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BJP'S POLITICS MURDERED INDIA IN MANIPUR, PM ARROGANCE BURNING INDIA: RAHUL GANDHI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said that the BJP's politics has "murdered" Bharat Mata (mother India) in the northeastern state and the arrogance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will burn the entire India.

He also asked why the government is not deploying the Army which can bring normalcy in the state within a few days. He also accused the Prime Minister of dividing Manipur and thus he was unable to visit the northeastern state. Speaking in Lok Sabha he also slammed the Prime Minister for not visiting Manipur and alleged that he does not consider the state to be part of India. The Congress leader also dubbed the BJP government as "anti national" and its leaders as anti-national and traitors, and took a pot shot at the Prime Minister for dividing Manipur into two parts.

In his no-holds barred attack against the government in his 37-minute speech, Rahul Gandhi said: "When I said that India is a voice of people, the heart, that voice has been

"This country is the voice of people, their pain, and their hardships. And if we have to listen to the voice then we have to wipe the arrogance, desires, dreams. When we remove our dream then only we can listen to the voice of India."

Rahul Gandhi, Congress Leader



murdered in India. It means Bharat Mata has been killed in Manipur. By

GOVERNMENT HAS NO INTENTION TO CHANGE DEMOGRAPHY: SHAH

New Delhi: Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that the incidents of Manipur are shameful and said that the government has no intention to change the demography of the northeast state.

"I agree with the opposition about the violence which has happened there. It is shameful, but it is all the more shameful to politicise it," he said. Shah at the same time said that had the video been shared with the state's DGP or the police on time, then action would have been taken against the perpetrators at the earliest. The Home Minister wondered why the video was leaked just a day before the commencement of the monsoon session. He also urged the ethnic groups to talk to the Central government and look for a peaceful solution to the strife torn situation prevailing there.

murdered in India. It means Bharat Mata has been killed in Manipur. By killing the people of Manipur you have murdered Manipur. You are anti-national as you have killed Bharat Mata (mother India).

SMRITI IRANI SLAMS RAHUL GANDHI OVER HIS ALLEGED GESTURE OF FLYING KISS

New Delhi: Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani on Wednesday slammed Congress MP Rahul Gandhi over his alleged gesture of "flying kisses" saying never before has the misogynistic behaviour of a man been so visible in Parliament as what was done by Rahul Gandhi.

"Never before has the misogynistic behaviour of a man been so visible in Parliament as what was done by Rahul Gandhi today. When the House of the people, where laws are made to protect the dignity of women, during the course of a session stands witness to a man's misogyny, my question is should he be brought to task?" Irani told reporters here. "Did not know that misogyny and indecent behaviour against women was one of the cultures of the Gandhi family."

SONIA GANDHI LEADS FROM FRONT AMID SMRITI IRANI'S VERBAL ATTACKS

New Delhi: Following Rahul Gandhi's speech on the no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha on Wednesday, it was former Congress chief and Rahul's mother Sonia Gandhi who led from the front after BJP MP Smriti Irani launched an all-out attack on the opposition.

Amid high pitched battle of arguments and counter arguments between treasury benches and the opposition, Sonia Gandhi was seen egging on her MPs amid the chaos, which ensued during speeches of Gandhi and Irani.

When the opposition objected to union minister Kiren Rijiju's mike being switched on during Rahul Gandhi's speech, Sonia Gandhi even stood up and on her egging on, several Congress and other opposition MPs jumped into the well of the house, protesting vociferously.

Rice prices soar to highest levels in almost 15 years in Asia

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rice prices soared to the highest levels in almost 15 years in Asia on mounting concerns over global supplies as dry weather threatens production in Thailand and after top shipper India banned some exports, media reports said.

Thai white rice 5 per cent broken, an Asian benchmark, jumped to \$648 a tonne, the most expensive since October 2008, according to data from the Thai Rice Exporters Association, Bloomberg reported.

That brings the increase in prices to almost 50 per cent in the past year.

Rice is vital to the diets of billions of people in Asia and Africa, and the surge in prices could add to inflationary pressures and boost import bills for buyers, the report said. The latest threat to supply comes from



Thailand, the second-biggest shipper. Authorities are encouraging farmers to switch to crops that need less water as the nation braces for drier conditions with the onset of El Nino, Bloomberg reported.

Cumulative rainfall in the key central growing region is 40 per cent below normal, and the move to curb planting is to conserve water for households. The government previously asked the growers to reap only one crop this

year. Last month, India widened its shipment ban to protect domestic supplies, spurring panic buying in some countries. The curbs exacerbated worries over a global shortage amid growing world consumption, Bloomberg reported. The price surge will aggravate stresses in global food markets that have been rocked by wild weather and reduced grain supplies from the Black Sea region because of the Russia-Ukraine war.

WORLD LION DAY CELEBRATIONS TO TAKE PLACE ACROSS GUJARAT TODAY

Junagadh: Gujarat is gearing up to commemorate World Lion Day on August 10 with a series of events across the state. Chief Minister Patel is set to kick off the celebrations by launching a 'Lion Anthem' and unveiling the Sinh Suchna Web App. The day will also witness the release of two books 'The King of the Jungle - The Asiatic Lions of Gir' and 'Hu Gujarat no Sinh'. The Chief Minister's address will be delivered via a video conference from Gandhinagar, connecting with audiences across the state.



Authorities said that the festivities of World Lion Day will span over 7,000 schools and colleges, enveloping 10 districts and 74 talukas within the Asiatic Lions' habitat. In an effort to foster lion conservation awareness, school children will be donning lion masks and participating in spirited rallies. Educational institutions will also feature speeches centered around the majestic creatures, highlighting their significance and challenges they face. Gujarat's Forest Department has been actively celebrating World Lion Day since 2016.

Bharti Airtel rolls out 5G on 26 GHz spectrum across all 22 telecom circles

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bharti Airtel on Wednesday said the company has rolled out 5G services on 26 GHz spectrum across all 22 telecom circles in the country.

The roll-out has been done in accordance to the norms set by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for complying to the minimum roll-out obligation criteria, the telecom major said in a statement.

As required by the DoT, the company said it has fulfilled the application criteria and requisition for complying to minimum roll out obligation norms following which the DoT has carried out testing in Mumbai LSA.

"With broader 5G opportunities enabled by 26 GHz, the company is poised to continuously drive innovation to create ultimate Airtel 5G Plus experiences for its customers," said Airtel. The performance on the ground has demonstrated remarkable potential and the growing momentum of 5G adoption," it added.



Bharti Airtel has so far rolled out 5G services in close to 5,000 cities and towns in the country, since the 5G announcement in October last year.

Earlier this month, the company announced its audited consolidated results for the first quarter ended June 30. The consolidated revenues for Q1FY24 at Rs 37,440 crore, that grew 14.1 per cent (on-year). India revenues stood at Rs 26,375 crore, increased by 13.1 per cent YoY.

Wrestlers' harassment case: Offences allegedly committed abroad cannot be tried here, Brij Bhushan's side to court

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Wednesday started hearing arguments on framing of charges against Bharatiya Janata Party MP and former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in connection with the sexual harassment case of female wrestlers. Appearing for Singh, advocate Rajiv Mohan contended before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Harjeet Singh Jaspal of Rouse Avenue Court, that since there is no sanction under Section 188 of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), the offences alleged to have been committed outside India cannot be tried by this court, and the offences committed outside the local jurisdiction of the national court, cannot be tried by this court.

The Delhi Police's charge sheet running over 1,000 pages was filed before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mahima Rai for the offences under Sections 354 (Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (making sexually coloured remarks), and 354D (stalking) of Indian Penal Code (IPC) against Singh.



Nuh violence: Hindu outfits asking for boycott of Muslim employees, vendors in Gurugram

Gurugram | Agencies

In a purported video, a group of Hindus carrying the banner of Nuh's Brij Mandal Jalaabhishek Yatra were seen urging shopkeepers in Haryana not to employ Muslims and to boycott the community vendors.

The Hindu group gave out this warning during a rally in a market place in Haryana. Shockingly this announcement was made in the presence of police personnel who were seen walking along with the group members in the video.

The members of the Hindu outfit raised "Jai Shri Ram" slogans during the rally. However, the video is yet to be verified by the police.

The police said they are probing the matter. "No one will be allowed to disrupt peace and Harmony in Nuh," said officials.

On Sunday, a maha panchayat was held at Tigma village of Gurugram in support of the four suspects who were arrested in connection with the murder of Imam Muhammad Saad, Anjuman Masjid in Sector 57. The maha pan-



chayat was attended by hundreds of villagers along with Hindu outfit groups where they publicly announced that hundreds of Muslim men working in Gurugram as carpenters, barbers, vegetable vendors, mechanics, and cab drivers should be boycotted and apartments or shanties should not be rented out to them.

Tigma village is close to the Anjuman Masjid in Sector 57 which was targeted in the city soon after attack on a Hindu procession which was passing through a Muslim-majority village in Nuh.

KOTA POLICE SET UP HELPLINE NUMBER FOR STUDENTS

Jaipur: Against the backdrop of frequent suicides, a helpline has been set up by police in Rajasthan's coaching hub Kota to solve the problems of students.

The team will work to reduce the increasing suicide cases in Kota, to resolve the problems of the children, and eliminate their stress.

ASP Thakur Chandrasheel, who is leading the team, told coaching students on Wednesday that if they have any problem, then they should reach out to the team.

"Call our helpline number 9530442778, 24 hours we are sitting to listen your problem," he said.

In his message to students, he said that they have come here to study, they are working hard, but if they are not successful, then they should not be upset, and always keep plan B.

"Every successful person is not a doctor or an engineer. Many roads are open. If there is any problem in Kota, we will remove it," he added.

India's Chandrayaan-3 gets more closer to the moon

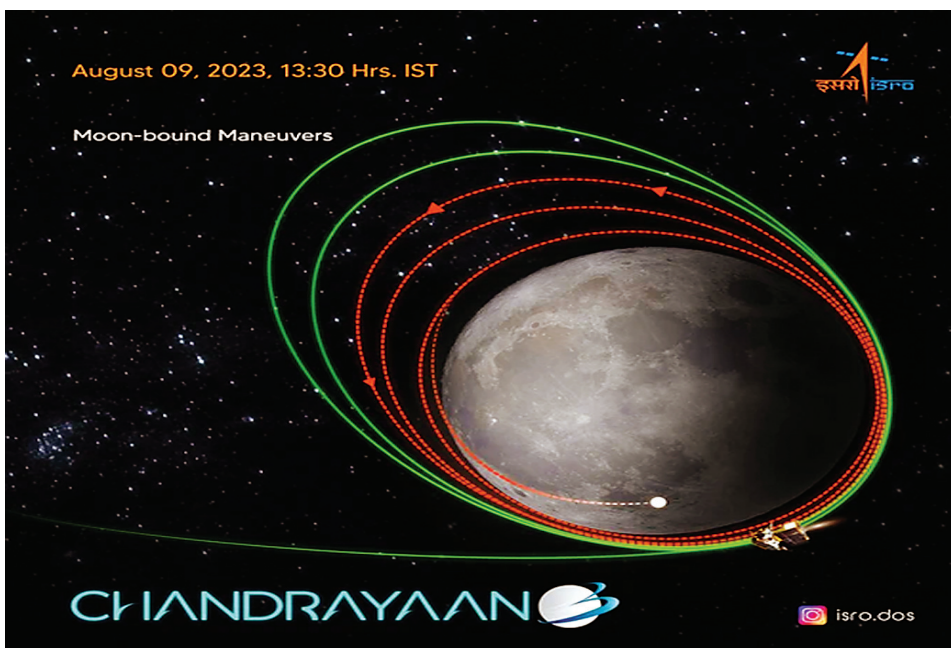
Chennai | Agencies

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday said the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft has moved closer to the moon surface with the reduction in its orbit for a second time.

The Indian space agency said: "Chandrayaan-3's orbit is reduced to 174 km x 1437 km following a manoeuvre performed today. The next operation is scheduled for August 14, 2023, between 11:30 and 12:30 Hrs. IST."

The spacecraft was brought down further - reduction in orbit - by firing its onboard engines to 174 km x 1437 km from 170 km x 4313 km. The orbit is reduced so that the main purpose of the Chandrayaan-3 mission is sought to be achieved, that is, soft landing of the lander on the moon.

The orbit reduction is done by retro firing (backward propulsion) of the on-board motors to slow down the spacecraft. The third orbit reduction operation will be on August 14 between 11.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m.



During this process, the speed of the spacecraft is reduced by firing its motors in the opposite direction. The fourth orbit reduction process is expected to be done on August 16. On August 6, the first lunar orbit reduction was carried out. The spacecraft comprises a propulsion module (weighing 2,148 kg), a lander (1,723.89 kg) and a rover (26 kg).

Sometime after the fourth orbit reduction activity, the lander will get separated from the propulsion module a couple of days and later expected to make a soft-landing near the South Pole of the moon on August 23 at 5.47 p.m. The lander will descend to the moon from a height of about 100 km from the moon's surface. The soft landing is a tricky issue as it involves a series of complex manoeuvres consisting of rough and fine braking.

Imaging of the landing site region prior to landing will be done for finding safe and hazard-free zones. Subsequent to the soft landing, the six-wheeled rover will roll out and carry out experiments on the lunar surface for a period of one lunar day which is equal to 14 earth days.



NAGA TRIBALS HOLD MASSIVE RALLY IN MANIPUR TO URGE CENTRE TO RESOLVE NAGA POLITICAL ISSUE

Imphal | Agencies

A massive rally was organised by the Naga tribals in Manipur on Wednesday demanding resolution of the decades-old Naga political issue based on the Framework Agreement, signed between the Central government and the NSCN-IM on August 3, 2015.

Organised by the United Naga Council (UNC), the apex body of the Nagas in Manipur, the huge rally was held in Manipur's four Naga-dominated districts -- Tamenglong, Chandel, Ukhrul, and Senapati, which are along the Nagaland and Myanmar borders.

After the rallies in the four districts, the UNC submitted memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi through the Deputy Commissioners.

Holding placards and banners, the participants of the rally, comprising men and women, gave slogans for early solution to the Naga peace talks.

Apex Kuki tribal body Kuki organisation Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) and Hmar Inpi, the apex body of Hmar tribes, had supported the UNC's mass rally.

The rally came amid ethnic strife between the Kuki tribals and the



majority non-tribal Meitei in Manipur since May 3, that has left over 160 dead and over 700 injured of both communities.

The UNC, in a statement, said that Naga peace talks with the government have made significant progress with the signing of the historic Framework Agreement between the Centre and the NSCN-IM eight years ago. However, the inordinate delay in signing the 'Final Agreement' is a cause for concern and has the potential to derail the peace negotiation, it said.

"Greater Nagalim", along with the separate flags and constitution, are the NSCN-IM's core demands causing the delay in the final resolution in

the much expected Naga issue. Greater Nagalim stipulates the integration of Naga-inhabited areas of Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, as well as Myanmar.

There is stiff opposition to the NSCN-IM's demand in the neighbouring states. In 2001, Manipur witnessed violent agitation against the NSCN-IM demand and even the state Assembly was partially burnt. Many people lost their lives when the ceasefire between the Centre and NSCN-IM was extended without territorial limits.

The KIM, in a statement, had said that at a critical time wherein the tribal Kukis of Manipur are being

subjected to bear the brunt of "ethnic cleansing" being unleashed by the majority Meiteis, aided and abetted covertly by the state machineries, the KIM fully endorsed the proposed mass rally of UNC.

"Enduring the apathetic attitude of the successive Manipur governments for over 50 years' vis-a-vis denial of tribals' constitutional rights and institutional injustices meted out by the majoritarian hegemony in socio-political and economic spheres upon the suppressed tribal communities, it is prudent on the part of the Central leadership to act conscientiously thereby expedite the processes of resolving the legitimate demands of both the tribal communities in the form of separate administration for the Kukis and in conformity with the Framework Agreement for the Nagas so as to ensure lasting peace in the beleaguered, torn-apart state of Manipur," the KIM statement had said.

The non-tribal Meiteis account for around 53 per cent of Manipur's around 3.2 million population and live mostly in the valley regions while the tribal Nagas and Kukis constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts, which covers around 90 per cent of the geographical areas of Manipur.

Heavy rainfall likely in Uttarakhand, Bihar, Sikkim, Arunachal in next five days: IMD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely over Uttarakhand, Bihar, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh during next five days while subdued rainfall activity is likely over rest parts of the country during next one week, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Wednesday.

"There's a possibility of isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall over Uttarakhand from Wednesday to August 13. Additionally, on Wednesday, east Uttar Pradesh is expected to experience isolated heavy rainfall, while Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Haryana might experience isolated heavy rainfall on Thursday and Sunday," the IMD said.

In its bulletin, the weather agency also predicted that on Sunday, both west and east Uttar Pradesh are likely to witness isolated heavy rainfall. "Uttarakhand could also see isolated extremely heavy rainfall on the current day.



However, the rest of north-west India is expected to have subdued rainfall activity over the next seven days," it said.

In east India, there is a forecast of light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall. Bihar, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, and Sikkim are likely to experience isolated heavy rainfall from Wednesday to Sunday.

"Jharkhand is expected to have isolated heavy rainfall on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Furthermore, Jharkhand on Wednesday and Sikkim on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday might

see isolated very heavy rainfall. Bihar could also witness isolated extremely heavy rainfall on the current day," said the IMD.

In northeast India, there's a forecast of light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall. "Over the next five days, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Tripura are likely to experience isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall," said the IMD.

In central, west, and south India, there is an expectation of subdued rainfall activity over the next seven days.

Rahul Gandhi put India's voice in Lok Sabha, says Kharge

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday hailed the speech of party leader Rahul Gandhi in Lok Sabha saying that he has put the voice of India in the Lok Sabha.

"Rahul Gandhi put the voice of India in the Lok Sabha today. Pandit (Jawaharlal) Nehru had said - 'Bharat Mata', are the people of India only," Kharge in a tweet said.

Attacking the government over Manipur violence, which found brief mention in Rahul Gandhi's speech in Lok Sabha, Kharge said: "Our own brothers and sisters are facing the violence in Manipur, they are suffering due to the insensitivity of the BJP. Modi ji's ministers are talking here and there, but they are not telling how the violence happened, why it was allowed to spread, why the Prime Minister did not appeal for peace, why did not go there and ask the people about their sorrows and pains?"

"Does the Modi government have nothing to do with the suffering of the people? Is all



their politics just to get votes?" the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha questioned.

His remarks came after Rahul Gandhi accused the Bharatiya Janata Party government of having killed 'Bharat Mata' in Manipur and all over India.

Federalism built in Article 370 cannot be abrogated, SC Constitution Bench told

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Senior Advocate Gopal Subramaniam on Wednesday argued before a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court that the federalism built in Article 370 of the Constitution cannot be abrogated.

Article 370 established the contours of federal arrangement between J&K and India, he said. Subramaniam said that the Constitution of India and Constitution of J&K compliment the relationship between India and J&K and "Article 370 is the medium through which the two Constitutions speak to each other".

"I urge my lordships to consider that both Legislative Assembly and Constituent Assembly are recognised in our Constitution. The basic structure will be deduced from both the



Constitutions," he added. Subramaniam referred to the marginal note to Article 370 which reads as "temporary provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir" and said that it would be incorrect to say that 370(3) is otiose, adding that the Constituent Assembly of J&K wanted the provision to continue.

He said that the Constituent Assembly cannot be read as the Legislative Assembly, using an interpretation provision as it would be an amendment in Article 370 (d).

At this, CJI D.Y. Chandrachud said: "We must note that though the Indian Constitution does speak of the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, it does not refer to the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir at all." "The Constitution Bench will continue hearing arguments on Thursday.

Germany saw 209% spike in overnight stays by

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Germany saw a 209 per cent increase in overnight stays by Indians in 2022 compared to the previous year, according to new data from the German National Tourist Board.

The German National Tourist Office (GNTO) and German Embassy in India successfully concluded a joint press conference, to showcase Germany as a preferred travel destination for Indian travellers.

The conference took place at the German Embassy in New Delhi and was attended by various media personnel



from India. The primary objective of this conference was to highlight Germany as a must-visit destination that offers 51 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, coupled with a focus on nature and sustainability. GNTO aims to attract Indian travellers interested in exploring the coun-

try's natural beauty, picturesque villages, and innovative eco-tourism practices.

In 2022, Indians spend a total of 623,363 nights in Germany (2021: 201,194). The record level of 2019 with 961,656 has not yet been reached. "However we have already reached 65 per cent

of the level of 2019, leaving room for continuous growth as Indians return to travelling. There is huge demand among Indians for international travel," said Romit Theophilus, director India for the German National Tourist Office.

"Germany is an attractive destination with exceptional offers. Our goal in the medium term is to reach the number of overnight stays we had before the Covid-19 pandemic. We have achieved a remarkable increase this year compared to 2021, which shows that our diverse campaigns and offers are attractive and appeal to Indians.

RAM PATH TO BE DEVELOPED AS HERITAGE WALK IN AYODHYA

Ayodhya: The 13-km long Ram Path in Ayodhya will be developed into a heritage walk with 100 murals related with Lord Ram which will come up along the stretch of the road. The project will be jointly executed by the Ayodhya Development Authority and Ayodhya Sanrakshan Samiti. Ayodhya Divisional Commissioner Gaurav Dayal said that wall paintings and murals related with Lord Ram will come up on this stretch.

The Ayodhya administration will also empanel an agency to make the heritage walk interesting for tourists.

On the pathway, decorative lights, street lights, plants, footpath, benches and other essentials will also come up.

It should be 'Keralam': Kerala Assembly unanimously adopts resolution

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

The Kerala Assembly on Wednesday unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Centre to officially change the state's name to 'Keralam'.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presented the resolution in the Kerala Legislative Assembly requesting the Centre to change the name of the state.

He said, "The name of our state is Keralam in the Malayalam language. States were formed based on language on November 1, 1956. Kerala Day is also on November 1.

"The need to unite Kerala for the Malayalam-speaking communities has been strongly evident since the



time of the national freedom struggle. However, the name of our state is listed as Kerala in the First Schedule of the Constitution.

"This Assembly unanimously requests the Union Government to take immediate steps to amend it to

'Keralam' under Article 3 of the Constitution.

"This House also requests that our state be renamed as 'Keralam' in all the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution," reads the resolution.

Fake call centre cheating US citizens busted in Goa

Panaji | Agencies

Goa police on Wednesday busted a fake call centre and arrested 18 accused persons who were cheating US citizens on the pretext of facilitating loans.

During the raid 13 laptops, 13 mobile phones, four modems and four routers, along with other accessories worth Rs 15 lakh were seized.

Superintendent of Police (Crime Branch), Nidhin Valsan, said that the raid was conducted at a bungalow in Porvorim, and 18 persons were apprehended from the call centre.

According to Valsan, the accused persons were procuring personal details of US citizens, who applied for different types of loans in their country.

"The accused persons were calling them through Google Voice application installed on their mobile phones and laptops by impersonating as staff of E-loan Company or Merchant Cash Advance Company under the pretext of disbursing loans to them," the officer said.



"The accused persons were inducing the victims to avail the loan amount as per the requirements and used to ask to pay processing fee/security deposit of 10 per cent for securing the loan," he said, sharing details of the modus operandi. The accused persons were directing the victims to pay processing fee/security deposit through online options such as Google Pay gift card, Apple Pay gift card, Walmart gift card and Target gift card.

The duped amount was then transferred by an agent in the US to the kingpin Sagar Mehtani through hawala transactions. Mehtani and his wife Bansari Tanavani are the main accused persons," Valsan said.

FAMILY RULE, CORRUPTION, APPEASEMENT MUST QUIT INDIA: BJP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The BJP on Wednesday launched a scathing attack at the Opposition bloc, Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), saying when "family parties" come together, then "arrogant" alliances form.

"Tributes to the greats who took part in the Quit India Movement. Under the leadership of (Mahatma) Gandhi Ji, this movement played a major role in freeing India from colonial rule. Today, India is saying in one voice, Corruption Quit India, Dynasty Quit India and Appeasement Quit India," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted in a veiled attack on INDIA as he recalled the Quit India Movement launched on this day in 1942 by Mahatma Gandhi.

Also remembering the sacrifices made by freedom fighters during the Quit India Movement, BJP national president J.P. Nadda said in a tweet: "Today, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are equally determined to adopt that spirit and unanimously pledge to make -- Corruption Quit India, Appeasement Quit India and Dynasty Quit India."

Earlier in the day, senior BJP leader Ravi



Shankar Prasad took a dig at the opposition alliance and said: "When all family parties come together, then arrogant alliances form. Family rule, corruption and appeasement must Quit India." "Family rule is inherently undemocratic and irresponsible. Corruption and appeasement are other curses to the country. INDIA alliance is called arrogant and they fully deserve it. Familism means a leader's son or daughter will only become the leader of the party. Only they will usurp the important positions, there will be no place for others." In an apparent attack at the Gandhi family referring to previous Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, the MP said: "There was a family rule at that time. Coal scam, Commonwealth scam, Submarine scam and Helicopter scam, all know that one or the other member of the family is involved." "Taking a swipe at Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, Prasad said: "The packaging and re-packaging of Rahul Gandhi keeps happening. Now, people within the Congress have to decide what is his leadership capability." Last week, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge slammed the Prime Minister after his jibe at INDIA and accused him of doing "divisive" politics.



CM CHOUHAN'S ROADSHOW RECEIVES A WARM WELCOME IN ANUPPUR Ladli Bahana To Get Rs. 1000 on August 10

► CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN'S ROADSHOW RECEIVED A WARM WELCOME IN ANUPPUR ON WEDNESDAY.

Team Absolute | Anuppur

Women greeted their beloved 'bhैया' with 'Tilak' as Chouhan got down from his car to meet the crowd. A group of tribal dance troupes also participated in the road show programme. Similarly, there were long queues of common people including college students. The convoy slowly moved towards the city. On Wednesday, the two-day program of the Chief Minister began in Anuppur district. The road show program started from Government Tulsi College Jaithari Road at 3 pm, which will continue till Amarkantak Tiraha, about 1500 metres away. After this, the Chief Minister will participate in the program of Ladli Behna at Government Eklavya Vidyalaya.

Two Day Visit Chouhan will be on a two-day visit to Anuppur district on Wednesday and Thursday. During the stay, Chouhan will participate in various programs in the district. As per the



Chouhan will participate in various programs in the district. As per the

schedule, the Chief Minister left Jabalpur Dumna Airport at 2:15 pm by helicopter and reached the helipad located on Jaithari Road in the district at 3 pm. Chouhan will also take part in the inauguration program of various schemes after the roadshow from Government Tulsi College to Amarkantak Tiraha. Under the proposed program of Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the district administration has finalised the preparations. The stage program will be organised at the Eklavya Residential School Anuppur premises. On Monday the entire roads were cleaned, similarly all preparations were completed at the Eklavya School premises.

Chouhan To Address Ladli Behna's

After the roadshow, Chouhan will address the Ladli Bahana Sammelan organised at Eklavya Vidyalaya premises. Along with this, he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various development works of the district. He will inaugurate the Mahila Sammelan by lighting the lamp after Kanya Pujan and Ladli Behna Pujan. Later, Chouhan will address the people and Ladli Behnas present. After which, the distribution of benefits of government schemes will take place.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the programs and schemes being implemented for the welfare and development are positively impacting the lives of people. On August 10, Rs. 1000 will be transferred to the accounts of Ladli Bahana. The State level function will take place at Rewa on August 10. All Gram Panchayats and

wards will virtually join the event. CM Chouhan was reviewing preparations across districts for the Ladli Bahana Yojana programme at his official residence here today. The Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary General Administration Shri Vinod Kumar and senior Officers were present. Divisional Commissioners and Collectors attended the meeting virtually. Ladli Bahana Sena To Play

An Active Role The Chief Minister Chouhan said that Ladli Behna Sena's active participation should be ensured in implementation of development schemes in every village and ward. This is vital in women's empowerment. The activities based on the theme of Ladli Bahana Scheme such as rangoli, folk songs, folk dances will be organized at Gram Panchayats and wards to make festive the moment of fund transfer.

Former dacoit Malkhan Singh joins Congress in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Head of the assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, former dacoit Malkhan Singh joined the Congress in the presence of State Congress President Kamal Nath.

Apart from Malkhan Singh, a large number of people took membership of the Congress in a function organised at the state office of the Congress. Malkhan Singh had joined the BJP in 2014. Later, he resigned from the BJP and joined Progressive Samajwadi Party (Lohia). After joining the Congress, Malkhan Singh claimed that he will campaign for the party in the upcoming assembly elections in the state slated this year, which will wipe out the BJP and



form the Congress government. Presently, Malkhan Singh's wife is a Sarpanch from Singayai Panchayat of Aaron area of Guna district. She won the election unopposed. There was a time when Malkhan Singh was counted among the dreaded dacoits of Chambal. There was a reward of more than

one lakh on him, while more than a hundred cases were registered, including kidnapping, murder, dacoity etc. Malkhan Singh surrendered in 1982 and spent almost six years in jail. After being acquitted of all the cases in 1989, he walked out of jail and since then he is active in politics.

Madhya Pradesh High Court Validates Caste Certificate Of BJP MLA Jajpal Singh Jajji

Team Absolute | Gwalior

A division bench of Madhya Pradesh High Court (Gwalior bench) has validated the caste certificate of a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Jajpal Singh Jajji by setting aside the decision of its single bench in connection of the "fake caste certificate" case.

The single bench of MP High Court (Gwalior Bench) on December 12, last year ordered the quashing of the 'Nat' scheduled caste (SC) status of Ashok Nagar (SC) MLA Jajpal Singh Jajji, FIR against him and also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000. After which the BJP MLA Jajji challenged the decision before the division bench of the court.

Advocate of MLA Jajji, S S Gautam told media, "There was a case regarding the certificate of scheduled caste (SC) status of legislator Jajpal Singh Jajji.

The Scrutiny Committee had made the SC status caste certificate of MLA Jajji valid on December 18, 2019."

"After that following a detailed investigation, the order of the Scrutiny Committee was challenged by the opposition before the single bench of the



court through a writ petition. After hearing, the Single Bench quashed the decision of the Scrutiny Committee on December 12, last year and gave directions to register an FIR against the BJP MLA and imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 and many other instructions were issued," Gautam said.

He further said that the said decision was challenged by the legislator Jajji before the division bench of the court. The final arguments in this appeal were held last month on July 13 and the order was reserved.

The division bench of the court on Wednesday gave its decision and by crossing the decision of the single bench, it accepted the decision of the Scrutiny Committee given on December 18, 2019 in which SC status certificate of MLA Jajji was set-aside, Gautam said.

All the orders which were given by the Single Bench have been quashed, he added. Notably, the writ petition was filed by the BJP leader Ladduram Kori, who lost the SC-reserved Ashoknagar seat to Jajji in 2018, when Jajji was in Congress. After that Jajji switched to the BJP in March 2020 after Union Minister Jotiraditya Scindia joined the BJP, and won the bypoll on a BJP ticket.

POLITICAL SLUGFEST IN MP INTENSIFIES OVER GODMAN DHIRENDRA SHASTRI'S SERMON

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The political slugfest has intensified between the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh over Bageshwar Dham head priest, Dharendra Krishna Shastri's programme in Chhindwara.

The Congress seems to be looking to cash in on the popularity of the controversial self-styled godman after a three-day 'ram katha' was organised in Chhindwara district hosted by state Congress President Kamal Nath and his son and Chhindwara MP Nakul Nath. Lakhs of devotees attended Shastri's religious programme here.

On the one hand Kamal Nath seems to be getting along well with Shastri, which the state BJP leaders are calling as "Congress' hypocrisy".

Though, Dharendra Shastri's ram katha in Chhindwara has ended but politics over it has intensified in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh.

At the conclusion of the ram katha, Kamal Nath said: "The relationship between me and Acharya Shastri is related to Hanuman ji, it is a relation of faith and belief. I have spent 40 years of my political life for the welfare of the people, similarly Shastri ji, you have narrated kathas at many places, but



you will rarely find a place Chhindwara to narrate a religious lecture and devotees like in Chhindwara."

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also took a jibe at the Congress for the ram katha that took place in Chhindwara, saying: "The Congress is confused and is looking desperate. Those who once avoided taking the name of Lord Ram and called it a mythical figure, today they are participating in kathas and reciting Hanuman Chalisa. The Congress is forced to resort to such tactics since

the elections are approaching. This is the electoral devotion of the Congress."

Chouhan also added, "Kamal Nath is thinking 'should I go here or there', it is very difficult where to go. Now one of his party leaders has said that who should become the Chief Minister? Questions are being raised only on his existence as a leader. Now I feel that he has also started organising religious kathas to strengthen his position as a Congress leader." State Home Minister Narottam Mishra also attacked Nath on the issue.

Bihar Mahagathbandhan leaders express concern over Kamal Nath-Baba Bageshwar meet

Patna: The leaders of Mahagathbandhan in Bihar have taken exception to senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Kamal Nath meeting Dharendra Krishna Shastri of Baba Bageshwar Dham.

They said that Kamal Nath should avoid such meetings. "Bageshwar Baba advocates Hindu nation. He came to Chhindwara on the invitation of MP's former CM Kamal Nath where he was worshipped. It has increased the discomfort within Mahagathbandhan. So, the Congress party should make its stand clear on this issue. Standing alongside a person who is advocating to make India a Hindu nation is not right," said RJD leader Shivanand Tiwari.

"With such a move Kamal Nath is not giving a good message among common people. Establishing a close relationship with a person who is advocating Hindu nation is not right. He should avoid such a move," said Mritunjay Tiwari, spokesperson of RJD.

However, the Congress played safe and termed the meeting as a private affair. "Kamal Nath and his son were doing Yagya and it was his private matter. We cannot put a question mark on the religious belief of a person and the party has nothing to do with it," said Madan Mohan Jha, former state president of Congress and MLC. Kamal Nath met Baba Bageshwar on August 5 in Chhindwara, the home constituency. When Baba Bageshwar came to Patna in May he had invited Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav to join him, but both of them refused to go.



Vaccinate children up to 5 years compulsorily : Health Minister Dr. Choudhary

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Public Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Prabhuram Choudhary has said that children up to five years should be compulsorily vaccinated.

Vaccination protect them against deadly diseases. Minister Dr. Choudhary was addressing the state level media workshop of the Intensive Mission Indradhanush 5.0 campaign.

Dr. Choudhary said that intensive Mission Indradhanush campaign is being conducted for vaccination of children upto 5 years and expectant mothers. In the first phase of the campaign will commence from 7 to 12 August, the second phase from 11 to 16 September and the third phase from 9 to 14 October 2023, special vaccination sessions will be organised to complete vaccination. Dr. Choudhary said that it is essential to make common citizens aware of importance of vaccination. Public aware-



ness is crucial for hundred percent vaccination. The role of media is vital in boosting public awareness. In Covid vaccination, remarkable work has been done in Madhya Pradesh with the co-operation of media. Director NHM (Immunization) Dr. Santosh Shukla informed that 0.5 children will be identified. Those who could not be registered on the U-WIN online portal will be registered.

After registration, the vaccination report will be available online. Regular reminder messages for scheduled vaccination will also be given on the registered mobile number. UNICEF Programme Officers Shri Anil Gulati and Shri Prashant Kumar were also present in the programme.

CM CHOUHAN PLANTS PEEPAL, KADAMBA AND MAHUA SAPPLINGS

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Kadamba and Mahua in the garden at Shyamla Hills. The Bhopal-based Regional Directorate of National Service Scheme launched the 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh, Mitti ko Naman-Viron ka Vandan' campaign started from August 9 to 30 by planting saplings along with CM Chouhan. Regional Directorate's Rajkul Singh Parihar, Dr. RK Vijay, Dr. AK Saxena, Dr. Rajkumar Verma and Dr. Ashok planted saplings. Scheduled Tribes Finance Development Corporation Chairperson Smt. Nirmala Barela and Smt. Ranu Sharma also planted saplings on their birthdays. Gurukul Dream Foundation's Sarvshri Akash Baruah, Jayesh Srivastava, Akash Tripathi, Mohit Singh and Tuvyam Jain also planted saplings.



MERI MATI MERA DESH CAMPAIGN IS WORSHIP OF MOTHER INDIA - C.M. CHOUHAN

CONCLUSION OF AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV TO BE CELEBRATED IN A GRAND MANNER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' campaign has assumed significance. This remarkable initiative will spread the sentiment of patriotism. It is expressive of reverence to Mother India. The campaign aims to connect all citizens.

Peoples representatives, Panchayat representatives, municipal members, social organizations, volunteers, religious organizations, students, sports persons, employees, local artists, all should join the campaign. Cultural competitions on the theme of the campaign should also be organized.

Chouhan said that the 'Meri Mati-Mera

Desh' campaign is not merely a government program. It should bring together all individuals. The national flag should be hoisted in every household, and plantation activity should be conducted. He informed that he will plant 75 saplings along with Ladli Bahana on August 14th. Instilling the values of patriotism in the new generation is an urgent task. Therefore, the 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' campaign should involve as many people as possible. Chouhan addressed a video conference on the 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' campaign. In the meeting held at Samatva Bhavan, Principal Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary General Administration Vinod Kumar, Chief Secretary Culture Shivshekhar Shukla, and other offi-

cial were present. District Collectors virtually attended the meeting.

The oath-taking ceremony will take place at the memorial site. It was informed regarding the 'Meri Mati-Mera Desh' and 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaigns that the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav will conclude with a host of events from August 9th to August 15th. The installation of plaques, oath-taking, Vasudha Vandana, honoring heroes, hoisting the national flag, and singing in chorus the national anthem are the main components of the campaign. A plaque will be installed in the premises of local schools in every Panchayat and Municipal Corporation. After taking oath, individuals will upload selfies with the lamp held in their hands to the self-

portal https://yuva.gov.in/meri_maati_mera_desh. Under the oath-taking initiative, a pledge will be taken to make India self-reliant and developed, to free the mentality of slavery, to take pride in the country's rich heritage, to strengthen unity, to honour those who sacrificed their life for the country.

Under Vasudha Vandana, 75 saplings will be planted in every Panchayat and Municipal Corporation. Under Vasudha Vandana, 75 saplings will be planted around Amrit Sarovars, schools, and public places. Honoring heroes will commemorate the heroes who sacrificed their lives while serving the mother nation. It will also honour freedom fighters, retired defense personnel, paramilitary forces, and state police personnel.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Neerja Chowdhury's book on Indian politics

Journalist Neerja Chowdhury on Tuesday, during the release of her new book 'How Prime Minister Decides', said that she initially intended to write on demonetisation however she had to abandon the idea knowing that she would not be able to acquire required information on the subject. The author described Indian politics as a 'great Indian Nautanki' (drama). NCP Supremo Sharad Pawar, who released the book, said that Narasimha Rao was the best prime minister. The book launch took place at the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library Society, Teen Murti Bhavan. Kerala Governor Arif Muhammed Khan, who was also a guest during the panel discussion, said that he had been reading the book for the last three days. "Indian politics should transcend party lines and focus on working for the greater good. Making supreme sacrifices, possessing good manners and conduct, acquiring vast knowledge, and we should accommodate all," Khan said. Journalist Rajdeep Sardesai said that the book unveils how the government operates and exposes mistakes of various political parties who have governed India. BJP leader Dinesh Trivedi acknowledged Neerja's research efforts for writing the book. Maharashtra former chief minister Prithviraj Chavan said that no other author would have approached this book the way Neerja did. Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said it is a must read book.

FINALLY, BAN ON TWO MORE VET DRUGS TO HALT VULTURE DECLINE IN INDIA

Vishal Gulati

The Central government has finally imposed a long-awaited ban on two veterinary painkiller ketoprofen and aceclofenac drugs, considered a commonly used drug for cattle but deadly for vultures, to rapidly halt current population declines in four vulture species that have declined by up to 99.9 per cent.

This decision is being seen as the biggest step since 2006 when the government banned veterinary use of diclofenac that almost completely wiped out vulture populations across Asia since the 1990s.

Both of the newly-banned drugs are frequently used by vets to treat cattle across the region in place of the earlier banned diclofenac, vulture experts told correspondent.

The Drugs Technical Advisory Board of India has recommended nationwide ban on manufacture, sale, and distribution of two non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as they are as toxic as the banned diclofenac.

Hailing the decision, the SAVE (Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction) Programme, a consortium of regional and international organisations, on Tuesday welcomed the prompt action to notification by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to provide legal reinforcement of national bans of the two veterinary drugs.

The gazette notification comes in the wake of recommendations last month.

"This is a highly significant step for vulture conservation, although further steps are still needed," SAVE said in a statement.

The Union Health Ministry and the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation followed by a ruling of the Delhi High Court in response to a vulture conservation petition submitted by advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal.

This decision follows many years of safety testing and peer-reviewed publication of research results by the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and other SAVE Partners.

Chris Bowden, SAVE Programme Manager and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) expert, told correspondent: "The latest bans are a huge step in the right direction



for the future of vultures in India, and the Indian government is showing other countries what is needed for vulture conservation.

"Once nimesulide is also banned and indeed a future testing protocol before drug licensing, then we really will celebrate knowing the future of these majestic environmental cleaners is far more secure."

SAVE chair Jemima Parry-Jones said: "This shows how long-term efforts are now being heeded, and the formal notification and legislation coming swiftly after the Advisory Board recommendation is a further credit to the Indian government in leading the way for the region."

Trivani Dutt, Director, ICAR-IVRI, also welcomed the decision banning NSAIDs toxic to vultures to save these most threatened species.

Another veterinary drug, nimesulide, has also been shown to be toxic to vultures. Evidence published by SAVE partners and by the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) has shown that vultures treated with the drug are killed and also that deaths of wild vultures in India are linked to the use of this approved drug.

SAVE hopes that the Drugs Technical Advisory Board of India will soon recommend that veterinary use of this drug should also be banned.

Peer-reviewed publications demonstrated the toxicity of ketoprofen to vultures back in 2010, leading to immediate calls for bans on its veterinary use, but despite this there had been no such bans on a national scale until 2021 when a decisive step was taken by the government of Bangladesh.

Calls for banning aceclofenac in India formally began back in 2014, as recent IVRI publications have corroborated earlier evidence that this drug metabolises almost immediately into toxic diclofenac once it is inside cattle and water buffalo and is therefore equally lethal to vultures.

These decisions are therefore long-awaited but very welcome, being among the crucial actions towards saving Asia's vulture populations from further declines.

Saying this ban is probably the most significant step towards vulture conservation since the diclofenac ban of 2006, Abhishek Ghoshal from the Vulture Programme of BNHS said: "It's a result of long-term efforts from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and including state governments, especially Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Assam and alongside with NGOs. Timely order notifications and on the ground implementation will now be pivotal."

World acclaimed vulture expert Vibhu Prakash, who recently retired from the BNHS, said: "These bans are long awaited and can't happen soon enough. Wild populations of four critically endangered vulture species have declined by up to 99.9 per cent and are not recovering in India due to this ongoing threat from cattle drugs which urgently need such action."

Despite the great news surrounding the ban on aceclofenac and ketoprofen, some serious problems remain with another NSAID nimesulide not included in this decision.

The evidence that nime-

sulide is toxic to vultures is as strong as that for the other drugs, but despite this, veterinary use of nimesulide remains legal. Nimesulide use should also be banned, and even more importantly, there are no regulatory procedures in place to prevent new-to-market veterinary drugs being approved for veterinary use tomorrow.

This leaves vulture populations at risk of being wiped out within a few years and all progress made so far would be wasted.

Until this regulatory problem is fully resolved, the self-sustaining captive populations of the three critically endangered vulture species, which have been maintained in Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres by the BNHS for 20 years, remain of absolutely vital importance.

The crash in the population of vultures in India from an estimated four crore in the early 1980s to less than a lakh by 2007 is unprecedented in the animal world.

In 2004, the cause of their crash was established as diclofenac, a veterinary drug. When the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are administered to cattle, and if the cow or buffalo dies within a few days and is consumed by vultures, it causes gout, kidney failure and death in the following days.

To save vultures from certain extinction, the government of India's Action Plan for Vulture Conservation in India, 2020-2025, which was presented to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) secretariat in 2020, advocates the prevention of misuse of NSAIDs by ensuring their sale only on prescription.

The vulture conservation plan with an outlay of Rs 207.50 crore, part of the Gandhinagar Declaration adopted by CMS Parties in 2020, also strongly recommended that veterinary treatment should be given only by qualified veterinarians which would prevent overuse of NSAIDs in treating livestock as toxicity of most of the drugs is dose dependent.

Also, the scientific manner of disposal of livestock carcasses will ensure that the vultures do not get exposed to the carcasses of animals that died during treatment.

This should be done as soon as possible, says the five-year plan.

international

PAK POLL PANEL DISQUALIFIES IMRAN KHAN FOR FIVE YEARS

Islamabad | Agencies

In a major blow to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday disqualified PTI chief and former Prime Minister Imran Khan for five years following his conviction in the Toshkhana case last week.

On Saturday, a trial court in Islamabad had sentenced Khan to three years' imprisonment besides slapping a fine of Rs 100,000 while hearing the ECP's criminal complaint against the ex-premier for concealing the details of Toshkhana gifts.

The court found him guilty of "corrupt practices by hiding the benefits he accrued from the national exchequer wilfully and intentionally", Dawn reported.

"He cheated while providing information of gifts he obtained from Toshkhana which later proved to be false and inaccurate. His dishonesty has been established beyond doubt," the court order read.

Khan was subsequently arrested from his Zaman Park residence in Lahore.

The verdict signified that Imran technically stood disqualified from holding



"Therefore, Mr Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi is disqualified for a period of five years and is also de-notified as a returned candidate from constituency NA-45 Kurram-I," the notification read, Dawn reported.

Earlier on Tuesday, Khan had filed a petition in the Islamabad High Court against the trial court's verdict, stating that the said order was "not sustainable" and "liable to be set aside", the report said.

The petition will be taken up on Wednesday.

The Toshkhana case, filed by ruling party lawmakers, was based on a criminal complaint filed by the ECP, Dawn reported.

The case alleged that Khan had "deliberately concealed" details of the gifts he retained from the Toshkhana - a repository where presents handed to government officials from foreign officials are kept -- during his tenure as the Prime Minister. He reportedly concealed the proceeds from their reported sales.

According to Toshkhana rules, gifts/presents and other such materials received by persons to whom these rules apply shall be reported to the Cabinet Division, Dawn reported.

33 dead in rain-related incidents in Beijing

Beijing | Agencies

At least 33 people died in rain-related incidents in Beijing, authorities in the Chinese capital said on Wednesday.

There are 18 others still missing, including a rescuer, Xia Linmao, deputy mayor of Beijing, told a press conference.

The deaths of the aforementioned 33 people were mainly due to flooding and the collapse of houses. From July 29 to August 2, Beijing was battered by severe torrential rains triggered by typhoon Doksuri. It was the heaviest rainfall in Beijing since records began 140 years ago.

Rain-triggered flooding has affected nearly 1.29 million people and around 15,000 hectares of crops. According to Xia, these numbers are expected to grow as the property loss assessment continues.

The torrential downpour has caused significant damage to infrastructure in the mountainous areas, affecting water supply in 507 villages, causing power outages in 273 villages and 16 residential communities, and disrupting communications in 342 villages.

Transportation came to a halt in 256 villages.

Over 11,000 city workers in Los Angeles go on 24-hour strike

Los Angeles | Agencies

More than 11,000 city workers in Los Angeles, the second largest city in the US, are walking off their job for a 24-hour strike.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721, the largest public sector union in Southern California, said in a Facebook post on Tuesday that it staged a one-day walkout over "unfair labour practice", Xinhua news agency reported.

"We refuse to accept LA City's bad faith bargaining efforts and repeated labour law violations. We strike today to demand respect and fight for our dignity," the union noted.

SEIU Local 721, which represents more than 95,000 workers in Southern California, said on its website that its members include people working in hospitals, foster



care, mental health, courts, law enforcement, libraries, street services, beach maintenance, sanitation, water treatment, parks services and watershed management.

The walkout is expected to disrupt public services large and small, reported the Los Angeles Times.

At least some public swimming pools are expected to close for the day. Trash cans won't be emptied, delaying refuse pickup by one day for the rest of the week, according to the report.

Each of the city's animal shelters will be closed and

traffic control officers may not be available for nighttime concerts, the report stated.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass insisted in a statement on Monday that "the City of Los Angeles is not going to shut down".

"My office is implementing a plan ensuring no public safety or housing and homelessness emergency operations are impacted by this action. Like I said over the weekend, the City will always be available to make progress with SEIU 721 and we will continue bargaining in good faith," she added.

Ukraine's counteroffensive happening slower than some had hoped: Zelensky

Kiev | Agencies

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has acknowledged that his country's counteroffensive against Russia is "happening probably slower" than some had hoped.

Zelensky's remarks featured in a video released by his office on Tuesday which he made during a meeting with Latin American media outlets over the weekend, CNN reported.

"But all of this is secondary. In some places, there are mines, in some places there are technical difficulties, in some places we have been waiting for long. Or there are other complications. We can be discussing it for a long time," Zelensky said.

"The direction of the counteroffensive, what's wrong with it, what we have enough of, what we lack."

The President went on to say that the "counteroffensive is when the army is attacking and not when it is retreating".



"And this is an important and positive moment. And it is Ukraine that has the initiative. It is very difficult to be fighting for such a long time which is obvious. All this is very difficult when you lack this or that equipment. I know it is difficult for us but I definitely know it is more difficult for the Russians," CNN quoted Zelensky as saying in the video.

"While there is fatigue in the eyes of Ukrainians, there is fear in Russians' eyes," the President added.

98 people arrested in US, Aus with links to child sex abuse

Washington | Agencies

At least 98 people have been arrested in the US and Australia in connection to sexually abusing children, more than two years after two Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents were killed while investigating an alleged international paedophile ring.

At a news conference Tuesday, the FBI and Australian Federal Police (AFP) said 79 arrests, 65 indictments, and 43 convictions were carried out as a result of the joint operation in the US, while 19 men were arrested in Australia, reports CNN.

The alleged child abuse ring was a "peer to peer network" with "some offenders committing offenses for over 10 years", said Australian Federal Police Commander Helen Schneider.

"Some of the children were known to the men who were arrested," Schneider said without giving further



details. She added that there was a possibility of further arrests.

The AFP started its probe in 2022 when the FBI passed on details of Australian members of the network allegedly sharing child abuse material on the dark web.

"This operation was highly com-

plex," CNN quoted the FBI's legal attache in Canberra, Nitianna Mann, as saying to the reporters.

"The complexity and anonymity of these platforms means that no agency or country can fight these threats alone." The FBI legal attache added that over 200 international

leads had been sent to partner countries and more than 300 investigations opened as a result of the joint operation. In a separate statement, the AFP said that most of the Australian offenders had jobs that required advanced IT skills.

Members of the network allegedly used "software to anonymously share files, chat on message boards and access websites within the network", using encryption and "other methods to avoid law enforcement detection", the statement added.

On February 2, 2021, FBI Special Agents Daniel Alfin and Laura Schwartzberger died during a shootout at an apartment complex in Sunrise, Florida, while executing a federal search warrant for a computer programmer suspected of possession of child abuse material.

Three other agents were wounded and the suspect in the shooting died at the scene.



81 YEARS AFTER 'QUIT INDIA', MUMBAI POLICE DETAIN LONE GANDHI DESCENDANT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Exactly 81 years after Mahatma Gandhi was targeted by the British Police on the Quit India Day, (August 9, 1942), his great-grandson Tushar A. Gandhi suffered a similar fate, here on Wednesday. Around dawn, as Tushar prepared to go to the historic August Kranti Maidan in south Mumbai to pay homage to the Martyrs of the Quit India Movement, he was halted in his tracks by the Santacruz Police right outside his home.

"As I was leaving to commemorate August Kranti Day, the Santacruz Police Station stopped and detained me, citing 'law and order'... I am currently at the Santacruz Police Station," Tushar Gandhi told IANS.

This is the first time ever in his life that Tushar Gandhi has been subjected to such action by the police who waited outside his house, since late last night.

"I am very happy as Mahatma



Gandhi and Kasturba (Bapu and Ba) were also detained on this historic date by the colonial British Police... I am proud," Tushar Gandhi added.

He said that he was not served any advance notice like some other Gandhians and organisations planning to go to August Kranti Maidan today to mark the Quit India Day, nor

has he been slapped with any charges. "I am just made to sit here... They are treating me very cordially... Apparently, it's under the orders of the Commissioner of Police... As soon as I am allowed to leave, I shall definitely commemorate August Kranti Day and its Martyrs," declared

Tushar Gandhi.

This morning, the revamped August Kranti Maidan was the venue for a new campaign 'Meri Maati, Mera Desh' with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CMs Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar, and others, with tight security and traffic restrictions in the vicinity.



Union Minister's "Aukaat" jab at Team Uddhav MP during no-trust debate

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The ripples of political developments in Maharashtra reached Parliament yesterday with members of the ruling BJP and the Opposition taking potshots at each other.

One such heated exchange took place between Union Minister Narayan Rane and Arvind Sawant, an MP from Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray).

Sawant, MP from Mumbai South, hit out at the BJP and claimed that the Opposition had to move the no-confidence motion because of the centre's silence on the Manipur situation.

Referring to recent political shocker, in which several MLAs of Sharad Pawar's NCP followed his nephew Ajit Pawar into joining the Eknath Shinde government,



Sawant said BJP had gone from calling NCP a "Naturally Corrupt Party" to embracing its leaders.

In response, Mr Rane said, "He (Sawant) has talked about Hindutva. He has said something about what kind of Hindutva is followed by the Shiv Sena and the Uddhav faction. If they love Hindutva so much, they are proud of it. Why did they leave the Bharatiya Janata Party and join hands with Pawar Saheb to get power in the year 2019? Didn't they remember Hindutva at that time?"

A former Shiv Sena heavyweight, Rane said the party weakened considerably under the leadership of

Uddhav Thackeray.

As a heated exchange between Sawant and Rane broke out, the latter said the Team Thackeray member does not have the "aukaat" - meaning stature - to speak against Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Home Minister Amit Shah.

A viral video showed him gesturing to Sawant, asking him to sit and repeatedly saying, "tumhari aukat nahin hai". Eventually, Chair intervened and asked Rane not to make personal remarks.

"The Shiv Sena no longer has the roar of the tiger. It has now been reduced to a cat," said Rane.

Responding to Rane's remarks, Priyanka Chaturvedi, another Shiv Sena (UBT) MP, tweeted, "This man is a minister. Here he is seen displaying the standard of this government and how low it can go."

Scolded by dad, teenage college student jumps off Mumbai building

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shocking incident, a 16-year-old boy jumped off a building in Mumbai and ended his life as his horrified family looked on this afternoon, police said on Wednesday.

According to police, the boy took the plunge from his 5th floor flat in Pratiksha Nagar Building No 18, even as his stunned father, mother, and sisters shouted at him to stop.

A student of the Guru Nanak College at Sion, Siddhant was rushed in a badly-injured condition to a nearby hospital but succumbed soon thereafter.

The incident occurred after the boy's father Sanjay Bhosale, an officer with the BMC L Ward Office, Kurla, had reportedly scolded him for some unknown reasons.

An accidental death report



has been filed in the case at the Wadala Truck Terminus Police Station (WTT).

"We are making further investigations... The victim's mobile phone and laptop have been seized for the probe... but no suicide note has been recovered," WTT

Police Station's Senior Inspector Dyaneswar Argade told reporter.

A police team has also gone to question his friends in the college and the neighbourhood where he lived to examine all angles to the teenager's sudden fatal act.

WOMAN SAVES DAUGHTER-IN-LAW BY DONATING KIDNEY

Team Absolute | Mumbai/New Delhi

A 70-year-old woman in Mumbai donated a kidney to her 43-year-old daughter-in-law earlier this month, setting an example at a time when several incidents of 'saas-bahu' rivalry have hit the headlines.

The transplant surgery was conducted at Mumbai's Nanavati Hospital on August 1. Ameesha's kidneys were damaged after she was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease last year.

While Ameesha is recovering at the hospital, her mother-in-law, Prabha Kantilal Mota, returned home to a rousing reception organised by her family.

Prabha Kantilal Mota said she decided to "gift" a kidney to her daughter-in-law because she couldn't see her suffering. "My three sons were scared about me. I said I am perfectly fit, I will give it. I will ask PM Narendra Modi to call on people to come forward to become donors," Mota said. "I look at her as my daughter, not daughter-in-law," she said. Jitesh Mota, Ameesha's husband



who is a diabetic and not eligible to donate, said he wanted to save his wife's life, but was also worried about her mother's health. "The doctor said there was a waiting period of more than eight years for the donor. My

mother then said that she would give the kidney," Mota said.

Dr Chandrakant Lallan, the family doctor of the Motas, said he has never come across such donation in 44 years of his career as a doctor. "Most

organ donors in India are women who donate these organs to their spouses, parents, or children. But a mother-in-law donating her kidney to her daughter-in-law is rare," Dr Lallan said.

SHARAD PAWAR'S BIG CLAIM ON BJP LEADER'S 'BABRI ASSURANCE'



Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the Ram Janmabhoomi movement gathered steam in 1992, BJP leader Vijaya Raje Scindia had assured then prime minister PV Narasimha Rao that nothing would happen to Babri Masjid and he believed her against the advice of

his ministers, NCP chief Sharad Pawar revealed on Tuesday.

At the launch of senior journalist Neeraj Chowdhury's book 'How Prime Ministers Decide', Pawar, who was the defence minister at the time of the Babri Masjid demolition, said he along with then home minister and the home secretary was present at the meeting.

"There was a group of ministers and I was one of them... It was decided that the prime minister should call a meeting of leaders of the respective party," the NCP chief said.

"In that meeting, Vijaya Raje Scindia had assured the prime minister that nothing would happen to the Babri Masjid," he said. Pawar said that while he, the home minister and home secretary felt anything could happen, Rao chose to believe Scindia.

Chowdhury, meanwhile, recalled a conversation that Rao had with some senior journalists in the aftermath of the mosque demolition where the prime minister was asked

what he was doing when the demolition happened.

She claimed that Rao had told journalists that he allowed it to happen because it would end a festering sore and he felt the BJP would lose its main political card.

The book was launched by Pawar, along with Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, former railway minister and BJP leader Dinesh Trivedi, and Maharashtra's former CM Prithviraj Chavan.

The discussion was moderated by senior journalist Rajdeep Sardesai. Trivedi recalled the time of Rajiv Gandhi as prime minister and the role of Arun Nehru, one of his key advisors.

"Arun Nehru was like family... That was one of the best periods and if it continued things would be very different," Trivedi said.

Prithviraj Chavan, who served as a Union minister in the UPA government, said not handling the Anna Hazare movement properly caused the downfall of the Congress-led

alliance. "What caused that downfall was what happened immediately before that. Scams, 2G... We didn't handle Anna Hazare rightly. That's what brought an end to the Congress government," he said.

He also said that former prime minister Manmohan Singh was good at building consensus and mentioned the nuclear deal. Chowdhury's book analyses the operating styles of the country's prime ministers through the prism of six decisions of historic significance.

Former PM Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980 after her humiliating defeat post the Emergency in 1977, Rajiv Gandhi's decision to undo the Supreme Court's judgment in the Shah Bano case, V P Singh's implementation of the Mandal Commission Report, PV Narasimha Rao's role as prime minister during the Babri Masjid incident, and the governments under Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh are among the topics discussed in the book.

Website on Hinduism receives bomb threat, Pune Police launch probe

Team Absolute | Pune

A website about Hinduism, run by man from Pune, has received a comment from a person issuing threats about a bomb blast in India and to kill Prime Minister Narendra Modi, police said.

A case has been registered at Alankar police station in Pune under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code against the person, MA Mokheem, who allegedly posted the comment on the website on August 6, they said, adding a probe was on into the case.

Pune district resident Rahul Dudhane runs the website about Hinduism, the police said.

On August 6, Dudhane went to a private hospital in Pune for his son's treatment,



a police official said.

According to the official, while checking his website, Dudhane came across a comment on it by MA Mokheem that said: "I will plan serious bomb blast in

India. I will be funding terrorist organizations... I will destroy the Hindu religion. I will kill Narendra Modi also." Dudhane then called the police control room and informed them about the

MAHA, MP COPS PROBE MYSTERY OF MISSING WOMAN BJP LEADER FEARED 'KILLED'

Team Absolute | Nagpur

The Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh Police are jointly probing the mysterious case of a 'missing' Bharatiya Janata Party activist of Nagpur who is now "presumed murdered", nine days after she had gone to Jabalpur, officials said here on Wednesday.

The missing woman, Sana Khan alias Heena, 35, attached to the BJP Minority Wing, had gone from Nagpur (Maharashtra) to Jabalpur (MP) on August 1 and had contacted her brother Mohsin M. Khan around 6 a.m. that day

As per the latest developments in the investigation, a suspect has claimed that Sana may have been murdered and her body thrown into the Hiran River flowing near the Katangi-Damoh road.

According to the family and police, she had gone to meet her business partner and husband Amit Sahu, alias Pappu that day, and since then both their phones were 'switched off' in Bilhari, barely 7 kms from the outskirts of Jabalpur city.

When frantic efforts to contact Sana failed, her brother -- who cares for her 13-year-old son -- lodged a complaint with the Jabalpur Police and her mother Mehrunissa filed a complaint with Mankapur



Police in Nagpur.

Alarmed for her safety, the family also met Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and apprised him in detail about the mystery of the missing Sana after which the police in both states intensified their probe.

Mankapur Police Station in-Charge Inspector Shubhangi Wankhede said that a police team had visited Bilhari and Jabalpur, met the family and others linked with Sana, but drew a blank.

"We were also trying to trace both Sana and Sahu with whom she was last reported to be seen. We fear she may have been murdered, but so far, her body has not been found.

"We are continuing our investigations," Wankhede told correspondent.

A resident of Gorabazar in Bilhari, Sahu runs a wayside eatery, Ashirwad Dhaba on the Jabalpur-Damoh highway in MP purportedly in partnership with his wife Sana whom he married around six months ago.

An employee of the dhaba identified as Jitender, has informed the MP Police that on August 2, Sana and Sahu allegedly had a big brawl.

Later, he was ordered to throw away a plastic bag containing some weighty stuff into a nearby drain and then wash out bloodstains in Sahu's white car

dickey and seat.

At that time, Jitender said he noticed a red-coloured bag kept inside the vehicle with bottles of liquor and a pair of shoes, raising further suspicions on the fate of Sana.

Incidentally, after that, Jitender escaped from there to Sagar, but was traced by MP Police and brought back to the eatery for the investigations, when he spilled the beans on his missing boss Sahu.

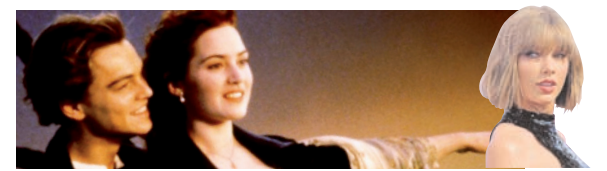
Though the police in both states are unwilling to categorically state that Sana may have been 'killed', after Jitender's revelations, the investigations are on the lines of a murder case.

Sana's family have alleged that Sahu has murdered her and disposed off her body, and urged the police to search and retrieve her mortal remains.

The Nagpur and Jabalpur police teams also broke open and searched a location where Sana-Sahu had stayed on the night of August 1-2, but found no clues.

The neighbours said they heard a loud quarrel from the room around 7.30 a.m. on August 2, but after some time things became quiet.

Subsequently, some eyewitnesses claimed noticing Sahu carrying a large parcel, placing it in his white car and then driving off from there - the last that he was seen.



Shakira, Lewis Hamilton have 'something more than friendship' following 'secret' Ibiza trip

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Shakira and F1 champion Lewis Hamilton have added more fuel to their romance rumours. The 'Hips Don't Lie' hitmaker and the seven-time F1 world champion have now been reported to have



"something more than friendship" after they secretly met up several times in a villa in

Ibiza, Spain, reports aceshowbiz.com. "Between (Shakira and Lewis) there has been something more than friendship," a journalist who claimed to be well-acquainted with the singer, Jordi Martin, said, reported by various media outlets on Tuesday. He further stated: "The two knew very clearly that there was nothing serious and that there was total freedom between them to do whatever they wanted."

Jordi also weighed in on earlier speculations that 38-year-old Lewis was "tired" of 46-year-old Shakira's behaviour.

He commented: "I would like to deny any information that has come out in a Catalan newspaper, where they say that [Lewis] is tired of Shakira's attitude. I can categorically deny this information because I have spoken to Shakira's entourage. And they confirm that between Shakira and (Lewis), there has always been a beautiful friendship."

Just a few days earlier, Shakira and Lewis were reported to have enjoyed secret meetings in a villa in Ibiza. Paparazzo Sergio Garrido spilled to Spanish TV channel Telecinco that the two met "three times in the Ibiza villa" in late July.

"When the workers left, the singer stayed alone with her private escort and received a visit from (Lewis)," Sergio went on to offer some details of their meeting. The paparazzo additionally shared that Lewis' driver overheard the racer's "constant conversations" with the 'Waka Waka' singer. Shakira and Lewis sparked romance rumors in early May. The two were caught on camera having a blast during a boat ride in Miami, along with a group of friends. Throughout the outing, the two were seen all smiles and giggling.

Ever since their Miami day out, Shakira and Lewis have been seen spending more time together.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Cardi B's thrown microphone during her club performance in Las Vegas was sold at \$100,000.

The Shure Axient digital mic, which belonged to an audio production company called The Wave in Sin City, was previously put on eBay by the

Cardi B's thrown microphone sold for a whopping \$100K

compa-

ny's owner, Scott Fisher. A week and 122 bids later, someone forked out \$99,900 for it, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The item was auctioned off for charity though. Scott initially told TMZ that the proceeds will be split with two charities, the Wounded Warrior Project and a local Vegas charity called Friendship Circle Las Vegas, which benefits

teens and young adults with special needs.

Cardi tossed the mic into the crowd after someone threw a drink at her during her July 29 gig.

Looking startled, the Grammy Award-winner spontaneously launched the microphone at the woman. Security then intervened while the rap star yelled from the stage. After getting her microphone back, she told the audience, "I said splash my p***y not my face b***h."

A woman, who claimed that she got hit by the mic but did not throw the drink, later reported Cardi for battery. The 26-year-old woman said she stood next to the person who threw the drink and got hit by the microphone on the right shoulder.

She claimed she was "experiencing pain because of the incident and is going to go get medical attention after she returns home today (7/30/23)."

Cardi, however, managed to escape criminal charges following a battery investigation as police have closed the case due to "insufficient evidence."

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said in a statement on August 3, "After a thorough review of this case and with the consultation from the Clark County District Attorney's Office, this case has been closed as having insufficient evidence. No charges will be filed in relation to this case."



Billy Porter says he is forced to sell his New York home due to ongoing Hollywood strikes

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Billy Porter, who is known for films such as 'The Broken Hearts Club: A Romantic Comedy', 'Cinderella' and 'Pose', has said that amid the ongoing WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes, he is being forced to sell his New York home, despite his new film 'Pose' being a critical and commercial success.

As reported by the Daily Mail, the actor told the Evening Standard: "I have to sell my house. I don't know when we're gonna go back to work." Billy, who is in England promoting his music career, explained: "The life of an artist, until you make f***-you money, which I haven't made yet, is still check-to-check."

Back in 2021, the actor told Conde Nast Traveller that his house which sits on one-acre of land is the first home he has ever owned and further told Evening Standard that two of his upcoming projects have been axed as Hollywood remains at a standstill due to the strikes. "I was supposed to be in a new movie, and on a new television show starting in September. None of that is happening now." The actor-singer who is a proponent of the LGBTQ scene and a big activist on that front had bought the property back in October 2020 with a total cost of \$1,400,000 along with his now ex-husband Adam Smith, who he split from in July. The house' current worth is over \$2,307,700 and is a massive and lavish estate, built around a 4,500 square-feet with four bedrooms, five bathrooms dating back all the way to 1970.



friend, a brother and a son, Angus was special to all of us in so many ways." "Last week he buried his father and intensely struggled with this loss. The only comfort we have is knowing Angus is now reunited with his dad, who was his best friend. Angus was open about his battle with mental health and we hope that his passing can be a reminder to others that they are not alone and should not fight this on their own in silence." Concluding the letter, the family wrote: "We hope the

Angus Cloud gets heartfelt tribute on 'Euphoria' Season 2

Los Angeles | Agencies

Late actor Angus Cloud has been given a tribute on the second season of the series 'Euphoria'.

The tribute comes in the form of a black and white photo card which reads: "In memory of Angus Cloud 1998 - 2023."

Back in July 31, Angus Cloud's family had issued a statement following his untimely death. "It is with the heaviest heart that we had to say goodbye to an incredible human today. As an artist, a

world remembers him for his humor, laughter and love for everyone. We ask for privacy at this time as we are still processing this devastating loss."

Then the star also received a beautiful candlelight vigil at his hometown in Oakland, California from people who knew him and celebrated his legacy and mourned his death.

Cloud had never acted professionally before being scouted by the series' casting director while working as a waiter. As such, his role in the series was his debut though his portrayal of the kindhearted drug dealer Fezco quickly resonated with audiences on a great level, making him both a fan favourite and a rising star in Hollywood.

Travis Scott breaks all records as his album 'Utopia' trends No.1 on Billboard 200

Los Angeles | Agencies

American rapper Travis Scott's album 'Utopia' has broken records and is now trending No.1 on Billboard 200, with the record selling over 496,000 equivalent album units by August 3 alone. The singer was also joined on stage by Kanye West in Italy, to the surprise and delight of over 60,000 fans.

According to Billboard, this event marked the global live debut of the record-breaking album, and Scott found the perfect stage in Rome's Circus Maximus as it was able to display the gravity of his achievement.

'Utopia' was joined at the Top 10 of Billboard 200 with Post Malone's new album 'Austin', which scored his fifth consecutive and total top five-charting set after the record debuts with 113,000 equivalent album units earned. This was followed by Morgan Wallen's 'One Thing at a Time' which went at No. 3 with total sales going over 96,000 equivalent album units. This marked the very first time that the album earned below 100,000 units after staying on Top 10 for 22 weeks.

Other big contenders also somehow underscored, with the 'Barbie' song 'I'm Just Ken' from the film sound-



track falling from No. 2 to No. 4 in its second week with 91,000 equivalent album units.

Meanwhile, Taylor Swift who had become the leader of the Billboard with her album 'Speak Now (Taylor's Version)' upon its release saw a drop as well, dipping from No. 4 to No. 5 with 66,000 units earned. Then

NewJeans' 'Get Up' also saw a dip, as it descended from No. 1 to No. 6 in its second week after earning 55,000 units.

Following, the singer also announced a tour of North America which will be titled 'Circus Maximus' where he will go to the big venues in areas such as Boston, Las Vegas, New York and Los Angeles among others.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Ana de Armas



132nd Durand Cup

GOKULAM KERALA SCORES A BRACE AGAINST THE INDIAN AIR FORCE FOOTBALL

Kolkata | Agencies

Former champions Gokulam Kerala FC registered a 2-0 win over the Indian Air Force Football Team (IAFFT) in a Group C match of the 132nd IndianOil Durand Cup, here at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan (KKB). Sourav and Sreekuttan scored on either side of the half as the IAFFT could not match up to the Malabarians, despite Sourav Sadhukan coming in the second-half and showing enterprise in front of goal. This was the first match of the group which also has Kerala Blasters and defending champions Bengaluru FC in it.

The first good chance for Gokulam came just before the 20-minute mark when Noufal broke through on the right, but his cut back in for an onrushing Nili Perdomo, saw the Spaniard shoot way-above the target.

The IAFFT then had a chance of their own five minutes later when Vivek Kumar shot on the turn from just outside the box, but it was too feeble a shot to disturb Zothanmawia in the Gokulam goal.

The goal came thanks to a blunder by Shibinraj, after an innocuous attempt on goal by Sourav, saw the experienced Air Force keeper mis-



judge the bounce and direct his save into his own goal inadvertently. Sourav was justly rewarded though for being the most adventurous of the Malabarians in the half.

Alex Sanchez, the second Spaniard in the eleven then missed an opportunity to double that lead but a one-goal lead is what Gokulam took to the break.

As the second half rolled on, Rahul Raju was booked early in the second half of Gokulam and soon on the hour-mark scorer Sourav pulled up forcing gaffer Domingo Cabrera to

make a double change. Shijin replaced the injured Sourav while Abhijith came on for Rahul Raju. IAFFT's Priya Darshan also brought on Zico Zorem Sanga upfront, taking out Naorem Somananda Singh from midfield.

Soon after Zico did get a golden chance to equalize, but the goal came again to the Malabarians and from a substitution made by Cabrera at the beginning of the half.

Sreekuttan, who had come in place of Noufal, broke away after being put through by Sanchez and with a mark-

er in front of him, unleashed a right-footed dink from outside the box which dipped over a full-stretch Shibinraj. It was perhaps the best goal seen so far in the tournament.

The insurance goal in the bag, the Malabarians did let the foot off the pedal a bit and that was when Saurav Sadhukan, brought on late in the second half, almost made them pay twice with two opportunistic attempts.

It was not to be and Gokulam ran away comfortable winners.

ODI Men's World Cup

India-Pakistan match in Ahmedabad officially rescheduled to October 14

Dubai | Agencies

The highly-anticipated clash between India and Pakistan at the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad was rescheduled to October 14 by International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday.

The development comes after the news of the most high-profile clash in the tournament being brought forward from the original date of October 15, owing to it coinciding with the first day of Navaratri, a major, nine-day Hindu festival as local police in Ahmedabad had raised concerns over providing adequate security on that day.

Apart from the India-Pakistan match, details of eight other matches have also been changed in the latest updated schedule of the tournament released on Wednesday.

India's last league match against the Netherlands, a day-night clash to be played in Bengaluru, has now been shifted to November 12 from November 11.

Due to the change in date of



the India-Pakistan clash, defending champions England's fixture against Afghanistan at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi will now be played 24 hours later on October 15, instead of the original date of October 14. Pakistan's contest against Sri Lanka in Hyderabad has moved from October 12 to now being played on October 10. On the other hand, Australia's big match against South Africa in Lucknow has been moved back by 24 hours and will now be played on October 12 instead of October 13. New Zealand's game against Bangladesh, which was originally scheduled as a day match for October 14 in Chennai has been moved back by 24 hours and will now be held on October 13 as a

day-night contest. England's clash against Bangladesh in Dharamsala on October 10 is now a day match with a 10:30am start time after it was originally scheduled as a day-night fixture. Matches scheduled for November 12 have been moved a day earlier to November 11 -- Australia-Bangladesh in Pune (10:30am) and England-Pakistan in Kolkata (2pm). It comes after the date of the England-Pakistan clash could be changed due to it coinciding with Kali Puja in the city.

The World Cup commences on October 5 when 2019 finalists England and New Zealand clash at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, with the event culminating in the final at the same venue on November 19.

Rakow win over Aris Limassol in UEFA Champions League qualifier

Warsaw | Agencies

Polish champions Rakow Czestochowa secured a 2-1 win over Cypriot side Aris Limassol in the UEFA Champions League third qualifying round on their home ground.

Underdogs Rakow extended their unbeaten run to five matches in their UEFA Champions League qualification debut, reports Xinhua.

Coach Dawid Szwarga had his team well-prepared for Tuesday's match. In just over six minutes, Vladyslav Kochergin tapped in from close range, capitalising on a remarkable pass by Igor Tudor from the right wing.

While Aris subsequently dominated, they struggled to produce quality scoring opportunities, leaving Rakow to enter halftime with a 1-0 lead.

In the second half, Rakow shifted their approach, pressing forward in search of another goal. Their efforts paid off in the 61st minute when Marcin Cebula was fouled by Yago after a decisive



move. Striker Fabian Piasecki successfully converted the ensuing penalty, extending Rakow's lead.

Towards the end, Mhlahli Mayambela narrowed Aris' deficit to 2-1 with a precise long-distance shot. The second leg is set for August 15 in Limassol.

CORINTHIANS REACH COPA SUDAMERICANA LAST EIGHT

Rio De Janeiro: Corinthians earned a place in the Copa Sudamericana quarterfinals after holding Newell's Old Boys to a goalless draw in Argentina.

The Brazilian giants had veteran Cassio to thank after the goalkeeper saved 11 shots on target from the Argentine outfit, reports Xinhua.

Corinthians had just two shots on target and controlled 41% of possession but they progressed by virtue of their 2-1 win in the first leg. Defensa y Justicia also progressed to the next round after a David Barbona strike fired the 2020 champions to a 1-0 home win over Ecuador's Emelec. The second-leg result handed the Argentine side a 3-1 advantage on aggregate. And former Flamengo striker Marinho struck late as Brazil's Fortaleza advanced with a 1-1 home draw against Paraguayan side Libertad. Matias Espinoza was on the scoresheet for the visitors, who were defeated 2-1 overall. Libertad saw three of their players sent off in the last 20 minutes as tempers frayed: Ivan Piris, Oscar Cardozo and Nestor Gimenez. Fortaleza, meanwhile, lost Marcelo Conceicao in the 95th minute for a straight red card.



Corinthians reach Copa Sudamericana last eight

Rio De Janeiro | Agencies

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their players sent off in the last 20 minutes as tempers frayed: Ivan Piris, Oscar Cardozo and Nestor Gimenez. Fortaleza, meanwhile, lost Marcelo Conceicao in the 95th minute for a straight red card.

European Athletics U20 Championships

Italy's Furlani wins long jump gold

Jerusalem | Agencies

Italian standout Mattia Furlani won the men's long jump title at the 2023 European Athletics U20 Championships at Jerusalem's Givat Ram Stadium.

The 18-year-old achieved a leap of 8.23m, narrowly missing his personal best by one centimeter and edging out Bulgaria's Bozhidar Saraboyukov by the same margin, who set an under-20 national record with 8.22m, reports Xinhua.

Poland's 17-year-old Marek Zakrzewski captured the men's 100-meter sprint, clocking in at 10.25 seconds. Britain's Joy Eze claimed gold in the women's 100-meters, finishing in 11.39 seconds. Austria's Enzo Diessl took top honors in the 110m hurdles, completing the race in 13.12 seconds.



Germany's Rosina Schneider secured first place in the women's 100 hurdles, setting a 2023 European U20 lead with a time of 13.06 seconds.

Ukraine's Mykhailo Brudin posted a world U20 leading distance of 66.58m to easily clinch the gold in the men's discus throw. Germany's Chioma Ndubuisi also achieved a world U20 lead, reaching 17.97m, on her way to the women's shot put gold medal. Germany's Sandrina Sprengel triumphed in the heptathlon with 5,928 points after pre-competition favorite Jana Koscak of Croatia withdrew on Day 1 due to injury.

In the women's triple jump, Ukraine's Oleksandra Chemukha secured gold with a personal best of 13.63m, while Valentina Savva earned Cyprus the gold in the hammer throw with a distance of 64.69m.

After two days of the four-day competition, Germany sits atop the medal table with three golds, two silvers, and two bronzes.

Kuldeep Yadav was the real match winner: Manjrekar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amidst the applause directed towards Suryakumar Yadav for victory, former Indian cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar has highlighted the significant role played by Kuldeep Yadav in the third T20 against the West Indies.

Yadav picked 3 crucial wickets in the first innings of the match, dismissing opener Brandon King, Johnson Charles and the dangerous Nicholas Pooran, to put the clamps on the West Indies to reduce the hosts to a meagre total of 159/5 after they had won the toss and elected to bat.

"Surya was brilliant again but Kuldeep the real match-winner for me. Restricting WI to 159 by taking 3 top-order wickets including that of Pooran. Well done Kuldeep," Manjrekar wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

Chasing 160, India lost opener Shubman Gill (6) and Yashavi Jaiswal (1) early, but



Suryakumar wasn't fazed by the setback as he terrorised the opposition bowlers with the clean hitting and played a magnificent 83-run knock, laced with four sixes and ten boundaries.

Andy Murray masters Lorenzo Sonego to enter Canadian Open second round

Toronto | Agencies

Three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray successfully kicked off his latest bid for a fourth title at the Canadian Open, eking out a marathon opening set en route to defeating Italy's Lorenzo Sonego 7-6(3), 6-0 in the first round.

This was Murray's second meeting with Sonego. The pair met for the first time earlier this year at the ATP 250 event in Doha, where the Briton saved three match points before winning in a dramatic third-set tiebreak.

The former World No. 1, who is making his first appearance in Toronto since 2015 and won the second of his three Canadian Open titles in this city in 2010, will meet Australian qualifier Max Purcell in the second round.

Murray seemed to have the upper hand from the beginning, even if his unforced errors allowed Sonego to stay ahead for much of the opening set. Although some untimely double faults put him at risk of losing the set while serving at 4-5. From an early minibreak down in the tiebreak, Murray won six of the next seven points to wrap up the set in close to 90 minutes.



The Brit carried his momentum into the second set, looking for ways to keep Sonego off balance and making him hit one extra ball. With the Italian growing more erratic with his groundstrokes, Murray pressed home his advantage, closing out the win in two hours and nine minutes.

It's pretty crazy how it all works out, says Mitchell Marsh on being named Australia's T20I captain

Perth | Agencies

After being named Australia's captain for the upcoming T20I series against South Africa, pace all-rounder Mitchell Marsh admitted that it was still pretty crazy for him to believe that he's getting a chance to be the captain of the side.

Marsh has been handed the top job albeit for the three T20Is against South Africa after Aaron Finch retired from international cricket earlier this year. The all-rounder was the hero of the final when Australia won the 2021 Men's T20 World Cup in the UAE and recently returned to Test cricket through a century in the third Ashes Test at Headingley.

"It's pretty crazy how it all works out. Very proud moment. Probably not something I'd ever thought I would do, but really looking forward to the opportunity of going to South Africa.

Guess I'm very proud that I've stuck at it, and been through a little bit of adversity through my career - through my own fault, mind you - but [it's] nice to be recognised in our group as a leader," said Marsh to SEN Radio.

Marsh has previously captained Australia at the U19 level and feels proud of himself for not giving up on succeeding at international level.

"Think anyone who works hard and is driven to succeed in whatever field they are in, and they come up short, it can be bloody hard to be honest with you, and I'm really proud of the fact I've never really given up," he said.

"I've also (been) through those lessons learnt to enjoy every part of my life -- the ups and downs -- and try to take a lot of learnings from my failures, and understand that whatever you do in life - whether it's cricket, sport, (or) business - you are

going to fail, and it's (about) how you deal with those failures.

Hopefully that will help me with my leadership, and (in) trying to win a few games for Australia," he added.

The 31-year-old opined that T20 is the toughest format to be a leader of the side, citing the shift in the game at any point through very narrow margins. "It's certainly the hardest (format). I've given up captaining the Scorchers... that was mainly around (when) I was really striving to play for Australia, and I didn't feel like I could give it everything. It's really hard to balance that," said Marsh.

"You've got to put a lot of time into getting things right tactically, but I'm really looking forward to the challenge and will have plenty of good people around me to help. I'll lean on others, which has been a really important learning for me as a leader," he added.





'Heart of Stone' director calls Alia Bhatt a formidable, intelligent, charismatic talent

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the Alia Bhatt and Gal Gadot starrer action spy thriller film 'Heart of Stone' draws closer to its release date, director Tom Harper detailed both what the film is about as well as the characters of Alia Bhatt and Gal Gadot. Speaking of Alia, Harper went on to call her a formidable and intelligent talent with great charisma.

'Heart of Stone' marks the 'Gangubai Kathiawadi' actress' debut in Hollywood. Regarding her acting, Tom Harper said "We were so excited that Alia was going to join us."

"She's huge in the Indian film industry, but this is her first Hollywood production and full English language film. She's a formidable talent, has great intelligence, and expert attention to detail as well as that amazing film star charisma".

Detailing 'Heart of Stone', Tom Harper said, "When I first came onboard, two things really struck me about the project: firstly, it was an original movie in a genre where there are a lot of franchises that have been around for many years, and secondly it had a female lead. I thought that was really exciting." Talking about Gal Gadot who is also the producer of the film, he said "Gal said to me, right from the very beginning, that she wanted this character to be a powerful woman in her own right, rather than a copy of the male action hero stereotype."

"Of course, she does do a lot of heroic things; she is a survivor, a maverick, and sometimes a rebel. But she is not alone. There is a deep care and compassion for people as the driving force of her actions."

"I often feels that there's one character acting in an almost God-like way, saving the world but yet disregarding the human's around them. This is a bit different; it has a bit more of a humanistic approach. That really appealed to me."

Harper's own vision is a bit different, and as such is different from standard spy-thriller as he pioneers a fresh narrative approach, giving audiences a different storyline with fleshed out characters that transcend conventional heroism.



After Big B and SRK, Ranveer Singh to play Don in 'Don 3'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood's livewire actor Ranveer Singh has been crowned as the new 'Don' and will be seen in Farhan Akhtar's 'Don 3'.

Farhan's Excel movie took to Instagram to reveal the actor, who would play the iconic actor, a day after the franchise was announced.

Before unveiling himself as Don, Ranveer was heard saying in an impactful manner: "Sher jo so raha hai woh jaage ka kab puchte hai yeh sab. Unse kehdo fir jaag utha hun main aur phir saamne jald aane ko kya hai taakat meri kya hai

him-mat meri fir dikhaane ko, maut se khlena zindagi hai meri jeetna hi mera kaam hai tum toh ho jaante jo mera naam hai. "11 mulko ki police dhoondti hai mujhe par pakad paaya hai mujhko kaun? Main hun don."

Ranveer is ready to step into the new interpretation of this larger than life character, which will be brought to life in 2025. Farhan Akhtar, who

directed Don (2006) and Don 2 (2011), both starring the Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan in the titular role, took to social media on Tuesday and shared that work on the film will begin in 2025. The character of Don was written by Farhan's father Javed Akhtar along with his then creative partner Salim Khan, the father of Bollywood superstar Salman Khan. The original 'Don' was Amitabh Bachchan, the film released in 1978. The 'Don' series has always been synonymous with riveting narratives, thrilling action, and unforgettable moments. The film, 'Don 3', will see him collaborate with renowned filmmaker Farhan Akhtar who is going to don the director's hat yet again, with this franchise.

AMIT SADH'S 'GHUSPAITH BETWEEN BORDERS' SELECTED FOR RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FEST

Team Absolute | Mumbai



Bollywood actor Amit Sadh's 'Ghuspaith Between Borders', a tribute to late Pulitzer Awardee Photojournalist Danish Siddiqui, is selected as India's official entry at The Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival 2023. Amit said: "It's been an enriching experience working on this project. 'Ghuspaith' is our tribute to photojournalists like Danish Siddiqui, who risk their lives to report to us the realities of the world. Having our film being selected for this festival is an absolute honour and I am hopeful that it will go far from here." Starring Amit in the lead, the film is inspired by the tragic demise of renowned Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui, shedding light on the hidden complexities of the illegal cattle trade, cow smuggling, human trafficking, the refugee crisis, and ethnic cleansing.

Revolving around the life of an Indian photojournalist named Manav (played by Sadh) the short raises a poignant question: 'Where do we draw the borders between humanity?'

Marking its 27th year, The Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival has become a haven for independent filmmakers from throughout the world. In 2022, the Festival presented 383 films representing works that were shot and produced in 106 countries. In 2002, RIFF was selected as a qualifying festival for Best Short Subject through the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Listed amongst the top 10 Short Film Festivals in the United States, a total of 84 Films have been discovered via RIFF for The Academy Awards, of which 14 have been Oscar winners as of 2022. RIFF is also recognised by BAFTA as a qualifying film festival for the British Short Film Category.

Karan Kundrra pranks Tejasswi Prakash, proposes a fun date night



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Television couple Karan Kundrra and Tejasswi Prakash fell in love on a reality show. However, the actor played a prank on his lady love and ended up watching a movie.

In a video, Karan is seen setting up a prank video by pretending to propose to Tejasswi. He dramatically confesses his feelings for her and Tejasswi, excitedly urges him on, wanting to hear more.

However, to Tejasswi's surprise, it is not a ring but a phone that Karan offers, asking her to join him on a romantic watch party of Guardians of The Galaxy Vol.3.

Karan shared why he regards Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 as the perfect date night movie: "It is filled with all the things I love - action, comedy, emotions. This franchise is definitely at the top of my movie lists and I am so

inspired by everyone involved in it. I am looking forward to experiencing the film again with Tejasswi."

Tejasswi added: "Rocket is one of my favourite characters, he is so cute and Bradley Cooper does a great job voicing him. I also am a huge fan of Chris Pratt and all his films as well. The cherry on top is that I get to watch the film with Karan."

Will Poulter also joins the star cast as Adam Warlock. Kevin Feige produced the movie for the franchise as part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe in "2020 and Beyond" along with Seth Green, Michael Rosenbaum and Vin Diesel as executive producers.

Guardians of the Galaxy Vol.3 is the third installment featuring Marvel's popular intergalactic superhero team. It is streaming on Disney+ Hotstar in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and English.

Shilpa Shetty to 'Botlab Dynamics': You have written history in the sky

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actress and judge Shilpa Shetty, who was left speechless with the cutting-edge innovation with the drones by 'Botlab Dynamics' in 'India's Got Talent', said they have written history in the sky with their talent.

Showcasing how technology is shaping the talent landscape is the Delhi based group 'Botlab Dynamics' who will prove that 'sky is the limit' as they capture the imagination of millions with their innovative and clutter breaking creation. The young, talented minds will showcase the imminent change in entertainment, where art and technology converge to create a truly immersive spectacle through drone shows.

With their control over the drones, Botlab Dynamics will create a visual spectacle with a breathtaking display of lights, patterns, and formations; leaving the judges and audience awestruck. It took Botlab Dynamics about 30 engineers and almost a month's time to make



this larger than life act possible.

Impressed by their innovation, Shilpa will share, "I am speechless. All of it looked so real. Who said history is only written in books? You have written history in the sky with your talent."

"Though I'm not that good with technology, but as a bystander, I was really impressed when I saw the act. More importantly, I was impressed with the purpose you started this venture with. Anything to make India proud and to make India number one, is something that makes me feel really good; and you are very close to achieving it," she added.

Adding on to the compliment, Judge Badshah who had already been associated with the group says: "I have known Botlab dynamics from before. For one of my concerts, I had an idea for a drone show. So, I was searching for drone service and while doing this I came across Botlab and contacted them."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Soundarya Sharma