

absolute india

VOL. 8, ISSUE 355, BHOPAL | FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 03, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI

NATION > 02
Excessive fee hike needs to be rolled back immediately, DU...



HOLLYWOOD > 06
Scarlett Johansson suing AI app developer for cloning her voice...



SPORTS > 07
Kohli overtakes Tendulkar's record of most 1000 ODI runs in a...



पोएम आवास से पक्के घर का सपना साकार

फिर इस बार भाजपा सरकार

MP के मन में मोदी

Men's ODI World Cup India beat Sri Lanka by 302 runs

1ST SEMIFINALIST

A five-wicket haul by pacer Mohammed Shami after superb half-centuries by Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer helped India thrash Sri Lanka by 302 runs for their seventh win in seven matches, sealing a place in the semifinals with two matches yet to play.

The hosts continued their brilliant all-round display in the World Cup, claiming the fourth-largest win ever by bundling out Sri Lanka for 55 in 19.2 overs after riding on some brilliant batting by Gill (92), Kohli (88) and Iyer (82) to post 357/8 in 50 overs.

India now have 14 points from seven games and are the first team to confirm their place in the last-four stage in the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup.

Shami claimed his second five-wicket haul of the ongoing World Cup, his 5-18 helping India bundle out Sri Lanka for a paltry 55 at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

First Time In 48 Years! Jasprit Bumrah became the first Indian cricket team bowler to take a wicket on the very first ball of a team innings during a Cricket World Cup match.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mohammed Shami claimed his second five-wicket haul of the ongoing ICC Men's ODI World Cup, his 5-18 helping India bundle out Sri Lanka for a paltry 55 and record one of their biggest wins in ODIs at the Wankhede Stadium here on Thursday. Shami, who came into the playing XI after Hardik Pandya was injured, has taken 14 wickets in just three matches so far. The last time they met Sri Lanka in the final of the 2023 Asia Cup in Colombo, India bowled them out for 55 in 19.4 overs. On Thursday, India bowled them out for 55 in 19.4 overs. It was Mohammad Siraj who claimed 6-21 in the Asia Cup final, on Thursday Shami claimed 5-18 to leave the Sri Lankans shell-shocked. While Bumrah claimed one wicket, Siraj and Shami bagged two wickets each in their first overs as Sri Lanka ended the powerplay with a paltry score of 14/6.

Bumrah started the carnage by taking a wicket off the first ball, trapping Pathum Nissanka lbw with one that moved back in to strike the back pad, handing the Sri Lankan opener a golden duck. Siraj followed suit, striking with his first delivery as he trapped Dimuth Karunaratne lbw for a golden ball duck, the ball moving away with the angle and beating the edge to catch the batter below the knee on the crease. Just like Nissanka, Karunaratne also reviewed the decision but could not get the decision of the on-field umpire overturned. Saraj got his second wicket of the over when Sadeera Samarawickrama chased a wide one and nicked it to Shreyas Iyer at third slip. Sri Lanka were four down for three runs when skipper Kusal Mendis was castled by Siraj off the first delivery of his second over, as the ball straightened late to beat the edge and hit the top of the off-stump. Just like Siraj, Shami too claimed two wickets in his first over. Down 22/7 after 12 overs, Sri Lanka looked like getting the unwanted

Brief scores:

India 357/8 in 50 overs (Shubman Gill 92, Virat Kohli 88, Shreyas Iyer 82, Ravindra Jadeja 35; Madushanka 5-80) beat Sri Lanka 55 all out in 19.4 overs (Kasun Rajitha 14; Mohd Shami 5-18, Siraj 3-16) by 302 runs.

SHAMI BECOMES THE HIGHEST WICKET-TAKER FOR INDIA IN ODI WORLD CUP

Mumbai: Mohammed Shami on Thursday became the highest (45) wicket-taker for India in the ongoing ICC ODI World Cup 2023 match against Sri Lanka at Wankhede Stadium. Shami took his tally of wickets in the ODI World Cup to 45 after taking his fifth wicket, he surpassed Zaheer Khan and Javagal Srinath's 44 wicket records to become the highest wicket-taker. He has also now four five-fors in ODIs, the most by an Indian. Three of them have come in the World Cups, the joint-most with Mitchell Starc. Shami also entered the top 10 of the highest wicket takers in ODI World Cup history, which is topped by Glenn McGrath with 71. Among active international cricketers, only Mitchell Starc and Trent Boult are above him in the list with 56 and 49 wickets respectively. Shami ended his spell with a brilliant figure of 5 for 18 in five overs as India registers its biggest victory in World Cup defeating Sri Lanka by a mammoth 302 runs to seal their berth in the semis.



record of the lowest all-out total in ODIs, which is 35, by Zimbabwe (vs SL) and USA (vs Nepal). They were 29/8 when Angelo Mathews got out for 12 in the 14th over and in danger of failing to get even 50. They managed that thanks to a ninth-wicket partnership between Maheesh Theekshana (12 not out) and Kasun Rajitha (14), only the third batsman to get into double figures.

Jarange-Patil heeds 2 retired judges, pleas by ministers with folded hands, ends hunger strike

Jalna (Maharashtra) | Agencies

Melting after two retired Bombay High Court judges gave him a plain talk and pleas with folded hands by cabinet ministers, Shivba Sanghatana President Manoj Jarange-Patil on Thursday evening finally ended his 9-day long hunger strike and agreed to give more time to the Maharashtra government to take a decision on Maratha quotas.

Heading to some realistic suggestions made by the retired judges - Justice M. G. Gaikwad and Justice S. B. Shukre, plus Ministers Atul Save, Dhananjay Munde, Uday Samant, and Sandipan Bhumre, Jarange-Patil said that he would give a two-month extension - till January 2, 2024 - to the government to implement Maratha reservation.

"This is the final ultimatum... Take this new deadline extension and give us the quotas. If you betray us, then Marathas from all over Maharashtra will troop to Mumbai and lay siege on its borders," he warned, and after his address, accepted a glass of water and sipped some fruit juice, ending his rigorous fast-unto-death. The Maratha leader cautioned that although he had called off his rigorous hunger strike, a relay hunger fast will be continued by his followers, as the huge gathering of villagers applauded and cheered, and the government heaved a sigh of relief.

Earlier this evening, the retired judges - Justice Gaikwad and Justice Shukre - gently explained to him the



stark legal realities of the complications in giving reservations in such a short time as it would not withstand the scrutiny of the courts. When Jarange-Patil demanded to know why the government cannot issue the 'Kunbi Caste' certificates to all Marathas based on the 11,530 such old entries found in the past couple of months, the judges said this is because it has yet to be ascertained that the Marathas are a 'backward' community. The retired judges made it clear that it is not possible to declare reservations in "one or two days" as Jarange-Patil sought, as it would not stand up in the courts. They said that in order to complete the legal formalities to make the quotas fool-proof, it would take at least a couple of months and requested him for more time to finalise it.

Mahua Moitra, Opposition MPs walk out of Ethics Committee meeting

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Trinamool Congress leader Mahua Moitra, who appeared before the Parliament's Ethics Committee in connection with the alleged 'cash-for-Parliament questions' charge on Thursday, walked out along with Opposition MPs, questioning the way the meeting was conducted. Moitra had appeared before the Ethics Committee on Thursday after she was summoned for the second time in connection with the charges against her. As per sources, the mem-



bers were not asking relevant and proper questions. The source said that she was asked by the committee members which days she was travelling and with whom, which was opposed by the Opposition MPs. Soon after the questioning began Moitra

was seen walking out angrily along with the Opposition MPs of the parliamentary Ethics Committee meeting. Moitra on Wednesday had written to the Ethics Committee demanding to cross-examine complainant and Supreme Court lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai and Dubai-based businessman Darshan Hiranandani. The Ethics Committee is probing BJP MP Dubey's allegations that Moitra accepted cash and favours for asking questions in Lok Sabha on businessman Gautam Adani at the behest of businessman Hiranandani.

My body can be arrested, not my vision: Kejriwal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Thursday that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) made its presence felt in Madhya Pradesh by winning a Mayoral seat in Singrauli last year, and now it will enter the state's Assembly. The 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly goes to the polls on November 17. Participating in a road show to campaign for AAP candidate Rani Agrawal in Singrauli, Kejriwal said the party has made its presence felt in several states in the past few years, which is the reason the ruling BJP is worried about it. "I don't know if I will be in jail when the MP poll results will be



announced on December 3, but I would be happy if people elect an AAP candidate from Singrauli. Even if I am in jail, this news will please me

enough," Kejriwal said. Notably, Kejriwal attended the road show in Singrauli defying the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) sum-

mon in connection with the Delhi excise policy case on Thursday. Kejriwal, who was accompanied by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, said, "The BJP is threatening to put me in jail. I am not worried about jail because I am among those who emerged from the Ramlila Maidan." Attacking the BJP over the ED summon, Kejriwal said, "You can arrest my body, but not my vision. Those who were sitting with me at the Ramlila Maidan are now in jail. But I am not worried about it." It may be noted that AAP had made its presence in Madhya Pradesh one-and-a-half years back when it won the Mayoral seat in Singrauli, the hub of coal mines in the state.

PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN BHU AFTER GIRL STUDENT MOLESTED

Varanasi | Agencies

The Indian Institute of Technology in the Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) on Thursday witnessed massive protests after a student alleged that she was molested on campus by three unidentified men, who forcibly kissed her, took off her clothes, and then recorded a video of her. The alleged incident took place late Wednesday night. Thousands of students gathered in protest at the institute director's office on Thursday, demanding better security arrangements on the campus. Later, the IIT-BHU administration



issued a notice saying that "all barricades in the institute shall henceforth be closed from 10 pm to 5 a.m.". The entry of outsiders has been banned on the campus. A police case has been lodged against three unidentified men under sections 354-B (assault or

use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code and under relevant sections of the Information Technology Act. In her complaint to the police, the student said: "I am a resident of a hostel at IIT-BHU. On November 2 around 1.30 am, I left my hostel for a walk. I met a male friend. We were walking together, a motorcycle approached us from behind with three men. They parked their motorcycle and separated my friend and me. They shut my mouth tightly and took me to a corner, kissed me forcibly, and took off all my clothes, and recorded photos and videos.

Failed romantic relationship not ground for rape case is settled law: Delhi HC

New Delhi: Granting anticipatory bail to a government employee, the Delhi High Court has observed that if a romantic relationship doesn't work out, it should not be the basis for lodging a rape case. The woman had filed an FIR accusing the man of having physical relations with her on the false pretext of marrying her. She alleged that after getting engaged to the accused, his family started demanding dowry, and when her father refused to provide money, the accused began avoiding her and refused to marry her.

Delhi-NCR air quality further dips into 'very poor' category

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With hazy weather conditions and slow wind movement, the air quality in Delhi-NCR continued to remain in the 'very poor' category for the sixth consecutive day. Delhi's overall Air Quality Index (AQI) reached 346 on Thursday evening, according to data from the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR). The AQI of Delhi's neighbouring cities of Noida and Gurugram was no

better. While Noida's AQI stood at 388 and the PM 10 concentration was at 377 both under 'very poor' category, Gurugram's AQI was reported at 350 under 'very poor' category and the PM 10 concentration was at 233 under 'poor' category. In the national Capital, the AQI at Anand Vihar reached the 'severe' category with PM 2.5 at 437 and PM 10 at 449 while NO2 was recorded at 71 and CO at 102, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).



EXCESSIVE FEE HIKE NEEDS TO BE ROLLED BACK IMMEDIATELY, DU TEACHERS TELL VC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Several teachers of Delhi University have written to the Vice Chancellor over the English department suddenly increasing the Ph.D fees to nearly Rs 24,000 per annum. Last year, the fees for the same course was Rs 1,932 per year.

The Democratic Teachers' Front (DTF) of Delhi University said in a letter that "this is absolutely shocking as such an astronomical hike in fees was not previously discussed in the academic council and executive council meetings".

Most departments have increased the fees, which is also unfortunate, but the English department, in a totally unjustified and arbitrary manner, has raised fees more than 10-fold from last year, DTF said.

DTF Secretary Abha Dev Habib said that this will have grave implications for the students.

"This unjustified act of Delhi University has put enormous finan-



cial burden and consequent mental strain on the students. It will also deny access to quality education to a large section of students and discourage entry of students from diverse backgrounds.

"Further, there was no mention of

this hike in the Ph.D bulletin and students were informed at the very last moment. As a result, they have been literally forced to pay such high fees with no prior notice to secure admission," Habib said.

DTF members told the VC that

they strongly protest this arbitrary hike in fees and demand its immediate rollback.

"We also wish to add that departments should not be allowed to raise fees arbitrarily without discussions in the statutory bodies," the DTF said.

The teachers' body said that a hike of over 1,200 per cent is unacceptable and unfortunate.

"Nothing can explain this kind of inflation. It is unacademic as this fee hike will reduce diversity and adversely impact the students. Scholarships and concessions cannot be substitute for affordable fees for all.

"This astronomical fee hike needs to be rolled back immediately. Such an attack on access to education and on diversity is against the letter and spirit of the Constitution of India and cannot be allowed to succeed. The students, teachers and non-teaching staff along with parents will unitedly fight to roll back the fee hike," the DTF said.

SC reserves judgement, asks EC for data on funds received via electoral bonds within two weeks

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its order on the challenges posed to the Electoral Bond Scheme after listening to the hearing for three days in a row.

The court has however, directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to submit the details of the funds received by all the political parties through Electoral Bonds till September 30 to the court within two weeks.

A Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, JB Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra heard the arguments from both sides - the Centre and petitioners challenging the scheme.

After the Centre concluded its submissions the Bench asked the ECI to submit the data on funding received through Electoral Bonds to date. However, Advocate Amit Sharma appearing for the ECI told the Bench that he did not have the required data.

The Bench expressed its displeasure to the ECI for not maintaining the required data despite an interim order passed in April 2019 which directed the commission to maintain the data of electoral bonds received till date.

Advocate Sharma told the Bench that the ECI thought that the April 2019 order was limited to only the electoral bonds issued in relation to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.



However, the Bench refused to accept the submission and said that the data had to be continuously collected according to the order and said the ECI should have asked for clarification. In the April 2019 interim order, the apex court had directed the ECI that all the political parties who have received donations through Electoral Bonds should submit to the poll panel in a sealed cover, detailed particulars of the donors and amount received against each Bond along with bank details.

The petitioners have so far argued that the Electoral Bond scheme violates the citizen's fundamental right to information under Article 19 (1) and it enables backdoor lobbying and quid pro quo; opaque instrument that is not entirely anonymous; promotes corruption and eliminates level playing field for political parties in Opposition; is unfair to shareholder of the companies.

Air pollution: Delhi metro to run 60 additional trains on its all route from Friday

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In view of deteriorating air quality and with GRAP-III now in force, the Delhi Metro on Thursday announced that it will run 60 additional train trips across its network starting from Friday.

According to Delhi Metro officials, in view of the implementation of GRAP-III stage to combat pollution in Delhi, the DMRC will be further adding 20 extra trips across its network starting from November 3.

"Delhi Metro is already running 40 additional train trips on weekdays (Mon-Fri) from October 25 onwards when the GRAP-II stage came into force," said the officials. "Thus, from tomorrow, DMRC will be running a total of 60 additional trips as part of its measures taken under GRAP to encourage more and more people to



use public transport in Delhi-NCR," the official added.

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) stage-III has been invoked in Delhi and its surrounding areas as air quality deteriorates further more, owing to unfavourable meteorological and climate conditions, said the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM). It also said that NCR state governments or the Delhi government to impose

strict restrictions on plying of BS III petrol and BS IV diesel LMVs (4 wheelers) in Delhi and in the districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, and Gautam Budh Nagar.

It also said that state governments in NCR and GNCTD may take a decision on discontinuing physical classes in schools for children up to Class V and conducting classes in an online mode.

60 GIRL STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL IN HARYANA ALLEGE SEXUAL ASSAULT

Chandigarh | Agencies

As many as 60 girl students have lodged a complaint of sexual assault against the principal of a senior secondary school of girls in Haryana's Jind.

The state government has placed the accused, Kartar Singh, under suspension after an inquiry. He is still at large.

The Haryana State Commission for Women is looking into allegations of two girl students who might have died by suicide because of sexual assault by the principal.

Commission Chairperson Renu Bhatia told the media that 60 girls have alleged sexual assault against the principal.

"We are also pursuing the serious allegations that two girls committed suicide because of the sexual assault by the principal." The victim girls, in a five-page handwritten letter to the National Commission for Women on August 31, said the principal, with the help of a woman teacher, had been sexually harassing girl students. They alleged the principal had fixed



black glasses in the window of his room.

"A woman teacher sends girls to meet the principal in his room. The principal touches the girls inappropriately and also talks in filthy lan-

guage," one of the girls said in the complaint.

The main complainant said the principal had molested her on two occasions and when she asked him to stop, he threatened her to rusti-

cate from the school.

"The principal told me to support him, otherwise be ready to face dire consequences. He had sexually assaulted several girls," the girl said.

For its hearing, the state commission for women on Thursday summoned the accused, police officials, including the DSP heading the SIT constituted in the case, and officials of the Education Department.

"It is a matter of serious concern that an accused against whom such grave allegations have been made is still not arrested. The commission will take up the issue with the authorities in the government at the high level to take action against the police officials," said Bhatia.

At the intervention of the National Commission for Women, the Haryana government suspended the accused principal on October 27. Also the police registered a first information report (FIR) on October 31 under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and Section 354 (assault to outrage women's modesty) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

MP: Woman seeks husband's release from jail to 'bear child', court asks for her health report

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court recently directed the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Medical College in Jabalpur to examine the health of a woman to find out if she is fit to conceive.

The court was hearing a writ-petition filed by the woman wherein she demanded the release of her husband from jail saying that she wants to bear a child, citing procreation as her "fundamental right".

The petition's arguments prompted the bench of Justice Vivek Agrawal to direct the dean of the government medical college in Jabalpur to constitute a five-member panel of doctors to examine whether the woman is fit to conceive and submit the report within the next 15 days.



Subodh Kathar, the government counsel, said, "The husband of the petitioner is in a jail in a criminal

case. The woman wants to conceive, for which she has claimed that procreation is her fundamental right cit-

ing a Rajasthan High Court order in the case of Nand Lal vs. State, Department of Home, and others."

Kathar, however, claimed the woman has passed the age of menopause as per her records and therefore there is no possibility of any conception, either naturally or through artificial insemination.

In its order, the court said there is a requirement of a medical report from a team of experts as to whether the petitioner is medically fit to conceive. "The dean shall constitute a team of five doctors - three gynaecologists, one psychiatrist and another endocrinologist - to examine whether petitioner is fit to conceive. The dean shall submit the report within 15 days," the court said, adding that the "petitioner is directed to appear before the dean of the medical college on November 7".

Deepanshi Sharma's 'Exploring the Depths' Art Exhibition Leaves a Lasting Impression in Jaipur

Jaipur | Agencies

The art world in Jaipur and beyond was captivated by the mesmerizing "Exploring the Depths" art exhibition, curated by the visionary artist Deepanshi Sharma, based in London.

The event, which recently concluded, drew art enthusiasts, critics, and connoisseurs, leaving an indelible mark on the local art scene. The exhibition was inaugurated by the distinguished chief guest, Dr. Jayshree Periwala, Chairperson, Jayshree Periwala Group of Schools, Jaipur, and the guest of honor Nihal Chand Goel (IAS), Director RIC, Former Chief Secretary of Rajasthan. Deepanshi's artwork has



always been celebrated for its ability to bridge the gap between art and reality, and "Exploring the Depths" is no exception. With a dedicated focus on capturing the intricacies of everyday life, her paintings transport viewers into a world where the lines between art and reality blur. Each canvas serves as a window into the soul of her subject, offering art lovers a

unique perspective on life's subtleties.

Reflecting on the success of the exhibition, Deepanshi Sharma said, "In 'Exploring the Depths', I aimed to create a world where the ordinary becomes extraordinary, where each brushstroke breathes life into the canvas. Through my art, I aimed to invite viewers to look deeper into the beauty that surrounds us every day."

"Exploring the Depths" showcased a diverse collection of paintings, each telling its unique story. Deepanshi's work received critical acclaim and garnered attention from art lovers, not just locally, but from various corners of the world.

DOZENS OF GIRL STUDENTS FALL ILL DURING SELF-DEFENCE DRILL IN J&K'S KUPWARA

Srinagar: Dozens of girl students fell ill during a self-defence drill in J&K's Kupwara district on Thursday, officials said.

Reports said that dozens of girl students fell unconscious at a government school in a village in Handwara tehsil of Kupwara during the drill.

Reports said that pepper spray had been used during the drill that could have resulted in the incident.

"When students started losing consciousness, they were quickly shifted to a nearby hospital," official sources said, adding that an investigation has been ordered to ascertain the cause.

"Police has registered a case in the incident. It is premature to say what actually caused the incident," an official said.

SP to contest 65 seats out of 80 in UP: Akhilesh

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav has said that if the INDIA alliance materialises in Uttar Pradesh, his party would contest 65 of the 80 seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and leave 15 for the alliance partners.

Lucknow | Agencies

The SP is prepared to contest all 80 LS seats in UP if INDIA partnership with the Congress stays, the SP would contest no less than 65 seats," he said at a party meeting.

The Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) is an opposition front announced by the leaders of 28 parties to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha elections against the ruling BJP.

In Uttar Pradesh, the INDIA bloc has four constituents - SP, Congress, Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and Apna Dal (K).

"The SP is fully capable of defeating the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in UP single-handedly and had there not been dishonesty in elections in the state, the SP would have formed the government after the 2022 UP Assembly polls. Therefore, the party must ensure full alertness to foil any attempts of dishonesty in the LS polls," said Yadav, according to party sources in the meeting.

Yadav said: "We only sought six seats from the Congress in MP where the SP is in a stronger position. But the Congress backtracked and fielded a candidate even on a seat that the SP won in the 2018 polls. We, too, will see when the LS polls come."

Tensions erupted between two of the INDIA bloc partners last



month when the SP accused the Congress of betrayal after the latter did not leave any seats for the former in the upcoming Madhya Pradesh polls. The SP later fielded candidates on 40 seats in MP.

Yadav also asked SP leaders and workers not to make any frivolous statements. He said: "Make statements as per the policies and directions of the national leadership. Do not engage in any groupism within the party, rather focus on strengthening the party at the booth and organisation levels."

The SP chief also asked leaders and workers to work diligently to expose "the BJP's lies and propaganda, and failure at all levels of governance."

SP National General Secretary, Ramgopal Yadav, warned against any groupism within the party and said those who engage in any anti-party actives should promptly be shown the door.

SP National General Secretary Shivpal Yadav called upon the cadre to emphasise on coordination and cooperation to strengthen the party and oust the BJP government.

"There real fight will all be at the booth level. If we stay strong and alert at the booth level, no power can prevent the SP's victory," the leaders said.



34 CANDIDATES WITHDREW THEIR NAMES IN MP ASSEMBLY POLLS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The countdown for voting in Madhya Pradesh assembly elections has started. November 2 is the last day for withdrawal of nominations. This is the reason why the hustle and bustle regarding withdrawal of nominations will continue on Thursday also. So far, 34 claimants have withdrawn their nominations in Madhya Pradesh. Jitendra Mannu Daga from Bhopal's Huzur seat has also withdrawn his nomination in support of Congress. This time a record breaking 4286 nominations were filed in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections. Of these, 3718 nominations were accepted, while 525 nominations were rejected. According to the election schedule, November 2 is the last day for withdrawal of nominations. So far, it has come to light that 34 nomina-



tions have been withdrawn on assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh. Now it is also believed that an increased number of nominations will be returned on the last day also. After this the final list will be released. Divya Dutt from Harsud, Habib Khan from Suhagpur, Jairam from Dharampuri, Suresh Bhati from Malhargarh, Sunita Rajput from Kurai, Wajid Mohammad and Pankaj Shukla from Indore 3 have

withdrawn their nominations. Similarly, Deepak Joshi from Indore 3, Rajendra Singh Jadaun from Shajapur, Ramesh Chandra from Susner, Dharendra Sharma from Maihar, Nitin Raghuvanshi from Chhindwara, Lagandhari from Singrauli, Premal from Maihar, Ashish Patel from Patharia have withdrawn their nominations. Vishnu Verma from Ichhawar,

Dheeraj Talwar from Indore Panch, Phoolchand from Maheshwar, Ashok from Dindori, Kailash Bagana from Ashta, Somil Nahta from Mansa, Shobharam from Maheshwar, RD Prajapati from Chandla have also withdrawn their nominations. Indore stood first in terms of withdrawal of nominations. Here the maximum number of nominations were withdrawn from Indore number three. From here, Nasir Khan had filed nomination as independent as well as from Aam Aadmi Party, which has been withdrawn. Similarly, Anup Kant from Damoh, Qazi Rehman from Bhopal North, Vikas Tripathi from Maihar, Deepa Patel from Patharia, Ratan Patidar from Badnawar, Pannabai from Mehgaon, Bhagwan Singh from Gotegaon and Pawan Tiwari from Narela have withdrawn their nominations.

BIG ACTION BY ELECTION COMMISSION IN MADHYA PRADESH, GOLD AND LIQUOR WORTH RS 226 CRORE SEIZED ALONG WITH CASH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Election Commission is working with full force to stop violation of the code of conduct in the assembly elections to be held on November 17 in Madhya Pradesh and to conduct fair and transparent assembly elections. For this, it has started crackdown with strict vigil through security forces and investigation agencies in all 230 assembly constituencies of the state. In the last 20 days, the Election Commission has seized cash worth Rs 25 crore and material worth Rs 226 crore, including gold, silver, liquor and narcotics. According to Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan, continuous action is being taken across the state by the police and investigative agencies to conduct the assembly elections in a fair and transparent manner. He told that from October 9 to 29, action worth



about Rs 229 crore 13 lakh has been taken by the police. Which is three times the amount of the last 2018 assembly elections. Let us tell you that in the 2018 assembly elections, action worth Rs 72 crore 93 lakh was taken by the police and investigating agencies.

Action worth Rs 226 crore 13 lakh has been taken by the investigating agencies from 9 to 29 October. This included Rs 25 crore 5 lakh cash, 19 lakh 57 thousand 696 liters of illicit liquor worth Rs

36 crore 99 lakh 40 thousand, narcotics worth Rs 11 crore 70 lakh 73 thousand 847, gold and silver worth Rs 75 crore 06 lakh 62 thousand 978. Jewelry and other items worth Rs 77 crore 31 lakh have been seized. Under the assembly elections, continuous monitoring and investigation is being done by FST and SST teams in various assemblies of the district. Under this, an amount of Rs 10 lakh 40 thousand in cash was seized from the vehicle MP-20-CJ-5059 by the Kiranpur FST team on Wednesday. During investigation it was found that this amount was received from the vehicle owner Shri Narayan Veerumal Chutani. As per the instructions of the Election Commission, if any amount of more than Rs 10 lakh is found without documents, it is presented to the Income Tax Department. Action is being taken accordingly.

75 rebels of BJP-Congress are fighting in the election field

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Both BJP and Congress are losing sleep due to angry people and rebels filing nominations for the assembly elections to be held on November 17 in Madhya Pradesh. Angered by not getting tickets, many former ministers, former MLAs and influential leaders of both the parties have filed nominations as SP, AAP, BSP or as independent candidates. In such a situation, both the parties are afraid that the rebel leaders might spoil the game in the assembly elections. Let us tell you that after the scrutiny of nomination papers, more than 75 rebels of BJP-Congress are still in the field. The Election Commission has fixed today and tomorrow for withdrawal of nominations. BJP-Congress have only two days left to pacify the rebels and angry candidates. In such a situation, both the parties and their responsible leaders are trying to convince the rebel candidates and bring them back into their fold.

Never include Scindia family in race for chair": Jyotiraditya Scindia

Team Absolute | Maihar, Madhya Pradesh

Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has hit the headlines ahead of the state assembly polls after saying that people should never include the Scindia family in the race for the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Scindia made the remarks while speaking to reporters in Madhya Pradesh's Maihar district on Thursday. He arrived there to offer prayers at Sharda Mata temple. Asked about whether he will be the Chief Ministerial face of Madhya Pradesh, the Union minister said, "Never include the Scindia family in the race for the chair (referring to the Chief Minister's face). The Scindia family works day and night with a passion for development, progress and public service. Due to the work done under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the work done by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in the state for the last 18 years, Madhya Pradesh has come out of Bimaru Rajya (Sick state). It has marked a place into the category of an unmatched state." Scindia took another dig at his former party saying that BJP was in the heart of the people even as the Congress was comparing itself to cine characters. "This is the desire of Congress. Whether the Congress should become Jai or Veeru (reference to characters in film 'Sholay'). The BJP is the party that resides in the hearts of the people. The BJP is a party for the development of the people. Neither do we want to become actors, nor do we want to stand with any actress. We want to reside in the hearts of the people," he said. When asked about the number of seats BJP is eyeing to win in the forthcoming assembly polls, Scindia said that he was



not an astrologer but he was sure that BJP would form a full majority government in the state. "I am not an astrologer but I can say with full confidence that you will see on December 3 which the public will bless us on November 17 (polling date) and BJP's lotus will bloom in every assembly seat. The BJP will form a full majority government in Madhya Pradesh," Scindia added. Madhya Pradesh is one of the five states set to undergo polls in one phase on November 17 and the counting of votes will take place on December 3. Voters will choose legislators from 230 Assembly constituencies.

Former ministers and former MLAs who face serious charges like murder, rape, robbery, kidnapping are in fray

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Can you expect that many of the former ministers and former MLAs who are contesting as candidates from BJP-Congress in Madhya Pradesh assembly elections to become the destiny makers of the people, will face charges of murder, rape, dacoit, etc. in the court? Cases are going on in serious crimes like robbery and corruption. The court has also framed charges in criminal cases against 16 sitting BJP MLAs, 12 Congress and 1 BSP MLA (total 29). Apart from this, cases are going on in the courts against 93 sitting MLAs. This has been revealed in the report of Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Election Watch. According to the report, among the 29 MLAs against whom the court has framed charges, are BJP ministers Rajendra Shukla (Rewa), Kamal Patel (Harda), Jalam Singh Patel (Narsinghpur), Ramkhalavan Patel (Amarpatan) and Pradyuman Singh Tomar (Gwalior). There are names. Apart from this, MLAs Paras Jain (Ujjain North), Prahlad Lodhi (Powai), Vikram Singh Vicky (Rampur Baghelan), Anirudh Madhav Maru (Manasa), Ram Dangore (Pandhana), Pranay Prabhat Pandey (Bahoriband) and KP Tripathi (Semaria). The court has framed charges in serious crimes. The Congress MLAs against whom the court has framed charges include Narmada Prasad Prajapati (Gotegaon,



former MLA President), Kunal Chaudhary (Kalapeepal), Sachin Birla (Barwah), Sohan Lal Balmik (Parasia), Ghanshyam Singh (Sevdha), Vikram Singh Nati Raja (Rajnagar), Pratap Grewal (Sardarpur), Jitendra Patwari (Rau), Mahesh Parmar (Tarana), Sukhdev Panse (Multai). These include Sunita Patel (Gadarwara), Dilip Gurjar (Nagda Khachrod), Rakesh Mavai (Morena), Ramchandra Dang (Biaora), Vipin Wankhede (Agar Malwa) and Ajab Singh Kushwaha (Sumavali). Along with

this, charges have also been framed against BSP MLA Rambai Singh from Patharia. According to reports, cases have been registered against former ministers and former MLAs for serious crimes like murder, rape, robbery, kidnapping, atrocities on women, taking bribes. Some of them have cases registered against them for serious crimes like corruption, money laundering, illegal possession, transportation, horse-trading, hoarding and profiteering.

ED attaches assets worth Rs 230 crore of People's Group in money laundering case

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday took major action against the People's Group of Bhopal. ED has attached assets worth Rs 230.4 crore in the case registered against the group under PMLA 2002

(Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002). ED has shared this information by tweeting. ED has attached the land, building and paper mill, training center and all the machinery of People's College of Medical Sciences and Research Centre, People's University, People's Industrial Training Institute. Apart

from this, the group's hotel Raja Bhoj has also been attached. Last month, ED had conducted a raid on People's Group. The Enforcement Directorate had seized all the documents including Rs 8 lakh cash. ED has registered a case against People's Group under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

Congress launches BJP brand protein

Team Absolute | Bhopal

भाजपा छाप प्रोटीन जो इसे इस्तेमाल करेगा भाजपा का बड़ा नेता बनेगा



Team Absolute | Bhopal

BJP-Congress are adopting all kinds of means to win and campaign in the assembly elections to be held on November 17 in Madhya Pradesh. Congress has launched a unique protein powder during the election campaign in Indore. Which has been named 'BJP Chhap Protein'. It is written on the box of this protein that this protein is suitable only for anti-social elements. In view of the assembly elections, this box and container of 'BJP Chhap Protein' has been launched by Indore's Congress spokesperson Vivek Khandelwal. He has told some characteristics of this political protein. According to him, only anti-

social elements can use this BJP imprint protein. The specialty of this protein is that the person using it will definitely soon become a big leader of BJP. The administration will not bother him. Congress spokesperson said that these 'BJP Chhap Protein' boxes will be made available to the Congress candidates in 230 assembly seats of Madhya Pradesh in the coming two-three days. On this occasion, Congress spokesperson Vivek Khandelwal said that during his 18 years of tenure, Shivraj government in Madhya Pradesh has nurtured only sand mining mafia, liquor mafia, land mafia, education mafia and drug mafia. This BJP imprint protein is extremely beneficial for them.

Congress is seasonal Hindu, Congressmen wear sacred thread as soon as elections come: Tomar

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Agriculture Minister and convenor of Madhya Pradesh BJP Election Management Committee Narendra Singh Tomar has said that Congress is neither concerned with the country nor with religion. Congress is seasonal Hindu. As soon as elections come, people start wearing Janu. They do not believe in any religion or religion. Shri Tomar was addressing public meetings on Thursday in support of BJP candidate Ghanshyam Chandravanshi in village Arnia Kala of Kalapipal assembly constituency of Shajapur district and BJP candidate Arun Bhimavad in village Ladvad of Shajapur assembly constituency. Union Minister Tomar said that what was the situation of the state before 2003 and what is it now? Taking aim at Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, he said that Congress launched Rahul Gandhi seven times, but every time he failed in the public test. He said that there were major attacks in this country. Big kings and sultans came to destroy India, but they could not do anything. Now Rahul Baba and Priyanka Gandhi are dreaming of doing all



that. He said that Congress is neither concerned with the country nor with religion. Congress is becoming irrelevant. He said that Congress is anti-Sanatana. Their leaders abuse Sanatan. For this we will have to do some work together, there is no need to spare those who look towards Sanatan Dharma. If you do not defeat Congress, which has the mentality of destroying Sanatan Dharma, it will ruin the country. Union Minister Tomar said that Madhya Pradesh is the only state in the country where Rs 12,000 is being given to farmers every year.

The BJP government at the Center is giving 6 thousand rupees and the BJP government of Madhya Pradesh is giving 6 thousand rupees. The Congress government has already stopped poor welfare schemes in Madhya Pradesh. If Congress government is formed again in the state, welfare schemes will be stopped. Congress works to loot the government treasury by misleading the public. The 2023 assembly election is the semi-final, the 2024 election is the final. Union Minister Tomar said that during the time of Congress, their Prime Minister used to say that if we send 1 rupee, only 15 paise reaches the poor. After this, Kamal Nath's 15-month-long government in the state made 900 promises, out of which even 9 were not implemented. But if Modi ji's government sends 1 rupee to the poor, then the entire money reaches their accounts. PM Narendra Modi has eliminated middlemen and brokers by giving a transparent system. Due to which the beneficiary is getting the benefit directly. He said that if there is a Congress government then there is destruction, we have seen this in the last years.



EDITOR'S SPECS

UP RANKS 2ND IN ACCIDENTAL DEATHS OF UNDER 18 CHILDREN

Uttar Pradesh ranks second in the list when it comes to the number of accidental deaths of children under the age of 18. This was revealed in the recent data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The NCRB data for 2021 shows that at least 4,518 children under the age of 18 lost their lives in various accidents across Uttar Pradesh. The adjoining state, Madhya Pradesh tops the list with around 5,925 fatalities among children under 18 years of age. Additionally, NCRB data reveals that almost 108 children under 18 lose their lives in different accidents every day across the country. The data indicates that approximately 39,400 children under 18 years lost their lives in various accidents nationwide in 2021 alone. In Uttar Pradesh, 1,248 children under 14 years of age and 3,270 children between 14 and 18 years of age tragically died in different accidents reported in the state in 2021. This included 931 boys and 317 girls under 14 years of age, and 2,571 boys and 699 girls between 14 and 18 years of age. According to the NCRB, Maharashtra and Bihar are in the third and fourth positions, respectively, in terms of fatalities among children under 18 in various accidents in 2021. Maharashtra reported a total of 3,794 children killed, and Bihar reported 3,911 kids under 18 years of age having lost their lives.

ZPM emerges as big challenger to Congress, BJP, MNF in Mizoram polls

Sujit Chakraborty

Notwithstanding two prominent national parties - BJP and the Congress - in the fray, the main electoral battle in the November 7 polls to the 40-member Mizoram Assembly is expected to be held between the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF) and the opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), almost a new entrant in electoral politics in the Christian-dominated state.

Mizoram was previously part of Assam until 1972, when it was carved out as a Union Territory. It became the 23rd state of India, a step above Union Territory, on February 20, 1987 after years of insurgency.

Since 1987, when Mizoram gained its statehood and held its first Assembly elections, the mountainous state has only seen bipolar politics between the Congress and the MNF, first led by Laldenga, and then by incumbent Chief Minister Zoramthanga.

Congress stalwart Lal Thanhwala and MNF supremo Zoramthanga holding the Chief Ministerial post mostly governed the country's second least populated state after Sikkim.

Just before and after the 2018 Assembly elections in Mizoram, ZPM led by IPS officer-turned-politician Lalduhoma became a major challenger to both the MNF and the Congress.

ZPM, whose candidates had to contest the 2018 Assembly polls as Independents as the party was not registered by the Election Commission of India (ECI), won 8 seats but lost two seats in the subsequent bypolls with party chief Lalduhoma retaining the Serchhip seat in the by-election.

The 73-year-old police officer-turned-politician has also emerged as a leading face as a strong contender for the Chief Ministerial post in the ongoing electioneering.

"My party (ZPM) would secure a landslide victory in the November 7 Assembly polls, and we would form the next government in Mizoram. This is thousand per cent assured. There is no question of aligning with any other party as we would win much more than the majority number of seats," Lalduhoma told correspondent.

He said the ZPM has already convinced the people of Mizoram that it would give a new system of governance, unlike the Congress and the MNF. "For the past many years, due to our constant and sincere efforts, we obtained huge public support across Mizoram. As both the MNF and the Congress failed to deliver the goods for the all-round development and welfare of the Mizo people, we (ZPM) happened to be the main



political force in the state," Lalduhoma said.

The former IPS officer served as the security in-charge to late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and held a vital post in the organising committee of the 1982 Asian Games.

Due to his closeness with the Gandhi family, Lalduhoma joined the Congress after he left the service in 1984. "I was entrusted by Indira Gandhi to resolve the Mizo National Front-spearhead insurgency led by Laldenga. I met Laldenga in London where he was in self-exile. I persuaded him to come to the overground ending the insurgency," said Lalduhoma, who played a significant role in bringing the MNF outfit to the mainstream and establishing peace in Mizoram.

Due to Lalduhoma's efforts and at the initiative of former Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhi, the Mizo Peace Accord was signed in June 1986,

ending two decades of strife and insurgency in Mizoram.

Later, Lalduhoma was elected to the Lower House of the Parliament from Mizoram's lone Lok Sabha seat as a Congress nominee, but due to some internal troubles after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, he quit the party and was disqualified under the anti-defection law in 1988. In 1997, Lalduhoma founded the Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNM), and in 2003 he was elected to the Mizoram Assembly from Ratu.

Before the last Assembly elections in 2018, ZNM, along with six local parties, formed the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), a coalition group which projected him as the chief ministerial candidate. The veteran Mizo leader in the 2018 polls won from two seats - Aizawl West I and



Serchhip - the second being the constituency of then Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader Lal Thanhwala. However, he kept the Serchhip seat. During the past few years, the ZPM has performed better in several local elections and has now emerged as a challenging third front in a traditionally dual-party electoral battle in Mizoram.

The ZPM is banking on the anti-incumbency factor of the MNF, with its focus against corruption and the economic empowerment of the youth and farmers. The Congress and the MNF have been in power for around four decades in Mizoram but they have not done much for the Mizo people and the state, the ZPM supremo said.

international

PUTIN WARNS AGAINST INTENSIFICATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA

Moscow | Agencies

Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he expects Western sanctions against Moscow to be intensified, and that his country needs to be ready for acts of sabotage on vital infrastructure.

Speaking at a meeting with the heads of economic departments, Putin said that Russia's economy is developing stably despite the pressure from the West, reports Xinhua news agency.

He noted that the GDP for nine months increased by 2.8 per cent compared to the same period last year, while wages in Russia grew by 7.5 per cent in real terms, and unemployment rate remained low at 3 per cent.

However, he warned that the West may resort to more aggressive measures as the potential of Western sanctions is exhausted.



He cited the proposal of some Western politicians on banning the import of screwdrivers, needles and other items into Russia.

"Well, the less junk, the better. Less chance that bedbugs will be exported to us from large European cities," Putin said.

The President also expressed concern that acts of sabotage may be used on vital objects of infrastructure, such as pipelines, power plants or communication networks.

He instructed the government and the Bank of Russia to act synchronously and effectively to reduce inflation, which is one of the main risks for the economy.

Putin also urged them to support business investment in production, technology and human development.

The President said that these are the key conditions for ensuring Russia's long-term growth and economic sovereignty.

Hamas defensive lines in northern Gaza continue to collapse: IDF

Jerusalem | Agencies

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on Thursday claimed that the Hamas militant group's defensive lines in northern Gaza continue to "collapse" as they retreat southwards to the centre of the besieged enclave.

"The IDF continues to advance in the Gaza City area, conducting face-to-face battles with Hamas terrorists and deepening the fighting," CNN quoted IDF spokesman Daniel Hagari as saying in a statement.

"Our fighters continue to collapse the defensive lines of Hamas in the north of the Gaza Strip and take control of central areas," he added.

Hagari further claimed that Israeli forces had "the upper hand" in every confrontation.

"We continue to intensify the activity and move forward according to the plan and the goals we have set for ourselves. The battle is progressing as we planned," he was quoted as saying.



The spokesman's claims come after the IDF had announced it was "expanding ground operations" in Gaza on Friday.

In a separate statement, the Israeli military also claimed "dozens" of fatalities on the Hamas side in continued fighting, the BBC reported.

The IDF said Hamas fired anti-tank missiles, detonated explosives and hurled grenades at Israeli forces.

But it responded with artillery fire, tank fire, an aerial strike from a helicopter and a missile strike from a navy boat.

Teacher strike in US city shuts all public schools

Portland | Agencies

Portland Public Schools teachers have launched a strike that has shuttered all its 81 schools in the largest city of the US state of Oregon.

The strike, the first in school district history, comes after a 10-month stalemate between district and union leaders as they were unable to agree on even basic budget realities, reports Xinhua news agency.

Rallies broke out at most Portland Public Schools campuses starting early Wednesday. The two sides will not meet to negotiate until Friday, which means schools will also close on Thursday.

Union leaders say teachers need large raises to keep pace with inflation, class size limits to allow them to meet students' academic and emotion-



al needs, and more planning time to adjust instruction to widely varying achievement levels, according to a report by the Oregonian.

Portland Public Schools is contending with enrollment declines driven by low birth rates and high housing prices, the report said.

Oregon State Governor Tina Kotek called for the two sides to remain at the bargaining table and continue to negotiate, instead of striking.

Indians to benefit most as Canada to admit 500,000 immigrants each year

Toronto | Agencies

Though Canada will admit 485,000 new immigrants in 2024 as in 2023, it plans to raise the numbers to 500,000 by 2025.

Unveiling immigration plans for 2024-26, Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, said on Wednesday that immigration levels will be capped at 500,000 from 2026. As India is Canada's biggest source of immigration and students, Indians will be the biggest beneficiary of these levels because they are going to get the lion's share of a record 281,135 newcomers under the economic category and 114,000 under the family category.

Last year, over 118,000 Indians took up Canadian permanent residency (PR), accounting for a quarter of all 437,120 newcomers to Canada. The new immigration targets will push up Canada's population each year by 1.3 per cent. In fact, record immigration levels have helped the Canadian population cross the 40-million mark even as the country faces an acute housing shortage.

The Justin Trudeau-led government is sticking to high immigration levels despite opinion polls showing opposition to the plan because of the housing crunch.



"Canada will continue to welcome newcomers and ensure that they are supported in their new lives," Miller added.

He however, admitted that immigration levels were being capped at 500,000 because "we recognise that housing, infrastructure planning, and sustainable population growth need to be properly taken into account".

"Through this plan, we are striking the appropriate balance to grow Canada's economy," the Minister added.

Canada, which admitted more than 46,500 refugees from over 80 countries last year, will welcome a record 76,115 new refugees in 2024.

Over 5.2 million applications from around the world for permanent residence, temporary residence and citizenship were processed last year.

Italy bracing for flood risks in north, heatwaves in south

Rome | Agencies

Italy has been bracing for the latest round of extreme weather, with heavy rains and potential flooding forecast for large parts of central and northern Italy. Meanwhile, high temperatures were predicted in the south.

Italian civil protection officials on Wednesday said that two thunderstorm systems would be moving over the country this week, resulting in red alerts for flooding in the northeastern regions of Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia. Orange alerts have been issued across large parts of northwestern and central Italy, including Milan, Xinhua news agency reported.

The coming thunderstorms are likely to spark floods that could close roads, interrupt commercial and passenger sea transport, and damage crops. The forecast comes after several days of heavy rainfall over much of northern Italy.

Additionally, the canal city of Venice has been repeatedly threatened by sea levels up to 1.54 meters above normal levels, but significant damage was averted due to the city's high-tech flood barriers.

In the south, October saw unseasonal high temperatures surpassing 35 degrees Celsius on multiple occasions. In Sicily, although October temperatures were cooler than the all-time high recorded in July and August, the averages in some parts of the island were nearly ten degrees higher than historical norms, local reports said.

The weather in Sicily has also been unusually dry and multiple wildfires were reported this week, following widespread fires throughout the long and dry summer.



Italian agricultural union Coldiretti said earlier this week that the high temperatures in August and the predicted thunderstorms were bad news for the agricultural sector. The olive harvest, which this year suffered from a one-third reduction due to the hot and dry summer, could see low production again next year due to the extreme weather in fall and winter.

The agricultural group said that repeated bouts of unpredictable weather this year have reduced wheat production by a tenth, while cherry production was 60 percent lower than normal, and the honey harvest was 70 percent below last year's levels.

Over the last 18 months, Italy has suffered from a string of extreme weather events, ranging from record-high temperatures and drought in the summer months of 2022 and 2023, to wildfires, floods, landslides, hail and severe winds.

'Landmines kill 264 civilians in Ukraine'

Kiev | Agencies

At least 264 civilians have been killed in landmine-related explosions in Ukraine since the start of the war with Russia, a specialized formation of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry has said. Since February 2022, at least 561 landmine incidents have occurred in Ukraine, also injuring 571 others, the State Special Transport Service said on Facebook on Wednesday, Xinhua news agency reported.

Most of the incidents happened on farmland fields, roads, yards and forests, it said.

According to the Ukrainian government, about 174,000 square km of the country's territory is potentially littered with landmines and other unexploded ordnance.



Bombay HC: Biological dad not 'kidnapper' of child in absence of prohibition order

Team Absolute | Nagpur

In a significant ruling, the Bombay High Court (Nagpur Bench) has ruled that a man who took away his minor child from his estranged wife's custody cannot be booked for kidnapping in the absence of a prohibition order by a competent court.

In a recent order, Justice Vinay Joshi and Justice Valmiki SA Menezes quashed a case of kidnapping filed against the man, Ashish A. Mule, 35, by the Gadge Nagar Police Station in Nagpur, for allegedly abducting his three-year old son from his estranged wife, Manisha A. Mule's custody, on March 29 this year.

The judges said that in the absence of any "prohibition order" by a competent court, the applicant-father could not be prosecuted merely for taking away his own minor child from the custody of his mother.

The judges said that the natural father of the minor child is also a lawful guardian along with the



mother, and therefore, he could not be said to have committed the offence of kidnapping, as alleged.

The real effect in the present of the man's action was that the child was taken away from the lawful guardianship of the mother to another lawful guardianship of the father, said the court.

Justice Joshi and Justice Menezes here referred to

the Hindu Minority & Guardianship Act, 1956 which defines the "natural guardians" of a child, and said that it was abundantly clear Mule was a natural guardian of the minor (boy) in the absence of an order otherwise passed by any competent court.

In the Mule couple's case, both the the applicant-father and the child's mother were the natural and lawful guardians of the child and Mule could not be charged with kidnapping even if he takes away the child from the mother.

Accordingly, the judges ruled that there was no prima facie case made out against the applicant Mule, continuation of such prosecution would amount to an abuse of the law, and quashed and set aside the FIR filed against the man - who was accused of kidnapping the child in March.

Mule was represented by lawyers Pavan Dahat and B. B. Moon, advocate V. N. Mate appeared for Manisha A. Mule, Additional Public Prosecutor S. M. Ghodeswar represented the state of Maharashtra in the matter.

Sanjay Raut says only Union govt can resolve issue in Maharashtra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT) Sanjay Raut, on Thursday, expressed his concerns over the Maratha quota agitation and emphasized that only Union government holds the key to resolving the issue. He, however, pointed out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah were engrossed in election campaigns while the state was grappling with unrest, stated a report.

The report further stated Raut saying that his party's stance has consistently backed the provision of reservations for the Maratha community across Maharashtra with a condition that it does not encroach upon existing quota allocated to other communities. His statements came during a press briefing in Mumbai.

Raut was quoted in a report as saying, "Only the Centre can address this issue (Maratha reservation), but PM Modi is occupied with election campaigning. Amit Shah is actively involved in campaigns spanning from Chhattisgarh to Mizoram, while Maharashtra faces turmoil."

Speaking further, he suggested PM Modi should engage with Maratha activist Manoj Jarange, who has been on an indefinite hunger strike, advocating for the quota. He said that in the



event of any harm befalling Jarange, Maharashtra could witness further unrest amid people resorting to suicides.

"People are committing suicide. If anything happens to him (Jarange), Maharashtra will burn. Do they want Maharashtra to burn," Raut was quoted as saying.

The MP further stated that it was the responsibility of the incumbent Maharashtra government, led by Eknath Shinde, to address the demands of the community.

Maharashtra has been seeing intensified agitation over the Maratha quota across the state, especially in the Marathwada region. In many places, these agitations have taken violent turns with over 150 cases being filed by the cops and over 80 persons being held for perpetrating violence. The protests intensified

on October 25, following Jarange resuming his indefinite strike. Following that many districts in Maharashtra witnessed large-scale violence wherein public properties worth Rs 12 crores were damaged.

Agitators also resorted to arson with some torching an MLA's home and office in Beed and tire-burning incidents being reported from Solapur and Pune.

Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis speaking about the arson on MLAs home had said that there were family members inside the home and the accused will be facing attempt to murder charges.

Meanwhile, in districts like Jalna, Beed and Dharashiv (Osmanabad), internet services have been suspended temporarily and prohibitory orders are in place.

Now, all-parties Maratha MLAs stage roadblock outside Mantralaya for quotas

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In what is said to be an unprecedented development, around two dozen Maratha MLAs cutting across party lines staged a roadblock outside Mantralaya in a high-security zone to press for quotas to the community, here on Thursday.

This is the third consecutive day of protests by the all-party legislators -- from the ruling MahaYuti and Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi -- to press for the reservation demands and express solidarity with Shivba Sanghatana leader Manoj Jarange-Patil who is on a rigorous hunger strike for the ninth day Thursday.

The legislators raised slogans of 'Ek Maratha, Lakh Maratha' and 'Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Ki Jai', gathered outside the state government headquarters at Nariman Point and squatted on the road briefly halting the morning traffic.

Later, they were detained and whisked off in vans by the Mumbai Police to the Azad Maidan police chowky, with no reports of any untoward incidents.



Nationalist Congress Party (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar reiterated the MVA demand for summoning a Special Legislature Session to discuss the issue in detail and finalise the Maratha quotas.

"Any reservation above the 50 per cent ceiling would require amending the Constitution, and the

power for which vests with the Centre," said Rohit Pawar, the grandnephew of NCP President Sharad Pawar.

He also observed that "when the ruling party legislators are compelled to stage a roadblock, it implies lack of communication with their own government".

"What exactly will be achieved by such an agitation... The MLAs should build pressure on the government to give justice to the Marathas, or go and join Jarange-Patil's agitation in Jalna," said Rohit Pawar.

On Wednesday, the all-party Maratha legislators had 'locked' up the Mantralaya main gate and the day before they staged a sit-in protest near the statue of Mahatma Gandhi near the state seat of power, followed by the roadblock on this day.

Maharashtra continued to witness sporadic protests in different districts as Jarange-Patil's hunger-strike entered the ninth day and a government delegation was slated to meet him in Antaravali-Sarati village in Jalna this evening.

5-Year-old collapses in play area Thane housing complex, dies

Team Absolute | Thane

A 5-year-old boy collapsed while playing on the premises of the housing society where he lived and died in Maharashtra's Thane district, the police said on Thursday. The child, a KG student,

went to the play area of their residential complex in Dombivali on Tuesday, while his mother waited outside, the official said.

After some time, the boy fell unconscious inside the play area. He was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him dead, said the

official from Manpada police station. The police sent the body for post-mortem and registered a case of accidental death, the official said, adding that cops were questioning the two caretakers who were present in the play area at the time of the incident.

Eknath Shinde's son objects to circular for traffic diversion near house

Team Absolute | Thane

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's son and Kalyan MP Shrikant Shinde has written to the Thane police commissioner objecting the "unilateral" decision by the police to divert traffic in their residential area, a move he said has drawn criticism to the Shinde family.

After the letter was issued, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic, withdrew the circular on Wednesday night.

Police have stepped up security outside the private residence of the chief minister in Loiuswadi area in Thane city in view of the protests by Maratha community members for quota in various parts of the state.

Shrikant Shinde stated that the police took the decision on traffic diversion outside their residential building without consulting them.

Also, we do not want to put the citizens of the city to any kind of hardships, the letter stated. "The traffic wing of the Thane Police has issued a circular on Wednesday for traffic changes in Louiswadi area where our 'Shubhdeep' building which is the residence of the Chief Minister is located. "The changes are proposed for the family members of the Chief Minister. My name is also mentioned in it though neither I nor my family made any such request or suggestion to change the traffic in our residential area. Also, we were not given any forewarning before issuing the notification in such a manner," he stated.

Due to the circular issued by the police, our family is being defamed in media and social media, the MP said.

"It is the fault of the police and we are being criticised for the same and it has resulted in a very irritating situation. We have no right to block the road of common people. We do not accept the VIP culture at all," he said.

The letter stated that strict action would be taken against the officials who issued the traffic change circular and the road should be opened for traffic.

After the letter was issued, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic, withdrew the circular. Shrikant Shinde called up the DCP and categorically told him that any such notification which would trouble the citizens was not acceptable. Hence the notification was being cancelled, the DCP (traffic) stated.



FIR against man for raping, threatening online female friend

Team Absolute | Navi Mumbai

The Navi Mumbai police in Maharashtra have registered a case against a 25-year-old man for allegedly raping and threatening a woman whom he had befriended through a mobile chat application, an official said on Thursday.

According to the news agency, the suspect from Beed district in Maharashtra first gained the 23-year-old woman's confidence by chatting with her before proposing to meet her.

The suspect allegedly took the woman, who lives in Panvel, to Nashik and his home in Beed where he allegedly raped her, the police said.



The woman reportedly claimed that the suspect then forcibly married her, beat her up and later made their intimate photos viral on a social media app. The alleged crimes were committed between June and August of this year, the official said. The Navi Mumbai police

on Wednesday registered a case under Indian Penal Code sections, including 376 (rape) and 504 (criminal intimidation). Since the alleged incident had taken place in Beed, the case has been transferred to Peth police station there, he added.

MUMBAI POLICE BANS SALE AND POSSESSION OF FIRE CRACKERS IN CITY WITHOUT VALID LICENSE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police on Thursday issued a preventive order banning sale, possession, display and carrying of fire crackers in the city, an official notification said. According to the Mumbai Police notification, the police said, notwithstanding any orders issued earlier in this regard, in order to prevent obstruction, inconvenience, annoyance, danger or damage to public the following order. The order was issued by Vishal Thakur, DCP (Operations), Mumbai. It said, "No person at any public place in the limits of Brihanmumbai shall sell, possess, offer, display, carry or expose for purpose of sale of any firecrackers/fireworks without license granted by the Commissioner of Police or any other Police Officer designated by the Commissioner of Police or State Government to grant such



license. It further said, "this order will come in force from 04th November, 2023 to 03rd December, 2023 (Both days inclusive). Fireworks means explosives specified in fire-works in clause 7 of Explosive Rules of 1983." In an another order, the Mumbai Police said, whereas reports have been received that due to the situation prevailing in the areas under the control of Commissioner of Police, Brihanmumbai, it is noticed that use, sale and storage of Flying Lanterns during i.e. Date 04/11/2023 to

03/12/2023 in Brihanmumbai Police Commissionerate area may cause grave danger to human life, safety and injury to public property and whereas it is necessary that some checks should be put on Flying Lanterns activities like its use, sale and storage in the Brihanmumbai Police Commissionerate; to prevent the activities of antisocial elements through such type of Flying Lanterns during the said period in Mumbai and that immediate action is necessary to prevent the same.

Pollution more than double over last 5 years in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The air quality in Mumbai in October has undergone a steady decline in the last five years, and even in Delhi, the situation is no better, a study has found. October is the first of the winter months when air quality starts going south, and in Mumbai, the volume of pollutants has doubled between 2019 and 2023.

A report by climate-tech start-up Respirer Living Sciences found Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Kolkata all exhibiting a rise in highly polluting PM (Particulate Matter) 2.5.

In Mumbai, PM2.5 shot up between 2019 and 2020 by 54.2 per cent, and after a marginal drop in 2021 (by 3 per cent) and 2022 (by 0.9 per cent), spiked again in 2023 by 42.1 per cent.

The city authorities have drawn up a detailed plan to combat pollution, fitting vehicle-mounted air filters on 350 BEST buses, setting up virtual chimneys at traffic congestion spots, placing special streetlights and installing air purification systems in select gardens.

The city has also ordered 30 vehicles mounted with sprinklers and industries have been asked to increase the height of chimneys. Delhi saw a sharp rise in PM 2.5 levels between



2019 and 2020 (by 32 per cent), a dip in 2021 (by 43.7 per cent), and a steady increase in 2022 and 2023 - though the peak pollution season expected to begin with Diwali is still some way off. Air quality in some parts of the city has dropped to the "severe" category and is expected to remain "very poor" for a few more days.

In Hyderabad, PM 2.5 increased between 2019 and 2020 by 59 per cent, dipped by 2.9 per cent in 2021 and shot up by 29.1 per cent in 2022. This year, it spiked by 18.6 per cent.

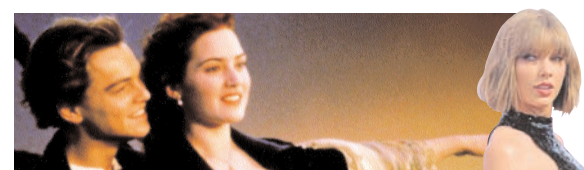
Kolkata, though, bucked the trend somewhat, with PM 2.5 levels dipping between 2019 and 2020 (by 26.8 per cent), going up in 2021 by 51.7 per cent. It dropped in 2022 by 33.1 per cent but rose again this year by 40.2 per cent.

Four state capitals, unexpectedly, showed a drop in PM2.5 levels this year compared to the last - Lucknow, Patna, Bengaluru and Chennai.

The biggest drop took place in Chennai (23.7 per cent) followed by Bengaluru (11.6 per cent), Patna (11.1 per cent) and Lucknow (0.9 per cent).

On Tuesday, expressing concern over the deteriorating air quality, the Supreme Court asked Delhi and four neighbouring states -- Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan -- to submit a report on the steps taken to curb pollution. Stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana is a major source of pollution in the northern states.

On Sunday, Punjab saw a 740 per cent increase in farm fires. Across the state, 1,068 fires were reported -- the highest in a single day in the current harvesting season - which was even caught in satellite pictures.



Scarlett Johansson

suing AI app developer for cloning her voice

San Francisco | Agencies

Actor Scarlett Johansson is reportedly suing an app developer for using her name and AI-generated version of her voice in an online ad.

As reported by Variety, the 22-second ad showed Johansson behind the scenes while filming 'Black Widow', where she says "What's up guys? It's Scarlett and I want you to come with me."

Later, an AI-generated voice meant to sound like the actor takes over, saying "It's not limited to avatars only. You can also create images with texts and even your AI videos. I think you shouldn't miss it."

The ad was for an AI image editor, called Lisa AI: 90s Yearbook & Avatar, the report mentioned.

Convert Software - the developer behind the app - included text at the bottom of the ad that read: "Images produced by Lisa AI. It has nothing to do with this person."

Representatives for Johansson were quoted as saying in the report that the actor was never a spokesperson for the app.



SOPHIE TURNER NOT DATING EXCLUSIVELY DESPITE KISSING ENGLISH ARISTOCRAT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sophie Turner is seemingly not in a rush to have a serious relationship following her split from singer Joe Jonas.

The actress is reportedly not dating exclusively at the moment despite having been caught kissing Peregrine Pearson. "Sophie is open to the idea of dating again," a source told 'Us Weekly' of the 27-year-old's current relationship status, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"She isn't fully committed to anybody at the moment, but she's definitely putting herself out there and keeping her options open."

Turner sparked dating rumors with Peregrine John Dickinson Pearson, simply known as Perry by his friends, after they were spotted making out in public in Paris. The twosome was photographed sharing a kiss on the streets on Saturday, October 28.

In photos obtained by 'The Sun', the 27-year-old actress wrapped her arms around the 29-year-old eligible bachelor as he courteously removed his hat to smooch her on the sidewalk. Sophie, meanwhile, appeared to be trying to go incognito by wearing a red cap and sunglasses with her long blonde hair styled in a braid during the outing.

An eyewitness told the outlet that they saw Sophie and Perry at the Gare du Nord railway station "chatting and laughing a lot." The informant dished, "They arrived together at the chauffeur pickup location outside of the station. It looked like they might have both come on the Eurostar from London." "They stood there for a few minutes and were chatting and laughing a lot," the spy added. "He then took his hat off and leaned in to give her a big kiss. After the kiss, they parted ways." The reported new couple left separately in chauffeur-driven cars. They later reunited at the city's Stade de France. It's unclear why Perry was at the event, but Sophie was on hand to unveil the Rugby World Cup trophy with retired New Zealand rugby union player Dan Carter.



Louis Tomlinson addresses 'childish' conspiracy theories

Los Angeles | Agencies

Former One Direction singer Louis Tomlinson clapped back at "immature rumours" about his personal life on October 31 while answering questions about his tour.

One fan asked on X (formerly known as Twitter), "Louis how do you make chicken parmesan?" which prompted the singer to reply with a bold message, reports eonline.

"You start by realising all these ridiculous childish theories and conspiracies are wasted time and energy," the 31-year-old wrote back, "and then just throw the chicken in the oven to be fair. Simple stuff."

While some users began speculating that Louis was referring to his "Larry" fanbase, the original user made his intentions clear: "All I did was ask for advice cooking advice (sic)."

And it wasn't Louis' only feisty response to a fan question on the platform.

"Have you ever thought about leaving music to practice it?" one person asked, to which the 'Night Changes' artist replied, "Feels like an insult but I don't think that was your intention hahaha."

He continued in earnest, "Every show is a type of practice, every studio vocal, every song I write, every song I hear. Being in the centre of it all breads (sic) creativity and understanding."

And when the English star isn't honing his craft or rocking out on stage, his direction in life points him towards fatherhood.

He gushed that he is "most proud" of his son Freddie Reign Tomlinson, 7, who he shares with Briana Jungwirth. In fact, music is one thing that bonds the father-son duo.

In another message on X, Louis -- who was spotted holding hands with model Sofie Nyvang earlier this year -- said that he tries to make his concerts somewhat family friendly, depending on where attendees are standing. "I brought my Freddie and he had a great time," he noted. "So as long as you have enough space I'm sure she'll have fun!"



Vanessa Hudgens dresses up as the Wicked Witch of the West

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress-singer Vanessa Hudgens, who always goes all-out for Halloween, dressed up for the holiday this year in a classic costume, sporting the look of the Wicked Witch of the West. The actress, posed in front of a mirror in her green and black look showing off her Wizard of Oz homage, reports People magazine. She wore a floppy black witch hat with a bright red wig and a low-cut, form-fitting ruffled dress.

Hudgens showed her commitment to the character by painting her body green to resemble the 1939 musical character's green skin.

As per People, she shared the snapshot on her Instagram page and simply captioned the post, "Happy halloweeeen". Hudgens' witchy look occurred one day after the hit musical 'Wicked' celebrated its 20th anniversary on Monday.

The Tony-winning show is based on the novel 'Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' by Gregory Maguire, which is a revisionist take on 'The Wicked Witch of the West' from 'The Wizard of Oz'. Each October, the Disney alum transforms her social media account from bubbly to black-and-white, and this year she continued the tradition by posting celebratory photos at the start of October.



Model Athena Crosby talks about final meeting with Matthew Perry one day before his death

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Friends' star Matthew Perry's model friend Athena Crosby has opened up about her outing with the actor just one day before his sudden death. After TMZ published photos of Perry grabbing lunch with a woman in Los Angeles on October 27, model Athena Crosby came forward and identified herself in a lengthy social media post, reports eonline.

"Once again I never intended to say anything," she wrote on her Instagram Stories Oct. 31, "but since I have been identified, yes that is me with him this past Friday."

Crosby reflected fondly on their lunch, stressing that the Friends star seemed to be doing well. "I want to emphasize that Matthew was in extremely good spirits, and talked to me enthusiastically about the things that he had coming up in his life," she continued.

"He was so happy & vibrant. Please refrain from any speculation surrounding his death and know that the man was on a comeback and truly deserved more time on this earth. Our entertainment industry has truly lost a legend. RIP." On her Instagram Stories, Crosby also explained why she initially didn't say anything about her connection to Perry.

"Rest in peace, my friend," the actress and entertainment correspondent wrote in an earlier post. "I wasn't going to speak about this but what I will say is I had the honor of knowing Matthew personally."

"I am so devastated from his death but felt it was in poor taste to talk about it publicly as the attention should not be on me but rather on him and his legacy and he was an extremely private person and I always respected that in our friendship. But indeed, we were friends and I was one of the last people to speak to him before he passed."

In addition, she encouraged her followers to "check out his amazing and inspiring book" Friends, Lovers, and the Big Terrible Thing-in which he wrote about his life, career and battle with addiction-and left them with a reminder.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Michelle Keegan



Men's ODI World Cup

KOHLI OVERTAKES TENDULKAR'S RECORD OF MOST 1000 ODI RUNS IN A CALENDAR YEAR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Virat Kohli surpassed batting legend Sachin Tendulkar's record of scoring more than 1000 ODI runs in a calendar year.

The stylish Indian batter completed this milestone during the 2023 World Cup match against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

Kohli has now scored more than 1000 ODI runs in a calendar year eight times, overtaking the legendary Tendulkar's erstwhile record of seven. Kohli's brilliance in ODI cricket came back in 2017 when he scored 1460 runs in 26 innings. With 1000+ runs in four consecutive years 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014, Kohli managed to equal Tendulkar's record after 2017, 2018, and 2019 phenomenal performance with the bat.

After struggling with the bat in the year 2020, 2021, and 2022 Kohli with 82 runs in the final match against Sri Lanka now becomes the record holder of scoring the most 1000+ ODI runs in a calendar year. Kohli scored a well-compiled 94-ball 88 with 11 fours and no sixes. Kohli now awaits another Tendulkar's record of most ODI Hundreds with 48 under his belt. Tendulkar who has scored 49 ODI



Hundreds heads the record of most ODI Hundreds.

IYER BECOMES THIRD FASTEST INDIAN BATTER TO SCORE 2000 ODI RUNS

Mumbai: Shreyas Iyer on Thursday became the third fastest Indian batter to complete 2000 runs in One-Day Internationals during the World Cup 2023 match against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium.

Iyer reached the milestone in his 49th innings in the format, behind Shikhar Dhawan, who is the second fastest Indian to score 2000 runs in ODIs in his 48th innings back in November 2014 against Sri Lanka in Hyderabad. Iyer hammered a 56-ball 82 comprised of three boundaries and six maximums against Sri Lanka to reach the milestone. With an average of 45.84 Iyer has scored 2017 runs in 49 innings comprised of three century and sixteen half-century. Indian batter Shubhman Gill holds the record of fastest batter to 2000 ODI runs. He reached in just 38 innings during the World Cup 2023 surpassing South African Hashim Amla's record of 40 innings against New Zealand in Dharamshala.



Serie A

Endrick sinks Botafogo as Palmeiras heat up title race

Rio de Janeiro | Agencies

Teenage forward Endrick Felipe scored two second-half goals as Palmeiras rallied from three goals behind to beat leaders Botafogo 4-3 in Brazil's Serie A championship.

Carlos Eduardo gave the hosts the lead when his deflected effort flew into the bottom right corner after Victor Sa's cross from the left wing, Xinhua reports.

Daniilo Pinheiro doubled the advantage on the half hour with a dipping 25-yard drive into the top-left corner following Marcal's corner.

Botafogo appeared to be cruising to a comfortable victory when Junior Santos tapped home from close range on the counterattack with 36 minutes gone.

Palmeiras had other ideas, however. Endrick reduced the deficit four minutes after halftime by sprinting past four defenders before slotting a low finish past goalkeeper Lucas Perri. Botafogo were reduced to 10 men in the 76th minute as Adryelson was shown a straight red card for a high challenge on Breno Lopes. Despite their numerical disadvantage, the Rio de Janeiro outfit continued to threaten in attack and Tiquinho Soares was awarded a penalty after he was tripped by Rony Barbosa.



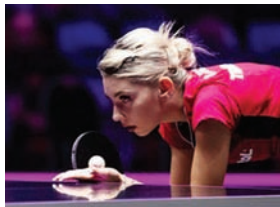
But Soares's timid shot was saved by goalkeeper Weverton as Palmeiras refused to surrender. Endrick was involved in most of Palmeiras' most dangerous attacking moves and the 17-year-old struck his team's second goal by showing sublime control before rifling home a left-footed shot from outside the 18-yard box. Palmeiras suddenly had the momentum and Jose Lopez put them on level terms by nodding home after Gustavo Gomez's headed cross in the 89th minute. The reigning Brazilian Serie A champions completed a remarkable turnaround in the ninth minute of stoppage time when Murilo Cerqueira connected with Raphael Veiga's floating free-kick before prodding in a close-range shot into the near corner. The result cut Botafogo's lead to three points, though they have a game in hand over second-placed Palmeiras.

Szocs upsets Chen Meng, Lee Sang Su stuns Fan Zhendong at WTT Champions Frankfurt

Frankfurt | Agencies

Bernadette Szocs, Lee Sang-su, and Lim Jong-hoon celebrated victories against Chinese table tennis stars Chen Meng, Fan Zhendong, and Liang Jingkun at the 2023 WTT Champions Frankfurt.

World No. 12 women's singles player Bernadette Szocs of Romania completed an upset win over second seed Chen Meng, edging past the Olympic champion in five tight games 4-11, 11-8, 13-11, 5-11, 12-10 to reserve her ticket to the quarterfinals, reports Xinhua. Szocs' astonishing win over Chen at the 2022 WTT Champions Macao did not make her the favorite to take another victory on Wednesday. However, the European Games winner



appeared more comfortable and confident at the table, ramping up the pressure on the world No. 2.

"I wanted so much to make history again because I wanted to be sure that it was not just luck that I had won her last year. I wanted to prove that I can beat her many times. This is my goal as always, trying to be very close to the Chinese top players, and even to beat them," said the 28-year-old Romanian. "I'm also preparing well for the Olympics, I want to make that as well.

The victory gives me a lot of confidence for the future," added Szocs. Current world No. 1 Sun Yingsha took a straight-set win over 19-year-old French talent Prithika Pavade 11-9, 11-3, 15-13 to secure a spot in the quarterfinals. As for the men's singles action, Lim Jong-hoon of South Korea became the first player to take down a seeded entry in the discipline, knocking out fifth seed Liang Jingkun with a masterful display over four games 11-9, 11-9, 8-11, 11-9. Lim's countryman, Lee Sang-su overturned top seed and title favorite Fan Zhendong 11-7, 9-11, 11-8, 13-11. It's Lee's first win over the Chinese world champion among their 15 encounters, while Fan suffered his earliest exit from a WTT Champions stage.

Newcastle beat holders Man Utd to reach QF; Liverpool, Chelsea, West Ham, Fulham and Everton also reach last-8

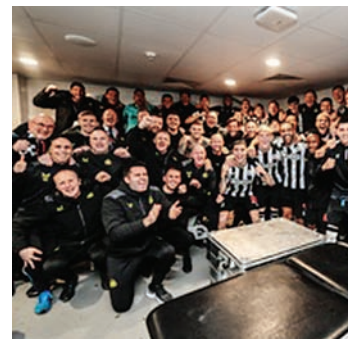
EFL Cup

London | Agencies

Goals from Miguel Almiron, Lewis Hall and Joe Willock sealed an emphatic 3-0 EFL Cup fourth-round victory for Newcastle United as they beat holders Manchester United at Old Trafford for the first time since 2013 to sail into the quarterfinals.

Man Utd and Newcastle made 15 changes between them from their latest Premier League fixtures last weekend, with seven and eight respectively.

Newcastle took control of the tie thanks to first-half goals from Almiron and Hall, the on-loan full-back scoring his first senior goal with a precise long-range shot to put Newcastle two goals up before the break. Willock added a third for the visitors on the hour-mark and cup



holders Man Utd were unable to recover, falling to a second consecutive 3-0 home defeat following their loss to Manchester City in Sunday's Manchester derby.

It was Newcastle's biggest away win over Man Utd for 93 years, and the first time the Red Devils have lost consecutive home fixtures by three

goals or more since 1962 - increasing the pressure on manager Erik ten Hag. Premier League high-flyers Arsenal were another big-name casualty. The Gunners lost against domestic opposition for the first time this season in all competitions, with West Ham United running out comfortable 3-1 victors in their tie at the London Stadium.

A stoppage-time goal from Martin Odegaard was of little consolation for Arsenal, who were three goals down within the hour through a Ben White own goal and strikes from Mohamed Kudus and Jarrod Bowen. Merseyside rivals Everton and Liverpool both booked their places in the quarter-finals.

Everton comfortably brushed aside Burnley with a 3-0 win at Goodison Park, with goals from James Tarkowski, Amadou Onana and

Ashley Young condemning the Claret's to defeat as Sean Dyché terminated a victory over his former club.

The 2022 EFL Cup winners Liverpool earned a hard-fought 2-1 win at AFC Bournemouth. Cody Gakpo and Darwin Nunez struck for the Reds either side of a Justin Kluivert equaliser for the spirited Cherries - and Liverpool progress to host West Ham in the quarterfinals.

In the remaining two ties of Wednesday night, Chelsea and Fulham safely navigated match-ups against lower-league opposition. Benoit Badiashile and Raheem Sterling both scored at Stamford Bridge to knock out Blackburn Rovers, while Fulham won 3-1 away at Ipswich to reach the last eight of the competition - setting up a quarter-final away at Everton.

THIRD DIVISION SIDE SAARBRUCKEN SHOCK BAYERN IN GERMAN CUP

Berlin | Agencies

Record champions Bayern Munich suffered their fourth consecutive early exit from the German Cup after stubborn Saarbrücken came from behind to clinch a 2-1 last-gasp comeback win at the second round.

The Bavarians assumed control from the kick-off but couldn't pose a threat to Saarbrücken's well-positioned defence, Xinhua reports.

Bayern, however, opened the scoring after utilizing their first clearcut chance 14 minutes into the game when Thomas Muller had all time and space to drill the ball from 22 meters into the roof of the net.

Saarbrücken remained unimpressed and restored parity just before the break after Lukas Boeder dispossessed youngster Frans Kratzig near the penalty area, allowing Patrick Sontheimer to latch onto the subsequent cutback pass by Boeder.

After the interval, Bayern increased the pressure but Saarbrücken's defence was able to keep the German giants at bay. The visitors tried their luck with long-range efforts then, but Saarbrücken goalkeeper Tim Schreiber was equal to Leroy Sane's hammer from 20 meters in the 50th minute. Sane remained in the thick of things but he still couldn't beat Schreiber moments later from a tight angle. Schreiber had his hands full of work in the closing



stages as also Jamal Musiala and Serge Gnabry chanced it from the distance as well.

Just when everyone settled for the overtime, Saarbrücken stunned Bayern with the injury time winner after Tim Civeja's square pass following a throw-in near the midfield allowed Marcel Gaus to beat Bayern goalie Manuel Neuer with a deflected shot from inside the box in the dying seconds of the

injury time.

In the other matches, Bayer Leverkusen bounced back from two goals down and overpowered third division side Sandhausen 5-2, second division club Paderborn shocked Freiburg 3-1, Dortmund moved 1-0 past Hoffenheim, Eintracht Frankfurt downed third-tier Viktoria Cologne 2-0, and Mainz lost 3-0 to second division outfit Hertha Berlin.

WTA Finals

Jabeur beats Vondrousova to avenge Wimbledon loss

Cancun (Mexico) | Agencies

In a rematch of the Wimbledon final, Ons Jabeur defeated No. 6 Marketa Vondrousova 6-4, 6-3 in round-robin play at the WTA Finals.

Jabeur's straight-set win on Wednesday moved her to 1-1 in the Chetumal Group and dropped Wimbledon champion Vondrousova to 0-2. The result, combined with No. 2 Iga Swiatek's straight-set win over No. 3 Coco Gauff, means the group remains in the balance going into the final day of group play, WTA Tour reports.

With a 2-0 record, Swiatek is in pole position to win the group and qualify for the semi-finals. Gauff and Jabeur sit second in the group at 1-1 and Vondrousova, at 0-2, is still in with a mathematical chance to advance.

Jabeur will face Swiatek on Friday. The two have not played a complete match since the 2022 US Open final, which Swiatek won 6-2, 7-6(5). "Iga is a very smart person and she



knows how to adapt to these conditions. I'm gonna try to enjoy this game," Jabeur said of his next match against Swiatek. "Try to play freely. Try to let go some of the anger that I have and hope for the best. It's definitely not going to be an easy match, but I will try my best."

LATE VECCHIO STRIKE KEEPS RACING IN TITLE CHASE

Buenos Aires: Emiliano Vecchio scored a late equaliser as Racing Club kept alive their title hopes with 2-2 draw at Defensa y Justicia in Argentina's Primera Division.

Gabriel Hauche gave the visitors the perfect start by scoring in the first minute before Lucas Pratto and Gaston Togni struck either side of halftime for the hosts, reports Xinhua.

But Racing refused to yield and Vecchio put his side on level terms when he combined with Maximiliano Romero before sending a cool finish past goalkeeper Enrique Bologna three minutes from time.

Racing are due to host Central Cordoba in their next top-flight fixture on Sunday while Defensa y Justicia will visit Estudiantes on the same day.

Men's ODI WC: Tackling Afghanistan's quality spinners on Netherlands mind ahead of crucial clash at Lucknow

Lucknow | Agencies

Friday's clash in the Men's ODI World Cup will be the final game to be played at the BRSABV Ekana Cricket Stadium. Both Afghanistan and Netherlands, squaring off in the clash on Friday, will be keen to take two points and push more for a semi-final berth.

For Netherlands, according to its all-rounder Colin Ackermann, countering the Afghanistan spin threat featuring Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi and Mujeeb Ur Rahman, along with Noor Ahmed at the bench, will be the key if they are to spring another surprise in the tournament.

"They've obviously got three very good spinners that have been successful in T20 cricket. The 50 over format is different. You don't have to go after the spinners from, from ball one. So it gives us an opportunity to have a look at them to see how the conditions are playing out there." "I think the teams that have done well against them have kind of taken the game deep and not given them any wickets in the middle overs. But in saying that they've also got two or three very good seam-



ers that are dangerous. So it's about getting through the power play first and then combating the spin in the middle overs," he said in the pre-match press conference.

Apart from skipper Scott Edwards, none of the Netherlands batters have amassed more than 200 runs in the ongoing World Cup, especially with the top-order failing to impress so far, with the middle-order chipping in with reasonable performances.

He also stated that the Netherlands focus is currently making the semi-finals of this World Cup instead of securing a qualification for 2025 Champions Trophy or thinking of facing teams like England and India.

"I don't think any teams knew about it before we started. But we are here at a World Cup, we're not playing the Champions Trophy. We first need to compete at this tournament before we look at the Champions Trophy."

"The focus is semifinal for us. We know that if we win our next three games, we'll make the semifinal. That is our focus at this stage. We're not interested in what's happening in two years' time. We've got a game to win tomorrow," concluded Ackermann.

Delhi FC's maiden triumph on a dramatic afternoon

Ludhiana | Agencies

Football fans were treated to a goal fest as Delhi FC prevailed 4-3 in a high-scoring second-round I-League clash against Rajasthan United FC at the Namdhari Sports Complex on Thursday.

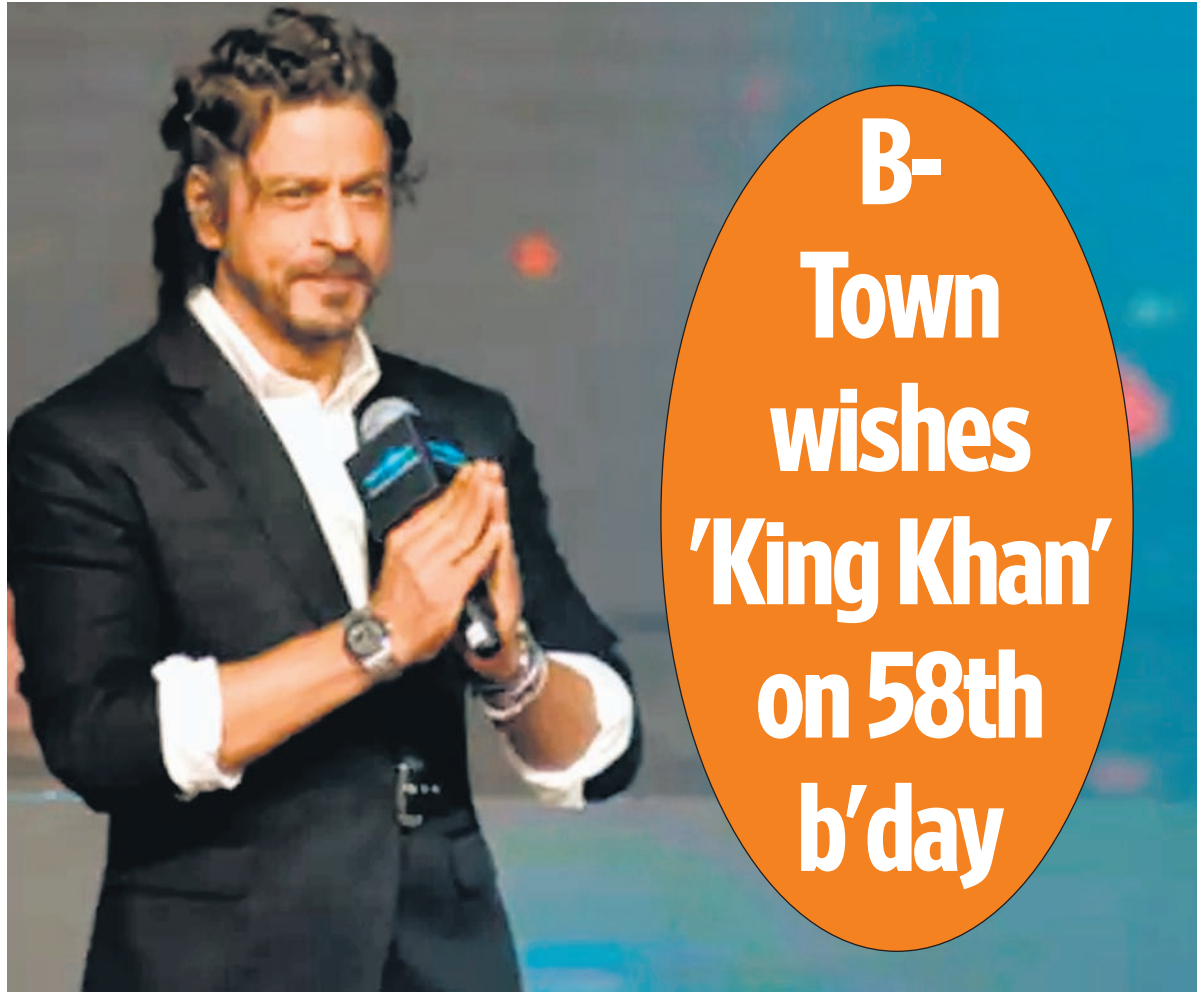
Aroldo da Silva Arruda, known to fans as Aroldinho, stole the spotlight with a stunning brace, while Gurtej Singh and Sergio Barboza also got their names on the scoresheet for Delhi FC. This victory was special for Delhi FC as it marked their first-ever triumph in the I-League after securing promotion this season. For Rajasthan United, who were reduced to 10 men in the 82nd minute following Ibrahim Moro's dismissal, Yash Tripathi was the standout performer as he scored a remarkable hat-trick. Delhi FC launched an



onslaught right from the start. Their relentless attacking approach generated numerous opportunities in the first half. In contrast, Rajasthan United, coming off a defeat against Real Kashmir FC, took some time to find their rhythm but eventually rallied in the second half, transforming the match into a thriller.

The fireworks began early, with Aroldinho's lethal right-footed strike finding the back of the net in the fourth minute.

The play originated from a short corner taken by Mummun Timothy Lugun, culminating in Aroldinho's clinical finish.



B-Town wishes 'King Khan' on 58th b'day

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 'Badshah' of Bollywood, Shah Rukh Khan turned 58 on Thursday, and the celebrities have swamped social media with heartwarming wishes for him. SRK's most cherished co-star Kajol shared a candid picture with the birthday boy, wherein both can be seen sharing a hearty laugh.

She captioned the post: "Wish u a Supercalifragilistic year ahead... I know it's gonna be a good one! @iamsrk."

Ajay Devgn dropped SRK's snapshot from the song 'Chaleya' from the recently released movie 'Jawan'. He captioned it: "Here's to another fantastic year of being Jawan and fabulous! Happy Birthday."

Chawla shared clicks from their movie 'Yes Boss', and wrote: "500 trees for a friendship, that is beyond words.... beyond time and sometimes beyond my understanding. Happy Birthday ShahRukh ...!!! Lots of love Jay and Juhi."

Kareena Kapoor Khan shared a monochrome picture of SRK, and wrote: "Happiest birthday King! May you shine the brightest always."

Taapsee Pannu shared the first teaser of SRK starrer 'Dunki', and wrote: "Happy Birthday Sir @iamsrk.. Let the festivities begin..."

Sidharth Malhotra said: "Happy birthday @iamsrk sir! Keep shining. Big love and respect always."

Kiara Advani wrote: "Happy Birthday King Lots and lots and lots of love."

Farah Khan dropped throwback pictures with SRK, which also includes a cute glimpse of AbRam, and said: "Happy birthday @poojadadlani02 sharing birthday with @iamsrk... can't believe you were just 23 during omShantiOm have the Best year both of you..."

Katrina Kaif said: "A phenomenon !!!! Happy birthday."

Singer Kumar Sanu said: "Happy Birthday to the King of Bollywood @iamsrk May you always be happy and healthy, This is my prayer to God."

Ananya Panday said: "Happy birthday @iamsrk Best in every way - there's no one like you."

Rakul Preet Singh said: "Happpppy bdayyyyyy OG king!! There is no one like you sir.. may you keep shining and spreading love like always. wishing you abundance of everything you desire"

Saira Banu posted a heartfelt birthday wish for SRK on Instagram. In her message, Saira drew parallels between Shah Rukh and her late husband, Dilip Kumar, stating: "Dear Shahrukh, I have consistently expressed, and I will reiterate, that if my son were here, he would have looked just like you. Your profound admiration for Dilip Sahib and me was evident in all our encounters."

"During one of these cherished meetings, you humbly sought my blessings and initiated this tradition of seeking

blessings with the touch of my hand on your hair. I will forever cherish the memory of how in moments of utter grief, you were the first person to offer your comforting presence. May Allah always bestow his blessings upon you. Happy Birthday, Shahrukh," she added.



Arshad Warsi: Goal is to inspire 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa' contestants to dance from the heart

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Arshad Warsi, who is all set to return to television as a judge on 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa', shared how dance has always been one of his greatest passions, adding that his goal will be to inspire contestants to dance from their hearts. A dance competition that sees celebrities shed their inhibitions and put on their dancing shoes, 'Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa', is set to make its grand return after a hiatus of 12 years.

The show adds a unique twist to the public personas of your favourite stars from diverse walks of life, as they take on the challenge of learning and performing intricate dance routines, all while competing for the coveted trophy. Arshad's charisma and unique perspective of dance and acting, coupled with his quirky personality, makes him the perfect addition to the judging panel. Talking about the same, he said: "Dance has always been one of my greatest passions and I have loved watching the fabulous performances on this stage over the years. I have tremendous respect for the contestants who will step out of their comfort zone to take up this challenge, and pour their heart and soul into perfecting each performance."

The 'Dhamaal' actor shared: "It takes courage to put yourself out there and I hope my feedback and encouragement will help them become better performers over the course of this journey. My goal is to inspire them to dance from the heart and have fun while they're at it." "And of course, I am looking forward to being entertained and inspired by their talent and creativity. I can't wait for this new season to begin," he added.

Big B reveals his younger brother Ajitabh is the reason behind his entry into films



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan shared an anecdote about his younger brother Ajitabh Bachchan, and said it was because of the latter that he entered into the film industry.

Big B, who is currently seen as the host on the knowledge-based reality show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati' season 15, welcomed 'Bindaas Bhatias' from Delhi, in the family special week.

During conversation with the three contestants, Amitabh said: "Let me tell you that the relationship between brother-sister, or brothers is that, for the younger one, every-one creates a protective environment. We

take care of them."

"And I have a younger brother too. We have an age gap of five-six years. I used to always think about protecting him. Most importantly he's the reason behind my entry into films," he shared.

The contestants replied: "Sir, we humbly salute your brother."

The 'Sholay' fame actor continued, saying, "My brother was the first one to tell me that you must work in films. I was working in Kolkata. He clicked my pictures with great poses. He clicked pictures and sent it. Though I got rejected. But he was the one who planted that thought into my head. And I quit my job to do this."



SANJEEDA SHAIKH TO PLAY PIVOTAL ROLE IN HRITHIK, DEEPIKA-STARRER 'FIGHTER'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Sanjeeda Shaikh, who is known for her work in the shows like 'Kyaa Hoga Nimmo Kaa', 'Kayamath', 'Ek Hasina Thi', and many others, was recently spotted doing rehearsals with Bollywood diva Deepika Padukone.

A source close to the production house has revealed: "Sanjeeda is an exciting addition to Siddharth Anand's 'Fighter'. She has a pivotal role in the film starring Deepika and Hrithik Roshan. Her contribution will add a significant graph to the film."

'Fighter' is an action film directed by Siddharth Anand, starring Hrithik, Anil Kapoor and Deepika. It serves as the first film in a planned aerial action franchise, and is produced by Viacom18 Studios and Marflix Pictures.

Sanjeeda has also done projects like 'Taish', 'Kaali Khuli', and will also be seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Heeramandi'. She was last seen in a music video 'Chaha Hai Tujhko'.

