ease. Despite her best efforts,

Sindhu, a double Olympic medalist, could do little to stop Gregoria Mariska Tunjung's rampage as the Indonesian sealed the final in just 28 minutes to win her maiden World Tour tournament.

It was Tunjung's first win over Sindhu in eight head-to-head meetings.

Barcelona go 15 clear in Spain with 4-0 win at Elche

Madrid | Agencies

FC Barcelona opened a 15-point lead over second-placed Real Madrid in La Liga with a 4-0 win away to Elche.

Sebastian Becece was making his debut as the fourth permanent Elche coach of the season, but his arrival did little to change the dynamics of a side that was bottom of the table with just two wins all season.

Robert Lewandowski opened the scoring with a slightly lucky goal following a free kick in the 20th minute and Ansu Fati doubled Barca's lead 11 minutes into the second half after running unchallenged from inside his half before shooting into the far corner of the goal, reports Xinhua. Lewandowski's second goal made it 3-0 in the 66th minute and Ferran Torres added the fourth with 20 minutes left to play.

Real Madrid plays at home against Valladolid on Sunday afternoon.

Athletic Bilbao and Getafe drew 0-0 after a game which saw the home side control



nearly the entire ball, especially in the second half, but fail to break down a packed Getafe defense.

Jose Luis Mendilibar had a perfect debut as Sevilla coach as his side won a vital derby 2-0 away to Cadiz.

Espanyol slip deeper into trouble after losing a Catalan derby 2-1 away to Girona. Arnau Martinez put Girona ahead with a spectacular left-foot shot early in the second half before Martin Braithwaite equalized from close range in the 74th minute.

Premier League

Man City defeat Liverpool to keep pressure on leaders Arsenal

London | Agencies

Manchester City kept their calm after falling behind, to roar back and beat Liverpool 4-1 in a result that very much keeps them in the race for the Premier League title.

Although Mohamed Salah poached a goal for Liverpool in the 17th minute, Julian Alvarez, who was in the side for injured Erling Haaland, levelled 10 minutes later and then helped Riyad Mahrez set up Kevin de Bruyne to put City ahead in the first minute of the second half.

Ilkay Gundogan then put the result beyond doubt when he made it 3-1 in the 53rd minute after Alvarez's shot had been blocked and the impressive Jack Grealish got the goal he deserved in the 74th minute after exchanging passes with De Bruyne.

Arsenal responded magnificently to the pressure with a 4-1 win at home to



Leeds United, with two goals from a fit-again Gabriel Jesus (the first from the penalty spot), while Ben White and Granit Xhaka completed the scoring for Arsenal.

Goals from Ollie Watkins and John McGinn gave Aston Villa a 2-0 win away to Chelsea to once again pile the pressure on Coach Graham Potter.

Aston Villa, meanwhile, climbed up to ninth after a run of four wins from their last five league games.

Bournemouth came back from a goal down to beat

Fulham 2-1 and climb out of the relegation zone. Andreas Pereira put Fulham ahead early in the game, but second-half strikes from Marcus Tavernier and Dominic Solanke, with Tavernier scoring a brilliant goal, turned the game around.

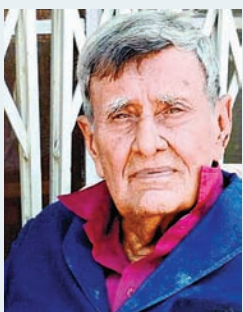
Alexis Mac Allister's 90th-minute penalty saved a point for Brighton in a thrilling 3-3 draw at home to Brentford. Allister's spot kick was the third time Brighton came back from a goal down in the match.

FORMER INDIA CRICKETER SALIM DURANI PASSES AWAY AT 88

Jamnagar (Gujarat) | Salim Durani, one of the finest all-rounders that have played for India, passed away at his home here after a prolonged battle with cancer, on Sunday. He was 88, according to a family source.

He was known for his batting and bowling prowess that left the spectators thrilled. A slow left-arm orthodox bowler and left-handed batsman, Durani was the hero of India's series victory against England in 1961-62, claiming 8 and 10 wickets in India's wins in the Calcutta and Madras Tests, respectively.

He also played a key role in India's maiden Test win against the West Indies in 1972, taking the wicket of key batters Clive Llyod and Gary Sobers. He is the first cricketer to receive the prestigious Arjuna Award and was awarded the C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award by the BCCI in 2011.



SL vs NZ 1st T20

Ish Sodhi's score-levelling six goes in vain as Sri Lanka win Super Over

Auckland | Agencies

Spinner Ish Sodhi blasted a six off the final delivery of the match to level scores but his effort went in vain as Sri Lanka defeated New Zealand in a Super Over in the first T20I here on Sunday.

Needing 13 from the final over to win the three-match series opener after Sri Lanka posted 196/5 in 20 overs, Sodhi and Henry Shipley scrambled six runs from the first five balls to set up a thrilling finale.

Leg-spinner Sodhi then flicked Sri Lankan skipper Dasun Shanaka high over mid-wicket for a six to tie the match and send it into a one-over decider.

However, New Zealand's hopes ended in the Super Over as spinner Maheesh Theekshana restricted the Black Caps to just nine runs, which Charith Asalanka easily over-



hauled with a six and a four off Kiwi quick Adam Milne. Earlier, Asalanka smacked a 41-ball 67, clearing the modest Eden Park boundary six times as the visitors set New Zealand 197 to win.

Kusal Mendis got Sri Lanka off to a good start with 25 off nine balls before Kusal Perera smashed an unbeaten 53 from

45 balls as Milne, Ben Lister and Shipley all conceded more than 10 runs per over.

In their reply, New Zealand was off to a shaky start and lost two wickets for three runs in the first seven balls. The hosts then rode on Daryl Mitchell's 66 and Mark Chapman's 33 before some explosive hitting by

Rachin Ravindra, who blasted 26 off 13 balls, took them close to the target.

Dilshan Madushanka conceded 45 runs from his three overs, while Wanindu Hasaranga and Shanaka each claimed two wickets for 30 and 20 runs respectively. But despite the adrenaline boost of a final-ball six to tie the game, New Zealand lost two wickets in the tie-breaker, which their chances of putting up a strong total.

Brief scores

Sri Lanka 196/5 in 20 overs (Charith Asalanka 67, Kusal Perera 53 not out, Kusal Mendis 25; James Neesham 2-30) beat New Zealand 196/8 in 20 overs (Daryl Mitchell 66, Mark Chapman 33, Rachin Ravindra 26; Dasun Shanaka 2-20, Wanindu Hasaranga 2-30, Pramod Madushan 2-37) the match in a one-over eliminator.

Bundesliga

Bayern stun Dortmund 4-2 to recapture Bundesliga top spot

Berlin (Germany) | Agencies

Thomas Muller's brace helped Bayern Munich cruise 4-2 past front-runners Borussia Dortmund and ensured a perfect debut for new head coach Thomas Tuchel at the 26th round of Bundesliga.

With the result, Bayern moved past Dortmund and established a two-point gap atop the standings.

The BVB caught a bright start on the road as Matthijs de Ligt had to block Marco Reus' shot from inside the box seven minutes played, reports Xinhua.

Bayern opened the scoring against the run of the game moments later as Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel cleared Dayot Upamecano's long pass into the wrong goal. Dortmund were shocked and had to swallow the second goal in the 18th minute after De Ligt flicked a cross into the path of Muller, who tapped home at the back post.



Things went from bad to worse for the visitors five minutes later as Muller wrapped up his brace and made it three when Kobel parried a hammer from Leroy Sane into the path of the German veteran.

The hosts should have made it four before the break, but Kobel was on guard twice to deny Kingsley Coman from promising positions.

Dortmund had the chance to reduce the arrears after the restart but for all that Sebastian Haller couldn't beat Bayern custodian Yann Sommer from inside the box.

Relentless Bayern showed no mercy at the other end of the pitch and made it 4-0 as Coman tapped home Sane's good build-up work in the 50th minute.



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हर गरीब को आवास के लिए भू-खंड

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