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Changing seasons, low immunity, poor Covid hygiene sustain virus cocktail

After three years of the deadly pandemic, India is currently facing a cocktail of viruses - putting healthcare providers on their toes as millions continue to suffer amid a poor Covid/flu protocol, with no masking. Most of these illnesses carry similar symptoms and specific testing is needed to detect the illness and confirm a diagnosis.

■ India on Saturday recorded 6,155 fresh Covid-19 infections, while the number of active cases increased to 31,194, according to the Health Ministry data.
■ The Covid death toll has increased to 5,30,943 with 14 fresh deaths.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the last couple of months, India has witnessed a sudden rise in H3N2 (a subtype of the influenza A virus), H1N1 (Swine Flu), Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and, of course, new Omicron XBB 1.16 variant. There were 13,202 reported H1N1 cases last year, with 410 deaths. In comparison, 12 people died from swine flu in 2021. The death toll due to the H3N2 virus climbed to nine last month. According to leading health experts, the sudden increase in the number of cases could be as a result of several factors, including seasonal reasons (one typically sees a spike in upper respiratory infections during spring in India), deterioration in adherence to Covid-19 protocols, which also reduced transmission of other virus infections and waning immunity due to a long time having elapsed since vaccination. "A periodic increase in cases of Covid-19 is to be expected, and it may be premature to call it a wave. Even with other endemic viral infections, there are ebbs and flows in the number of cases," said Dr Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director, George Institute

India. Dr Amit Prasad, Associate Professor, School of Biosciences and Bioengineering, IIT Mandi, said that the rise in respiratory viral infections may be due to strain improvements of these existing viruses due to "antigenic drift" which is common among flu viruses. "This antigenic drift is slow accumulation of changes on the surface antigens like HA and NA. These are virus surface proteins hemagglutinin (HA) and neuraminidase (NA), which acts as antigens which are detected by the human/host immune system and are capable of triggering immune response i.e antibody formation finally," Prasad explained. Due to change in the surface proteins composition the existing antibodies do not neutralise these new strains and that gives opportunity to a virus for making infection. Another reason could be in general low immunity in post-Covid era.

According to Dr Krishan Chugh, Principal Director and head of department of paediatrics, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, RSV is being seen more commonly currently compared to similar periods of previous years. "This is probably a post covid effect. Children were confined to their homes in the last two seasons due to the lockdown of covid pandemic and were not exposed to this virus. Hence they didn't develop immunity to it and this year, when they have started mixing with their cousins and friends and day care mates this infection is easily spreading from one to the other," Chug said.

Covid wave looms as India's population-level immunity wanes: WHO SE Asia Chief

New Delhi: Decreasing levels of immunity in our population may trigger new Covid waves and to tackle this, India needs strong disease surveillance along with high vaccine coverage, WHO Regional Director, South-East Asia, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh has stressed. India is currently seeing a surge in Covid cases, to levels last seen during the Omicron wave in early 2022. India on Saturday recorded 6,155 fresh Covid-19 infections, while the number of active cases increased to 31,194, according to the Health Ministry data.



Daily cases have crossed the 6,000-mark for the first time since September 16 last year. A total of 14 deaths -- three in Maharashtra, two each in Karnataka and Rajasthan, and one each in Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Punjab have been reported. One death was reconciled by Kerala, according to Union Health Ministry data. Dr Singh stressed the need for people to take booster vaccine doses and to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour to tackle the surge in infections. Over the past six months, we have been seeing surges in infection in some countries that have not been associated with a rapid increase in the need for hospitalisation, intensive care, or an increase in fatalities. We can also expect new waves of infection as our immunity wanes. We can contain the impact of this with strong disease surveillance, high vaccine coverage, and making our health systems more resilient. We also need to strengthen our capacity to track the virus and urgently address any gaps in the health systems. As we continue to do all this, we need to transition to long-term control of Covid-19 and other respiratory diseases.

Pilot's 1-day fast against own govt for 'inaction' of corruption charges

Raising questions on the inaction of the Gehlot government against former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje in the last four years in different corruption allegations, Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Sunday announced that he will hold a one-day fast as a mark of protest on April 11. The day is observed as Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Jayanti.

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

Former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister and Congress leader Sachin Palayat will sit on hunger strike in Jaipur on April 11, questioning his own Congress government over the investigation into corruption cases during the previous Vasundhara government. Pilot said in a press conference at his residence here on Sunday. During the Vasundhara government, the Congress government was formed when all the leaders of the Congress raised the corruption cases in the state in front of the public, and even after four and a half years after coming to power, no steps were taken to investigate the corruption cases, while the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot was urged in this regard by writing twice.



He said "I was given the responsibility of the party in the state by Sonia Gandhi and we opposed the wrong policies of the Vasundhara government, especially we raised the issue of corruption. As a result of which his government went away. When we were in the opposition, we had said that we will investigate the corruption of the BJP government. I wrote the first letter in this regard to the Chief Minister on March 28 last year but there was no response. After this, another letter was written on November 2, but we did not get a reply to that too. "While we wanted that there should be no difference between our words and actions. Had raised demands for mining, land scam and

other matters but we did not get any response from them. If the corruption of Vasundhara government is not investigated, then many of our opponents will spread the illusion that we are in collusion with them. That's why we want that there should be an inquiry into the corruption of the Vasundhara government because six-seven months are left for the elections. In such a situation, the public should not feel that there is a difference between our words and actions because we had promised the public that when our government comes, we will investigate their corruption" He added. Through a video, he showed Gehlot speaking on various forums about the corruption cases that happened during the time of Vasundhara government and getting them investigated and demanded that the Chief Minister and we Congress leaders talked about the investigation of corruption cases. And now if our government has not taken any step on this in four

Country's tiger population rises to 3,167 in 2022 from 2,967 in 2018

Team Absolute | Mysuru (Karnataka)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the latest figures of tiger census in the country on Saturday on completion of 50 years of Project Tiger. The census showed that there has been a steady rise in the number of big cats. As per the census statistics, the number of tigers in the country has increased to 3,167 in 2022 from 2,967 in 2018. In 2006, there were 1,411 tigers in the country; in 2010 census 1,706; and in 2014 census 2,226. Modi maintained that the number of tigers has increased by 75 per cent in the



last 10 years. India has the 70 per cent of tiger population of the world. The numbers are going to increase, he said. The countries have taken an oath to double the

number of tigers at the Tiger Forum held at Saint Petersburg in Russia. India has reached the goal before deadline, Prime Minister Modi stated.

J&K infiltration bid foiled, one killed, 2 arrested

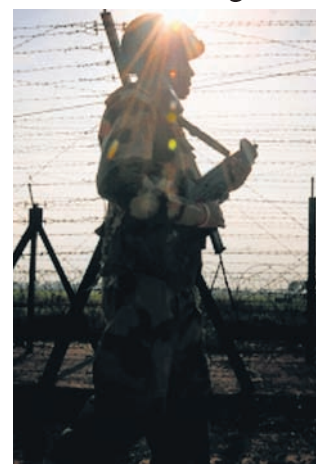
Team Absolute | Jammu

Alert army troops foiled an infiltration bid on the line of control (LoC) in J&K's Poonch district on early Sunday, killing one intruder and apprehending two others, defence officials said.

"On April 8, at approximately 10.15 p.m., own alert troops deployed on the LoC in the Poonch Sector observed a suspicious movement of a group (three individuals) close to the LoC.

"At around midnight the group, crossed the LoC and started infiltrating on to own side, Defence Ministry spokesman, Lt Colonel Devender Anand said.

"Own alert troops kept the movement of the infiltrating group under continuous observation. At



approximately 2 a.m. today (Sunday) as the group approached the fence, the alert Indian Army troops deployed on the fence challenged the infiltrators.

"The intruders started to run away, were engaged by fire, in which one intruder was shot dead, while the other two managed to run into the jungle taking advantage of the thick foliage and rocky outcrop," he added. The area was immediately cordoned to prevent their escape across the LoC, the spokesman said.

"Search operation was launched at first light wherein the dead body of one intruder was recovered at the encounter site. As the search progressed in the jungle, one intruder was apprehended alive in wounded condition.

"In the subsequent search the third intruder was also apprehended alive. In the search operation so far, three bags with fourteen packets of narcotics weighing approximately 17 kg, Pakistani

currency, some documents, and eatables have been recovered," he said.

As per Lt Col Anand, during preliminary questioning, the two intruders apprehended alive claimed that they (all three) are residents of Pakistan Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK) and belong to Maidan Mohalla, village Chanjal.

"By their quick action, alert Indian Army troops have thus prevented a major infiltration bid of a Narco terror group which had the potential of disturbing the peace in Poonch & Rajouri districts through its nefarious designs.

"The Indian Army continues to remain alert on the Line of Control and is fully prepared to thwart any such attempts in the future too," he said.

Narrow escape for Haryana ex-CM Hooda

Chandigarh: Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda had a narrow escape as his SUV car collided with a stray blue bull in Hisar. The Congress leader was on his way to attend a function when the accident occurred. "A nilgai appeared on the road and hit Hooda's vehicle. However, he escaped unhurt and no one else in the vehicle received any injury," Hisar's Superintendent of Police Ganga Ram Punia told the media. After the accident, Hooda headed for the public function.

WITH CORRIDOR ACTING AS THE BOOSTER, KASHI'S ECONOMY SEES 'ACHCHE DIN'

Varanasi (UP) | Agencies

The revamping of the Kashi Vishwanath Dham corridor has opened the door for a new Kashi. The Ganga is closer to the historic Kashi Vishwanath Dham and obstacles to mythological legends have been removed. The Kashi Vishwanath Corridor has ensured direct accessibility to the Ganga River from the temple.

Kishori Lal Agarwal owns a small shop selling kachori-sabzi, Varanasi's staple breakfast, in the Lanka area. He has a family business and he is the fourth generation owner. His shop sells only one item for decades - kachori sabzi - and never experimented with vari-

ations. Two months ago, he added 'poha' and bread pakora to the menu and has no regrets.

"Suddenly, there are people from all over the country coming to Varanasi and each one of them has a specific food preference. We added new items to the menu to cater to people with different tastes. We are now planning to include some South Indian items from next month," he said.

The massive renovation of Varanasi in the past few years has proved especially beneficial for small vendors and businessmen in the heritage city.

Vendors are upgrading their business, expanding the variety they offer to customers and the



hospitality industry is flourishing like never before.

Ever since the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor was opened

in December 2021 after renovation, the tourist footfall has not stopped. "Varanasi is now a tourist/pilgrim's delight. Besides

the temple, other amenities have been added and it almost seems like a whole new city. The local people are enthused and know that if they invest in improving their business -- be it boatmen, hotels, sari sellers -- the return will be better than expected. Those who drove cycle rickshaws are switching to e-rickshaws and even the smallest eatery is sprucing up its premises," said Dibyojyoti Base, who has lived in Kashi for over six decades. The boatmen, in particular, are thrilled at Kashi's makeover.

"Our business has grown manifold in the past one year. The number of tourists - particularly foreign visitors - has grown and we

earn more because of more rides. People prefer to take a boat to reach the Vishwanath Dham, instead of the road route," said boatman Parveen Nishad.

The hotel business is also witnessing a boom. Rajesh Mehrotra, manager of a resort, said, "Prior to the renovation of the temple, guests were mainly pilgrims and the majority of them preferred to stay in dharmshalas and low-cost hotels and lodges. But now we have guests from all categories and there are days when even luxury hotels get full occupancy.

People are now actually coming to Varanasi for a holiday and that, in itself, speaks volumes for the changing situation."



Rashtriya Sewa Sangam concludes with the resolution "Self-reliant Society, Self-reliant India"

■ 2756 representatives from 45 provinces of the country took pledge of self-reliant India, prosperous India
 ■ Sewa Sangam paved the way for promotion of innovation, startups and self-employment



Sangam today. Amita Jain has been working through Seva Bharti for the last 26 years. She is Madhya Bharat Prant co-secretary, vice-president and woman chief and at present she is the vice-president of the National Service. Along with this, he has also worked as an all-India head of adolescent development work and has prepared a book dedicated to "Samarth Kishori". Amita Jain, former member of National Women's Commission Advisory Committee and M.P. She has also been a former member of the Child Rights Protection Commission.

The platform was set for creating a harmonious and capable India in this Sewa Sangam on the theme of "Narseva, Narayan Seva". Everyone took a pledge to create a self-reliant society to build a prosperous India. The exhibition was inaugurated on 6th April at Seva Sangam Complex in Jamdoli, Jaipur. On April 7, the formal inauguration took place with the inspiring address of Sarsangchalak Dr. Mohanrao Bhagwat. Sarsangchalak met the representatives on 8th April.

The ideas of social change got rays of hope in Sewa Sangam. With this, the resolution of a prosperous India will come true in the coming days. With this, such a country will be made where people of every class and society will be able to live with pride. Sewa Bharati is wholeheartedly dedicated to facilitate a firm social upliftment in all spheres. The organization is making constant efforts to train and empower women," commented by the spokesperson.

Sewa Sangam was duly concluded on 9th April Sunday. Sarsangchalak exhorted the delegates to contribute in the service work with more determination. The Sarsangchalak was present for two days while Dattatreya Hosbole, Sarkaryavah of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh held meetings together with the representatives of different provinces for three consecutive days.

Central office bearers of various organizations also participated in Sewa Sangam for all the three days. 2756 delegates from 45 states including Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Ladakh, in which 515 women were also present. There were 820 managers in the organization of Sewa Sangam, out of which 95 were women. Sewa Sangam settled in 6 cities was completed with the resolution to be organized again for the next five years.

Team Absolute | Jaipur

The mega Rashtriya Sewa Sangam hosted by one of the leading social groups present across the country Rashtriya Sewa Bharti (RSB) concluded in Jaipur concluded on Sunday, April 9 with the resolution of "self-reliant society and self-reliant India". In this Sewa Sangam, Sarsangchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Dr. Mohanrao Bhagwat also guided the delegates. Self-reliant India, with the motto of prosperous India, has also witnessed many success stories. Sewa Sangam has also paved

the way for encouraging innovation and employment in small towns and encouraging start-ups in every sector.

Sarkaryavah of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Dattatreya Hosbole spoke on the important churches held here on the third day today on the completion of Seva Sangam. He said that the amazing success stories shared at Seva Sangam should be publicized across the globe and more and more people should get inspired and come together. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's trustee Amita Jain was also present in Seva

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The wonderful stories of success in Sewa Sangam portrayed as a

PM MODI GOES ON JUNGLE SAFARI IN BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK



Chamarajanagar (Karnataka) | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi went on a safari at Bandipur National Park in Karnataka on Sunday.

Clad in casuals and donning a hat, PM Modi travelled in an open jeep for one-and-a-half hours and spotted tiger and other wild animals.

Nine convoy vehicles followed his jeep in the jungle, authorities said.

PM Modi started his safari from Bandipur campus and traversed about 12 kms in the deep jungles. He went to Bolagudda hill area which offers a spectacular view of the Bandipur National Park. Earlier in the day, he arrived at the Melukamanahalli helipad in the hilly Nilgiris district in a special chopper and travelled to Bandipur. The Tiger Project in Bandipur National Park has emerged as one of the prime habitats of tigers in the world. As a model code of conduct is in place in the state, BJP leaders did not get the opportunity to welcome PM Modi. Authorities welcomed him at the Mandakalli airport in Mysuru on Thursday night and also at the Melukanahalli helipad. He arrived in Mysuru on Saturday late evening to take part in celebrations to mark the 50 years of 'Project Tiger'.

Sex racket busted after police raid Gurugram spa, 10 arrested

Gurugram | Agencies

Ten people, including two spa owners, were arrested on Sunday for allegedly operating a sex racket from a spa located in Omex Mall in Gurugram, police said.

Following a tip-off, a policeman, acting as a decoy customer, visited Blue Stone Spa on Sunday found that the owners of the spa were involved in the sex trade, and relayed the information.

A team from Sector 50 police station then raided the Blue Stone Spa, and nabbed 10 people, later identified as spa owners Mukesh and Umesh and customers Sagar, Vikrant, Nobo, Yogesh, Mohinder, Prem, Sudhant, and Vinod.

At the time of the raid, a



room in the spa centre was occupied where a woman and man were found in an objectionable position, a police official said.

"After reliable information, a police team reached the spot and arrested the culprits, who were soliciting sex, red-handed. Police have arrested two owners and

eight customers who were also included in the sex trade," ACP, HQ, Abhilash Joshi said.

The arrested have been booked under different sections of the Immoral Trafficking Act and an FIR has been registered against them at the Sector 50 police station.

Umesh Pal murder: Three aides of Atiq's son, arms supplier in Delhi jails, says Special Cell

New Delhi | Agencies

The Delhi Police's Special Cell on Sunday said that they have arrested arms supplier Avtar Singh who supplied 10 weapons to Khalid and Zeeshan, the two aides of UP Don Atiq Ahmed's son Asad, as well as another aide named Jawed and all four have been sent to judicial custody here.

Earlier reports had said that Khalid and Zeeshan were handed over to the Uttar Pradesh Police's Special Task Force.

Asad is on the run in connection with the sensational murder of Umesh Pal - a witness in former BSP MLA Raju Pal murder - that took place in Prayagraj in February. Zeeshan and Khalid, who



helped Asad to hide in Delhi, were detained from Sangam Vihar.

In coming days, the UP Police's STF can seek their production warrants and

they are in touch with the Delhi Police, a Delhi Police official said.

"Avtar Singh was arrested and disclosed that he had also supplied ten weapons to

two persons namely Khalid and Zeeshan. We launched a manhunt and manual sources were also tapped. Based on a secret input, on March 28, Khalid and

Zeeshan were arrested from Sheikh Sarai, Delhi and two weapons along with live cartridges were also recovered from the possession of the duo," a police official said.

During the course of investigation, the duo disclosed that they had also provided shelter to Asad and Ghulam, who are wanted by UP Police in the infamous Umesh Pal murder case.

Subsequently, acting on more secret information, Jawed has also been arrested on March 31 and another case under Arms Act in police station Special Cell was registered.

During course of investigation accused Jawed disclosed that Asad and Ghulam had also met him after the Umesh Pal murder.

BJP's CEC meets to finalise names of Karnataka candidates

New Delhi | Agencies

With a month left for the Karnataka Assembly elections, the BJP's Central Election Commission met at the party headquarters here on Sunday to finalise name of the candidates.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister Amit Shah, party President J.P. Nadda, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavraj Bommai, senior party leader B.S. Yediyurappa and other state leaders arrived at BJP headquarters for the meeting.

As per top sources, the CEC meet is to finalise the names of the candidates, and there could be major changes in the last list as political requirements. A list with names of maximum candidates could be out on Monday.

Earlier on Saturday, Shah held a meeting at Nadda's residence to discuss and finalise the list of candidates for the May 10 polls.



Over 2,000 obsolete rules & laws scrapped in last 9 yrs, says Union Minister

New Delhi | Agencies

Over 2,000 rules and laws were scrapped by the Centre in the last nine years for ease of governance and ease of business, said Jitendra Singh, the Minister of State, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions on Sunday.

The Minister said that unlike the earlier governments which found comfort in the status quoist approach, Prime Minister Modi has demonstrated the courage and conviction to do away with such rules which were causing inconvenience to the citizens and many of which had persisted since the time of British Raj. The ultimate aim of good governance is to bring ease of living to the citizens, he said while speaking as Chief Guest after presenting Yashraj Bharati Samman (YBS) Awards at a 'Gratitude ceremony'.

The Minister recalled that soon after the government came to power in May 2014, within two to three months, the practice of



getting certificates attested by gazetted officers was done away with. Thereafter within a year, the Prime Minister spoke from the ramparts of Red Fort about the abolition of interview in job recruitment so that a level playing field could be provided. In pensions, face recognition technology was introduced so that the elderly citizens did not have to go through the tedious process of getting a life certificate. Most of the functioning was con-

verted online and in order to bring in transparency, accountability and citizen participation, the human interface was reduced to the bare minimum.

Talking about grievance redressal, Jitendra Singh said that the grievance redressal mechanism was shifted to CPGRAMS as a result of which about 20 lakh grievances are received every year in comparison to just two lakhs every year before this government came in because this government followed a policy of time bound redressal and gained the confidence of the people.

In the field of healthcare, the Minister said that the use of technology and telemedicine during Covid pandemic has shown how innovation can deliver healthcare in the remote and rural areas.

This government has not only promoted technology and innovation but also Startups to undertake new innovations even in the health sector thereby transforming lives of citizens.

Removal of chapters by NCERT driven by divisive and partisan agenda: Historians

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Around 250 educationists and historians criticised National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) over its decision to revise textbooks. They said that removing the chapters was driven by a divisive and partisan agenda.

The historians demanded NCERT to withdraw the decision. Significantly, some sections related to Mughals were removed from the Class 12th History textbooks, and paragraphs that contained information about the ban briefly imposed on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) by the then government after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi were omitted. Romila Thapar, Jayati



Ghosh, Mridula Mukherjee, Apoorvanand, Irfan Habib and Upinder Singh, among others have started a signature campaign to protest against the decision and for its withdrawal.

level teachers, said that if 'WhatsApp University' is given a free hand to devour Indian schools, colleges and universities, then Indian democracy will be seriously affected.

NCERT said that the change made in school books has not been done with the

aim of making anyone happy or angry. NCERT Chief Dinesh Prasad Saklani said that the changes have been made purely on the basis of expert advice. He said that new books for all classes on the basis of National Education Policy (NEP) will also be introduced and its

work has been completed at the foundation level.

Saklani said that changes were not only made in History books, but also in books of other subjects to reduce the burden faced by students. He stated that the changes are not based on any particular person, event, period or institution.

Saklani added that this is not a big change and all of them were made last year, keeping the Covid-19 pandemic in view and the academic loss faced by students worldwide, at all levels. In such a situation, NCERT decided to revise the course on the basis of experts' opinions to reduce the burden on students who would return to school after a long time, Saklani concluded.

NOW ASSAM CM TO FILE A DEFAMATION AGAINST RAHUL GANDHI OVER ADANI TWEET

Guwahati | Agencies

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday said that he will lodge a defamation suit against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for "inappropriately" linking him with industrialist Gautam Adani in a Twitter post.

Sarma said the defamation case will be filed after the conclusion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state on April 14. "Whatever Rahul Gandhi has said on Twitter is a slanderous comment," he said, adding that due to the ongoing preparations for PM Modi's scheduled April 14 visit in Guwahati he has to wait to lodge the suit.

"I don't wish to respond to it at this time. I will file the



defamation lawsuit once the Prime Minister's visit to Assam is over," Sarma added.

Earlier on Saturday, after the tweet of Rahul Gandhi linking Adani to some former Congress leaders including Sarma, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Jyotiraditya Scindia and others, the Assam Chief Minister reacted sharply.

"It was our decency to have never asked you, on where have you concealed the proceeds of crime from the Bofors and National Herald Scams. And how you allowed Ottavio Quattrocchi to escape the clutches of Indian justice multiple times," he said in a response to Gandhi.



REDUCE THE BURDEN OF THE COURT BY PRE-LITIGATION MEDIATION: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that there is a need to adopt pre-litigation mediation to settle mutual disputes.



for this. This will prove to be a revolutionary step in resolving the disputes of the villages.

Chief Minister Chouhan participated in the bhoomi puja programme of the Advocate General's office building 'Nav Srijan' in Jabalpur today.

CM Chouhan said that there was a need for an advocate's office building in Jabalpur. Earlier there was not enough space for the advocates.

said that man is not just made up of flesh and bones. He is the son of nectar, a part of God and the storehouse of infinite powers.

CM said that Swami Vivekananda's thoughts have contributed a lot in making his life successful. He is my source of inspiration. Swamiji had

General Building would meet the necessary requirements of the present. Justice should be done to the person, this is the intention of the court.

Chief Justice Ravi Malimath said that today he is participating in this pious work. This building should be ready within the given time limit.

Supreme Court Justice J.K. Maheshwari explained the importance of the power of thoughts. He said that the views of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi are important in making a person's life successful.



15 tourists trapped on rocks rescued from Narmada River in Khandwa

Team Absolute | Omkareshwar

Around 15 youth from Gujarat and Indore got stuck in the centre of the Narmada River near Nagar Ghat in Omkareshwar, after the Dam water was released.

On receiving the information, Mandhata police and Tehsildar Uday Mandloi reached the spot and coordinated with the rescue operation to ensure all the youths were safely evacuated.

The incident occurred on Sunday morning when NHDC started turbines for power generation, causing a sudden increase in water level.

Despite sirens being played to alert people, who were taking bath in the river. Thus, getting trapped there.

Mandhata police station in-charge Bisen told that water is released daily by NHDC by running turbines for power generation. Due to this, the water level of Narmada rises up to a certain limit.

Man found burning on road dies; cops launch investigation

Team Absolute | Ujjain

A 42-year-old man whose name had cropped up in connection with a bribery incident was found ablaze under mysterious circumstances on a road in Ujjain city of Madhya Pradesh and later died during treatment, police said on Sunday.



Singh Parihar. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Abhishek Anand said a video of the incident indicated that Asif had set himself on fire but a probe is underway from all angles.

ble for accepting a bribe. Parihar also confirmed that Asif was the same man whom the constable had handed over money after running out of the police station during the Lokayukta Police action on April 7.

Elderly woman worshipped as 'Narmada Devi' after video of her walking in river went viral

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

A video of an elderly woman walking in the Narmada River surfaced on social media on Saturday morning and went viral. After seeing the woman, people started considering her as the form of Maa Narmada, a goddess, and went to seek her blessings.



Narmada River and was walking in the water along the riverbanks. She also clarified that she was just an ordinary woman like any other.

The truth behind the viral video The truth behind the video was that the water level of the Narmada River was low at that spot, and the woman was walking on the riverbed itself. Due to the low water level, it appeared as if she was walking on water, which led to the rumor and claims of a miracle.

Rumour associated with Jyoti Raghuvanshi Some devotees claimed that the woman had healing powers, and whoever she touched would be cured.

However, the woman denied such claims and stated that she only gave advice on indigenous medicine if someone asked for it. The police found out that the woman was missing since May 2022, and her family was searching for her.

CM CHOUHAN WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE GOURAV DIWAS PROGRAMME OF REHTI NAGAR

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will gift several constructions and development works to Rehti Nagar in Sehore district on Monday in its Gourav Diwas programme.

For the development and beautification of the city in Rehti on Gaurav Diwas, foundation of many development works worth Rs 60 crore 87 lakh will be laid and works will be dedicated. This includes, bhoomi-pujan of 9 construction works costing Rs 28 crore 31 lakh and dedication of 10 construction works worth Rs 32 crore 56 lakh.



CM CHOUHAN PLANTED SAPLINGS WITH MEMBERS OF 'TOORYANAAD'

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Neem, Peepal, Guava, Jamun and Karanj along with the members of MANIT Bhopal's student's organisation 'Tooryanaad' in the garden located at Shyamla Hills.

Indian culture joined in. Every year cultural programs, creative and ideological competitions, workshops and lectures etc are organised by the institution for the college youths. It is worth mentioning that Tooryanaad's alumni conference is being held in Bhopal on 8-9 April. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Deeksha Bhaskar and Ajay Verma planted saplings on their birthday.

TERENCE LEWIS, INDIA'S BEST DANCER JUDGE, BLOWN AWAY BY MP'S CONTESTANT SKILLS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Dancer, and choreographer Terence Lewis, who is currently judging the dance reality show 'India's Best Dancer 3', shared how he found contestant Shivanshu Soni from Madhya Pradesh on Instagram and was so impressed with his dancing skills that he even texted him to say that he wants to learn dance from him.



talent on the show. Shivanshu also talked about his passion for dance and said that it is everything to him. He said that despite being from a non-dancer family, he got all support from his mother and everyone in the family which helped to continue his passion for dancing and think of making a career in it.

Even though it's a different field, my mother was always supportive and would take me to various auditions and workshops. They always pushed me to pursue my passion, saying whatever you are doing you are best at it," he added.

CAR TURNS TO ASHES DURING TEST DRIVE ON MP ROAD; 2 SEE NARROW ESCAPE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A SUV car caught fire near the Sheraton Grand Hotel on the bypass road near Indore, on Saturday at around 12:30 pm. Fortunately, two people named Irshad and Haleem, who were inside the car escaped with minor injuries and were taken to a nearby hospital for medical treatment.



the front of the vehicle. The video of the incident surfaced on social media and showed the fire car eventually reduced to ashes. According to eyewitnesses, the car was traveling at a high speed when the fire broke out, and the front side door got locked automatically. Irshad managed to jump off from the back side of the car, but Haleem got stuck as the flames spread rapidly.

7 years after SC handed Vyapam cases to CBI, court starts framing charges

PRAVEEN DWIVEDI | Bhopal

The special CBI court in Bhopal, which is dealing with Vyapam cases, has disposed of over 50 per cent of the cases, and in the latest development, it has initiated the process of framing charges in two major cases.



Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Satish Dinkar, who is representing the CBI in the court, told IANS that the framing of charges in two big cases has begun, however, the hearing will speed up after two months.

fresh FIR has triggered 'unrest' within the ruling BJP and has also raised several eyebrows over its 'sanction'. However, the STF has said that it is just a routine action since they are investigating hundreds of complaints related to the Vyapam case that were not taken up by the CBI.

The case was registered on December 6, 2022, against Prashant Meshram, Ajay Tengar, Krishna Kumar Jaiswal, Anil Chouhan, Hari Kishan Jatav, Shiv Shankar Prasad, Amit Badole and Sulwant Singh Morya for allegedly clearing PMT 2008-2009 through impersonators.

Most of the cases are being heard in a special CBI court in Bhopal, and the single court is dealing with as many as 54 cases, including the 'engine-bogie' scam in the PMT exams in 2012 and 2013, which has a roster of more than 1,300 accused persons.

Though the irregularities in the Vyapam exams were noticed first in 2001, a strong nexus of corrupt bureaucrats, politicians of both the ruling and opposition parties, racketeers and middlemen kept executing their plans for over a decade, until the lid was blown off in 2013.

It is worth mentioning that in July 2015, the Supreme Court transferred Vyapam investigations from the state STF to the CBI. The central agency registered 155 cases. Today, CBI has no Vyapam case pending for investigation, and hundreds of investigators, who were sent to Bhopal for the massive probe, have returned to their parent units.

All the accused persons in the Vyapam cases, who were either arrested by Madhya Pradesh police or by the CBI and were charge-sheeted, are now out on bail. Most of them were granted interim bail by the Madhya Pradesh High Court, including nine who were granted conditional bail in March 2022.

OBJECTIONABLE WEB SERIES WILL BE BANNED, SAYS MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday said the state government will take steps to ban "objectionable web series." He was speaking at a function of religious preacher Devkinandan Thakur in Bhopal. Thakur talked about the need for banning objectionable web series as the young generation is being alienated from culture due to such content, he said.

OFFICE OF THE NAGAR PALIKA PARISHAD GUNA DISTRICT GUNA (FIRST CALL) Section-1 Notice Inviting e-Tenders NIT No.01/2023_UAD_266136_1 Dated:-05/04/2023 Online PERCENTANGE RATE TENDER bid for the following AMRUT 2.0 works are invited from registered contractors and firms of reputed fulfilling eligibility criteria:





EDITOR'S SPECS

Will MP retain 'Tiger State'?

The state has registered the highest growth of big cats in the past one decade. Madhya Pradesh had won back its 'Tiger State' stripes in the All India Tiger Estimation Report 2018 by a difference of just two tigers -- 526 to Karnataka's 524.

Now, forest officials claim that the number of tigers in Madhya Pradesh has crossed 700, which means that the state has registered around 175 new big cats in the last five years. Forest officials claimed that in 2000 when Chhattisgarh was carved out, Madhya Pradesh had around 250-300 tigers.

At that time, the tiger census was done on the basis of their footmarks count, which had always been questionable. Now, new technologies like the radio collar system and close monitoring as well as high visibility have brought more authenticity.

J.S. Chouhan, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests of Madhya Pradesh, said, "In the past one decade, Madhya Pradesh has not only witnessed the highest growth in the number of tigers, but a lot of transformation has taken place. It can be judged the way big cats are not only residing in the tiger reserves but in all national parks in Madhya Pradesh. We are hopeful that Madhya Pradesh will retain the tag of tiger state," Chouhan said.

At present, Madhya Pradesh has six tiger reserves, namely -- Pench Tiger Reserve, Kanha Tiger Reserve, Panna Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Satpura Tiger Reserve and Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve.

Beside these, the state has 35 wildlife sanctuaries and all these sanctuaries are ideal places to witness the imposing beauty of the forest and wilderness of the national parks. But, on the other hand, state has also registered the highest death of tigers in the last few years. As per the forest officials, around 35-40 tigers were reported dead every year in Madhya Pradesh, and most of them were unnatural deaths.

According to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Madhya Pradesh has lost 270 tigers since 2012. Forest officers, however, say it's unlikely, pointing out that there are more tiger births than deaths here.

LOST & NOT FOUND: MYSTERY OF RAJASTHAN'S MISSING TIGERS REMAINS UNSOLVED

ARCHANA SHARMA

It is a fact that a missing tiger's mystery has been haunting the desert state for years. However the experts have been unable to trace these missing big cats.

Even as the nation celebrates the 50 glorious years of Project Tiger, the questions being raised about these missing big cats are yet to be answered by officials.

The Forest Department recently found the carcass of a male tiger in Masalpur range of Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS). The death at KWLS adjoining the famous Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (RTR) came as a conservation setback at the proposed tiger reserve. Four tigers have gone missing from the reserve since 2020.

After pregnant Tigress-138 went missing from the proposed reserve, male tiger T-132 has not been sighted for long. Evidence of the big cat was last found in Masalpur range a couple of months ago. Young tigers T-132 and T-136 moved out of RTR nearly five months ago. While T-136 reached till Morena district of MP, T-132 found its home in KWLS. Forest officials, however, claimed the carcass recovered is not of T-132.

Last year, Amer MLA Satish Poonia raised a question in the Assembly on whether an inquiry has been conducted into the number of tigers born and missing from areas like the Ranthambore National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Mukundra Hills National Park, among others, from January 2019 to January 2022.

The forest department said, "The record submitted in the state Assembly on missing tigers revealed that a total of 13 tigers have disappeared from the Ranthambore National Park between 2019 and 2021. Two male tigers T-20 and T-23 went missing from the park in 2019 and seven big cats -- five males named T-47, T-42



T-64, T-95, T-97 and two females T-73 and T-92 -- disappeared in 2020.

"At present most of the 32 female tigers are in reproductive age, due to which there has been an increase in the birth of cubs," the department stated. "A total of 44 cubs have been born between the year 2019 to 2021. Due to the high number of tigers in the battered areas of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, there is a high number of cases of missing tigers, territorial fights and deaths.

It was also informed that since the establishment of the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in 1973, the number of tigers is maximum at present. The number of tigers and their cubs in the adjoining areas of Ranthambore has gone up from 66 in 2019 to 81 in 2021.

Presently, the ratio of male to female tigers is 1:1.3 which is abnormal, said the Forest Department in response to a question raised by Poonia on the missing tigers.

Environmentalist Babulal Jaju says that around Rs 50 crore have been spent on installing cameras in the jungles, yet the missing tigers are still to be traced. Why, Jaju asked?

He went on to say: "We need to believe that tiger area has decreased due to which there are many territorial fights. More jungles need to be created in days to come. Also, boundaries need to be created in jungles to ensure smooth and safe living of big cats.

"The villages inside Project Tiger should be vacated and compensa-

tion should be paid to villagers dwelling there. This will ensure a healthy relationship between the villagers and animals. If there are no villagers in the jungle, the animals will be safe.

"Also, there is a need to create more tiger reserves for plenty of space for this big cat. The much-awaited Kumbhalgarh Tiger Reserve project should be turned into reality. Vehicles for safaris should be reduced and within limits."

Rajsamand MP and NTCA member Diya Kumari has been pitching for making Kumbhalgarh Sanctuary into a Tiger Reserve. The NTCA had already sent the Feasibility Assessment Report for

appropriate action.

The State Government had to take action on the report and send it to the Ministry of Wildlife and Environment along with its recommendation. However, so far no action has been taken on the matter by the Rajasthan government, she said recently during the NTCA meeting.

The other points discussed at the meeting pertained to development of a tiger corridor for tiger movement; tiger relocation from one state to another which will solve the problem of inbreeding; opening new zones in Ranthambore, Sariska and Ramgarh Tiger Reserve; increasing the funds.

international

SHEHBAZ SAYS PRESIDENT ALVI IS 'BEHOLDEN' TO IMRAN MORE THAN CONSTITUTION

Islamabad | Agencies

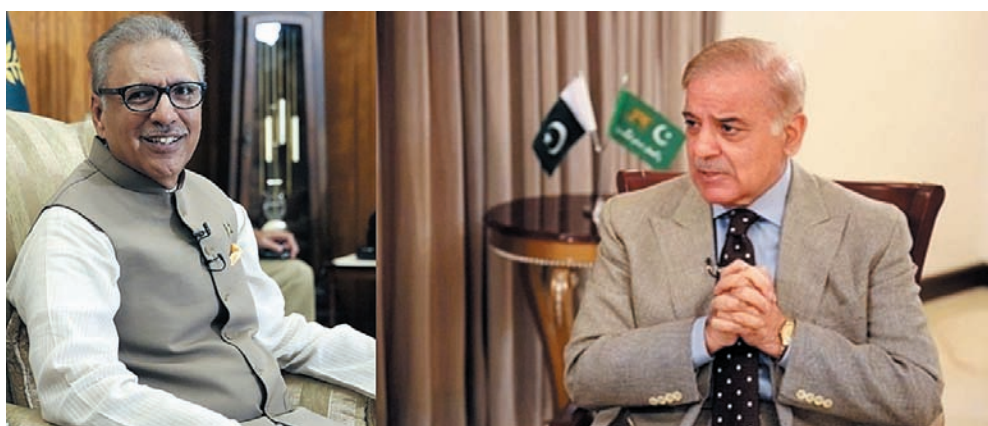
Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif castigated President Arif Alvi for returning the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023, unsigned and calling him a worker of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), according to a media report.

The bill is aimed at curtailing the powers of the chief justice - including the suo motu and the formation of benches. The PTI has strongly condemned the move to pass the legislation and said it is an "attack on the judiciary", Geo News reported.

"President Alvi returning the Supreme Court Bill duly passed by Parliament is most unfortunate," the prime minister said in a hard-hitting tweet hours after the president returned the bill to the legislature, Geo News reported.

The president has, since the formation of the Pakistan Democratic Movement's government in April last year, returned bills and also refused to administer the oath to several members of the federal cabinet, including Prime Minister Shehbaz.

Alvi has sought the advice of PTI Chairman Imran Khan - who was ousted as the prime minister in April last year - on several crucial matters, including the appointment of the chief of army



staff.

In the tweet, the prime minister said the president has belittled his office through his actions as he follows the PTI chief's orders rather than fulfilling his constitutional duties.

"Through his conduct, he has belittled the august Office by acting as a worker of the PTI, one who is beholden to Imran Niazi more than the Constitution & demands of his Office," he added,

Geo News reported.

The bill was approved by both houses of parliament last month and sent to the president for assent amid a deepening political and constitutional crisis in the country over elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

After Alvi's refusal to assent to the legislation, the government is likely to get through this bill from a joint session of the parliament, Geo News reported.

China sends dozens of warplanes towards Taiwan

Taipei | Agencies

China on Sunday sent dozens of warplanes towards Taiwan for a second day of military drills, launched in retaliation to the island's president, Tsai Ing-wen, meeting US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy during a brief visit to the US, according to a media report.

Taiwan's defence ministry said it was monitoring the movements of China's missile forces, as the US said it too was on alert, The Guardian reported.

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) sent 58 warplanes, including fighter jets, reconnaissance planes, and refuellers, into Taiwan's air defence identification zone on Sunday morning, according to Taiwan's defence ministry, The Guardian reported.

It did not provide a map or locations, but said 31 planes



had crossed the median line the de facto border in the Taiwan Strait between Taiwan and China.

The PLA had announced the immediate start to three days of drills on Saturday morning. By 7 p.m. that evening, it had sent 71 warplanes and eight ships into Taiwan's ADIZ with almost 60 crossing the median line.

Taiwan's ministry said the activity had severely violated Indo-Pacific peace and sta-

bility, and had a negative effect on international security and economies. It urged other countries to speak out against China's actions, The Guardian reported.

Last August, after a visit to Taipei by then US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, China staged war games around Taiwan including firing missiles into waters close to the island, though it has yet to announce similar drills this time.

MILITANTS IN SYRIA FIRE 3 ROCKETS TOWARD ISRAEL: ARMY

Jerusalem | Agencies

Militants in Syria fired three rockets toward northern Israel on Saturday night, Israel's military said, in a rare attack from Syria amid escalating tension in the region.

According to a statement released by the army, only one of the rockets crossed into the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights and landed in an open area, Xinhua news agency reported.

It triggered sirens in the northern community of Moshav Meitar, however, there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage. The Israeli army on Thursday and Friday struck southern Lebanon and Gaza Strip as Israel accused Hamas and other militant groups of being responsible for firing dozens of rockets at Israel. The latest tension was triggered by Israeli raids of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, Muslims' third holiest site, during a sensitive holiday time as Muslims were observing the holy month of Ramadan with prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and Jews were commemorating the Passover holiday.

2 IS militants killed, one arrested in Afghanistan

Kabul | Agencies

Two IS militants were killed while another was arrested in Afghanistan's Nimroz province on Sunday, an official said.

"Units of Special Forces stormed a hideout of Khawarej (a reference to IS group) in Sayedabad area of Police District 3 in Zaranj city today morning killing two insurgents and arresting another," provincial director for Information and Culture Mufti Habibullah Elham confirmed in talks with Xinhua.

No security personnel and civilians have been harmed during the operations, the official contended, Xinhua News Agency reported.

The security forces also discovered and seized a good quantity of arms and ammunition during the operations that lasted for a while, the official further said.

This is the fourth operation launched by Afghan forces against IS hideouts over the past week.



Earlier, security forces raided IS hideouts in the northern Mazar-i-Sharif, eastern Charikar and the western Herat cities, killing several IS-affiliated insurgents, according to officials.

The Afghan caretaker government, which has downplayed the rival IS outfit as a serious threat, has vowed to smash the armed opponents in the war-torn Asian country.

S.Korea suspends operation of Kori-2 reactor for permission renewal

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea has temporarily suspended the Kori-2 nuclear reactor for safety inspections and improvements required to extend its operations, its operator said on Sunday.

The No. 2 reactor at the Kori Nuclear Power Plant, located in Busan, 325 kilometers southeast of Seoul, was halted at 10 p.m. Saturday upon the expiry of its 40-year permission to operate, according to the Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) Co, Yonhap News Agency reported.

The industry ministry earlier said that the suspension was inevitable as the process to extend its life span has been delayed due to the previous government's nuclear phase-out policy.

The government began procedures to resume its operations recently. The extension process is expected to take around three



to four years, but the government is seeking to move up the schedule as much as possible to June 2025 as long as safety is ensured.

Even if the process is expedited, the reactor is expected to be suspended for at least two years and two months.

The Kori-2 unit began commercial operations in April 1983 as the country's third nuclear reactor. Currently, South Korea operates 18 out of its 25 nuclear

reactors.

The Yoon Suk Yeol government reversed the nuclear phase-out policy of the previous administration and is working to expand the country's generation of nuclear power to boost energy security and better achieve net-zero goals.

It seeks to expand nuclear power generation to 30 per cent of the country's total energy creation by 2030, with the figure for 2021 coming to 27.4 per cent.

RESIDENTIAL FIRE KILLS 7, LEAVES OVER 60 FAMILIES HOMELESS

Manila: Seven people, including a two-year-old girl and a 12-year-old boy, died when a fire swept a residential community in Rizal province in the Philippines, police said on Sunday. The

fire broke out before 10 p.m. local time on Saturday in Taytay town and spread fast in the densely packed neighbourhood of old houses, engulfing over 40 houses before it was declared under control more than an hour later, Xinhua News Agency reported. The victims were trapped in their house at the end of the street, and the bodies were found on the kitchen floor and inside the bathroom, according to the police. The fire also left more than 60 families homeless. The Bureau of Fire Protection is investigating the cause of the fire.

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SHINDE, FADNAVIS OFFER PRAYERS IN AYODHYA

Team Absolute | Ayodhya (UP)

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday reached Ayodhya and offered prayers at the Ram Janambhoomi temple and the Hanuman Garhi temple.

He was accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who arrived in Lucknow on Sunday morning, and Uttar Pradesh minister Swatantra Dev Singh, apart from his cabinet colleagues and legislators.

Shinde was welcomed by his Uttar Pradesh counterpart Yogi Adityanath at the Lucknow airport, amid fanfare.

Shinde received a warm welcome in Ayodhya as the holy city had been plastered with posters welcoming the chief minister.

Interestingly, the posters welcoming Shinde also carried photographs of Balasaheb Thackeray - a clear move to establish him as the leader of real Shiv Sena.

Local BJP leaders also turned out in full force to welcome the chief minister. This is Eknath Shinde's first visit to Ayodhya after taking over as Maharashtra chief minister.

Earlier, Shinde was scheduled to travel by car to Ayodhya but a last-minute change was made and he went to Ayodhya on a helicop-

ter. Later in the day, the Maharashtra chief minister will attend the Saryu aarti and then head to Lucknow to meet UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath before returning to Mumbai.

RAM TEMPLE WAS BALASAHEB THACKERAY'S DREAM: CM

Lucknow: Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said that Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray's dream of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya was now becoming a reality.

Talking to reporters before leaving for Ayodhya on Sunday, he said, "Balasaheb Thackeray's dream of grand Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is now becoming a reality. For this, I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Ayodhya is an issue of pride and bhakti (devotion) for us."

"Lord Ram's blessings are with us and that is why we have got the symbol of bow and arrow," Shinde told reporters.



"WILL LORD RAM BLESS THEM?" SANJAY RAUT

Mumbai: Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday attacked Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, alleging that the latter went to Ayodhya when farmers were facing problems due to rain and hailstorm in the State. Addressing mediapersons, Raut said, "We also believe in Lord Ram. We have also been to Ayodhya several times. But the BJP never followed us there. When the Babri incident happened, they ran away. Farmers in Maharashtra are saddled with problems due to rain and hailstorm but the government, ignoring all these issues, is visiting Ayodhya. Will Lord Ram bless them? They are copying us. Public knows who is original and who is duplicate."



3 years after first lockdown, Maha sees Covid return, but it's better prepared

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Three years after the first cases were reported followed by a major national lockdown, the Covid-19 virus has once again reared its ugly head in its favourite haunt, Maharashtra, among other states, though there is no talk of a shutdown akin to 2020 yet.

From early March, the state experienced a gradual increase in Covid cases, ostensibly owing to seasonal fluctuations, according to top health authorities. In the past two weeks, there has been a sharp spurt in daily infections and deaths, as per official data till April 7. From the lowest case of one new infection on February 6, in 60 days it has gone up to a staggering 926 now, and currently there are 4,487 active cases in the state. As in the past, Mumbai leads the state with 1,367 active cases, while Hingoli has reported zero infection among the state's 36



districts. Thane, Pune, Nagpur, Raigad, Satara and Palghar districts are at the higher end with three-digit cases, while the rest are on the lower side with double or single digit cases.

"We have witnessed a slow but steady increase in Covid-19 cases, but hospitalisation and fatalities remain low owing to the large vacci-

nation coverage," said health department expert Pradip Awate.

Nevertheless, the latest spike has spurred the state health authorities to girdle up and take preventive measures, on the lines of the first wave of early 2020, and an all-India mock drill has been announced for April 10-11 to check the country's Covid preparedness. Mumbai is in

full preparedness with 1,073 oxygen beds, 666 ICU beds, 393 ventilator beds, and a total of 3,422 isolation beds in the 15 hospitals of the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), three state government hospitals and 35 private ones. The city is also geared up with medicare and healthcare professionals - 6,543 - including 5,792 doctors, nurses and paramedics fully trained in Covid management.

Unlike the first three waves, the BMC is ready with a daily testing capacity of 135,035 at 34 hospitals and 49 labs, sufficient stocks of all necessary Covid medicines, essentials and resources like PPE kits, masks, nebulisers, oximeters, etc.

It may be recalled that India went into the first lockdown on March 25, 2020, and emerged out of it in stages over the past over a year.

However, Awate feels that Covid-19 has now become a pandemic' similar to influenza or other viral

infections, and would exhibit a spike in cases as per seasonal variations of the daily minimum-maximum temperatures. He explained that for influenza, there are vaccines specified by the WHO every year depending on its type or severity, and they are administered annually for certain targeted sections of the population based on age or comorbidities, with effectiveness of one year. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Maharashtra has recorded a cumulative total of 81,48,599 Covid cases and 148,457 fatalities, both highest in the country.

So far, Mumbai has recorded 11,57,537 cases and 19,749 deaths, compared to Pune's 15,08,156 infections and 20,610 fatalities.

Meanwhile, the WHO had indicated last month that it may soon end the Covid-19 global pandemic - declared in January 2020 - though a time-frame for that is yet to be finalised.

WOMAN'S DECOMPOSED BODY FOUND IN FLAT, COPS SUSPECT SUICIDE

Palghar: The decomposed body of a woman was found in a flat in Vasai in Maharashtra's Palghar district, a police official said on Sunday.

The body was found on the bed in a room with one end of a saree tied around her neck and the other around the ceiling fan, the Manickpur police station official said.

"She has been identified as 28-year-old Mumtaz Kazi who came to live in that house just a month ago. We are looking for her husband for more information. It seems like a suicide as there are no external injuries on the body. However, we are awaiting the post mortem report," he said.

IIT-B student nabbed for suicide of Darshan Solanki

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a major development, the Mumbai Police SIT has arrested a student of IIT-B in connection with the alleged suicide of a Dalit student Darshan Solanki, here on Sunday, officials said.

The accused has been identified as one Arman Khatri, a batchmate of Solanki, and living on the same floor of the IIT-B Students hostel.

The fast-paced development came after the SIT sleuths recovered a purported suicide chit on March 3, that said "Arman has killed me". An expert last week confirmed the writing matched with Solanki's, making a breakthrough.



Belonging to a modest background, Solanki, 22, was a FY B.Tech (Chemical Engineering) course and hailed from Gujarat.

On February 12, he allegedly hurled himself down from the 7th floor of his hostel building and ended his life, sparking a huge row

on academic campuses all over India.

An IIT-B probe panel later ruled out any caste-based discrimination on the campus as the probable cause leading to Solanki's death and pointed fingers at his poor academic records.

His family rejected the IIT-B report and demanded that the Mumbai Police lodge an FIR based on their complaint, which was subsequently done.

The Solanki family also contended that he was subjected to casteist bias on the campus and suspected foul play making him resort to suicide. The state government also set up SIT to probe the matter which finally culminated in the arrest.

Lilly Singh, Arjun Rampal, Hrithik support Preity Zinta after harassment post

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A slew of personalities including Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Lilly Singh, Hrithik Roshan and Malaika Arora and many others have come out in support of actress Preity Zinta, who spoke about being harassed in a post on social media.

Preity on Saturday took to Instagram, where she talked about how an unknown woman 'planted a big wet kiss' next to her daughter Gia's mouth and how a 'handicapped man kept trying to stop' her for money in Mumbai while the paparazzi found it funny, laughed and did not help.

Commenting on the post, actor Arjun Rampal said: "Next time give me a call will sort them out."

Hrithik Roshan said: "Well done Pree." Malaika Arora wrote: "You said it out loud and clear."

"Good on you for standing up for yourself. I know that can be hard. But it's important and true," wrote Lilly Singh. Priyanka posted a shocked emoji. On Saturday, Preity had shared a clip of a man in a wheelchair following and knocking on her car.

She captioned it: "Two events this week have left me a bit shaken. In 1st incident, my daughter Gia-where a



woman tried to take her photo. When we politely asked her not to, she walked away, then suddenly scooped my daughter in her arms & planted a big wet kiss next to her mouth & ran off saying what a cute baby. This woman lives in an elite building & happened to be in the garden where my kids were playing. If I wasn't a celebrity I probably would have reacted badly but kept my cool as I didn't want to make a scene."

"I can see the 2nd incident here. I had a plane to catch & this handicapped man kept trying to stop me.

Over the years he has harassed me for money & I have given it to him when I could. This time when he asked for money I said sorry today I have no cash, just a credit card. The lady with me gave him some money from her purse. He threw it back at her cuz it wasn't enough & started getting aggressive. As u can see, he followed us for some time & got more aggressive." "I think it's high time people realise that I'm a human being first, then a mom & then a celebrity. I also don't need to apologise for my success constantly & be bullied for it cuz

I've worked very hard to get where I am," she also said.

She added that she has an equal right like anyone else in this country to live the way she wants and urged everyone to think before judging and stop blaming celebrities for everything.

"Most importantly my children are NOT part of a package deal & are not meant to be preyed on so please leave my kids alone & don't come to them for photos or touch/grab them. They are infants & need to be treated like infants, not celebrities," added Preity.

MILLIND GABA PERFORMING 'SHRI RAM JANAKI' AT CONCERT, VIDEO GOES VIRAL



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular Punjabi singer Millind Gaba's performance at an event has taken over the Internet as he was seen singing 'Sri Ram Janaki' at his concert. A video of Gaba is doing the rounds on social media in which he is seen dressed in a black T-shirt paired with black shorts and denim shirt. He is seen singing the bhajan, but in his own way. The crowd attending his concert is seen loving

his impromptu rendition as they all join him to sing the track.

It's not clear where he was performing but according to Gaba's Instagram the performance took place a week earlier as he shared the video. However, the clip has now taken over social media by storm. Gaba is known for belting out party anthems such as '4 Men Down', 'She Don't Know', 'Mod Do', 'Main Teri Ho Gayi', and 'Paris Trip'.

An elite agency or a master of 'CDI' - Criminal Delay in Investigation?

QUAID NAJMI | Mumbai

Way back in 1963, the Central government had set up the elite Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), intended to solve high-profile criminal, corruption, conspiracy or other critical cases which the local police were ill-equipped or incapable of handling. Taking over from where the state police or other agencies failed to crack such complicated cases and/or book the culprits, the CBI soon acquired a deep halo and its name evoked dread among all and sundry. Successfully solving multiple mega crimes, it soon earned the image of a Robin Hood-cum-Superman among the commoners who felt it could deliver them from all those corrupt, powerful or unscrupulous demons. It didn't last too long. In the past few decades, particularly the last one, the CBI has been diminished "to an overrated national cop", working under the pressure of the (any) ruling party, overburdened with routine probes. The agency became susceptible to the very acts it was supposed to act against, leading to an overall loss of credibility, several retired officers aver.

A former ex-regional director terms the CBI's scorecard of the past 60 years as barely 35 per cent -- having a 'marginal impact' on crime or criminals, particularly the political or the while-collar varieties -- owing to lack of autonomy, low resources and staff and fingers in too many cases, some as low as graft of a few thousand rupees!



However, ex-Superintendent of Police, CBI Mumbai, Y. P. Singh, credits the CBI with "full marks" for some super-success probes like the 1991 Harshad Mehta-led stock market scam, the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case or the 2010 Adarsh Society scandal. "But, the 26/11 (2008) Mumbai terror strikes has yet to reach

its logical conclusion, so it can't be termed as glory. The probe into the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput 2020, in which the outcome is obvious so the CBI should have filed its closure report wonder why the delays," remarked Singh, now a leading lawyer in Mumbai. In fact, in 2013, the Supreme Court had come down heavily on the CBI, labelling it "a caged

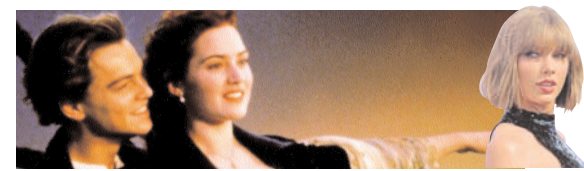
parrot speaking in its master's voice" and lamented that "there are many masters and giving unbridled power to the CBI is not possible".

The apex court also observed how "the CBI has become the police force and is in the administrative control of the Central Government", urging the need for "CBI investigations to be independent". Endorsing the "limited impact" of the agency in recent years, a former CBI deputy director said despite its trail-blazing contributions in cracking some of the biggest and most high-profile cases, today the agency is busy "probing mundane matters that a local police chowki can handle", or matters that "smack of personal rivalries-cum-settling political scores", that have unfortunately cast a blot on the once revered agency.

The Centre admitted in Parliament that as of December 2022, nine states have "withdrawn the general consent to the CBI" -- Telangana, Meghalaya, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal, coincidentally, mostly ruled by the Opposition parties.

Maharashtra, where the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi regime had yanked off the general consent to the CBI, restored it in October 2022 after the new BJP supported government took over in June last year, for blatantly obvious reasons. Mourning the loss of the CBI's glorious reputation, most former top sleuths feel that unless "some drastic measures are taken" the agency may completely erode its credibility or be reduced to a "bogeyman" - like Gabbar Singh of "Sholay".





Taylor Swift & Joe Alwyn break their relationship after 6 years

Los Angeles | Agencies

British actor Joe Alwyn and singer Taylor Swift broke up a few weeks ago. According to Entertainment Tonight, the split was amicable and "it was not dra-

matic."

The portal was told "the relationship had just run its course. It's why (Alwyn) hasn't been spotted at any shows." Swift is currently on her The Eras tour, which heads to Tampa, Florida next week.

It wasn't so long ago when Swift and Alwyn were said to have been in a great place in their relationship. They started dating in late 2016, and a source told ET back in October that they were "doing great" and that their "relationship is super strong."

That update came just hours after Swift dropped her highly anticipated 10th studio album, *Midnights*, followed by seven additional songs released in her surprise 3am Edition of the album. For his part, Alwyn told *British Vogue* in September 2018 that he's keenly aware fans always want to be in the know when it comes to his and Swift's relationship.



I still feel like a normal person: Kathryn Hahn

Los Angeles | Agencies

'WandaVision' actress Kathryn Hahn said that she has never set out to purposely keep her kids out of the spotlight, but that's because she's never felt like her life has changed since being famous.

Speaking to *Parade* magazine, she explained: "I don't think of (living a normal life) consciously, but I think that it must be because I feel like I'm just still the same person (I always was). I always want to feel that same feeling. Whenever I'm working on anything, I want to feel that we're all in it together. I'm excited to be able to just have the opportunity."

"But then, like anybody, I still feel like I could be a receptionist at a hair salon at any

moment. I think everybody feels the same way." The actress met fellow actor Ethan while studying at Northwestern University and they both had to get normal jobs in between acting gigs.

The couple - who tied the knot in 2002 - had a stint living in a tiny one-bedroom apartment in New York, and although they fought over the lack of space, the *'Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery'* actress looks back on that period "so fondly."

Asked if he was looking for jobs to pay the bills as well, she said: "Yeah, he was working at a Starbucks, and I worked as a receptionist at a hair salon right after Northwestern. We lived in a one-room studio where you open up the door and hit the shower."

"We would get in fights. Basically, I kept being like, 'When you shave, you have to rinse out the hair before I try to clean the dishes.' We only had one sink. It was that kind of an apartment. I look back on those days, though, so fondly. That was the New York of my dreams."

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Keanu Reeves is reported to make his first major theatre performance in a Broadway revival of Samuel Beckett's *'Waiting for Godot'*.

The *'John Wick: Chapter 4'* actor once portrayed Prince Hamlet in a 1995 Manitoba Theatre Centre production of

Keanu Reeves will be making Broadway debut in 'Waiting for Godot'

'Hamlet'

in Winnipeg, Manitoba, but is now said to be ready to take on his first play role in decades, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

Various theatre insiders let it slip to *Page Six* that they have "heard that the *'John Wick'* star will appear in the play," but added there is "no word on who is producing or directing the piece."

Keanu appeared in the 1993 Shakespeare movie *'Much Ado About Nothing'* alongside Oscar-winning *'Hamlet'* director Sir Kenneth Branagh as well as Dame Emma Thompson, Denzel Washington and Kate Beckinsale.

He's also a theatre fan, and was last year seen in the audience of *'American Buffalo'* in which his *'The Matrix'* co-star Laurence Fishburne was starring.

Keanu has said that he would "love" to star in

a musical, but has been stopped from doing it as he "can't sing." He told in a Reddit 'Ask me Anything' session: "I would love to be in a musical. But I can't sing so I'm not sure anybody else would want me in a musical but I sure would try. I mean I could sing, but not really well. I can always dream."

Previous runs of Beckett's bleak existential play *'Waiting for Godot'* have featured a huge range of A-listers playing its two characters Vladimir and Estragon - who pointlessly wait for Godot who never shows up - including Patrick Stewart, Ian

McKellen, John Turturro, Ethan Hawke, John Leguizamo, Steve Martin, and Robin Williams.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Producer Jon Landau had a hard time trying to get studios interested in *'Avatar'*. The producer is famous for his partnership with director James Cameron on the 1997 Oscar-winning blockbuster *'Titanic'* but revealed that, when the pair were trying to get the 3D epic science fiction franchise *'Avatar'* off the ground less than a decade later, it was tricky to sell the idea to Hollywood studios while the technology was not there, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

"So Jim wrote *'Avatar'* before we ever started filming *'Titanic'* but we knew the technology did not exist to tell the story the way we wanted to tell the story," he told *HeyUGuys*.

"So we put it on the back burner until 2005 when we looked at the landscape of technology and said 'We could be the impetus to push it to the next level where we could finally make this movie.' And it wasn't about the 3-D, it was about the characters, it was about the world and putting them up there where they could be emotive and engaging."

Jon went on to explain that the pair eventually secured a development deal with 20th Century Fox for the movie - which went on to become overtake *'Titanic'* as the highest-grossing film of

'Avatar' almost didn't get made as producer struggled for funds

all time whilst its two sequels became the second and third highest-grossing respectively - but admitted that even being presented with a prototype, the studios were still hesitant to greenlight the project.

He added: "And we went up to the studio at Fox at the time and we asked them to support us for a year, which they said yes to. We did a prototype test, that was very crude and we thought that was our floor, not our ceiling."

"We presented them with a whole package in 2006 but they weren't sure people would go see a movie with blue people had tails. After a series of circumstances, we were finally able to make the movie but it was not easy even after coming off of *'Titanic'*."

'The Crown' undergoes rewrite for Season 6 after Gillian Anderson's exit

Los Angeles | Agencies

'The Crown' writers were forced to change the script for season six after it was revealed that Gillian Anderson would not be returning. The actress previously portrayed former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on the show but, after scheduling conflicts prevented her from reprising the role, 'The Crown' writers had to hastily rewrite some of the scripts, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

"Gillian's portrayal of Thatcher was met with global critical acclaim and she was a huge asset to *'The Crown'*. It had been hoped she would be able to make an appearance in scenes around the golden wedding but sadly that has not been the case due to scheduling issues," a source told *The Sun* newspaper. "As ever with the series, clever scripting will mean viewers will be none the wiser. It's been another blow for producers in what's already been a fairly dogged production."

Gillian's portrayal of Thatcher in season four won her an Emmy and a Golden Globe. Meanwhile, Gillian previously insisted that *'The Crown'* has made the royal family "more internationally loved, celebrated and under-



stood." She told *Total Film* magazine: "It's a drama. There's a lot of researchers involved and a lot of people checking and double-checking and triple-checking."

"There's a lot that has not been written about that could be written about. And if you knew the difference in those, you'd see there is a great deal of kindness and restraint. And I think, at the end of the day, there are incredibly

compassionate and well-rounded takes on human beings." "And what you're left with is properly, maturely drawn, complex characters. And there's a lot that's in there that one has to say; if you didn't do it, we wouldn't be writing about it. I think the whole family is more internationally loved, celebrated and understood in a way that they wouldn't be were it not for the show."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Ana de Armas



IPL 2023

Tripathi's fifty help Sunrisers beat Punjab Kings for the first win of season

Rahul Tripathi blasted an unbeaten 74 and added 100 runs for the unfinished third-wicket partnership with skipper Aiden Markram (37 not out) as Sunrisers Hyderabad defeated Punjab Kings by eight wickets at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium here on Sunday.

Hyderabad | Agencies

Rahul Tripathi blasted an unbeaten 74 and added 100 runs for the unfinished third-wicket partnership with skipper Aiden Markram (37 not out) as Sunrisers Hyderabad defeated Punjab Kings by eight wickets at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium here on Sunday.

Tripathi smacked his 74 off 48 deliveries and Markram smashed 37 off 21 deliveries as they raised 100 runs for the third wicket off 51 balls as Sunrisers Hyderabad scored 145/2 in 17.1 overs chasing a modest score of 143/9 in 20 overs built on an unbeaten 99 by PBKS skipper Shikhar Dhawan. The PBKS innings was destroyed by rookie leg spinner Mayank Markande who claimed his first four-fer with a 4-15.

This was Sunrisers Hyderabad's first win this season after defeats in their first two matches. PBKS suffered their first defeat after two wins.

Sunrisers Hyderabad got off to a modest start as they managed 34/1 in the Power-play. At the same time, Punjab Kings were 41/3.

The fact that they did not lose too many wickets early in their innings, thus making their chase of the modest target of 144 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here, look early.

There was an early stutter when they lost Harry Brook for 13 after he had



struck three fours during his 14-ball stay. Mayank Agarwal and Rahul Tripathi took the score to 47 before Agarwal, who has moved PBKS to SRH this season, was out after a 20-ball 21, hitting three fours.

However, Rahul Tripathi and skipper Aiden Markram batted sensibly on a pitch that was offering swing and seam

and was also helping the spinners. Tripathi was the star for the team as he slogged Rahul Chahar flat over wide midwicket just over Sam Curran for a six and then struck the spinner for four off successive balls in the 9th over. Harpreet Brar was smacked for three fours in the 10th over as Tripathi hammered fours off successive deliveries, the second one a beauty to execute which he came down the track and lofted inside out over extra cover.

He smashed two sixes off Mohit Rathee and followed up the second one with a reverse-sweep four over point and another four in the next ball, driving square behind point and beating the sweeper to the rope.

He got good support from his skipper Aiden Markram as they added 100 runs for the unfinished third-wicket partnership off 51 deliveries. Initially, the South African batter played second fiddle to Tripathi before slicing Nathan Ellis behind point for a four. He hammered Ellis for four successive fours in the 17th over as Sunrisers romped to victory.

Brief scores

Punjab Kings 143/9 in 20 overs (Shikhar Dhawan 99 not out, Sam Curran 22; Mayank Markande 4-15, Marco Jansen 2-16, Umran Malik 2-32) lost to Sunrisers Hyderabad 145/2 in 17.1 overs (Rahul Tripathi 74 not out, Aiden Markram 37 not out; Arshdeep Singh 1-20) by 8 wickets

SRH VS PBKS

RINKU'S MAGICAL INNINGS HELP KOLKATA TO WIN OVER GUJARAT

Ahmedabad | With five balls left in the final over, Kolkata Knight Riders needed 28 runs, with a victory for Gujarat Titans looking imminent, especially after stand-in captain Rashid Khan took a hat-trick. But Rinku Singh smashed five successive sixes on the last five balls off Yash Dayal to complete an improbable heist in the history of IPL and give Kolkata a memorable three-wicket victory at the Narendra Modi Stadium. Fifties from B Sai Sudharsan and Vijay Shankar, including him smashing Lockie Ferguson and Shardul Thakur for five sixes and two fours in the 19th and 20 overs, yielding 45 runs overall, took Gujarat to 204/4 in 20 overs.

In reply, Venkatesh Iyer smashed 83 off 40 balls and shared a 100-run partnership off 55 balls with captain



Nitish Rana to take Kolkata to victory. But 'ashid's hat-trick in the 17th overturned the game in Gujarat's favour before Rinku brought in another twist through his unbeaten 48 in a jaw-dropping display of strokeplay to seal a Kolkata win.

Brief scores: Gujarat Titans 204/4 in 20 overs (B Sai Sudharsan 53, Vijay Shankar 63 not out; Sunil Narine 3-33, Suyash Sharma 1-35) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders 207/7 in 20 overs (Venkatesh Iyer 83, Rinku Singh 48 not out; Rashid Khan 3-37, Alzarri Joseph 2-27) by three wickets.

I had a belief that I can do this, said Rinku Singh

Ahmedabad | Rinku's unbeaten 48 attributed his miraculous knock to immense self-belief. "I had the belief that I can do this. (Nitish) Rana bhai said to keep the belief and to bat till the end, then we will see what happens."

"I was just trying to hit sixes. (Umesh) bhaiya was asking me not to think much and just play the ball. I was

not thinking a lot, was just reacting to the ball. It kept coming out of the middle, I had belief and it came off in the end," he said after getting the Player of the Match award in the post-match presentation ceremony.



LIKE HIS CAPTAIN, JADEJA IS ABSOLUTELY FEARLESS: GAVASKAR

Mumbai | Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar feels Ravindra Jadeja is absolutely fearless like his captain MS Dhoni, saying that no matter how much one praise star all-rounder, it is less. Jadeja was at his best against arch-rivals as he picked up three wickets (3/20) and took that sensational reflex catch of Cameron Green. "Like his captain, Jadeja is absolutely fearless. Green's catch is like making a possibility out of the improbable. No matter how much you praise this player, it is less," Gavaskar told Star Sports.



On the other hand, former India spinner Harbhajan Singh called Jadeja a superhero.

INJURED CHAHAR TO BE SIDELINED FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD



New Delhi | Chennai Super Kings (CSK) pacer Deepak Chahar, who sustained a hamstring injury during the match against Mumbai Indians, is likely to be sidelined for an extended period. "...Chennai Super Kings swing bowler faces an extended period on the sidelines after picking up a suspected hamstring injury..." a Cricbuzz report said. "Chahar will undergo scans to identify the extent of the injury once the team returns to Chennai. The Chennai Super Kings medical staff are closely monitoring both the players and will provide all support necessary for their recovery," the CSK said in a statement. The report further said that CSK are also likely to be without their other star player Ben Stokes at least for a week due to a minor toe injury.

ORLEANS MASTERS

Priyanshu Rajawat clinches maiden BWF World Tour title

Orleans (France) | Agencies

India's upcoming men's shuttler Priyanshu Rajawat clinched the men's singles title at the Orleans Master, beating Magnus Johannesen of Denmark 21-15, 19-21, 21-16 in the summit clash on Sunday.

This is Rajawat's maiden BWF World Tour title and first Super 300 tournament final appearance. His only previous final on the BWF World Tour was at last year's Odisha Open Super 100 event.

Moreover, Priyanshu's win was the first men's singles title on Tour for an Indian shuttler since January last year when Lakshya Sen won the India Open.

En route to his maiden Super 300 title, the youngster dropped just one game in the entire tournament.

The young Indian took the opening game with an easy. But he made some unforced errors in the second, allowing Johannesen, to make his way back into the match. Rajawat earned seven straight points to take the lead



at 16-14. But another slew of errors from him let Johannesen seal the second game.

Rajawat made a strong start to the third game, winning the first five points. A few errors from the Indian allowed Johannesen to close in but the Indian held his nerve to wrap up the match in an hour and eight minutes.

Priyanshu was the last remaining Indian challenge and has been in terrific form in the tournament. In the second round, he upset world No. 12 Japan's Kenta Nishimoto, who had won the Madrid Spain Masters title heading into the Orleans Masters, where he was the top seed.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United and Newcastle both win

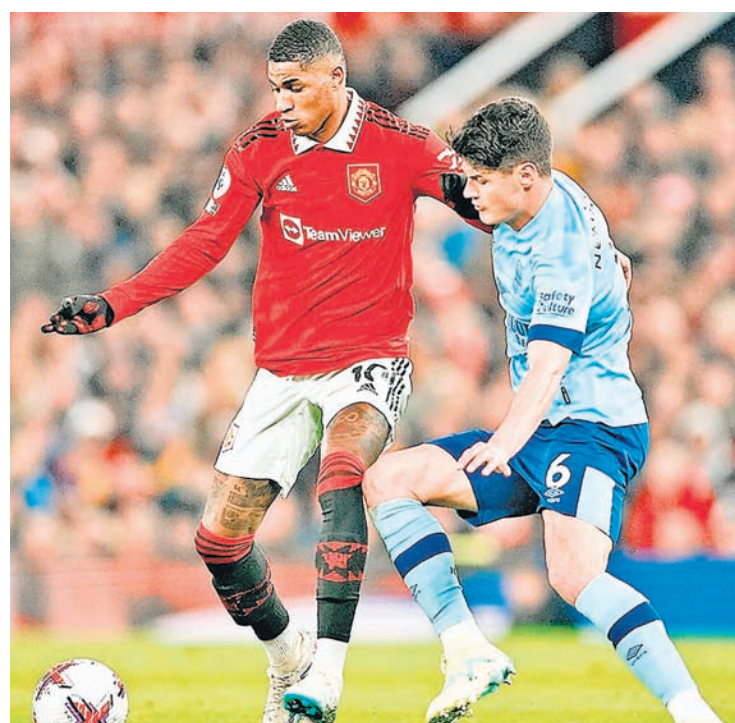
Guwahati | Agencies

London | Manchester City closed Arsenal's lead at the top of the Premier League to five points after a 4-1 win away to bottom of the table Southampton.

Erling Haaland confirmed his return to fitness with two goals including a spectacular volley, as Pep Guardiola's side overwhelmed their rivals. Jack Grealish and a penalty from Julian Alvarez sealed the win, while Sekou Mara scored a consolation goal for the home side.

Manchester United and Newcastle United both strengthened their cases for a top-four finish with Newcastle coming behind from a goal down away to Brentford to win 2-1, a Xinhua report said.

Manchester United beat Everton 2-0, with Scott McTominay keeping up his recent scoring form with the opening goal after 36 minutes and although Everton reacted after the



break, Anthony Martial ended their comeback hopes in the 71st minute. Christian Eriksen returned for United after injury, but that good news was tempered by Marcus Rashford limping off with an apparent groin injury with 10 minutes remaining.

Son Heung-min scored his 100th goal for Tottenham and Harry Kane netted a 79th minute winner in their 2-1 win at home to Brighton, who had equalized through Lewis Dunk's header.

Brighton's defeat allowed Aston Villa to move sixth as their winning run continued with a 2-0 win at home to Nottingham Forest thanks to goals from Leon Bailey and Ollie Watkins.

West Ham's David Moyes survives to fight another week after Harrison Reed's own goal gave them a vital 1-0 win away to Fulham, but Leicester City slip deeper into trouble after losing a '6-pointer' 1-0 at home to Bournemouth, who escape the bottom three thanks to Philip Billing's 40th minute goal.

BUNDESLIGA: DORTMUND RETURN TO WINNING WAYS, BAYERN MAINTAIN LEAD



Berlin | Agencies

Yousoufa Moukoko's decider helped Borussia Dortmund overpower Union Berlin 2-1 while Bayern Munich moved 1-0 past Freiburg thanks to the hammer from Matthijs de Ligt in the 27th round of the Bundesliga.

The BVB controlled possession from the starting whistle, whereas Union implemented a wait-and-see strategy.

Berlin kept all its men behind the ball but still couldn't keep Dortmund at bay as the BVB opened the scoring with 27 minutes gone when Raphael Guerreiro's whipped cross into the box allowed Donyell Malen to mark his third straight Bundesliga goal, a Xinhua report said.

Union showed no interest to take over and were lucky in the closing stages of the first half as goalkeeper

Frederik Rønnow defused Sebastian Haller's dangerous header.

After the restart, Dortmund reduced its offensive efforts and got punished at the hour mark after Kevin Behrens made the most of Seraldo Becker's good build-up work to restore parity out of thin air in the 61st minute.

Both sides responded with attacks and were in search for the winner. Dortmund had the last laugh though and took the lead again in the 78th minute when 18-year-old Moukoko beat Rønnow five minutes after his substitution in his 50th Bundesliga appearance.

Dortmund almost made it 3-1 but Rønnow was equal to Jamie Bynoe-Gittens' attempt in the dying seconds of the clash.

With the result, Dortmund defended the second spot in the standings and stay two points adrift of front runners Bayern Munich.

LA LIGA: CHUKWUEZE THE STAR AS VILLARREAL BEAT REAL MADRID

Madrid | Real Madrid gave up any slim chance they had of retaining the La Liga title when they were beaten 3-2 at home by Villarreal. Samuel Chukwueze was Villarreal's hero, with two goals and an assist for Jose Luis Morales to help his side to three vital points in the battle to qualify for Europe next season.

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti made several changes to his side ahead of Wednesday's Champions League tie at home to Chelsea, but Madrid took the lead through a Pau Torres own goal in the 20th minute. Chukwueze leveled before the break, but Vinicius Jr put Madrid back in front with an excellent solo goal in the 48th minute, a Xinhua report said. Chukwueze's run then allowed him to set up Morales to level with 20 minutes left to play and he sealed a fine display with the winner in the 80th minute.

FC Barcelona, who lost 4-0 to Madrid in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday, can go 15 points clear in La Liga if they beat Girona today.



ALL INDIA FIDE RATING CHESS 12-year-old Ishaan Tendolkar holds IM Vikramaditya Kulkarni

Mumbai | Agencies

In what can be termed as a major upset so far in the event, 12-year-old Ishaan Tendolkar played the game of his life to hold the top-seeded and International Master (IM) Vikramaditya Kulkarni to a draw in the third round of the SBI Life All India FIDE Rating Chess Tournament here on Sunday.

In their encounter on the top board, Ishaan, playing black, opted for the Modern Benoni Defense to the Queen Pawn Opening of Vikramaditya Kulkarni and soon gained equality.



Kulkarni used all his experience to try and outwit Ishaan (ELO 1238) but the youngster was equal to the task. The players called for a truce after a marathon of 96 moves.

The results on boards 2 to 6 were

on expected lines as the second seed, FM Saurabh Khherdekar (ELO 2090), 3rd seeded Raghav (2066), 4th seeded Arnav Kherdekar (ELO 1722, 6th seeded Guru Prakash (ELO 1691) and 7th seeded Yohan Boricha (1639) registered wins over their respective opponents to take the lead.

The lead is now shared by 12 players, who have three points from three wins. A group of nine players are following the leaders with 2.5/3.

Six more rounds are still to be played in this Rs 3.00 lakh prize money tourney, which is being conducted by India Chess School.

FRENCH LIGUE 1: MESSI SCORES AND ASSISTS TO LIFT PSG OUT OF SLUMP

Paris | Agencies

Goals from Lionel Messi and Sergio Ramos powered Paris Saint-Germain to a 2-0 victory at Nice to snap their two-match losing streak in French Ligue 1. The win also put the 10-time league champions back to six points in front of Lens in the standings, to some degree temporarily easing the pressure on every member in the team, especially head coach Christophe Galtier and superstar Messi. Seven-time Ballon d'Or



winner Messi, who has been whistled by Paris fans in the last two home matches, opened the scoring in the first half from a low cross into the box by left back Nuno Mendes. Ramos, who just came back from a calf injury, scored his first goal of this season as the Spaniard headed in a Messi corner with 14 minutes remaining to seal the win for PSG, a Xinhua report said. But it was the man standing between the post that was named the player of the match. Gianluigi Donnarumma made three excel-

lent saves to deny Hicham Boudaoui and Nicolas Pepe's efforts in the first half, and refuse Yousouf Ndayishimiye's close-range strike in the second.

Nice proved to be a tricky side as they managed 21 shots against PSG's shaky defense in the match, eight more the visitors, only to fail to score a goal.

Earlier in the day, bottom side Angers, who hosted fifth-ranked Lille, earned their first win in 22 league games thanks to a winner by defender Halid Sabanovic in the 84th minute.



I am training for MMA for something special overseas: Soundarya Sharma

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Soundarya Sharma, who made her acting debut with the movie 'Ranchi Diaries' and was also seen in 'Big Boss 16', is on cloud nine for her upcoming Hollywood project

for which she is taking mixed martial arts training.

Soundarya said that it is too early for her to talk about any project in particular but she is putting all her efforts physically and mentally to give her best. This MMA training is part of that.

"I am training for MMA for something special overseas. I'm very thrilled about it. It's a lot of hard work and I am loving it. Shall announce and share more details soon."

The actress who did a cameo role in 'Thank God' and also worked in the web series such as

'Raktanchal 2', 'Country Mafia', and 'Karam Yudi' added further that she is looking forward to some exciting projects and wants to explore Bollywood with some prominent roles.

"I have signed two big Bollywood films; they will be announced next week. God is very kind. As of now I cannot share the details, shall wait for them to come straight from the makers and shall speak when the time is right," she added.



Psychological transformation is important for any character: Ravie Dubey

Team Absolute | Mumbai

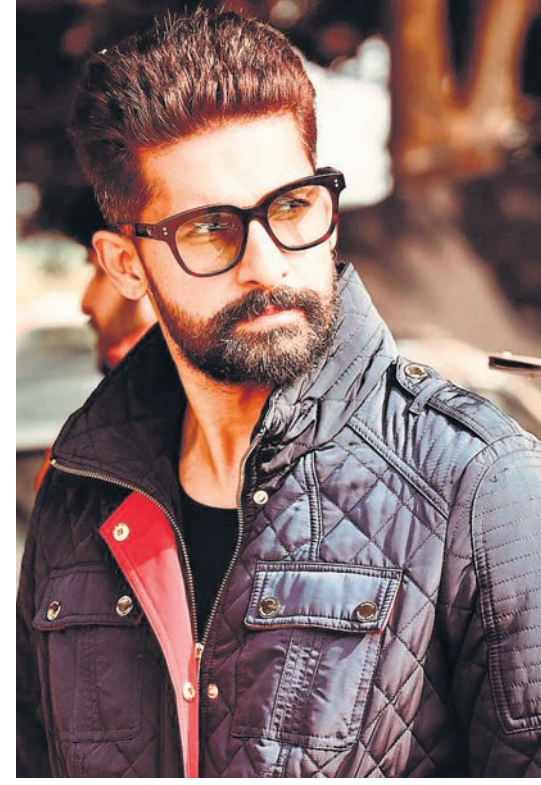
Actor Ravie Dubey spoke about his look in his upcoming film 'Faradday', where he had to transform himself physically and mentally to get into the skin of his character.

The actor shared that he also went through a psychological transformation while shooting for the film. Ravie added: "In this character, physical and other kinds of aesthetic transformation are secondary. The most important factor is I have to delve into the psyche and the core ethos of a character like this. So psychological transformation is important for any character but for a character like this it's of utmost priority and importance."

On what all he has done to perform the character of Rajan perfectly, Ravie said: "I am careful about what I eat. Fitness is a way of life. Getting the specific look was surely a lot of hard work. I took full charge of fitness and diet. When you prepare for a complex character, of course the transformation physical and mental both are important."

He added how a character like this takes a toll on his mental and physical well-being and how he is handling it.

"I'm sure all actors would feel that once they are in the zone of a certain character, time passes quickly. And I'm just happy that people have found it interesting. That is a big step forward, for not just me, but for the entire team that's going ahead with this film, and our production. As a viewer, I would love to see a film like this. And therefore, I decided that we must make this and we must tell the story."



Chahatt Khanna to be seen with Jacqueline, Zayed Khan in upcoming film

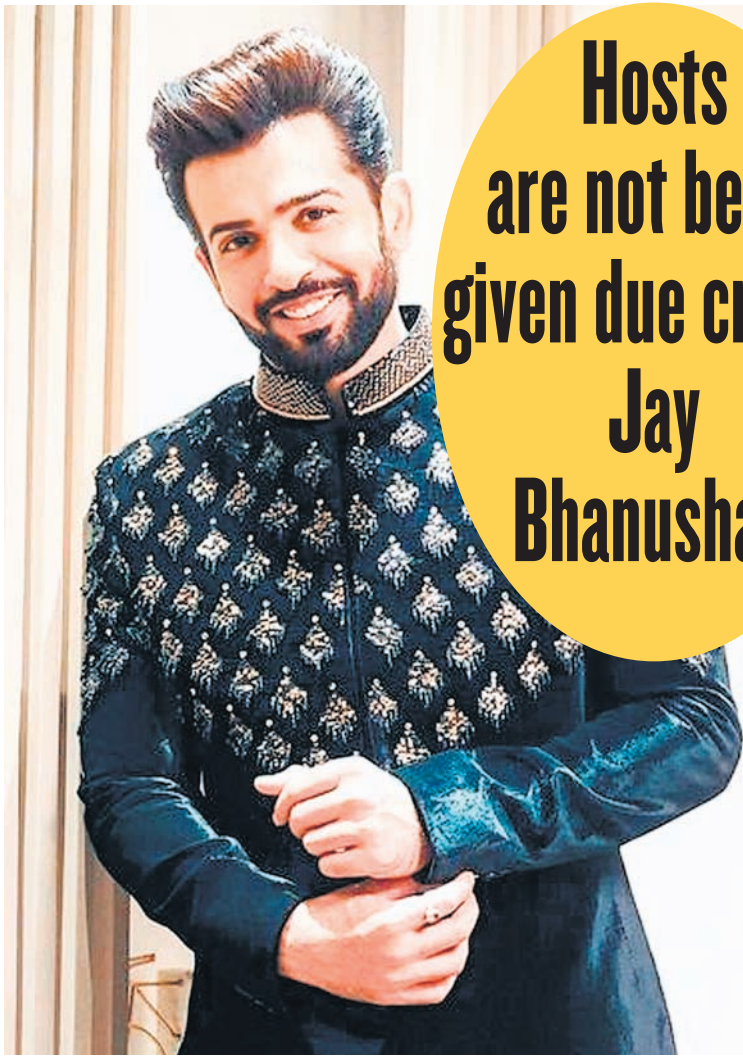
Chahatt Khanna shared her excitement as she is all set to be part of the Jacqueline Fernandez-starrer film 'One Way'.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

She said she is looking forward to exploring different opportunities and playing challenging roles. Chahatt is also going to be seen in another film titled 'Yatri'. Talking about these projects, Chahatt said: "I enjoy working across different mediums. However, films have a longer shelf life than other

mediums and that's the reason every actor aspires to do films. While I have been a part of a bunch of films in the past, my forthcoming films will showcase me in characters that I have not played earlier. These films offered me the scope to show my mettle as an actor and play the kind of parts that challenged me to push my boundaries." "As actors, we wish to play a variety of roles. I have always made a

conscious effort to make sure that I don't get stereotyped in a particular image. The endeavour is to surprise the audience every time you do a project. I have always strived to be a versatile actor and am grateful for the fact that I have got the opportunity to portray a wide range of characters over all these years. Professionally, I am pretty confident that 2023 will be an eventful year for me", concluded Chahatt.



Hosts are not being given due credit: Jay Bhanushali

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor and television show host Jay Bhanushali feels that anchors are still not entirely given due credit and said that they deserve a lot more than what they have got.

He feels just like there is a category for awards in for cinema and television; a section should be for hosts too. They should be feted for their hard work as well.

Talking about TV show hosts getting their credit, Jay in a conversation with IANS said: "I still feel that hosts are not being given due credit after the show is successful. Our job is to entertain people and sometimes we make a joke out of

ourselves to make others laugh and that is why people take us for granted many times."

"As an actor you get National Awards. Why are we not getting National Awards? For National Awards there is every category but for anchoring still not there. So because of that I still feel we are not appreciated."

It's a difficult job, he says without mincing any words.

"It is a much more difficult job than a comedian's. They have at least four writers writing for them. But when we are on stage, the script we have is when we are introducing participants after the performance is over, it is our talent on how we are entertaining and

creating moments that is a big challenge."

"You will see many actors, but very rarely an actor turning an anchor so 1000 actors you'd see but you can see only 4-5 anchors who are still working on TV."

"So, I think we are not getting that much credit as we deserve."

The actor said that even when promos are shot, anchors/hosts are excluded. "When the promos are shot, the anchors are excluded but they play a very major part for the success of a show because we are the ones who create that atmosphere for the people that's when the fun, emotions etc are created. I feel we deserve a little more than we have got."

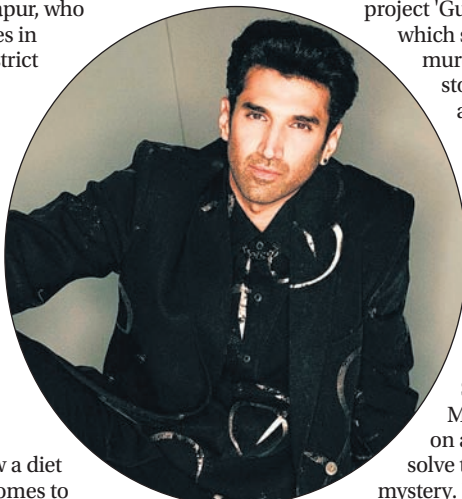
ADITYA SAYS HE EATS 'HALF KG ICE CREAM' IN ONE SITTING ON HIS CHEAT DAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Aditya Roy Kapur, who believes in following a strict diet regime and healthy lifestyle, shared how he used to gorge on a half kg ice cream tub in one go without any hesitation on his cheat day.

He said: "Most of the time, I follow a diet so when it comes to enjoying food, one should make use of the cheat meal. There is no use enjoying one or two scoops of ice cream. And ice cream

is literally like air." He shared some fitness tips on Kapil's show as he spoke about his upcoming project 'Gumraah', which starts with a murder and the story revolves around finding the truth and the real culprit in the case. Mrunal Thakur plays investigating officer Shivani Mathur who is on a mission to solve the murder mystery. It is a remake of the 2019 Tamil film 'Thadam'. 'Gumraah' features Aditya in a double role along with Ronit Roy and Deepak Kalra.



I consider myself as my own enemy if I repeat my characters: Rajpal Yadav

Aakruti Bagla | Mumbai

Acclaimed actor Rajpal Yadav is widely regarded as one of this generation's greatest comedy performers. The prolific comedian and an incredible actor, Rajpal Yadav never fails to tickle our funny bones with his characters. Recently, Absolute India News caught up with the actor for an exclusive conversation. Excerpts:

The actor who has done a variety of roles on all mediums, shares how he copes up with a project receiving negative response sometimes. He said, "Be it OTT or film, behind every work there is collective effort of many people. So if the film does wonders, even that credit is not mine. Even if it tanks, I am not responsible for it. As actor I strive to put my best foot forward so that audience is entertained."

Be it a blink-and-miss appearance, or doing lead role, the actor



has always managed to leave an indelible mark with his performance. Talking about whether short screen time bothers him, Rajpal averred, "Be it theatre or films, screen-time never bothered me. I don't mind if the role is negative, comedy, or a mere guest appearance. What matters to me is the strength of my presence. I am grateful about the fact that in around 200 films which I have done in my career; I have never repeated my roles. I consider

myself as my own enemy if I repeat it."

The actor is known for his unmatched comic timing, tells that how being tagged as merely 'comedy actor' limits his capabilities. He shares, "I am afraid of being tagged even as an actor as it's a big responsibility. I interpret directors' vision and work as an entertainer, rather than a comedy or negative character. By being tagged as a comedian, I feel that my capabilities are limited."

Rajpal Yadav's expressions and dialogues are used in meme's milieu. Talking about this culture and how he perceives it, Rajpal said, "I acknowledge the one who intend to entertain using social media, and even the one who takes a sly dig in that pretext. I believe that in the end it's your hard work and talent that gets you success. You can trend on social media for a day, but it requires consistency to stay persistent."



Ananya Panday