

absolute india

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Apex Court seeks details of crimes against women from Centre, Manipur govts

SUPREME COURT'S TOUGH QUESTIONS ON MANIPUR

Supreme Court (SC) on Monday stressed for the need of evolving modalities to deal with the larger issue of sexual violence against women in Manipur and sought details of FIRs registered in all such cases from the Centre and the state government. It also asked the union government to provide details of the relief package provided for rehabilitation purposes to Manipur.

Despite repeated requests, the Central government yet to provide any funds to Mizoram to provide relief to over 12,600 people, who took shelter in the state after being displaced from Manipur, where ethnic violence still rages unabated, state officials said on Monday.

The Supreme Court termed the offences against women "horrendous", and said it did not want the case to be handled by Manipur police. "Time running out for us, there is great need to have healing touch in the state," it said.

"This is not just one case like Nirbhaya. That is one isolated incident. Here it's a systemic violence perpetrated," the Supreme Court added.



naked and sexually assaulted in Manipur along with the clutch of pleas related to inter-ethnic clashes in the north-eastern state.

"We will deal that justice is done to these women (who have approached the court), but we also have to see the wider issue of violence against women in Manipur," observed the bench.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said that the Central government would have no objection if the investigation is monitored by the apex court.

The court deferred hearing on an application seeking action on a similar incident that occurred in Bengal. "We'll hear you later, let's hear

Manipur first. What suggestions do you have for Manipur? We cannot justify what happened in Manipur by saying that this and this happened elsewhere," told CJI Chandrachud to advocate Bansuri Swaraj.

The CJI-led bench expressed surprise for the delay of over 18 days in registration of FIR. "What stood in the way of police registering the FIR immediately on the 4th of May?" it

Spreading of fake news, rumours will be treated as sedition: Manipur govt

Imphal: Manipur government on Monday asked people and organisations to desist from spreading, publishing and generating fake news, lies, rumours or misinformation regarding the ongoing situation in the state otherwise stern action would be taken under the laws and it will be treated as sedition.

Officials quoting government notification said that spreading of wrong information would be booked under sedition charges.

The notification said that no person is immune to prosecution under the laws of the country if he/she is found to be generating or spreading false news, lies, rumours or any propaganda with bad intention which can worsen the prevailing law and order situation in Manipur.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A bench comprising of CJI D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Mishra was hearing a petition filed by the two tribal women who were paraded

The court asked the Centre how many of around 6,000 FIRs filed since the violence broke out in Manipur were for crimes against women. The Centre said it did not have a break-up of such cases. The Supreme Court then directed the Centre and the Manipur government to return tomorrow with information on six points:

1. Break-up of cases
2. How many zero FIRs
3. How many transferred to the police station that has jurisdiction
4. How many arrested so far
5. Status of legal aid to the arrested accused
6. How many Section 164 statements (or statements before the nearest magistrate) recorded so far

"There is no gainsaying the fact that crimes against women are taking place in all parts. The only answer is this. You cannot excuse what is taking place in one part of the country, like Manipur, on the ground that similar crimes are happening in other parts too. The question is, how do we deal with Manipur? Mention that...Are you saying protect all daughters of India or don't protect anyone?"

Chief Justice to lawyer Bansuri Swaraj, who spoke about crimes against women in Bengal, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh.

2,500 people take shelter in temple near Gurugram after violence



Chandigarh | Agencies

Nearly 2,500 people, comprising children, on Monday took shelter at a temple near Haryana's Gurugram as massive violence broke out in the Muslim-dominated Nuh area.

The police, who used tear-gas and fired shots into the air, have called in reinforcements. Nearly 20 people have been injured.

Massive violence broke out after stones were pelted and vehicles were set on fire during a religious procession. The violence broke out over reports of cow vigilante and Bhiwani deaths case accused Monu Manesar visiting Mewat. Saying additional troops from neighbouring districts have been sent,

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Monday said adequate security arrangements have been put in place to restore peace in the Nuh area.

He said apart from the heavy deployment of Haryana Police, companies of paramilitary force are also being deployed to ensure that no untoward incident takes place. "Adequate forces are being deployed there. We have also spoken to the Centre. We are trying to restore peace there. All those who are stranded in different areas of Mewat region are being rescued," Vij told the media. Three companies of paramilitary force have been sent to the clash-hit areas. The Nuh police have decided to hold a peace meeting with the members of both communities at 8.30 p.m. on

Monday.

Clashes erupted in Nuh district after some miscreants pelted stones and set cars on fire during a religious procession. According to the police, religious procession 'Brij Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra', which was flagged off from Gurugram's Civil Lines by BJP district president Gargi Kakkar, was stopped by a group of men near Khedla Mod in Nuh.

Section 144 of CrPC has been imposed in the district. The government suspended mobile Internet services in Nuh till August 2.

The order has been issued in order to stop the spread of misinformation and rumours through various social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc. on mobile phones and SMS.

Two teenage sisters gang-raped for 18 months in Rajasthan

Jaipur | Agencies

Two teenage sisters, who were allegedly raped by two co-workers of their father at a brick kiln in Rajasthan's Alwar district for 18 months, are pregnant, said police officials on Monday.

The girls' father lodged a complaint on Friday in this regard. In the complaint, he alleged that his daughters, aged 15 and 13, were raped by two accused Sappi and Subhan.

The family came to know when the elder girl complained of abdominal pain and other health problems. Her parents took her to a doctor, who confirmed that she was seven-

and-a-half months pregnant, the police said.

"As her parents asked her, the girl told them that Sappi and Subhan had raped her and said that they had raped her younger sister as well," the police added.

The victim alleged that the accused had threatened them of dire consequences, if they disclose the incident.

Superintendent of Police (Alwar) Anand Sharma said an FIR was registered on Friday and the girls' medical examination has been conducted. The medical test confirmed that both girls are pregnant.

The younger victim is two-and-a-half months pregnant, the police said.

BJP will stick to 'UPA' for new opposition bloc 'INDIA': Sources

New Delhi: After severely criticising the opposition bloc for naming its alliance INDIA, the BJP has declared today that it will call it by its old name - UPA, sources said. "I.N.D.I.A. is the opposition's attempt to portray a clean image to the public by associating itself with the name of the country," the sources said, adding the BJP will continue to expose them, especially the Congress, addressing them with their old name.



The opposition front, after much deliberation, decided to name the newly formed coalition Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance or INDIA, at a 26-party meet in Bengaluru on July 18. The BJP has been opposing the name from the

start, claiming the new branding has been done so that it can hide the opposition's many scams of the past. They are using the name INDIA only so the "corrupt" image of the UPA can be erased from the public eye, the sources said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently took a swipe at the opposition, saying "they changed their name from UPA to INDIA to hide how you schemed against the poor".

BJP PREVENTING KHARGE TO SPEAK IN RS OVER MANIPUR, ALLEGES CONG

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress on Monday hit out at the BJP after the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge was not allowed to speak in the House on Manipur saying all saffron party MPs were "instigated to prevent him from speaking" as his voice was drowned by treasury bench.

In a tweet, targeting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "Extraordinary happenings in Rajya Sabha this afternoon. Leader of the Opposition, Mallikarjun Kharge-ji, is given permission to



speak by the Chair. He tries to prevent him from speaking. He tries to but his voice is drowned out in the din created by the Treasury benches. The House gets adjourned."

His remarks came after the Rajya Sabha was adjourned for the second time during the day after Kharge tried to speak on the Manipur issue.

The Congress-led opposition has been demanding a detailed statement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the Manipur issue in both Houses of Parliament and also a discussion on Manipur.

ED attaches assets worth Rs 6.02cr belonging to Lalu Prasad's family members

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it has attached six immovable properties worth Rs 6.02 crore belonging to the family members of former Union Railway Minister and ex-Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad in connection with an investigation into a money laundering case related to the land for job scam case.

An official said that the attached properties belong to Rabri Devi - wife of Lalu Prasad; Misa Bharti - daughter of Lalu Prasad; Vineet Yadav - husband of Hema Yadav (Lalu Prasad's daughter); Shiv Kumar Yadav - father-in-law of Hema Yadav; AB Exports Pvt Ltd and AK Infosystem Pvt Ltd - both companies owned and con-

trolled by family members of Lalu Prasad. The ED initiated an investigation under the PMLA based on an FIR lodged by the CBI against Lalu Prasad, Rabri Devi and others.

In this case, seven land parcels were acquired by family members of Lalu Prasad (the then Minister for Railways during the period 2004-09) from the candidates appointed (as Substitutes) and their family members. "The investigation by the ED revealed that the family members of candidates gifted land (at cheap rates/less than the circle rate) to family members of Lalu Prasad and associated companies in lieu of job which was given in a mala fide manner with undue haste and in violation of extant law and procedure," said the official.

HEAVY RAIN TO BATTER EAST INDIA, NORTHWEST TO SOAK UP SOON: IMD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said that heavy to very heavy downpour is likely to continue over east and east central India during the next three days, while an increase in rainfall activity is expected over the northwest during Wednesday and Thursday.

In its latest bulletin, the IMD said that the northwest weather forecast indicates light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall during the period from Tuesday to Friday.

In addition, there is a possibility of isolated very heavy rainfall over Uttarakhand and West Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday and Thursday, and over East Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday.

Moving to Central India, light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall is predicted during Tuesday to Thursday.

East Madhya Pradesh will likely experience it on all three days, while north Chhattisgarh will have rain on Tuesday and Wednesday.



Northwest Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha are expected to receive rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday. There's also a chance of isolated very heavy rainfall over East Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday," it said.

In East India, the forecast calls for light to

moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with thunderstorms, lightning, and heavy rainfall at isolated places from Monday to Friday.

Moreover, there is a possibility of isolated very heavy rainfall over Odisha from Monday to Wednesday, over Jharkhand on Tuesday and Wednesday, and over Gangetic West Bengal on Tuesday. Sub-Himalaya West Bengal and Sikkim may experience isolated very heavy rainfall on Thursday and Friday.

The IMD further predicted that in Northeast India, the weather forecast indicates light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall throughout the next five days, with isolated very heavy rainfall on Thursday and Friday.

In West India, the prediction is light to moderate, fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall, particularly over Konkan, Goa and ghat areas of Madhya Maharashtra during the next five days.

There is a possibility of very heavy rainfall on Thursday in these regions," said the IMD.

CLAMOUR GROWS TO NAB HINDUTVA LEADER FOR SLUR ON MAHATMA, FIR IN THANE

Mumbai: After

Amravati, a fresh FIR was lodged by Thane Naupada police against Hindutva leader Sambhaji Bhide for his alleged derogatory remarks targeting Mahatma Gandhi, with clamour for his arrest from the Maharashtra government and the Opposition on Monday.

Following a complaint by the NCP-Sharad Pawar leader Dr. Jitendra Awhad, the Thane police registered a FIR against Bhide, days after a similar FIR was lodged by Amravati Police on the complaint of Congress leader Yashomati Thakur.

The breakaway NCP-Ajit Pawar Minister Chhagan Bhujbal and Maharashtra State Commission for Women President Rupali Chakankar have also demanded prompt action against Bhide.





LS PASSES CINEMATOGRAPH (AMENDMENT) BILL AMID PROTESTS BY OPPN

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which aims to curb film piracy and give more powers to the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to issue separate certificates for a film's exhibition on television or any other media.

The bill was passed after a brief discussion within half an hour, even as opposition members protested by standing in the well of the House, seeking prime minister Narendra Modi's presence in the House and his response on the Manipur violence.

Kirit Solanki, who was in the Chair, adjourned the House for the day after the passage of the Bill.

The bill amends the Cinematograph Act, 1952.

It was passed by Rajya Sabha last week. Piloting the bill, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur said in Lok Sabha that India is the largest film market in the world, where most number of films



are made.

With the documentary "The Elephant Whisperers", and south Indian films like "RRR" making it big in the international markets and even winning the prestigious Oscar award, this has proved India's soft power in

world cinema, he said.

Thakur said that even in Central Asian countries, youngsters sing songs of films like the hit "Disco Dancer", which came in 1982, when most of the youngsters were not even born. The bill seeks to crack a whip

on film piracy and aims to give more powers the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to issue separate certificates for a film's exhibition on television or any other media.

It also entails a three-year jail term and a fine of up to 5 per cent of a film's production cost for those making its pirated copies.

Thakur further said that through this bill, the government intends to curb piracy, as it is a bane for film makers, who make a film with a lot of hard work, and all that comes to nought when its prints get leaked due to the menace. Criticising the protesting opposition members, the minister expressed disappointment that the opposition was not interested in the bill, which was for the welfare of Indian cinema.

The bill was later passed through voice vote. The legislation also introduces three certifications under the 'UA' category, UA 7+, UA 13+ and UA 16+, which means that children younger than the given age limits can access such movies with parental guidance.

Drama during MCD house meeting at Civic Centre, proceedings adjourned

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The meeting of the MCD House on Monday at the Civic Centre witnessed ruckus and sloganeering once again as AAP and BJP councillors clashed over the issue of flooding in the Yamuna river.

The BJP leaders were holding placards with slogans against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and shouting slogans against the AAP government.

They were countered by AAP councillors, leading to a heated argument.

As a result, the MCD proceedings couldn't continue and Mayor Shelly Oberoi, unable to restore order, adjourned the house.

This was the first MCD house meeting taking place after floods in the capital



and it was apprehended that members of the AAP and BJP would clash over this issue.

Before this, the elections

for the Mayor and members of the Standing Committee, there was also a ruckus, leading to the proceedings being disrupted.

Over 43,000 staff of TSRTC to become government employees

Hyderabad | Agencies

The Telangana Cabinet on Monday decided to recognise over 43,000 employees of the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) as the employees of the state government.

The Cabinet, at its meeting chaired by Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu, constituted a sub-committee comprising officials to frame the guidelines. A total of 43,373 TSRTC employees will become government employees. A Bill in this regard will be introduced in the Assembly session, beginning on August 3. Industries Minister K. T. Rama Rao told media persons that the decision was taken to protect the TSRTC as a social obligation and to strengthen the public transport system.

The Cabinet also decided to expand Hyderabad Metro at a cost of Rs 60,000 crore in



next 3-4 years. A double-decker Metro line will be laid from Jubilee Bus Station to Thumkunta and Patny to Kandlakoya at Outer Ring Road (ORR). The minister said while one level will be for motor vehicles, the second level will be for Metro trains. Hyderabad Metro will also be extended from Isnapur to Miyapur, Miyapur to Lakdi Ka Pul, LB Nagar to Pedamberpet, Uppal to Bibinagar, Kottur to Shadnagar and Uppal to ECIL. A Metro Rail is also planned around the 159-km Outer Ring Road. The

Hyderabad Metro Rail and the Municipal Administration Department have been asked to prepare detailed project reports.

The Minister said the state would also request the Centre to cooperate in executing the project. He remarked that even if the present government at the Centre failed to cooperate, the next government at the Centre will extend the help. He predicted that a coalition government will come to power at the Centre next year in which BRS will have a key role.

T'gana BJP MP stirs up row by demanding removal of Lambadas from ST list

Hyderabad | Agencies

A BJP MP from Telangana has stirred up 'hornets' nest by demanding removal of Lambada community from the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Adilabad MP Soyam Babu Rao's demand has evoked strong protests from Lambadas. Saffron party leaders from the community have also condemned his remarks.

Protesters came out on streets at few places in Adilabad constituency and burnt the effigies of the Lok Sabha member.

After meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah three days ago, Babu Rao had demanded that Lambadas should be denotified from the ST list in Telangana.

He even stated that if needed, tribals in Agency areas would launch protests on the lines of Kukis in Manipur.

Babu Rao's demand landed BJP in a tight spot.

Lambadas, whose population in the state is estimated to be about 40 lakh, constitute a majority among the tribals.

BJP's state president and Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy was confronted with leaders of Lambada associations during his visit to Warangal on Sunday.

He tried to distance the party from Babu



Rao's statement and clarified that this was the personal view of the MP. Kishan Reddy again clarified on Monday that the BJP has nothing to do with the statement made by the Adilabad MP. "This is the personal opinion of the MP and

not the BJP's stand," he said, adding that an explanation will be sought from the MP.

Kishan Reddy told reporters that the BJP plans to enhance reservation for tribals and promised that if voted to power, BJP will increase the quota.

He alleged that the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) was not sincere in enhancing reservation for STs as it clubbed the issue with the proposal for religion-based reservation.

In 2017, the State Legislature had passed a Bill for increasing the reservations to STs from 6.8 per cent to 10 per cent in proportion to their population.

It had also passed a Bill to increase quota for backward Muslims from 4 to 12 per cent.

Both the Bills were sent to the Centre for approval.

As the Centre did not give its approval, the state government last year passed an order, increasing quota for STs.

Babu Rao, who hails from the Gond community among STs, is known for his strong views for removing Lambadas from ST list.

Some parts of the state had witnessed tension in the past between Lambadas (also known as Lambadis and Banjaras) and Gonds or Adivasi tribes of the Agency areas.

Lambadas were added to ST list in undivided Andhra Pradesh in 1978.

Nora Fatehi records statement in Delhi court in defamation case against Jacqueline Fernandez

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actress-dancer Nora Fatehi on Monday recorded her statement at a Delhi court on a criminal complaint she has filed against actress Jacqueline Fernandez alleging that the latter made defamatory allegations against her for "malicious reasons" and to destroy her career in Rs 200 crore extortion case involving conman Sukesh Chandrababu Naidu as the prime accused.

In her statement before Metropolitan Magistrate, Kapil Gupta of Patiala House Court, Fatehi said that the allegations have caused her financial loss and harmed her reputation, and that they (accused) have called her a gold digger and accused her of having a relationship with conman, Sukesh Chandrababu Naidu. "I feel that I have been



used as a scapegoat in this case in the media to safeguard certain people, and because I am an outsider, I have been used as a soft target and I want compensation for all the damage caused to my career," she said.

The imputations made by the accused caused prolonged and unnecessary harassment, loss of work and cyberbullying, she said in her statement, claiming that she had nothing to do with the case.

"Fernandez has unnecessarily dragged and defamed me as I am in the same industry. She is fully aware that the business of any artiste and their career is solely based on their reputation. This clearly establishes that the said imputation has been made with the intention and knowledge that such imputation will harm the reputation of the complainant," Fatehi said.

PRO-KHALISTANI GRAFFITI APPEARS OUTSIDE SDM OFFICE IN HARYANA

Chandigarh: In an anti-India provocation by the banned Sikh for Justice (SFJ), a graffiti carrying a pro-Khalistani slogan was written outside the SDM office in Mandi Dabwali in Haryana on Monday.

The pro-Khalistan organisation has claimed responsibility for the act.

The writings on the walls claimed, "Haryana will become Khalistan too."

Senior MNC manager in Bengaluru lodges sexual harassment complaint against colleagues

Bengaluru | Agencies

An FIR has been registered after a senior female employee in a MNC in Bengaluru complained of sexual harassment by her colleagues, police said on Monday.

The incident had taken place in Cubbon Park police station area.

The victim had lodged a complaint against senior architect Sharana Basappa Maraturu, senior vice president Vaidyanathan Shehan, vice president Praveen Mysuru, and senior manager Shruvan Poligili, alleging that the accused had also targeted all women employees in the



company who had refused to attend parties.

She had also claimed that the management did not respond or extended help even after she complained

about sexual harassment, police sources said.

Police have begun the investigation and further details are yet to emerge.

NCW team visits West Bengal over alleged women harassment

Kolkata | Agencies

National Commission for Women (NCW) team arrived in Kolkata on Monday to visit different places in the state where alleged harassment of women by TMC activists has taken place.

The team will visit Panchla in Kolkata, adjacent to Howrah, where a woman BJP candidate was allegedly dragged out of the polling booth during the recently concluded panchayat polls and her modesty was outraged. The team will visit Malda in north Bengal to investigate the matter of harassment of two tribal women at Pakua Hat in that district allegedly by a group of people.

"NCW team shall take into account its findings after interaction with all the concerned authorities; recommend remedial measures for preventing recurrence of such incidents in future," NCW said in a Twitter. The NCW visit is being viewed as a counter to the recent visit by leaders of the opposition alliance Indian National



Development Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) to violence-ridden Manipur.

The NCW team's arrival to West Bengal also coincides with the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Leader of Opposition within the state assembly on Monday during a discussion on a motion moved by Trinamool Congress over the Manipur situation. While TMC had been constantly saying that BJP and the Union government is sending central delegations to West Bengal to malign state's image at a time when Manipur is burning, the BJP leadership is alleging that TMC has no right to speak on Manipur issue when harassment of women in West Bengal is common.

Delhi HC refuses to direct Centre to impose 'total prohibition' on cow slaughter

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court has declined to direct the Centre to implement a complete ban on the slaughter of cows and their progeny.

Presided over by Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sanjeev Narula, the court ruled that the matter should be addressed by the competent legislature.

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed by Brishbhan Verma, who sought a total prohibition on cow slaughter, encompassing old and useless bulls, bullocks, old buffaloes, and male counterparts.

However, the court observed that in Delhi, the prohibition on cow slaughter is already enforced through the Delhi Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act, 1994.



Citing a Supreme Court decision, the bench said that it is within the purview of the competent legislature to decide on issues related to the prohibition of cow slaughter. The judiciary cannot compel the legislature to pass a particular legislation on this matter.

The court pointed out that for other states, the petitioner has the option to take appropriate steps in line with the Supreme Court's ruling.

It was also noted that all states and Union territories, except Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Meghalaya,

Mizoram, Nagaland, and Lakshadweep, have enacted legislation to restrict or ban cow slaughter.

Representing the Centre, counsel Monika Arora confirmed that the legislative competence concerning the issue lies with the state governments.

Under construction culvert collapses in Odisha's Rayagada, 5 killed

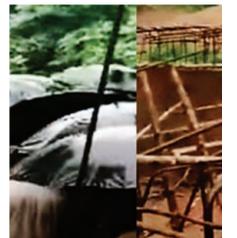
Bhubaneswar | Agencies

In a tragic mishap, five persons including four children died after an under-construction culvert suddenly collapsed in Odisha's Rayagada district on Monday.

The incident took place at Upper Saja village under Kalyansingpur block in Rayagada district at around 11 a.m. The persons were bathing in the local nullah and accidentally went near the under-construction culvert, which is being constructed by the Rural Development department, sources said.

After getting information, local police and fire services rushed to the spot and worked to clear the debris.

Odisha Law Minister Jagannath Saraka, local MLA Makaranda Muduli and Rayagada SP Vivekanand Sharma also visited the spot

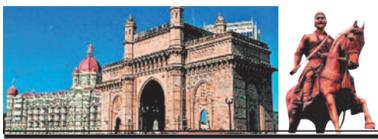


and took stock of the situation.

Stating it is a very unfortunate incident, the MLA said necessary action against the persons responsible for the mishap need to be taken.

Expressing deep grief over the loss of lives in the incident, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia for family members of each deceased.

The CM has also ordered to take strong action against officials responsible for the mishap.



DAWN SHOCK AS RPF JAWAN KILLS IN-CHARGE, 3 PASSENGERS ON JAIPUR-MUMBAI TRAIN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a speeding train shocker at dawn, a disturbed Railway Protection Force (RPF) constable allegedly shot dead his immediate in-charge and three other passengers onboard a running train, Jaipur-Mumbai Superfast Express (No. 12956), officials said here on Monday.

The incident occurred as the train was speeding between Virar (Palghar) and Mira Road (Thane) where the two on-duty cops - Constable Chetankumar Singh and his in-charge, Assistant Sub-Inspector Tikaram Meena - were on escort duty.

It was around 5.23 a.m. when Singh reportedly had an argument with some passenger in the B-5 coach, lifted and aimed his automatic weapon at them, but Meena intervened and asked him to maintain calm.

In an apparent rage, Singh didn't heed Meena and shot at him and three other passengers, including a pantry car employee, firing at least 12 rounds indiscriminately from his weapon. Singh ran from there to an adjoining bogie, then pulled the alarm chain, hopped off near Dahisar station and attempted to flee but was chased and caught by a GRP



jawan on duty there.

He was taken to Mira Road station along with the killer weapon and is under detention even as top RPF, GRP and other officials rushed to investigate the tragedy.

The deceased passengers are identified as - Akhtar Abbas Ali, 48 of Sewri (Mumbai) and Abdulqader Mohammedhussein Bhanpurawala, 50, of Nalasopara (Palghar).

As per officials, for a few moments, Singh even tried to hold the passengers hostage at gunpoint, though the exact motives behind his actions are not yet clear.

According to preliminary information, Singh had been in a disturbed state of mind owing to certain family issues. After a delay of around two hours, the train reached Mumbai Central station and then shifted to a yard where a forensic team, GRP, RPF and local authorities along with senior officers have started a probe.

Meanwhile, the bodies of all the victims were shifted to Borivali station and then to the Kandivali Shatabdi Hospital for an autopsy and further formalities.

Western Railway Divisional Railway Manager (WR-DRM) Neeraj

Verma termed the incident as 'very unfortunate' and said it would be probed from all angles.

He added that the families of the deceased victims have been contacted and they shall be entitled to compensation as applicable.

The family of the deceased ASI Meena shall be entitled to various benefits like ex-gratia, Railway Suraksha Kalyan Nidhi, Death Cum Retirement Gratuity, General Insurance Scheme, leave amount and other expenses totaling to around Rs 60-lakh, plus a compensation from WR, said an official.

"If all 3 Maharashtra opposition partners decide...": Sharad Pawar

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar has said if his party, the Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT) decide, they can usher in a change in Maharashtra.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The NCP, Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT) are constituents of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in the state.

Pawar also claimed it was difficult to engage with the present state government.

He was speaking on Sunday at a book launch function where he shared the stage with Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat.

Pawar recalled how previous governments helped in the preservation of ancient art and culture, literature and history.

"But it is difficult for us to engage with the present state government. But some solution will come out. If we three (MVA constituents) decide, there can be a change," he asserted.

It was for the first time since July 2, when the NCP split due to the revolt by Ajit Pawar, that leaders of all the



three MVA allies shared the stage.

On July 2, Ajit Pawar and eight other NCP MLAs joined the Eknath Shinde-BJP government in the state.

During the book launch

event, Sharad Pawar also said the Yeshwantrao Chavan Pratishthan, which he heads, will give Rs 50 lakh to Rajawade Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, the group which published the books.

"Don't Need Traitor To Tell Me...": Team Uddhav MP on misogynistic remark

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena MLA has drawn flak over his misogynistic remarks against Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi, who belongs to the Uddhav Thackeray-led group.

The Eknath Shinde-led party's MLA Sanjay Shirsat has claimed that Chaturvedi was sent to Rajya Sabha by Aaditya Thackeray because of her beauty. Shirsat said former MP Chandrakant Khaire, who belongs to the Uddhav Thackeray faction, had told him this.

Slamming Shirsat, Chaturvedi called him a traitor who sold his soul and integrity. "I don't need a traitor to tell me what I look like and why I'm where I am," she



tweeted. Shirsat has displayed his sick views on politics and women, she added. Aaditya Thackeray told reporters that Shirsat has a rotten mind and has realised his worth. "I don't know how people with such a rotten

mindset have survived in politics," he said.

Priyanka Chaturvedi joined the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena in 2019 after leaving the Congress, where she served as a national spokesperson.

MAN JUMPS OFF MUMBAI SEA LINK, SEARCH UNDERWAY

Mumbai: In a suspected case of suicide, an unidentified man jumped off the Bandra Worli Sea Link (BWSL) here into the Arabian Sea on Monday, police said. Teams of the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy and Mumbai Police have deployed a helicopter for a massive aerial and maritime search operation to track the person from the choppy waters in the Worli Bay. The identity of the person, where he hailed from and motive behind the extreme step is not clear.

The incident resulted in huge traffic snarls on both arms of the BWSL which the traffic police were attempting to clear to enable commuters to reach their destinations.

Bombay HC ex-Additional Judge Pushpa Ganediwala moves plea for pension

Team Absolute | Nagpur

Justice Pushpa Ganediwala, a former Additional Judge of the Bombay High Court (Nagpur Bench), has moved the court seeking pension as applicable to a judge.

Justice Ganediwala, who came under a cloud after her 'skin-to-skin' verdict in a rape case, was compelled to resign after she was denied elevation as Permanent Judge here last year.

She has challenged the high court (Original Side) registrar's communication of November 2, 2022 that she was ineligible for the pension and other benefits as entitled to a judge.

In her plea last fortnight, Ganediwala has contended that irrespective of whether she retired voluntarily or after attaining superannuation, she was entitled to pension and other benefits.

Her plea has named as respondents:



the Bombay HC through the Registrar-General, the Union Ministry of Law & Justice, Maharashtra Law & Judiciary Department Secretary and others, and it is likely to come up for hearing in due course. After practising as a lawyer for seven years, Ganediwala was appointed as a District Judge in 2007, later served as Joint Director of

Maharashtra Judicial Academy, Principal Judge in the City Civil & Sessions Court, and as a HC Registrar, before being elevated as an Additional Judge on February 13, 2019 for two years.

Three of her judgements had created a furore -- in one she set aside a rape conviction saying there was nothing to support the prosecution case, in the second she said that holding hands of a minor or the accused' pants zip open at that time did not amount to sexual assault, and in the third held that pressing a 12-year-old girl's breast without removing her top did not constitute sexual assault -- all delivered within a week in January 2021.

The final one -- that became infamous for her suggestion that direct 'skin-to-skin' contact was necessary to constitute an offence of sexual assault under the POCSO Act -- had resulted in a massive public furore.

'BOND OVER SPORTS, MOVIES': IIT-BOMBAY IN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION GUIDELINES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) has issued guidelines urging students to desist from asking fellow students for details that might reveal their caste and instead encouraged them to bond over commonalities like sports, music and movies.

The anti-discrimination guidelines come months after allegations of caste discrimination at the premiere institute surfaced following the death of Darshan Solanki, a first-year BTech (Chemical) student.

Apart from circulating the guidelines among students, authorities have also pasted them at different locations on the institute's Powai campus.

According to the guidelines, it is inappropriate to ask fellow students about their birth, admission, and the category they belong to as it could lead to conscious or subconscious bias.

It is also inappropriate to ask other students about their JEE Advanced rank or GATE score or any other information that may reveal caste or other related aspects, the guidelines say.

Asking the rank could appear like an attempt to



find the caste and may set the stage for discrimination, state the guidelines made public by the institute on July 29. The guidelines encourage students to bond over commonalities like departments, sports, music, movies, schools, college, and hobbies.

They also prohibit students from sharing messages, including jokes that are abusive, hateful, casteist, sexist or exhibit bigotry based on religion or sexual orientation, which can be construed as harassment or bullying. IIT B also talks of 'severe

punishment" in case of violation of the guidelines.

The institute said the guidelines are just a compilation of content in the context of anti-discrimination.

"Each year, in the orientation session for new Under Graduate (UG) and Post Graduate (PG) entrants, various institute bodies/cells have always emphasised the zero-tolerance policy that IIT Bombay follows towards any form of discrimination.

"Each hostel and department/centre too have had posters from various cells. This year, the content from various cells, posters/orientations, in the context of anti-discrimination, has been compiled into one poster. This is also being circulated by the institute towards both new and existing students," said IIT-B. Darshan Solanki, who hailed from

Ahmedabad, allegedly jumped to death from the seventh floor of a hostel building on the IITB campus on February 12. According to the chargesheet filed by the Mumbai police in the case, he had told his mother that caste-based discrimination existed on the institute's campus. He also told his mother during phone calls that the behaviour of fellow students changed when they learned about his caste, claimed the chargesheet.

MAN STABS ESTRANGED WIFE AFTER DISPUTE, ARRESTED

Mumbai: A man was arrested on Sunday night shortly after he stabbed and injured his 35-year-old estranged wife over a marital dispute in Mumbai, police said.

The incident occurred after the woman stepped out of the residence of her employer in suburban Khar, an official said.

The woman received injuries in her neck, the official said, adding the attacker was picked up from his home in Dharavi.

The injured woman was rushed to a nearby hospital where she is recuperating and her condition is stated to be stable. A case of attempt to murder was registered and further investigation is underway, the official added.

Team Uddhav MP says Sharad Pawar should not share stage with PM Modi

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UT) MP Arvind Sawant on Monday said NCP leader Sharad Pawar should reconsider his decision to attend an event where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be conferred the Lokmanya Tilak National Award.

Pawar is scheduled to attend the event organised by the Lokmanya Tilak Smarak Mandir Trust in Pune as the chief guest on August 1 where he will share the stage with Prime Minister Modi.

Leaders of different parties from the opposition bloc INDIA have raised the issue saying it will be bad optics for the alliance. Some leaders have also questioned Pawar's decision to attend the event especially after his nephew Ajit Pawar had revolted against him and joined the BJP-Shiv Sena



government in Maharashtra.

Sawant said that Tilak had given the slogan 'Swaraj is my birthright'. But "is there Swaraj today? In today's situation, he (Pawar) should think... It is 'swa-rajya' instead - the rule of one person," he said and added that Mr Pawar should reconsider his decision. "Leaders of their party (BJP) are destroying the Constitution of India, he (Pawar) should not go there," he said. The award was constituted by Tilak Smarak Mandir Trust in 1983 to honour the legacy of Lokmanya Tilak, according to a statement by the Press Information Bureau (PIB).

The award is given to people who have worked for the progress and development of

the nation and whose contribution can only be looked upon as remarkable and extraordinary, the statement said.

It is presented every year on August 1, the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak, the statement said.

NCP leader Sharad Pawar has been invited as chief guest for the event, organisers earlier said.

Rohit Tilak, vice president of the Trust, confirmed on Monday that Sharad Pawar will attend the award ceremony. "There is no change in the programme. Pawar Saheb, who is the chief guest, will be attending the event. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, deputy chief ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar, Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais, and Sushil Kumar Shinde, who is also a trustee, will also be attending the event," he said.

BOMBAY HC REFUSES NOD TO 17-YR-OLD GIRL TO ABORT PREGNANCY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court has refused permission to a 17-year-old girl to abort her 24-week pregnancy, saying it was the result of a consensual relationship and the baby would be born alive at this stage.

A division bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Y G Khobragade, in its order on July 26, noted the girl would turn 18 this month and that she was in a consensual relationship with the boy since December 2022.

The bench in its order said the victim girl and the accused boy had developed physical relations several times. The girl herself brought a pregnancy kit and confirmed the pregnancy in February this year, it noted.

"Therefore, it appears that the petitioner victim is not innocent and she was having full maturity of understanding. If the petitioner was not interested to carry the pregnancy she could have sought permission for termination soon after confirmation of the pregnancy," the HC said.



The girl had filed the petition in the HC through her mother, seeking to terminate the pregnancy claiming she was a "child" within the meaning of provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, a court's permission is required to ter-

minate pregnancy beyond 20 weeks, if it is found the pregnancy poses a threat to the life or health of the mother or the child.

The plea claimed the pregnancy would cause grave injury to the mental health of the petitioner who wishes to study to become a doctor in future.

The high court took note of a report submitted by the medical board after examining the victim girl, which said there was no anomaly in the foetus and the growth was normal. The medical board opined that a child born if pregnancy is aborted at this stage would show signs of life, but would not be capable of independent survival. "If a baby is born alive even after forcible delivery considering the request of the mother to terminate the pregnancy then it would lead to an under-developed child with chances of deformities," the HC said.

The bench said it was not inclined to permit termination of the pregnancy as in any case, the child is going to be born alive and the natural delivery is just 15 weeks away.

If the girl later wishes to put up the child for adoption she is at liberty to do so, the high court said, adding if the baby is delivered at full term, then there would be no deformity and the chances of adoption would brighten. The bench also said the girl could be lodged at some social organisation which takes care of such pregnant women till she delivers the baby.



EDITOR'S SPECS

AAP will dent Cong more than BJP in Rajasthan Assembly polls

About 47 per cent people in Rajasthan feel that the Congress will suffer the most if the AAP contests the Assembly polls later this year, an opinion poll predicted on Friday. The ABP-CVoter opinion poll, which was carried out between June 26 to July 25 in all the 200 Assembly seats of the desert state involving 14,085 people asked which party will suffer more if AAP contests the Assembly polls in Rajasthan. According to the survey, 46.5 per cent people feel that Congress will suffer while 27.2 per cent felt that BJP will suffer if AAP contests the Assembly polls later this year in the desert state. The survey also said that 21.7 per cent BJP people, 37.4 per cent Congress people and 23.3 per cent others feel that the saffron party will suffer if AAP contests in the elections later this year. Meanwhile, the survey said that 9.5 per cent BJP people, 11.3 per cent Congress people and 15.1 per cent others feel that the RLP will have an alliance with the AAP after polls. The survey also said that about 54.8 per cent of BJP, 34.7 per cent of Congress and 49.3 per cent others feel that the grand old party will suffer if AAP contests in the elections. Meanwhile, 25.3 per cent said they don't know and cannot comment. The Assembly polls are scheduled later this year where the Congress is looking to break the tradition of alternate government. The BJP is also preparing to make a comeback in the state.

AT THE CORE OF MANIPUR'S ETHNIC STRIFE IS FIGHT OVER TRIBAL LAND RIGHTS

Sujit Chakraborty

The ethnic conflicts in Manipur for over three decades have mostly been land-centric and in all of them, Kuki tribals are involved.

The Kukis and their sub-tribes are hill tribes living in Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and other northeastern states besides Myanmar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in southeast Bangladesh.

This northeastern region is culturally and ethnically diverse having more than 200 ethnic groups, including 34 in Manipur, with distinct languages, dialects and socio-cultural identities.

In the ongoing ethnic violence, which broke out in Manipur on May 3, over 160 people have been killed and over 600 injured, huge destruction of properties took place, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts by the All Tribal Students' Union of Manipur to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Kuki tribals felt that if the Meitei community gets the ST status, their various rights, including the land rights, would be curtailed and Meitei people would be able to purchase and live in their existing lands.

The ongoing conflict between non-tribal Meiteis and Kuki tribals can also be termed as hills versus plains conflict.

Meiteis account for 53 per cent of Manipur's three million population, while tribal communities account for around 40 per cent. Out of these, Naga tribes make up for 24 per cent and Kuki/Zomi tribes constitute 16 per cent.

The valley areas, where the Meiteis are living, are around 10 per cent of the total geographical areas of Manipur while the hilly areas comprise around 90 per cent territory.

On September 13, 1993 militants belonging to National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah faction massacred around 115 Kuki civilians in the hills of Manipur.

However, the Naga outfit rejects responsibility for the killings.

In 1990, there were clashes over land. Kukis often claimed 350 of their villages were uprooted, over 1,000 killed, and 10,000 people displaced.

In 1993, there were clashes between Meitei Pangal (Muslims) and Meiteis. A bus carrying



Muslim passengers was set on fire and over 100 people were killed.

Manipur had scores of militant outfits and violence was largely triggered by insurgents.

A total of 23 underground outfits under two conglomerates - 8 under the United Peoples' Front (UPF) and 15 are under Kuki National Organisation (KNO) -- are currently under Suspension of Operation (SoO) with the Centre since August 2008.

Manipur is also affected by activities of Meitei, Naga, Kuki, Zomi, and Hmar insurgent groups.

To curb the illegal and unlawful activities by insurgent groups of northeastern states, a total of 16 insurgent organisations have declared "unlawful associations" and/or "terrorist organisations" under The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Out of these 16, eight are from Manipur. These are People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its political wing, the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and its armed wing the Manipur People's Army (MPA), the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP), the Kanglei Yoi Kanba Lup (KYKL), the Coordination Committee (Cor-Com), the Alliance for Socialist Unity Kangleipak (ASUK), and the Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF).

While the NSCN-IM and other Naga outfits in neighbouring Nagaland entered into a ceasefire agreement with the Centre in 1997, Manipur Valley-based militant outfits (Meitei groups) such as the UNLF, PLA, KYKL etc. are yet to come to the negotiating table.

There are 2,266 Kuki cadres who have been staying in different designated camps in Manipur after the Centre and the Manipur

governments signed the tripartite Suspension of Operation (SoO) on August 22, 2008, when Congress was in power in Manipur.

Officials in Manipur alleged that the cadres of the Kuki National Army (KNA), Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) and Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA) are instigating the poppy cultivators in the state against the government, which has been taking action against illegal poppy cultivators by destroying poppy fields in the forest lands, especially in the reserve and protected forests.

However, an umbrella organisation of the Kuki outfits has dismissed the accusations.

On March 10, the tribals organised protest rallies against the state government's actions against the illegal poppy cultivators and illegal encroachments of forest lands in three hills districts that were also allegedly backed by the Kuki militants.

The rallies in several places turned violent, injuring many, while the Manipur government unilaterally withdrew itself from the SoO deal the very next day. However, the Central government is yet to approve the Manipur government's decision to withdraw from the SoO deal.

The Manipur government also claimed that the Myanmarese immigrants came from across the border, encouraging illegal poppy cultivation and the drugs trade.

On April 9, the Kuki Independent Army (KIA) looted 25 sophisticated arms from the armoury of Kuki militant groups staying in their designated camps at Chungkhao in Churachandpur district bordering Myanmar.

The Manipur Police launched a probe into the looting of arms by the militants of the KIA (also known as the

Kuki Independent Organisation), which is a non-signatory of the tripartite ceasefire pact with the governments.

The arms loot took place three days after the Manipur police announced a reward of Rs 50,000 to any person who provides information leading to the arrest of KIA chief Thangkhongam Hoakip (40).

The hilly and forested Churachandpur district in southern Manipur, which borders Myanmar and Mizoram, is home to various Kuki-Chin militant groups.

Ever since the non-tribal Meitei community members started demanding to categorise them as Scheduled Tribe around one and a half decades ago, the Kuki tribals and their various organisations have been strongly opposing the demand saying that if the Meitei community is declared as tribals, their (Kukis) share of benefits as tribals will be curtailed and the people belonging to the Meitei community will be allowed to purchase land in the hilly areas.

Amid the ethnic violence, 10 tribal MLAs, belonging to the Kuki community, have demanded a separate state for the Manipur tribals.

The 10 legislators, including seven ruling BJP MLAs, also sent a memorandum to Union Home Minister Amit Shah in support of their demand.

Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Education, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said that the demand was made under tremendous pressure from various quarters, including the Kuki militants.

international

WAR IS GRADUALLY RETURNING TO RUSSIA: ZELENSKY

Kiev | Agencies

Hours after Kremlin accused Kiev of targeting Moscow with drones, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that the "war is gradually returning to Russia".

In a video address on Sunday from the western city of Ivano-Frankivsk, Zelensky said: "Today is the 522nd day of the so-called 'Special Military Operation', which the Russian leadership thought would last a couple of weeks.

"Gradually, the war is returning to the territory of Russia -- to its symbolic centres and military bases, and this is an inevitable, natural and absolutely fair process."

Russia calls its ongoing invasion 'Special Military Operation'.

The Russian Defence Ministry said three drones were intercepted on Sunday but a business and shopping development in the west of the capital was hit.



The fifth and sixth floor of a 50-story building were damaged, and no casualties were reported, CNN quoted state news agency TASS as saying.

Videos showed debris as well as emergency services at the scene.

Yurii Ihnat, a spokesman for Ukraine's Air Force, said the latest drone attacks on Moscow were aimed at impacting Russians who felt the war was distant.

"There's always something flying in Russia, as well as in Moscow. Now the war is affecting those who were not con-

cerned," Ihnat said on Ukrainian television.

"No matter how the Russian authorities would like to turn a blind eye on this by saying they have intercepted everything... something does hit."

Ukrainian Minister Mykhailo Fedorov, whose Digital Transformation Ministry oversees the country's 'Army of Drones' procurement plan, had said there would be more drone strikes to come as Kiev ramps up a summer counteroffensive aimed at pushing Russian troops out of Ukrainian territory, reports CNN.

Ukraine claimed responsibility for a strike on July 24 that hit two non-residential buildings, including one near the Ministry of Defence headquarters.

Meanwhile, a Russian missile attack in the northeastern Ukrainian city of Sumy on July 29 killed at least two civilians and 20, while a rocket strike on Zaporizhzhia left another two people dead. Ukrainian drones also targeted the Russian-occupied Crimean Peninsula on Sunday.

Typhoon Khanun heads toward Japan's Okinawa, Amami

Beijing | Agencies

Tokyo: The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) said Khanun, a large and powerful typhoon, is expected to approach the country's southwestern regions of Okinawa and Amami from Monday through Tuesday.

According to the JMA, typhoon Khanun was moving across the sea south of Japan and headed north-northwest at 15 km per hour on Monday, reports Xinhua news agency. The storm had a central atmospheric pressure of 960 hectopascals, with winds of up to 144 km per hour near its center and gusts of up to 198 km per hour, said the JMA. The agency added that winds of up to 90 km per hour are expected in Okinawa and up to 72 km per hour in Amami on Monday.

Weather officials forecasted that the storm will continue to move northward while developing, gradually change its course westward, and come closest to the regions of Okinawa and Amami through Tuesday.

North China on highest-level alerts as rainstorms linger

Beijing | Agencies

Beijing and Hebei have continued the highest-level alerts on Monday as downpours continued to lash China's northern region.

Meteorological authorities in Beijing maintained a red alert for rainstorms on Monday morning and warned of torrential rains until 8 a.m. on Tuesday, reports Xinhua news agency.

Latest data shows that from 8 p.m. on July 29 to 10 a.m. Monday, the average rainfall in Beijing was 157.8 mm, with the maximum rainfall exceeding 538 mm in a village in the suburban Fangshan district.

As of 10 a.m., Monday, operations on 275 bus lines run by Beijing Public Transport Corporation were affected, and several



train routes in the suburban areas suspended service.

Meanwhile, the neighbouring Hebei province has also activated the highest level alerts for rainstorms, flood control, and waterlogging prevention in response to the heavy rainfall.

The Hebei provincial meteorological observatory continued to issue a red

alert for rainstorms at 8:59 a.m. on Monday.

It forecast that stormy weather will persist on Monday in parts of Zhangjiakou, Chengde, Tangshan, Baoding, the Xiong'an New Area, Langfang, and Shijiazhuang, the provincial capital, with accumulative precipitation likely exceeding 250 mm in some areas.

Hundreds ordered to evacuate as wildfire burns across Canada-US border

Ottawa | Agencies

Hundreds of people in western Canada have been ordered to evacuate due to an out-of-control wildfire burning across the country's border with the US, the media reported.

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and the town of Osoyoos issued an evacuation order the evening of July 29 for 732 properties in and around Osoyoos, 400 km east of Vancouver, Xinhua news agency quoted the local media reports as saying.

The wildfire, which originated from the northwestern U. state of Washington, is burning about 4 km from Osoyoos in British Columbia's southern Interior.

On the Canadian side of the border, it had grown to 885 hectares as of Sunday morning, while on the US side, the fire had burned more than 4,000 hectares, Washington State wildfire officials were quoted as saying.

On Sunday morning, over 2,000 properties in west Osoyoos were placed on evacuation alert.

An evacuation alert means residents should prepare to evacuate their homes, while an evacuation order means residents



should leave immediately, the reports said. Osoyoos Mayor Sue McKortoff urged residents and businesses to reduce water consumption and not to water lawns in order to conserve resources for the firefighting effort.

The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre said on Sunday that there were over 1,000 active wildfires nationwide with over 600 of them out of control.

So far this year, the country has registered over 5,000 wildfires, which have devoured about 126,000 square km of land.

Police suggest IS behind Pak rally bombing

Islamabad | Agencies

Police in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Monday said an initial probe has suggested that the Islamic State (IS) terror group was behind the alleged suicide blast at a Jamiat Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) workers' convention in Bajaur, which claimed 46 lives.

More than 100 people were also injured when a suicide bomber set off explosives at the rally on Sunday in the former tribal area, which borders Afghanistan, reports Geo News.

Emergency was declared in the hospitals of Bajaur and adjoining areas where most of the injured were taken, said District Police Officer (DPO) Nazir Khan.

The critically injured were transported from Bajaur to hospitals in Peshawar by military helicopters.

"We are still investigating and gathering information on the Bajaur blast. The initial probe shows that banned outfit Daesh was involved," the law enforcers said.

The police added they were gather-



ing details about the suicide bomber, while the bomb disposal squad team was collecting evidence from the site, Geo News reported.

DPO Khan said three suspected people had been taken into custody.

Pakistan has seen a resurgence of attacks by extremists since last year when a ceasefire between the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and

Islamabad broke down. A mosque bombing in Peshawar killed over 100 people earlier this year, Geo News reported.

A report submitted to the UN Security Council recently mentioned that the TTP might be seeking a merger with Al Qaeda to create an umbrella organisation that shelters all militant groups operating in South

Asia.

Pakistan has long blamed Afghanistan for not living up to its commitment to ensuring that its soil is not used for terrorism in Islamabad, but cross-border militancy continues, Geo News reported.

JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman demanded that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and KP Caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan investigate the incident.

The targeted party is a major ally of the coalition government, which is preparing for national elections to be held in November, Geo News reported.

Sharif condemned the blast, calling it an attack on the democratic process of Pakistan and vowed that those responsible would be punished.

The top brass of the Pakistan Army has recently said that sanctuaries and liberty of action available to terrorists of proscribed TTP and other groups of that ilk in Afghanistan is one of the major reasons impacting the security of Pakistan.



RECRUITMENT WILL BE DONE ON 1 LAKH GOVERNMENT POSTS IN ONE YEAR, SO FAR APPOINTMENTS MADE ON 60 THOUSAND POSTS: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that recruitments on one lakh government posts will be done in the state in a year, out of which appointment on about 60 thousand posts has been given. The people of the state are my family and I try to run the government like a family. The poor and labourers are God for us. You have been selected in government service to serve them. It is our responsibility to provide social security to the poor and labourers, to provide them a healthy and safe working environment. Chief Minister Chouhan was addressing the appointment letter distribution programme of Excise, Labour and Co-operative Department.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that on last August 15, I had talked about recruitment on one lakh posts in a year. This recruitment drive is going on continuously. So far, 60 thousand people have been given appointments. Today's appointments are also included in this. It has been our commitment that recruitment in government service should be done on the basis of transparency, honesty and merit. All of you have been selected on the basis of merit, so you all deserve congratulations. After taking charge in government service, the departmental schemes and programmes will be implemented through you only. May you discharge this responsibility successfully, this is



my blessing and best wishes. "I expect you to discharge your responsibilities with the feeling that we are not only for ourselves, but for the people and the state. Government service means service to the public and the development of the state and the country. And the sense of responsibility should always remain in the mind. The progress and development of the state depends on you. The successful implementation of public welfare schemes and programmes also depends on you".

Responsibilities of the Co-operative, Labour and Excise Department are important

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the Co-operative Department is an

important department related to social concern. The department is contributing to the development of the people and the state by providing financial services to rural and remote areas. Labour Department is important from the point of view of providing healthy and safe working environment to the workers. It is necessary to be vigilant, especially with respect to that the workers of the unorganised sector are not exploited. The Excise Department has a dual responsibility. It is necessary for the employees of the department to always be alert for drug control and to prevent sale of illegal liquor. The officers and employees of this department should take a pledge that they will not allow

illegal activities to be carried out and will make every possible effort to safeguard the revenue of the state. In the new excise policy, a decision has been taken to close the Ahatats and its successful implementation has been done. To control addiction, the mindset of the people will have to be improved and work of raising public awareness will also have to be done.

STATE IS ON THE PATH OF PROGRESS

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the state is moving on the path of development and progress. The per capita income which used to be Rs. 11 thousand in the year 2002-03 has now increased to Rs. one lakh 40 thousand. GSDP is 15 lakh crore and the budget of the state is 3 lakh 15 thousand crore. There has been a lot of improvement in the field of entire infrastructure including road, water, electricity. Along with this, activities are being conducted with sensitivity in the departments having social concerns.

APPOINTMENT LETTERS DISTRIBUTED TO A TOTAL OF 741

Appointment letters were distributed to a total of 741 candidates in the programme. Appointment letters were given to 340 excise constables in the Excise Department, 347 clerks and computer operators in the Co-operative Department and 54 candidates for the posts of Insurance Medical Officer, Pharmacist, Assistant Grade 3 and Safai Sevak in the Labour Department.

Anju Thomas's Pak visit: MP police to probe int'l conspiracy angle, says Narottam Mishra



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra on Monday said the Special Branch (SB) of state police have been directed to investigate the "international conspiracy" angle in Anju Thomas's visit to Pakistan.

Briefing the press here, Mishra said the state police will examine the "international conspiracy" angle in the episode involving a 34-year-old Indian mother of two children who travelled to a remote village in Pakistan to marry her Facebook friend.

Anju, who is now known as Fatima after converting to Islam - on July 25, married her 29-year-old Pakistan-based Nasrullah.

As per the reports, Anju, whose parents live in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior, came into contact with Nasrullah in 2019.

On Saturday, Mohsin Khan Abbasi, the chief executive officer of a real estate company based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, visited Anju and Nasrullah at their residence. He presented Anju a cheque, with an undisclosed amount, and a land document in the presence of her husband to make her feel at

home in Pakistan.

"The fact that Anju is being welcomed in Pakistan and getting gifts is raising several doubts. That's why I have directed the special branch of police to examine the case minutely, to rule out any international conspiracy," Mishra said.

Last week, Anju's father Gaya Thomas said, "She went to Pakistan leaving her two children and husband behind."

She did not even think about her children. If she wanted to do this, she should have divorced her husband first. She is dead for us."

Female junior doctor commits suicide at Hamida hospital

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A junior female doctor, who was pursuing her postgraduate degree from Hamida medical college in Bhopal, allegedly died by suicide.

She was found lying unconscious in a hostel room early on Monday by her doctor friends. The deceased has been identified as Saraswati and she was a gynecologist.

Sources in the college said her husband is an IPS officer in Andhra Pradesh.

Local police rushed to the spot and were investigating the matter. This is the second case of suicide in last seven months by a female junior



doctor in the biggest medical college of Madhya Pradesh. In January this year, 24-year-old postgraduate resident

doctor had committed suicide by injecting some suspicious chemical into her body.

OVER A DOZEN DEVOTEES INJURED IN STAMPEDE AT TEMPLE IN MP'S REWA

Bhopal: Over a dozen people were reported injured in a stampede at a centuries old Shiva temple in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh on Monday

As per the report, a large number of devotees were present at the temple when the stampede occurred as an electric wire fell on some of them.

As of now, officials have not confirmed any casualty. The injured persons, including women and children, were rushed to nearby hospitals. Some of them who were critical were referred to the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial hospital in Rewa, around 50 km from the spot. Rewa SP Vivek Singh and Collector Pratibha Pal have rushed to the spot. The centuries old Shiva temple is located in Dev Talab, where around 3000-4000 devotees visit every day.

4 MONTHS BEFORE POLLS, MP GOVT TRANSFERS 18 IAS OFFICERS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Four months before the Assembly elections, Madhya Pradesh government has transferred as many as 18 IAS officers, including divisional commissioners of Bhopal and Indore.

An order regarding the same was issued late on Sunday. Indore divisional commissioner Pawan Sharma and Bhopal divisional commissioner Mal Singh Bhaydiya have swapped their posts.

Five collectors including of Chhindwara, the home district of former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, were transferred. Manoj Pushp, 2011 batch IAS officer, who was posted as additional chief secretary (Women



and Child Development) of Madhya Pradesh, will be new collector of Chhindwara. He has also served as Rewa district collector. Sanjeev Shrivastav, 2011 batch IAS officer, has been appointed as district collector of Bhand. Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner V. S. Choudhary (2012 batch IAS officer) has been appointed

as additional secretary (urban development and housing).

2013 batch IAS officer Frank Nobel A., who was posted as Guna district collector, has been appointed as new BMC commissioner. District collectors of some other districts such as Umaria and Panna were also transferred. Ujjain divisional commissioner

Sandeep Yadav has been appointed as principal secretary of revenue department. Sanjay Goyal has been appointed as commissioner of Ujjain.

The Congress has raised question on transfer of IAS officers when the assembly elections are just four months away.

State Home Minister Narottam Mishra said on Monday that transfer of IAS officers was done in an normal procedure. "Transfer of officers is normal and continuous process. The Congress should not raise question on it. During 18 months government, the Congress had made Madhya Pradesh a transferring industry," Mishra, who is also spokesperson of MP government, said.

Congress MP leader withdraws plea from SC challenging Jyotiraditya Scindia's Rajya Sabha election



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed, as withdrawn, a plea challenging the election of Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia to the Rajya Sabha from Madhya Pradesh in 2020.

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Pankaj Mithal allowed withdrawal of the special leave petition moved by Congress leader Govind Singh against order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court refusing to review its decision of framing the preliminary issue in the election petition filed against Scindia.

Singh has challenged the candidature of Scindia as a candidate of the BJP from Madhya Pradesh in the biennial election for Rajya Sabha held on June 19, 2020, on the ground that while submitting the nomination paper along with an affidavit, the BJP leader did not disclose particulars or information regarding registration of an FIR lodged against him and others in Bhopal.

It was contended that Scindia had suppressed the facts by not disclosing the FIR in his nomination form which amounts to fraud and corrupt practice and his election be declared as null and void.

The Representation of the People Act, 1951 makes it mandatory for the contesting candidate to disclose all correct details in the nomination form supported by an affidavit.

The plea filed before the apex court argued that the high court refused to review its order of framing a preliminary issue in the election petition as to whether mere registration of an FIR constitutes a "pending criminal case" liable to be disclosed in the nomination papers of a prospective candidate under the

Representation of the People Act, 1951.

On July 7, the Supreme Court refused to entertain another special leave petition filed by Singh against the main order of high court framing a preliminary issue in the election petition. On the other hand, Scindia had contended before the high court that there was no criminal case pending against him and mere registration of FIR does not fall within the purview of a pending criminal case.

In September 2018, an FIR for offences punishable under Sections 465, 468, 469, 471, 472, 474 and 120-B of IPC was registered against Scindia and others at Shyamla Hills police station in Bhopal on the direction of a special judge.

"Ayush Aapke Dwar" scheme in the entire state from August 1

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The "Ayush Aapke Dwar" scheme will start from August 1 across the country. In this scheme of the Department of Ayush, the facility of Ayush treatment will be made available to the citizens in an accessible manner in major areas of the state. The department has started this scheme to ensure the reach of Ayush even in remote areas during the rainy season. The scheme will continue without break till 30 September 2023. In relation to the

scheme, the Directorate of Ayush has issued guidelines to the Principal Ayush College, Divisional Ayush Officer and District Ayush Officer.

Treatment facility for diseases caused due to rain

Health services in rural areas get affected due to rain. In view of this situation, Ayush medicines will be distributed free of cost to the general public for the treatment of diseases caused due to rain. Along with this, the general public will be informed about the prevention of diseases occurring in this season and will be made

aware of cleanliness. Such public awareness programmes will be organised in Panchayats, local schools and college premises apart from Haat-Bazar. For this work, the help of the staff posted in all the institutions of Ayush department, Ayush college, affiliated hospital, Ayush wing, Ayush dispensary, Ayush village and Ayush health and wellness centre is being taken. During this, instructions have also been given to the Ayush staff to register the health report of the person in the health survey form in the Ayush village and to prepare the data.

MARKETING BOARD WILL BE FORMED FOR HORTICULTURE CROPS IN THE STATE: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the Kushwaha Samaj is a patriotic and hardworking Samaj. The Samaj has to move forward unitedly. Kushwaha Samaj is the protector of Indian culture. Gems like Chandragupta Maurya and Emperor Ashoka emerged from this Samaj. A separate marketing board will be constituted for horticulture crops in the interest of the Kushwaha Samaj associated with the production and trade of fruits, flowers, vegetables, so that small farmers can get rid of middlemen.

Chief Minister Chouhan was addressing the Kushwaha Mahakumbh at BHEL Dussehra Maidan. Chief Minister Chouhan handed over a cheque of Rs 10 crore for the construction of Lavkush Temple and Community Dharamshala in Sagar to Shri J.P. Verma, National President of Kushwaha Sabha. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the necessary process regarding allotment of land for the office of All India Kushwaha Mahasabha, Madhya Pradesh will be completed. CM Rise School in Damoh district will be named after Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. Representatives from all over the state participated in the Mahakumbh.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the Kushwaha Samaj has made invaluable contribution for the security of the nation. The Samaj has worked hard to drive out foreign intruders. The Samaj participated in the freedom struggle. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitri Phule did important work in the field of women's education. Chief Minister Chouhan said that all necessary steps will be taken in the interest of Kushwaha



Samaj. The announcements made in the past for the welfare of the Kushwaha Samaj have been implemented. To perpetuate the memory of Mahatma Phule, Damoh's

Higher Secondary School has been named after Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. By forming the Kushwaha Welfare Board, the Kushwaha Samaj has been given the opportunity to move

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CM CHOUHAN

- Lavkush Temple and Community Dharamshala will be constructed in Sagar at a cost of Rs 10 crores.
- A separate Horticulture Crops Marketing Board will be constituted for better marketing arrangements for horticulture crops like fruits, flowers, vegetables etc.
- Necessary process regarding allotment of land for the office of All India Kushwaha Mahasabha Madhya Pradesh will be completed.
- Separate Mandi will be made for horticulture crops.
- Earlier announcements include formation of Kushwaha Welfare Board, optional holiday on Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jayanti, inclusion of biographies of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitri Phule

forward on the path of development.

CM Chouhan felicitated in Kushwaha Mahakumbh All India Kushwaha Samaj felicitated Chief Minister Chouhan. Chief Minister Chouhan has a long series of works for public interest and social interest. The announcements made earlier are being implemented. At the outset, CM was welcomed with a turban, presented with flowers and a sword. Mementos were given to Chief Minister Chouhan.



JUSTIN BIEBER, WIFE HAILEY REPORTEDLY EXPECTING FIRST CHILD TOGETHER

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop singer Justin Bieber and his supermodel wife Hailey Bieber are reportedly expecting their first child together after nearly five years of marriage. According to PopFactions, Hailey was consulting with fertility doctors in December of last year and is now pregnant. It's not clear where the rumour originated from, but a recent photo of the couple's outing has fueled the pregnancy speculation, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The pair were recently spotted attending one of Drake's 'It's All a Blur Tour' concerts. During the show at the Barclays Center stadium in New York on July 18, Hailey flashed what appeared to be a tiny baby bump.

In the picture circulating online, the 26-year-old model was standing and leaning against the rails as she caressed her stomach. She put her two hands on her bare tummy, which was put on display as she rocked a black crop top and pants.

Justin, meanwhile, was enjoying the concert while sitting on a giant speaker next to her.

The Canadian pop star wore a simple white T-shirt, denim shorts and a black hat which he put on backwards. Commenting on the picture, one fan simply pointed out, "Belly." Another gleefully remarked, "Her hands on her bellyyyy!" A third speculated, "Is she pregggers? Looks like."

Some other, however, were skeptical that the photo gave away a hint at Hailey's supposed pregnancy, with one arguing, "I don't think so, she's leaning against the rails in this photo so obv her body is bento in an unnatural position but it's only my opinion, I might be wrong." Another jested, "Me when I eat in burger king." Justin and Hailey, who will celebrate their fifth wedding anniversary this September, have previously hinted that they're ready for a baby.



Helen Flanagan told to 'cover up or leave' restaurant over bikini issue

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Helen Flanagan was left red-faced while on a holiday in Barbados with her three children, when she was refused entry to a swanky restaurant after turning up in just a bikini, but she was saved by a helpful holidaymaker.

The 'Coronation Street' star, 32, was asked to "cover up or leave" by the restaurant staff at the four-star Waves Hotel and Spa in Barbados.

Helen was wearing just a gold two-piece when she was turned away from the swanky Kyma coffee shop, the Sun reported.

Helen looked mortified after being told she was not dressed appropriately. But another holidaymaker then spared her the blushes and stepped in to lend her a dress.

The Sun quoted the holidaymaker as saying: "Helen turned up to the Kyma bar with her kids and was enjoying a drink outside. It was seriously hot in the early afternoon and when Helen took her kids indoors to get the air-conditioning, she was told she had to cover up or leave."

"She looked horrified because all she had on was a bikini and people were staring. My sister had a Skims black dress and lent it to her so she could go in."

"She was so grateful because it was a little awkward."

"It's a pretty upmarket bistro-come-cafe, and although you can go there straight from the beach, you have to have a T-shirt or a katan on. Helen sat back and enjoyed a coffee with the kids after that."

"She returned the dress - and a pair of flip-flops we lent her - to the hotel reception before she left."

"She was a great sport about the whole thing."

The actress had been keeping fans updated on her luxury trip via Instagram.

The actress said she would love to go back to Weatherfield if Rosie had children.



TV personality calls Sofia Vergara 'rudest woman'; 'forgotten her humble beginnings'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sofia Vergara has been tagged as the "rudest woman" by Teresa Giudice, a television personality. The 'Modern Family' actress was lambasted by 'The Real Housewives of New Jersey' regular Teresa, 51, while she recalled meeting her in 2017, reports aceshowbiz.com.

On the latest episode of her 'Namaste BS' podcast, while chatting with co-host Melissa Pfeister about Sofia being reluctant to take a snap with her backstage at a talk show, Teresa said: "Sofia Vergara's PR person and my PR person spoke together, and I guess the two of them said, 'Let's get a picture of Teresa and Sofia together.'"

"I didn't want a picture with her. I've never asked to take a picture with anybody. (She's) the rudest woman I've ever met. I saw her whole demeanour, and then I heard her say to her PR person, 'Why are you making me take a picture with that lady?'"

"I was like, 'Excuse me? I did not want to take a picture with you! I never asked to take a picture with you'. I was like, 'How rude. You're so not a humble person. You forgot where you came from.'"

The reality star mocked Sofia's accent, and referenced the actress' humble beginnings in Barranquilla, Colombia, by saying, "It's not like she started out like being on the top. She forgot where she came from. She's so not a down-to-earth person. I'm so not a fan of her."

Teresa previously told TMZ about Sofia, "Ugh, I can't stand her, sorry. I hate to say that because I'm Italian, she's Colombian, she has an accent - she has more of an accent than me. You would think she would be nice, like, she's an immigrant - no, I'm just saying, she should be nice!"

Fans blasted Teresa at the time over her comments about Sofia's roots.



Cardi B's mic-throwing victim says she mistook her for person who threw drink

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Cardi B's mic-throwing victim has claimed that the rapper mistook her for another person. A woman, who was allegedly hit with the 'Bodak Yellow' hitmaker's microphone during her angry fit, said that the hip-hop star mistook her as the person who threw drink at the Cardi B, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The woman, who goes by paxybaby on TikTok, took to the video-sharing platform to share footage from the incident.

In the clip, she was seemingly holding the camera while someone in front of her holding her drink in the air before tossing it at Cardi's direction.

After Cardi reacted by throwing her mic at the audience, the woman was visibly shaken judging from her camera's angle.

She captioned the footage, "When you're the one gets smoked by Cardi B microphone but didn't throw the drink."

The woman posted another video of the incident on her Instagram Story, this time capturing the moment from a bit further back. The clip shows that a woman, possibly paxybaby, was standing right behind the woman who was holding a drink in the air.

When Cardi threw her mic, the second woman seemingly swiftly moved away to avoid the mic, which appeared to have landed on the woman holding the camera. Someone else was seen quickly pointing at the right culprit though, before security guards escorted her out.

The incident took place when the Grammy Award-winning artist was performing in Las Vegas on July 29. She took the stage at Drai's nightclub when she got upset by the person who hurled liquid from a cup at her mid-performance.



NIGHTCLUB CROWD TROLLS GERARD PIQUE WITH 'SHAKIRA' CHANTS, 'WAKA WAKA' SING ALONG

Madrid | Agencies

Spanish former professional footballer Gerard Pique was mercilessly trolled during his visit to a nightclub in Madrid.

In a new video circulating online, the ex-fiancee of Shakira could be seen being trolled by the audience members when he was onstage to deliver a speech, reports aceshowbiz.com.

He attended an event for his 'Kings League' seven-a-side tournament at Atletico's Wanda Metropolitan. As he had a microphone to give a speech, the crowd started loudly chanting the name of Shakira, with whom he shares his children.

Gerard was featured struggling to speak amid the noise. Not stopping there, the wild crowd further showed support to Shakira by singing her song 'Waka Waka', which was the 2010 World Cup song. The track was one of the things that led him to meet the 'Hips Don't Lie' hitmaker.

Upon watching the clip, fans showed support to Shakira while mocking Gerard. "My respects for the crowd," one fan wrote in an Instagram comment.

One other added, "Lmao he will forever be haunted, he shouldn't of let his mistress steal shakira jam."

"He deserves it for being a ch3ater," someone else said. "How embarrassing LMAO, you cheat on someone just to get exposed globally and now the fans of your ex humiliate you everyday," another person wrote.



Kimberly Garner



BUMRAH SET TO MAKE COMEBACK AS INDIA'S CAPTAIN FOR T20I SERIES AGAINST IRELAND, PRASIDH ALSO RETURNS

Fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is set to make a comeback into international cricket after being named as India's captain for the three-match T20I series against Ireland. In the squad, fast-bowler Prasidh Krishna also makes a return to the team.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The three T20I matches between India and Ireland will be played in Malahide on August 18, 20 and 23. India and Ireland played a two-match T20I series in June 2022, with the visitors winning the series 2-0, though the hosts came close to winning.

For the tour of Ireland, Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, and Shahbaz Ahmed have also been included, with Ruturaj Gaikwad appointed as vice-captain of the side.

Bumrah has been out of competitive cricket since late September last year, when he pulled out of the home T20Is against South Africa, after playing in two games against Australia. The reoccurrence of back injury resulted in him missing the Men's T20 World Cup in Australia. He had also missed the Asia Cup held last year in the UAE.

Bumrah attempted a comeback in January this year for the ODI series against Sri Lanka. But he was withdrawn on the eve of the ODI series opener at Guwahati, with the BCCI citing the need for him to build bowling resilience and calling the decision a precautionary measure.

He then underwent back surgery in New Zealand in March and has been on a recovery route since then at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru. On the other hand, Prasadidh had been out of action since last year due to a stress fracture in the back which needed surgery and was also undergoing rehab at the NCA.

India squad for T20Is against Ireland: Jasprit Bumrah (captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad (vice-captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Shahbaz Ahmed, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasadidh Krishna, Arshdeep Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Avesh Khan

Fifa Women's World Cup

Australia, Nigeria progress as Canada knocked out

Sydney (Australia) | Agencies

Co-host Australia trounced Canada 4-0, advancing to the Round of 16, while Nigeria also moved forward despite a 0-0 draw with debutant Ireland at the FIFA Women's World Cup on Monday.

Australia concluded the group stage at the top of Group B with six points, while Nigeria secured second place with five points. Olympic champion Canada was eliminated with four points, and Ireland claimed its first-ever World Cup point from the draw, reports Xinhua.

Rebounding from a surprising 3-2 defeat to Nigeria, Australia delivered a superb performance before an audience of 27,706 fans in Melbourne. The attack-minded Australia, unfazed by the previous setback, saw Hayley Raso score twice in the first half as the Matildas took control.

Striker Mary Fowler and Steph Catley added goals in the second half, ending Canada's disappointing campaign.

The game in Brisbane failed to impress, but the result was enough for Nigeria to reach the Round of 16. Nigeria forward Uchenna Kanu thought she had finally broken Ireland's resistance in the 51st minute, but her powerful header was brilliantly saved by acrobatic goalkeeper Courtney Brosnan.



This was the best opportunity of the game, and Nigeria's players celebrated after the final whistle knowing they had secured a spot in the knockout stage. Earlier, Japan thrashed Spain 4-0 in an upset, signalling a strong warning ahead of their clash with Norway in the Round of 16. The Asian heavyweight seized the top position of Group C aggressively, scoring three goals during a dominant first half. Playing in front of 20,957 fans in Wellington, Japan was unstoppable on the counterattack, with Hinata Miyazawa scoring twice on either side and a strike from Riko Ueki in the 29th minute. Japan's rout was complete when substitute Mina Tanaka scored in the 82nd minute.

India women's rugby sevens team secures Asian Games qualification



past few years with triumphs recently in the Asia Rugby 7s Trophy, the Asia Rugby U20 Championship, and the Asia Rugby U18 Championship, where the team won three silver medals on the trot.

According to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) policy for team events, 'the teams which have achieved a ranking up to eighth among participating countries of Asia in the last one year should be considered for participation in Asian Games'.

The final travelling team that will go to the Asian Games will be announced at the camp that started on July 29 and will go on till September 20 at the SAI Netaji Subhas Eastern Centre, Kolkata, West Bengal.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian women's rugby 7s team has qualified for the upcoming edition of the Asian Games by being ranked seventh in the conti-

ment. The prestigious quadrennial event is scheduled to take place in Hangzhou, China, from September 23 to October 8.

The Indian team has been consistently performing well on the Asian stage for the

World University Games

INDIA SURPASS WORLD RECORD TO WIN MEN'S 10M AIR RIFLE TEAM GOLD



Chengdu (China): India surpassed the shooting men's 10m air rifle team world record on Monday and won a gold medal at the 31st FISU World University Games, here.

India shot 1894.7 points for the title, 7.3 points ahead of the previous world record set by China in 2018. However, since the shooting results of FISU World University Games are not included in the results of the ISSF, the governing body for Olympic shooting events, it does not count as a new world record, Xinhua reported. "I am very happy and proud of winning the gold medal in the World University Games. My efforts paid off," said Indian shooter Aishwary Tomar.

Badminton

Indian shuttlers Raksha, Taarini win silver medals in All-England Juniors

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Indian girls Raksha Kandasamy and Taarini Suri claimed silver medals in the women's singles and mixed doubles events of the BWF All-England Junior Badminton Championships 2023, played at the University of Birmingham, England.

The Navi Mumbai-based second-seeded Raksha lost to Canada's top-seeded Jackie Dent in three keenly-fought games at 21-19, 12-21, 11-21 in the final, according to information reaching here on Monday.

Meanwhile, the Mumbai-based Taarini along with her England partner Dillon Chong went down fighting to the American pairing of Garret Tan and Ella Lin in two games at 18-21, 18-21 and had to settle for the silver medal in the event that started on July 27 and ended on July 30, 2023.

Earlier, in the semifinals, Taarini and Dillon combined well to overcome the Spanish team of Marc Martin and Macarena Izquierdo clinching a hard-fought 21-19, 22-20 win. In the other semifinals, Garret and Ella easily prevailed over the English



combination of Robin Harper and Lucy Brierley posting a quick 21-15, 21-11 victory.

In the women's singles semifinals, the No.1 seed Jackie Dent defeated another Indian contender and sixth seed Naishaa Kaur Bhatoye 21-19, 21-7, while Raksha had quite a fight on hand before getting the better of Italy's third seed Gianna Stiglich 21-13, 16-21, 25-23.

Davis Cup

Rohan Bopanna, Sumit Nagal spearhead India's challenge in Group II tie against Morocco

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Veteran doubles ace Rohan Bopanna and India's top men's singles player Sumit Nagal headline the six-member Indian tennis team at the Davis Cup 2023 World Group II tie against Morocco, scheduled from September 16 to 17 in Lucknow.

Sasikumar Mukund, Digvijay Pratap Singh, Yuki Bhambri and Ramkumar Ramanathan are the other four Indian tennis players in the squad for the match against Morocco.

Bopanna, currently ranked 9th in the world in men's doubles, has been in excellent form this year, securing victories at the Qatar Open and Indian Wells Masters. The Indian ace revealed last month that the Morocco tie will be his career's final Davis Cup appearance.

Nagal, who endured a difficult time in the last couple of years with injury, has also shot up the rankings after winning ATP Challenger titles in Rome and Tampere this season.

Former player Rohit Rajpal will continue as the non-playing captain of while Zeeshan Ali will be the coach. In addition, the All-India Tennis Association (AITA) has also named five more players -- Saketh Myneni, Manas Dhamne, Manish Sureshkumar, Karan Singh and Yuvan Nandal -- who will be with the squad to provide the core



group with some valuable practice matches.

India lost 3-2 to Denmark in the Davis Cup 2023 World Group I play-offs in February and was relegated to the Group II stage for the first time since the new Davis Cup format was implemented in 2019. A total of 24 national teams will compete in

World Group II ties. The 12 winners will progress to World Group I playoffs while the losing team will drop to World Group II playoffs.

India's best performances at the Davis Cup came in 1966, 1974 and 1987, when they finished as the runners-up.

Serie A

Leaders Botafogo rout Coritiba to stay 12 points clear

Rio de Janeiro | Agencies

Gustavo Sauer netted two goals and set up another as leaders Botafogo cruised to a 4-1 home victory over Coritiba in Brazil's Serie A championship, here.

Sauer opened the scoring by rifling a 20-yard shot into the bottom left corner but Bruno Gomes equalized with a long-range effort after Diogo Oliveira's headed pass on Sunday.

Tiquinho Soares continued his prolific scoring form by heading home after Sauer's delivery from a corner and the latter extended the hosts' lead with a cool finish from 12 yards following Victor Sa's pass, a Xinhua report said.

Sa was again the provider as he delivered an inch-perfect cross for Soares to head home Botafogo's fourth goal. The result at Rio de



Janeiro's Olympic stadium means Botafogo maintain their 12-point lead over second-placed Flamengo while Coritiba are 18th in the 20-team standings.

In other Brazilian top-

flight fixtures on Sunday, Gremio drew 1-1 at Goias, Palmeiras won 4-1 at America Mineiro and Sao Paulo were held to a goalless home draw with Bahia.

World No. 1 Iga Swiatek wins Warsaw Open

Warsaw (Poland) | Agencies

Poland's Iga Swiatek smashed Laura Siegemund of Germany 6-0, 6-1 on home court in the final to win the Warsaw Open title, here.

The World No. 1 controlled the game from the very beginning and needed just 30 minutes to win the opening set without losing a single game.

After a short break, Siegemund, who had nothing to lose, started to take more risks, but she was not able to reply to Swiatek's effective attacks, as the favorite won nine consecutive games on Sunday. Siegemund kept her service to make it 3-1 in the second set. However, Swiatek was in her best shape as she found a break to take the lead 5-1, closing the match out a



moment later, a Xinhua report said. "To be honest, it's hard to play on home soil as the pressure is higher in that case. I wanted to show my experience and the mental strength here. I'm happy that I won the tournament, I'm really proud because of that," Swiatek said afterwards. Polish fans did not celebrate a double victory, however, as in the doubles final Weronika Falkowska and Katarzyna Piter lost 6-4, 6-4 to Britain's Heather Watson and Yanina Wickmayer of Belgium.

Taylor Fritz beats Aleksandar Vukic to win Atlanta Open

Atlanta (USA) | Agencies

Taylor Fritz capped a perfect return to North American hard courts by winning the Atlanta Open for his second tour-level title of the season after beating Australian Aleksandar Vukic 7-5, 6-7(5), 6-4 in the final, here.

Despite letting slip two championship points on return at 6-5 in the second set, Fritz held his nerve to close the two-hour, 16-minute clash on Sunday in a deciding set to lift the ATP 250 trophy.

In his first tournament on home soil since March, World No. 9 Fritz relied on



his hefty serve and first-strike to tennis to be crowned champion at the hard-court event, where he was broken just once all tournament. The 25-year-old won 84

percent of his first-serve points and struck his groundstrokes with conviction and consistency to seal victory. Fritz, who also triumphed

in Delray Beach earlier this year, has won six tour-level titles, three of which have come in his home country.

Fritz rose to ninth in the ATP Live Race To Turin as a result of his standout week in Atlanta. The American No. 1 is aiming to return to the ATP Finals, where he was a semi-finalist last year as an alternate.

On the other hand, the 27-year-old Vukic was competing in his maiden tour-level final. The former University of Illinois standout ousted three seeded players in Atlanta and will rise 20 spots to a new career-high No. 62 in the ATP Rankings on Monday.

Stuart Broad's retirement makes me 'more firm' to continue playing: James Anderson

London | Agencies

Veteran England fast bowler James Anderson has revealed that Stuart Broad's retirement from the game after the end of the fifth Ashes Test at The Oval has made him "even more firm" in continuing to play the game.

Anderson is England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker with 690 scalps, with Broad set to end his Test career with 600 wickets. Anderson came into the fifth and final Ashes Test on the back of taking just four wickets in the series at an average of 76.75. His future has been a big talking point, especially with him turning 41 during the match.

"Not at all no. I am even more firm; I want to keep going. I have had a really disappointing series by my stan-



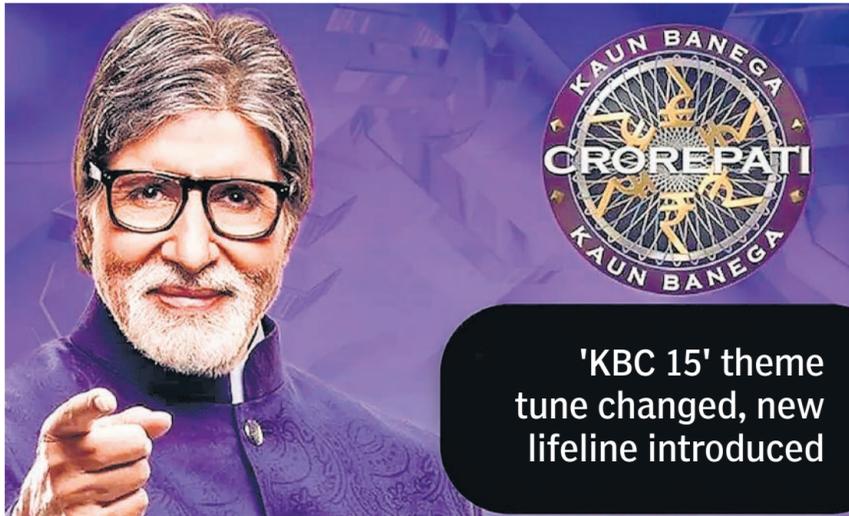
dards. I have not got the wickets I would have expected from myself. I don't think I have bowled particularly badly, I have just not...felt like I made an impact for the team that I would have liked and what I expect from myself," said Anderson to Sky Sports. The right-arm pacer also said he feels good to continue, especially with England's next Test assignment after the Ashes being a five-match series trip to India from January 25 to March 11 next year.



Big B says 'new beginning'...

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After over a decade of having the iconic theme tune, the audiences are up for a surprise as the popular quiz game show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15' (KBC 15) will have a new theme tune, and a new lifeline in the show. Sources said that "There is a new lifeline in the show this season. There has been a change in the tune of KBC, with the addition of new instruments in it like flute, sitar. And, also the audience will witness a change in the set which is in the form of 'X'. There are two tunnels, with new and different lights. The name for the timer, which is referred to as 'dugdugji', will also be changed". A video of the show posted on social media begins with the game show's iconic theme tune, showing the grand set of the 'KBC'. Big B enters in a black suit and is heard saying: "5G ki speed se upgrade ho kar ke, naye approach ke sath is naye daur me aap sabka bahot swagat hai. Aarambh karta hun Gyaandaar, Dhandaar aur Shaandaar Kaun Banega Crorepati..



'KBC 15' theme tune changed, new lifeline introduced

#newbeginning". It has been presented by Amitabh Bachchan since its incep-

tion, except for during the third season, which was hosted by actor Shah Rukh

Khan. The registration for this season started from April 29.

Learned to take control of my mental space:

Anjum Fakih

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actress Anjum Fakih, who has been eliminated from 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 13', said throughout her stint in the stunt reality show, she has learned to take control of her mental space.

In her last water-based stunt on the show, Anjum was bested by Aishwarya Sharma. All the contestants gave their best shot, however, fear got the better of Anjum, and she stood eliminated in the show's third week.

Bidding farewell to 'KKK 13', Anjum said: "As I reflect on the incredible journey on 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 13', I realise that every moment was charged with determination. Throughout the show, I discovered so much about myself and learned how to take control of my mental space."

She said that these valuable lessons will stay with her for a lifetime. Anjum also expressed her heartfelt gratitude to all the viewers and other contestants for their support in this thrilling adventure.

"Their encouragement meant the world to me, and I hope I have made them proud. A special thanks to the amazing Rohit sir, whose mentorship unlocked my potential. His belief in us gave us the strength to face every challenge even with fear coursing through our minds. This show marks a turning point in my life, it has been an unforgettable experience that I will forever hold dear," she added.

Anjum's journey began with a thrilling chopper-related stunt that fuelled her resolve to earn the crown of the ultimate khiladi. She was fortunate to have her friend Ruhi Chaturvedi by her side for most of the stunts in the premiere week.

The two most nerve-wracking stunts they performed were the seesaw challenge and the car and trolley stunt. Although she couldn't give her best in the latter owing to anxiety, she voiced her take on battling it over the years.

Anjum shone in the next stunt in which she bravely faced her fear of reptiles and snakes as she unlocked herself with keys hidden in boxes filled with phobia-inducing creatures.



Salman Khan-starrer to have 'Tiger Vs Pathaan' hint

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker Aditya Chopra will reportedly tease 'Tiger vs Pathaan' in 'Tiger 3' since this film will also have the two giants of Indian cinema Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan slugging it out to save a situation.

"There is tremendous buzz already about 'Tiger vs Pathaan' and

YRF has chosen to keep quiet about the project. We know that the film should start its shooting schedule in January 2024 with Siddharth Anand directing this marquee YRF Spy Universe project," said a source.

The source added: "We are sure that Aditya Chopra will tease the existence of 'Tiger vs Pathaan' in 'Tiger 3' since he had also teased the fact that Salman and SRK are going

to come together for 'Tiger 3' in 'Pathaan'."

The source shared: "Every film of YRF Spy Universe is going to tease its next big projects for people to guess. Hints will be dropped in every film so that the fans can be engaged constantly to take the conversation of the YRF Spy Universe forward."

"The studio has effectively tapped into the fandoms of the biggest

superstars of Hindi cinema and also the loyal fan base of YRF films to market its titles and this strategy should help in generating disproportionate buzz around every YRF Spy Universe film," says a source.

'Tiger 3' is an action thriller film directed by Maneesh Sharma and produced by Aditya Chopra. The film stars Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif and Emraan Hashmi.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who was on a much-needed vacation to Bali, is now back home, and on Monday dropped a glimpse of her working out in the gym.

Recently, Samantha was on an acting break as she wanted to focus on her health, and undergo the treatment for autoimmune condition myositis.

According to Webmd, Myositis refers to any condition causing inflammation in muscles. Weakness, swelling, and pain are the most common myositis symptoms. But, the fitness freak diva has returned back to India, and gave Monday motivation goals to her fans, with her new workout video.

The workout video also has a cute addition to it.

Taking to the Instagram Stories, the

Samantha shells fitness goals as she drops cute workout video with her cat 'Gelato'

actress shared the workout videos. In the clip, Samantha can be seen doing exercise with her pet cat Gelato. She is donning a black tee, grey shorts, and is seen cuddling her cat. Samantha is working out to the backdrop music of 'Fly' by Nicki Minaj, ft. Rihanna.

In another video, Samantha is heard saying, "Gelato, you need to work on your muscles", adding that her gym instructor Junaid Shaikh "is very disappointed", while the cat plays around. Earlier, Samantha shared some mesmerising photo dump of her vacation to the tropical paradise.

Musicians demand an apology for misinformation on Kapil Sharma Show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kunaal Vermaa, who recently grabbed headlines with his strong stand against the injustice taken place on national television, has a number of celebrities backing the star up with their support.

In a recent episode of The Kapil Sharma Show, Kapil introduced musician AM Turaz as the man behind the song Tum Hi Aana. Outraged by this misinformation Kunaal took to his social media posting a video which stated about not being acknowledged or even rectified in spite of contacting Kapil Sharma shows team. He also went public expressing his disappointment to which Kunaal was backed by a number of fraternity friends like Amaal Malik who reposted Kunaal's video stating, "Let there be no doubt this man is one of the most honest people out there and he is the man who has penned #TumHiAana in all its entirety. @kunaalvermaa my bro everyone knows you have penned this beautiful song"



Armaan Malik commented, "So sad to hear about this Kunaal bhai. This is just messed up. You are one of the most talented writers of our time and a true artist and I hope the concerned people atleast acknowledge that they made a grave mistake and rectify this episodes commentary. And rahi baat people knowing who wrote Tum Hi Aana, koi shak bhi nahi hai that it's you and only you."

Tanishk Bagchi said, "This is really so unfair. The team should have researched about this before. They should apologise to @kunaalvermaa"

Payal Dev stated, "no one can take credit of Tum hi aana from you bhai. You know what situa-

tion we faced during the making of the song. Every one knows it is written but you only. This is our song. Thank you for making it more soulful with you lyrics. We love you and support you always."

Aditya Dev went on stating, "Har achha artist bohut hi Dil lagakar apne gaane ko banata hai, aur uska credit agar use Na Diya jaaye toh bohut bura lagta hai. I stand with you bhai Kunaal Vermaa."

A number of other musicians were seen taking a stand for 'Tum Hi Aana' lyricist Kunaal Vermaa. Their team is trying to reach out to Kapil Sharma's team but haven't got any revert till now.



Bhumi Pednekar