

absolute india

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Delhi High Court bats for need of Modern India

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

■ The high court passed the judgment setting aside a trial court's order which dismissed a divorce petition filed by a man on his wife's assertion that both of them belonged to 'Meena' community, which is a notified Scheduled Tribe and the Hindu Marriage Act would not apply to them.

■ The court noted in divorce proceedings, if proper tribal customs are not established or the following of Hindu customs or rites is admitted by the parties, there is no reason to hold that the provisions of the HMA, 1955 would not apply.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Friday said there is a need for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) to become reality so that youth of modern India belonging to various communities, tribes, castes or religions who solemnise their marriages ought not to be forced to struggle with issues arising due to conflicts in various personal laws. The court said that the hope



WhatsApp won't enforce privacy policy

WhatsApp on Friday accepted that "the government is the administrator" in its case and informed the Delhi High Court that it will put its privacy policy update "on hold" until the Data Protection Bill comes into force. WhatsApp's counsel also accepted that its commitment is "we need to fit in the law. We will not enforce it until the Data Protection Bill will come out. In our case the government is the administrator of the rules...we said okay, we will wait till the Bill."



expressed in Article 44 of the Constitution that the state shall secure for its citizens Uniform Civil Code "ought not to remain a mere hope". A single bench of Justice Prathiba M. Singh said, the need for a Uniform Civil Code as envisioned under Article 44, has been reiterated from time to time by the Supreme Court. "The need for such a Code -- 'common to all', which would enable uniform principles being applied in respect of aspects such as marriage, divorce, succession etc., so that settled principles,

safeguards and procedures can be laid down and citizens are not made to struggle due to the conflicts and contradictions in various personal laws", the bench added. She said courts have been repeatedly confronted with the conflicts that arise in personal laws, and persons belonging to various communities, castes and religions, who forge marital bonds, struggle with such conflicts. The court noted that no community is likely to bell the cat by making gratuitous concessions on this issue. It is the state

which is charged with the duty of securing a uniform civil code for the citizens of the country and, unquestionably, it has the legislative competence to do so.

The court emphasized that in modern Indian society which is gradually becoming homogenous, the traditional barriers of religion, community and caste are slowly dissipating.

TIME LIMIT ON CASTE QUOTA IN EDUCATION DECLINED

The Supreme Court on Friday declined to entertain a plea by an advocate seeking directions to fix time limits for expiry of caste-based reservations in education. The bench told the petitioner that the court is not inclined to entertain the petition. The plea contended that if the candidate is made capable to compete in the open, it will be an empowering exercise for that candidate and it will contribute to the progress of the nation.

Second wave not over, need to follow Covid protocols: Government

► POINTING TO THE DECLINE IN DAILY NEW CASES IN THE COUNTRY DURING THE SECOND WAVE, JOINT SECRETARY, HEALTH SAID: "MORE THAN HALF OF THE TOTAL CASES IN THE COUNTRY ARE PRIMARILY REPORTED FROM TWO STATES - MAHARASHTRA AND KERALA AND SPREAD OF INFECTION CONCENTRATED IN LIMIT-ED GEOGRAPHY."

Team Absolute | New Delhi



concern." Also cautioning people that the second wave is not over, Joint Secretary, Health, Lav Agarwal, said: "It is necessary to keep following Covid protocols in order to close the second wave fully."

About the surge in cases in other countries like the UK, Russia and Bangladesh,

COVID VIRUS MAY REACH ITS ENDEMIC STAGE AFTER A WHILE: ICMR

The Covid-19 virus may reach its endemic stage after a while, just like influenza, and the vulnerable population may have to take the vaccine shot annually, said Samiran Panda, Head, Division of Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases, Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR). "Mutation is normal for all viruses when they proliferate. Experts suggest that the Covid-19 virus will reach its endemic stage like influenza after a while and then the vulnerable population may have to take the vaccine shot annually," Panda said. He explained that influenza, commonly known as flu, was a pandemic 100 years ago but today it is an endemic.

12 FEARED DROWNED IN SARYU RIVER IN AYODHYA

Ayodhya : At least 12 people were feared drowned while taking a bath in Saryu river at Guptha Ghat on Friday. A group of 15, belonging to four families, had come from Agra to visit the city, officials said.

A team of local police divers are on the spot for rescue operations and three persons have been brought out. The incident took place at the Kutch Ghat of the Guptha Ghat complex. Guptha Ghat is a riverside complex featuring a series of 19th-century banks, temples and shrines.

Slum boy turns police mascot for Covid rules

Team Absolute | Dharamsala

A five-year-old slum boy, who hogged social media attention for teaching Covid-appropriate behaviour to holi-daymakers with a stick in hand, is now being employed by the Himachal Pradesh police to make people follow the rules. The state has seen a major surge in the number of tourists escaping the heat of the plains, causing doctors to warn that their Covid-inappropriate behaviour may just trigger a third wave of the pandemic.

The boy, Amit, whose parents earn their livelihood selling balloons, was caught on a video in the streets of Bhagsunag near McLeodganj asking people to wear a mask by poking them with a stick.

When the video went viral, the local police, realising how effective Amit was, provided him with food and clothes. Donning a new



Himachali cap and clothes, the boy, sitting on a police vehicle, is now the new mascot for Covid-appropriate behaviour.

Rahul slams Centre over hike in PNG, CNG prices

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Friday took a swipe at the BJP-led Centre over the hike in the prices of the CNG and PNG, saying that inflation is continuing to grow and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'accountability' was only towards friends'.

In a tweet in Hindi, Rahul Gandhi said, "Inflation continues to grow. 'Acche din' is heavy on the country. Prime Minister's accountability only towards his friends."

He tweeted with the hash-tag #PNG #CNGPriceHike. His remarks came after the Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) late Wednesday announced a hike in prices of compressed natural gas (CNG) and piped natural gas (PNG) in Delhi and neig-



TIGER SUCCUMBS IN K'TAKA RESERVE FOREST

Bengaluru: A five-year-old male tiger succumbed to his injuries at the Bandipur Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Karnataka, a forest department official said here on Friday. According to a statement released by the BTR director's office, upon spotting a tiger with injuries during a patrol on Thursday, the employees of Gundre range had alerted the Special Tiger Protection squad. According to the statement, the tiger was provided first aid and was being shifted to the Bannerghatta Zoo for further treatment when it succumbed to his injuries.

Armed Afghan women take to the streets against Taliban

■ Last year, a teenager, Qamar Gul, became famous nationwide after fighting off a group of Taliban who had killed her parents. The militants included her husband.

■ In Baghlan province, a woman called Bibi Aisha Habibi had become the country's only female warlord in the wake of the Soviet invasion and the civil war that followed. She was known as Commander Kaftar, or Pigeon.

■ For conservative militants, facing women in battle can be humiliating. ISIS fighters in Syria were reportedly more frightened of dying at the hands of female Kurdish forces than being killed by men.

■ Unverified videos posted on social media appeared to show Taliban fighters speeding towards the centre of the Qala-i-Naw city on motorcycles.



KABUL: | Agencies

Women have taken up guns in northern and central Afghanistan, marching in the streets in their hundreds and sharing pictures of themselves with assault rifles on social media in a show of defiance as Taliban militants make sweeping gains nationwide, The Guardian reported.

One of the biggest demonstrations was held in central Ghor province, where hundreds of women turned out at the weekend, waving guns and chanting anti-Taliban slogans.

"They are not likely to head to the frontlines in large numbers any time soon, because of both social conservatism and lack of experience. But the public demonstrations, at a time of urgent threat from the militants, are a reminder of how frightened many women are about what Taliban rule could mean for them and their families, the report said."

"There were some women who just wanted to inspire security forces, just symbolic, but many more were ready to go to the

BUKU TO INTENSIFY AGITATION IN UP FROM AUGUST 1



Lucknow: The Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKA) will be intensifying their agitation against the three central farm laws from August 1 in Uttar Pradesh.

The agitation will now include local issues as well. Yudhvir Singh, general secretary of the BKA, said that they will launch the agitation simultaneously in all the 18 divisions of Uttar Pradesh.

He said, "From July 11, we will be holding meetings of our divisional and district committees and from August 1, we will start with our agitation in UP to press for our demands." He further said that the divisional and district committees will spread awareness in districts about the three farm laws and also issues prevalent in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

"We will also raise the issue of hike in the price of electricity besides our pending sugarcane payments. Our farmers will hold demonstrations at the division and district level for the agitation."



AFTER A FORTNIGHT, COVID DEATHS IN MAHARASHTRA JUMP ABOVE 500

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For the first time in 14 days, Maharashtra's Covid-19 toll suddenly shot above the 500-mark, though the daily infections remained below the 10,000-mark, health officials said here on Friday.

On June 26, the state's toll stood at 511, after which it hovered below the 500-level. However, the toll zoomed to 738 on Friday, comprising 200 fresh fatalities and 538 old deaths, though much lower than the peak toll of 2,771 recorded on June 13.

With this, the state's death count on account of Covid-19 has reached a whopping 125,034, the worst in the country. The state has so far reported 61,40,968 Covid cases till date, remaining above France which has recorded a tally of 57,99,107 till now, and figures at No. 4 in the world, below the US, India and Brazil.

The number of fresh cases remained below the 10,000-level at 8,992 on Friday, much less than the peak of 68,631 cases reported on April 18, even as the state remains on high alert for a possible third wave of the pandemic. In Mumbai, for over six weeks, new infections remained below the 1,000-level at 596 on Friday, pulling up the city's tally to 726,633 till date, after touching the highest daily spike of 11,206 cases on April 4. With another 13 deaths recorded on Friday, the total fatalities in the country's commercial capital touched 15,599 on Friday. The state's death rate also worsened from 2.02 per cent to 2.03 percent, while the number of

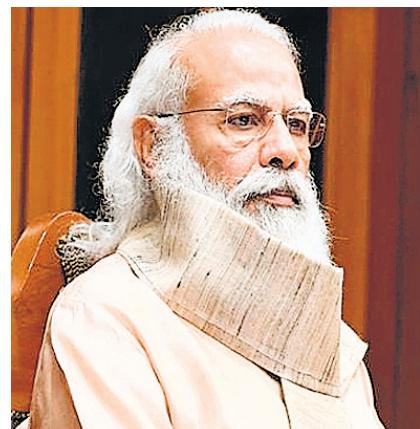


active cases remained below the 2-Lakh level at 112,231. On the brighter side, as many as 10,458 fully-cured patients returned home, taking the total number of recoveries to 59,00,440 with a recovery rate of 96.08 per cent for the day.

The Mumbai Circle, comprising Mumbai, Thane, Palghar and Raigad districts, recorded 1,863 new

cases, taking its Covid tally to 16,11,886, while 40 more deaths mounted its death toll to 32,930, in view of reconciliation of data. Meanwhile, the number of people sent to home isolation increased from 624,511 on Thursday to 627,243 now, while those shunted to institutional quarantine went up from 4,572 a day before to 4,756 on Friday.

Modi reviews progress of oxygen augmentation, availability



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday reviewed the progress of oxygen augmentation and availability across the country.

Officials briefed the Prime Minister about the progress on installation of PSA oxygen plants across the country. More than 1,500

PSA oxygen plants are coming up across the nation which includes contributions from PM CARES Fund as well as various ministries and PSUs.

PSA Oxygen plants are coming up in all states and districts of the country.

Officials told the Prime Minister that once all PSA Oxygen plants coming up through PM CARES are functional, they would support more than four lakh oxygenated beds.

The Prime Minister instructed the officials to ensure that these plants are made functional at the earliest and to work closely with the state governments for the same.

He also asked officials to ensure there is adequate training of hospital staff on operation and maintenance of oxygen plants and directed officials to ensure that each district has trained personnel available.

Officials told him that there is a training module prepared by experts and they are targeting training of around 8,000 people across the country.

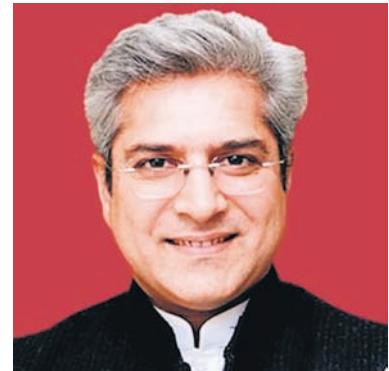
"We should deploy advanced technology like IoT to track performance and functioning of these oxygen plants at a local and national level," Modi said.

DTC commuters will soon find real-time info: Gahlot

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Transport Minister of Delhi, Kailash Gahlot, said on Friday that commuters in Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) buses will soon have access to real-time information regarding the arrival of buses at particular bus stops.

"Delhiites can very soon plan their bus journeys to the minute. We're in the final leg of integrating all our public transit systems into the Google India platform, which will utilise the Open Transit Data of Delhi government and live data of buses to create a reliable multi-modal transit planner," Gahlot tweeted after a review meeting on Friday. In April this year, the Delhi government had signed an agreement



with the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT Delhi) to create a Centre for Sustainable Mobility to set up world-class trans-

port infrastructure in the national capital. For this development, the Delhi government has already allocated Rs 6.1 crore. The centre will work towards integrating various advancements initiated by the Transport Department like route rationalisation, open transit data, charging station infrastructure on one platform etc.

The open-transit data system which facilitates real-time location of DTC and cluster buses will be created in the centre. Congratulating the Transport Department for its development initiative, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted, "Delhi government is working hard to make Delhi's transport system user-friendly using technology."

FinMin cautions of inflationary risks on rising commodity prices, input costs

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Finance Ministry has cautioned of inflationary risks to the economy due to global demand-driven recovery in commodity prices and high input cost.

The Monthly Economic Review for June 2021 released by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) noted that inflationary pressures took an upturn in May 2021 with headline inflation (CPI-C) and WPI inflation touching a high of 6.3 percent and 12.94 per cent, respectively.

Supply side disruptions in states and unfavourable base effects drove the broad-based momentum in retail inflation across food, fuel and core categories. On the other hand, electricity and manufactured products inflation led the uptick in wholesale inflation.

Healthy monsoon coverage, gradually rising Kharif sowing and unlocking of states is expected to ease food, and thereby headline, inflation, it said.

"However, risks due to global demand



led recovery in commodity prices and input cost pressures remain," it said.

As the Indian economy struggles to shed the impact of the second wave of Covid-19, the report suggested that maintaining a fast pace of vaccination and plugging the lags in

the healthcare infrastructure in the country would be the most sustainable stimulus for the durable recovery of the Indian economy.

Resilient tax collections of the Central government in the first two months of FY

2020-21 and sustained momentum in capital expenditure, particularly in the road and rail sector augurs well for continued economic recovery driven by capital expenditures, it said.

The recently announced economic relief package is expected to further oil the wheels of the capex cycle via implementation of the PLI scheme and streamlining of processes for PPP Projects and Asset Monetisation, the review said.

Consumption sentiment is expected to pick up with further enhancement of employment support under the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ANBRY), targeted support to the urban poor through the credit guarantee scheme for on-lending by micro-finance institutions, and wider Bharat-Net digitisation coverage.

Free food-grain and enhanced fertiliser subsidies under the package along with continued MGNREGA implementation, on the other hand, would serve as a cushion for rural demand in the coming quarters, the review said.

Mukul Roy named PAC chairman, BJP stages walkout

Kolkata | Agencies

Veteran politician Mukul Roy, who recently joined the Trinamool Congress after winning the Assembly polls from Krishnanagar North on a BJP ticket, was made the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman on the last day of the Budget Session in the West Bengal Assembly on Friday.

The BJP MLAs, who pitched for Ashok Lahiri as the PAC chief, staged a walkout as a mark of protest following the appointment of Roy.

"This is the first time in history that the opposition party has not been given the PAC chairman's post. The Speaker (Biman Bandhopadhyay) has done this intentionally to hide misappropriation of funds. Had BJP's Ashok Lahiri been made the PAC chairman, all the misdoings would have come to light," said Leader of the Opposition, Surendra Adhikari.

Roy, officially a BJP MLA, joined the Trinamool last month, four years after leaving the ruling party for the saffron camp.

However, he has not resigned as an MLA, despite being asked to do so several times by the saffron camp. The BJP has already appealed to the Speaker for his expulsion under the anti-defection law. The matter is likely to be heard on July 16.

Defending the decision of the Speaker, Trinamool Lok Sabha MP Saugata Roy said, "There is no rule which says an opposition



leader has to be made the PAC chairman. It is only a convention. The Speaker is the sole authority to select the chairman. He has done the right thing."

The decision to appoint Roy as the chairman of PAC was taken much earlier when Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had openly lent her support to Roy and said that the Speaker's decision would be final in this matter.

The decision to appoint Roy as the PAC chief will not only help accommodate the veteran politician in a key post, but also prevent a BJP legislator from occupying the position.

LET TERRORIST ARRESTED IN J&K, WEAPONS SEIZED



Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Police, along with security forces, arrested an active terrorist of proscribed terror outfit LeT in Bandipora district and recovered arms and ammunition from his possession, officials said on Friday. Police said on specific input regarding movement of terrorists in Hajin town, a joint Naka was established by police, the army's 13 RR and the CRPF's 45 Bn in Gundjhangeer area. "During naka checking, one person was found behaving in a very suspicious manner, and was apprehended by the joint naka party," a police official said.

He has been identified as Muzammil Sheikh alias Abu Maviya, resident of Chandgeer Hajin. Police said during his search, arms and ammunition including a Chinese pistol, along with live rounds, were recovered from his possession. "Pertinently, the said terrorist had joined proscribed terror outfit LeT recently and was tasked to carry out subversive activities in and around Hajin town," police said.

'Speaker decides disputes in house': Delhi HC junks Chirag Paswan's plea

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Friday declined to entertain a plea by Lok Janshakti Party MP Chirag Paswan, challenging the Lok Sabha Speaker's decision recognising his uncle Pashupati Paras as the party floor leader, saying that "the right to decide the internal disputes of the House rests with the Speaker".

The plea contended that change in its leader in the Lok Sabha is the "prerogative of the party", and added that action of the Secretary General of Lok Sabha is contrary to Rules of the House



and the principles of natural justice. Dismissing the plea, a bench of Justice Rekha Palli said: "The right to decide the internal disputes of the House rests with the Speaker." The court said it did not see any merit in the

averments raised by the petitioner and also pointed out that petition is a way to settle scores. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, submitted that the petition was "blissfully vague" in the context of basic constitutional issues. Noting that out of six elected members, five are not with the petitioner, he argued that this dispute cannot be a subject matter of judicial review. "The prayer is to implement the constitution of the party. Suppose one of those five had to come to court, how would the writ examine that dispute?"

Covid curfew may extend beyond July 12: Goa CM

Team Absolute | Panaji

Goa's Covid-related state-level curfew may not wind up just yet, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant hinted on Friday. "We need to think about continuing with the state curfew for some more time," Sawant told reporters here. The current phase of the state level curfew in Goa is scheduled to end on July 12. While extending the curfew on July 2, Sawant had allowed reopening of restaurants and bars as well as outdoor sports complexes. The state level curfew had been first imposed on May 9, in wake of a surge of Covid-19 infections and deaths in the state. The curfew was later extended periodically on six occasions, since its imposition.

Sawant also said that the government was thinking of providing more relaxations when the curfew is eventually extended after July 12.



I, Kasturi Bai is mother of Army No. 14831521M, Rank Sep/MT, Name Rakesh Singh Mevada, residing at : Village-Nandni, Post-Nandni, Teh.-Kalapipal, Dist.-Shajapur, State-Madhya Pradesh PIN - 465337. I have changed my name Kasturi Bhai to Kasturi Bai as per affidavit no. AY-744360 dated 22.06.2021 before Bhopal Court.

MINING ACTIVITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED IN THE STATE: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the economy has been affected by Covid. Mineral activities give impetus to the economy. It is our resolve to extend maximum cooperation in fulfilling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve of self-reliant India. Every effort will be made to speed up mining activities in the state. It will be our endeavour to auction more than one hundred mineral blocks in the state by 2022.

Chouhan was discussing with the Union Mineral Minister Prahad Joshi through video conferencing on mineral related issues of the state. Union Minister of State for Minerals, Rao Saheb Danve from Delhi also participated in the video conference. State Mineral Minister Brijendra Pratap Singh, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Principal Secretary Mineral Resources Sukhveer Singh were also present.

Union Minister Prahad Joshi said that mineral activities contribute to the basic economy. PM Modi intends to expedite the auction of mineral blocks by simplifying the processes in the mineral sector to



build an Atma-nirbhar Bharat. For this, necessary reforms have also been made in various laws. Proceedings are underway under Ease of Doing Business. Expressing satisfaction over the ongoing activities for auction of blocks in Madhya Pradesh, the Union Minister said that the next auction process should be conducted by fixing the time table. Chouhan said that coal reserves are abundant in the state. The coal mining work in the state is being done by the public sector companies of the Government of India. Instructions should be given to these companies to work for coal gasification and liquefaction in

Madhya Pradesh. This will help in protecting the environment and enriching the source of energy. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that survey is going on for the discovery of rare minerals in Betul and Chhattarpur districts by the Geological Survey of India. This work should be completed within the time limit. Chouhan also requested to re-examine the royalty rates of limestone. Chouhan requested the Geological Survey of India and MCL to provide technical support in the exploration and auction process of mineral blocks in the state. A request was also made to start the office of Indian Bureau of Mines in Bhopal.

The Chief Minister demanded to fix the average price of glauconite mineral useful for fertilizer production. Discussions regarding de-reservation of reserved areas since 1961 in Balaghat and Chhindwara districts by MOIL (Manganese Ore India Limited) were also held in the meeting.

Chouhan expressed the need to relax the provision of not granting mineral lease on less than 5 hectare area and to re-fix the notified royalty rates of major minerals from 2014. Chouhan also requested to reconsider the ban imposed by the Atomic Mineral Division in view of the possibility of uranium in the Maddevra Rock Phosphate block of Chhattarpur. Union Mineral Minister Shri Prahad Joshi assured of speedy action.

It was informed in the meeting that revenue of Rs 2908 crore was received in the year 2020-21 from 831 mines of main minerals in the state. In the year 2020-21, revenue of Rs 1538 crore was received from 6338 mines of minor minerals. The target is to get revenue of about 30 thousand crores for 50 years from the mineral blocks to be auctioned in the coming years.

Prepare reservation roster soon, exam result should be declared on time

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that top priority should be given to the work of reservation roster. All tasks should be completed as per set deadlines. He said that the Higher Education

Department should hold discussion about the roster with the Vice Chancellors of all the universities. Grievances must be addressed effectively. If needed, the advice of legal experts may be sought. After finalizing the roster, the process of filling up new posts should be started soon. The Governor was holding a discussion with Principal Secretary Higher Education Anupam Rajan at Raj Bhavan on Friday.

Governor Patel said that Covid-19 vaccine must be administered to all the staff of government and private universities mandatorily. Similarly, the vaccination of students of government and private universities should be ensured in the shortest



possible time for which necessary arrangements should be made. He said that along with the conduct of examinations according to the academic calendar by the university, the examination results must also be declared on time.

He said that negligence and apathy towards the future of the students would not be tolerated.

Patel also sought information about the construction works going on in the universities. He said that the construction of the sanctioned works should be completed within the time limit. Along with the building approval, budget provision should also be made according to the construction requirement. Due to non-availability of

land, the pending works should be resolved soon in coordination with the district administration.

He told to pay special attention to the quality and time limit of the construction works. He asked to make appropriate arrangements and form monitoring committees to review the progress of the work. The quality of construction and timeliness of duration should be ensured by regular monitoring of the work by the committees. He said that pending clauses of financial management and audit of universities should be reviewed regularly so that there are no irregularities in financial management.

ABV Institute of Good Governance signs MoU with 6 excellence institutes



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Atal Bihar Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis (AIGGPA) on Friday signed 6 MoUs with various universities, AIIMS, NIREH (ICMR) and IISER. The main goal of the MoU is advancement of knowledge and better policy making through mutual cooperation in public policy, governance, administration and other related areas. Good governance institutions and MoU institutions will be benefited by this. In the presence of Vice-President of the Institute

of Good Governance Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, CEO of the Institute, GV Rashmi signed MoUs with Barkatullah University Bhopal, Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication, Rajiv Gandhi Technological University, AIIMS Bhopal, NIREH (ICMR) Bhopal and IISER Bhopal. On this occasion, Vice-President of the institute, Shri Chaturvedi said that better development plans have to be made under the direction of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for the state. The cooperation of all the organi-

zations will prove useful in this. He said that the institutions with which the MoU has been signed today will benefit them as well as the institutions of good governance. The Additional CEO of the institute Lokesh Sharma will remain in constant touch with the institutions in connection with the MoU. Sunil Kumar, Vice Chancellor, RGVP said that this is a new beginning. Vice Chancellor of Makhanlal Chaturvedi University of Journalism KG Rao said that it is being hoped that the work will be done with utmost seriousness in this MoU. Director, AIIMS Dr. Sharman Singh said that the MoU will be very beneficial for our institute.

Director, NIREH Dr. Ajayarany Tiwari, said that this will provide new opportunities for our institute. IISER Prof. Ashish Srivastava said that this will strengthen both the institutions.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chouhan said that I congratulate all the concerned departments including the Home Department, Home Guards, SDRF for the incredible efforts.

Chouhan on Friday dedicated the State Level Situation Room set up at Vallabh Bhanwan Annex-2 and the State Level Control and Command Center established at Home Guard Headquarters.

Chouhan said that now a strong

network for disaster management has been formed in the state. State level Situation Rooms have been linked with State Level Control and Command Centers and Control and Command Centers of 52 districts.

Chouhan said that with the development of this network and the use of state-of-the-art technology in it, will not only make quick rescue and relief operations possible but will also make live monitoring of rescue and relief operations possible.

Various types of databases like - updated water level of all dams, updated status of opening of gates of dams, updated water-level of rivers through river gauge-level, updated database of Meteorological Department, real time database of ambulances and vehicles of Dial-100 and Dial-108, 10 thousand CCTV of traffic, live

feed of cameras, live feed of 500 cameras of smart city etc. will be made through 1000 Mbps leased line at State Level Situation Room and State Level Control Command Center. Arrangement to use live feed access of total 16 departments made.

Live feed of various religious places and fair sites will also be available to the Situation Room and State Level Control Command Center. In these, better management will be ensured from the state level in the case of a disastrous situation.

District command and control call centers are being set up in 45 out of 52 districts of the state and in the 7 smart city districts, the integrated command and control centres established earlier under the Smart City Project will be used. The pilot project of the District Command and Control Center has

been started in three districts Hoshangabad, Sehore and Raisen.

The situation room and command and control centers can be utilized for various activities of the government - in the form of district level call center in disaster and emergency situation, for monitoring of CM Helpline, feedback for improving the public service delivery system, for campaigns launched by the government from time to time, surveys, procurement, vaccination, other activities, feedback for improving the public service delivery system and for the district administration as per requirement.

Chouhan also saw (virtually) the mock live demo of disaster control performed by the home guards in the situation room. Under this, he saw the rescue and relief measures taken to save people drowning in the river.

Team Madhya Pradesh is ready to deal with every situation: CM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Madhya Pradesh has made best arrangements for disaster control by using state-of-the-art technology. Team Madhya Pradesh is ready to deal with every situation of all kinds of disasters like flood, earthquake, fire, accident etc.

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feed of cameras, live feed of 500 cameras of smart city etc. will be made through 1000 Mbps leased line at State Level Situation Room and State Level Control Command Center. Arrangement to use live feed access of total 16 departments made.

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Five Pak refugees get Indian citizenship at event

A woman who came here along with her family when just a few months old some 40 years ago, were given citizenship certificates by Home Minister Narottam Mishra.

Team Absolute | Indore

Five persons who had migrated from Pakistan to India, including a woman who came here along with her family when just a few months old some 40 years ago, were given citizenship certificates by Home Minister Narottam Mishra at a function in Indore on Friday. The woman, Gita,

who was born in Jacobabad in Pakistan on January 31, 1981 and has been living in India since June 4 that year, said she was elated at getting citizenship, having applied for it at the collector's office here on September 9, 2015. "I am feeling very good. I was trying to obtain citizenship, but it was not working out so far for some reasons. My sister and brother, however, are yet to get citizenship of this country," she told reporters. Officials

said that the five include a married Muslim woman. They said a large number of Hindu refugees from Sindh in Pakistan are staying in Indore, with some 2,000 having received citizenship in the last five years, and around 1,200 applications currently pending.

University Students Launch Unique Campaign to Save Lives of Squirrels in Campus

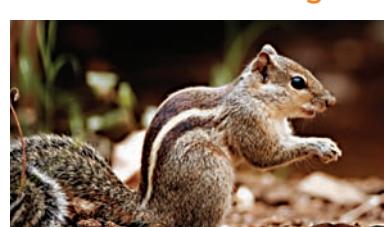
Around 1500 squirrels are believed to be living inside the campus presently.

Team Absolute | Indore

The Students of Shri Govind Ram Seksaria Institute of Technology and Science have started a campaign to save the life of squirrels within the campus. The vehicle movement plan within the campus has been changed as a part of this initiative.

The parts of the campus where squirrels live in large numbers have been declared 'no vehicle zone.' This step was taken as around 10-15 squirrels used to die every day after getting crushed by speeding vehicles.

The lush green campus of Shri Govindram Seksaria Institute of Technology and Science is home to a number of birds, squirrels and various other animals. Around 1500 squirrels are believed to be living inside the campus



presently. The huge campus, with a significant part of it covered in lush greenery, houses around 6000 people including staff members and students.

Since the traffic rules were altered and barricades were placed, not a single squirrel has lost its life. RK Saxena, the Director of the institute, said that more than 2,000 vehicles operate within the campus every day. More than 10 squirrels

used to die every day due to moving vehicles. This thing came to the fore when the lockdown was imposed and vehicles stopped coming to the campus. Not a single squirrel died in that period. When the lockdown was eased, traffic rules were changed and vehicles were not allowed to enter a specific 'no vehicle zone.' Now, to save the lives of the squirrels nobody minds walking an extra 200 metres. Alex Kuttu, the gardener in the institute, said that the campus is spread over 30 acres with mango, guava, Jamun, and mulberry trees in abundance. That's why the campus is populated with animals such as squirrels, parrots, rabbits, ducks, butterflies and bees.

The college has also planted several trees on the boundaries as well as inside campus to reduce the air pollution.

16 COACHES OF A GOODS TRAIN DERAILED, NO CASUALTIES REPORTED

Annupur: A goods train coming from Korba in Chhattisgarh derailed near Anuppur in Madhya Pradesh. As per reports, the railway track situated on the bridge over the Alan River had cracks due to which 16 coaches fell in the river. No casualties have been reported and rescue operation is on. The accidents has questioned different official departments concerned, major question being, how did the track develop crack which was started two years ago? Along with this, questions are also being raised on the periodic inspection of the track.

As per reports, there was coal in the goods train which was being sent from Kusmunda in Korba district of Chhattisgarh to Gadarwara railway siding of Narsinghpur district of Madhya Pradesh. Railway had started the third line between Niigaura in Anuppur district and Venkatnagar in Chhattisgarh only two years ago. The third line project is specially designed for running goods. The rescue team has left Shahdol after the accident. This includes Area Regional Manager Shahdol and other members of the rescue team. The traffic of passenger trains has not been affected. Saket Ranjan, CPRO of South East Central Railway Bilaspur zone said the work of removing the coaches from the river has been started.

Liquor shown as medicine consignment, smuggled in superfast train, 3 held

They secretly brought this stock of IMFL to Bhopal two days ago, he said, adding that since June 25, it was their sixth consignment that they brought to the Madhya Pradesh capital.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Three men have been arrested for allegedly smuggling Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) in large quantity from Delhi to Bhopal by booking a par-

cel bogie in a superfast train after showing it as a consignment of medicine, police said on Friday.

The accused were arrested on Wednesday after they were found illegally bringing 350 litres of IMFL, worth Rs 5.50 lakh, by booking the parcel bogie of Shaan-e-Bhopal Express after paying Rs 90,000 fees. Bhopal crime branch's Additional Superintendent of Police Gopal Dhakad said.

They secretly brought this stock of IMFL to Bhopal two days ago, he said, adding that since June 25, it was their sixth consignment that they brought to the Madhya Pradesh capital. The accused, Gajendra

Rathore (36), Mukesh Mehra (32) and Subhash Soni (32), who were arrested following a tip-off, used to get these consignments from some persons in Delhi. The stock would be brought to MP in four-layered packing with 'medicines' written on the boxes, he said.

Mehra used to sell the smuggled IMFL at his liquor shop at Panchavati area of Bhopal.

Besides that, the three accused would also sell this alcohol to their customers individually, Dhakad said. The accused were produced in a local court on Thursday, which remanded them in judicial custody, he said.

The woman reached the police station late on the night of July 5 and filed a complaint against husband.

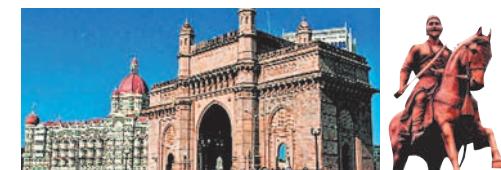
Team Absolute | Indore

After 15 days of marrying a woman, a man in Indore allegedly eloped with his stepdaughter, police said. The incident occurred in the Lasudia area of Indore on July 5. The woman who married the accused man out of love has now filed a complaint against him and requested the police to find him and her daughter. The accused has been identified

as Santosh Singh. The police have launched an investigation to trace the accused and his step-daughter. The woman in her complaint said that after a few days of marriage, Santosh was talking about marrying her daughter. There was a rift between the husband and wife over this matter. The woman told the police that she tried to convince her husband many times but he remained adamant to marry his stepdaughter. The woman reached the police station late on the night of July 5 and filed the complaint.

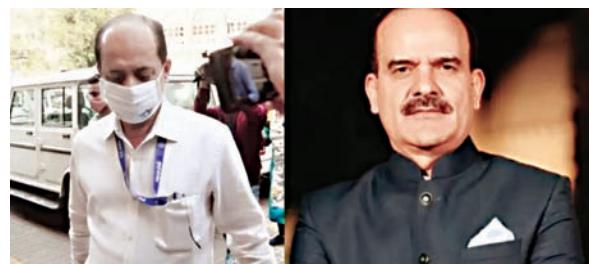
According to the woman, Santosh came on Monday night (July 5) and forced her daughter to sit in a car and fled away. She said that her daughter was not ready to go with him, however, he forced her to do so. She was crying for help when Santosh was forcing her to sit in the car, but no one came to her rescue. The police said that a case has been registered against the accused on the complaint of the woman. The search is going on to find out the man and the complainant's daughter. The police officials said that they will investigate every aspect of the case and will trace the accused soon.

It has been four days after the incident, however, the whereabouts of the accused have not been traced so far.



AFTER VAZE, ED TO RECORD STATEMENT OF EX-MUMBAI COMMISSIONER

Team Absolute | New Delhi



on Deshmukh's orders.

Vaze said that he later handed over the amount to the ex-minister's PA Kundan Shinde, who is now arrested in the same case, along with another PA Sanjeev Palande.

On its part, the ED said that Shinde has denied knowing Vaze and was not cooperating with the investigations, though both he and Palande were directly linked in the crime.

Deshmukh, who was forced to quit because of the allegations against him, has skipped three ED summons recently for questioning and has moved the Supreme Court seeking protection against any coercive action.

Vaze was arrested in connection with the sensational case of planting a SUV with

Earlier in the day, ED officials said that the agency will question Vaze on Saturday inside the jail premises in Mumbai. On Thursday, a Special Court has granted permission to the ED to visit Vaze and record his statement in the jail.

It may be recalled that on May 19, Vaze had claimed to the ED that he had collected Rs 4.70 crore from bars in Mumbai between December 2020–February 2021 allegedly

20 gelatin sticks and a threat note near the home of industrialist Mukesh Ambani and the subsequent death of the vehicle owner Mansukh Hirani. Later, Vaze penned a note alleging Deshmukh had demanded Rs 2-crore to reinstate him in service and also set a target to collect Rs 100-crore per month from hotels and bars in Mumbai.

He also targeted Shiv Sena's Transport Minister Anil Parab alleging that the latter had asked to collect money from contractors for him. Both Deshmukh and Parab have stoutly denied the allegations and termed it as a strategy of the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party to defame and malign the image of the Maha Vikas Aghadi government.

seen on social media. I even confirmed with Faisal Farooqui, the media manager of late Dilip Kumar Saab," Jain told IANS.

"These are fake tweets created by fake IDs. Mischief makers and absolutely false. Every word of these tweets is FALSE. There's no truth in their content," Farooqui said in a written statement to Jain.

Farooqui added that the property goes to the late actor's wife (Saira Banu Khan), herself an acclaimed actress, who was beside her husband till his last breath. Farooqui had grown up with Dilip Kumar Saab and has been close to the family, informed Jain.

According to the cyber sleuth, further investigations by SMHS into the gargantuan World Wide Web (WWW) did not turn up even a remote mention of anything concerning Dilip Kumar or the Waqf Board.

He suspects that event the figure of Rs 98 crore was "made-up", just to match with the age at which the towering actor breathed his last, as the fake

The state tops the list in the number of Covid-19 infections, deaths, and active cases. The state is expecting a stock supply of around 09 lakh doses by end of the day. As per the state authorities, if the new stock will arrive today, the vaccination centres will get the stock by tomorrow

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra is once again facing an interruption in the supply of vaccines. Most of the govt run centres across the state are not operational on Friday.

While the Covid vaccination drive was suspended in Mumbai on Friday, many other cities and towns in Maharashtra continued to wait for a constant supply of vaccine doses.

The Brihanmumbai municipal corporation (BMC) said it would inform citizens about the continuation of the drive as per the availability of vaccines. The drive was suspended in private as well as government vaccination centres in Mumbai. In other major cities like Pune, many private hospitals continued to wait for vaccine stocks. Mumbai has total 303 BMC and govt (state and central) run Covid vaccination centres. Yesterday BMC declared that due to lack of supply, all the BMC and govt run centres in the city will remain shut on Friday. And once the new stock will come, the vaccination centres will start again.

Before this, on Sunday also, around 140 BMC and govt run centres were shut in Mumbai, again due to lack of supply.

This lack of supply is not just a Mumbai specific issue. Entire Maharashtra is going through the

same and most of the centres across the state have run out of stock.

In smaller towns and cities, people cannot get their second shot even after com-

available, and the central government must provide three crore vaccines every month.

The state was expecting a new stock supply day before yesterday. But the stock didn't come. The state is expecting to receive 09 lakh doses (Covishield and Covaxin) by today afternoon-evening.

So it will be dispatched immediately and if the stock comes today, by tomorrow afternoon-evening, the centres will have the stock.

State immunisation head Dilip Patil told Mirror Now that, "We are doing the inoculation as and when and we are getting the stock. At present the vaccination in the state is affected due to interruption in the supply. But I am optimistic that by today EOD we will get the new stock

and by tomorrow afternoon or evening we will once again start the vaccination at all centres." Maharashtra so far has administered 3.57 crore doses. Maharashtra tops the list of States in the number of Covid-19 infections, deaths, and active cases. Twenty-one cases of the "Delta Plus" variant along with 5,500 cases of mucormycosis have been detected.



required gap after the first dose.

Maharashtra Assembly on Tuesday passed a resolution seeking three crore Covid-19 vaccine doses per month from the Centre.

Recently the State Assembly has passed a resolution stating that the State government can vaccinate 10 lakh people every day if vaccines are made

Social post on Dilip Kumar donating property to Waqf hoax: Cyber Sleuth

Team Absolute | Mumbai

An outrageous message on social media circulated hours after the demise of legendary actor Dilip Kumar on July 7 claiming that he had donated his properties to the Waqf Board has turned out to be a hoax, according to a Cyber Sleuth here on Friday.

The viral message in Hindi, later translated into other languages, was not only shocking and disturbing, but left many wondering about the truth of its purported claims, said Social Media Hoax Slayer (SMHS) Pankaj Jain.

"Yusuf Khan alias Dilip Kumar has left, pretended to be a Hindu and ate from them, but after death donated his property worth Rs 98 crore to the Waqf Board, all are jihadis," read the post that spread like wildfire.

"I was barged with calls and messages to verify the truth behind the post and after huge efforts, I found that it was just a hoax, like many that are

Clear construction debris from river, will come to check it, says Bombay HC to Pune officials

Team Absolute | Mumbai

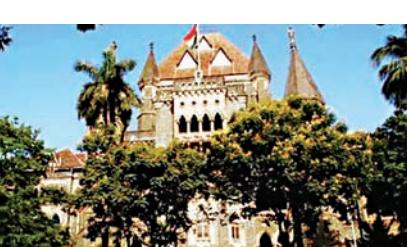
The Bombay high court on Friday took to task Pune's municipal authorities over the latter's failure to stop the dumping of construction debris into the Mula Mutha River. A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS Kulkarni asked the district collector and the civic body to immediately clear the river of such debris, and said it will personally visit Pune to check if it had been removed.

The bench was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by one Sarang Yadwadkar through advocate Ronita Bector.

The petitioner had submitted photos to show that debris from the construction of the Pune metro rail project was being dumped into the river in breach of environmental norms. The Pune municipal corporation (PMC) initially denied that debris was being dumped as alleged in the PIL.

The HC, however, directed the PMC's counsel Abhijit Kulkarni to ask the civic officials to visit the site and submit photographs.

While the authorities submitted a few photographs showing a portion of the river main-



ly covered by water hyacinth, the petitioner took fresh photographs of the site, which showed that construction debris had indeed been dumped into the water.

Advocate Kulkarni then said the debris must have been dumped by the "contractor carrying out the metro rail work." The HC said the contractor was a private party and it was the responsibility of the state and civic authorities to see that norms were not violated. "Immediate steps are needed. We will personally come to Pune and check. The state will have to ensure debris is removed. The entire stretch of the river is to be cleaned. The pictures by the petitioner show the river is on the verge of disappearance owing to the dumping of debris," the HC said.

Leopard Breaks Into School Canteen, Rescued

The rescue operation was carried out successfully by the Maharashtra Forest Department and Wildlife SOS.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

An adult male leopard, which broke into the canteen of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, located in Takali Dhokeshwar village in Ahmednagar district, was rescued after a four-hour long operation.

The big cat is currently under medical care and observation at the Leopard Rescue Centre in Junnar.

The rescue operation was carried out successfully by the Maharashtra Forest Department and the Junnar-based conservation charity, Wildlife SOS.

A statement from Wildlife SOS said an adult leopard entered the school through the kitchen window. The on-ground maintenance staff at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya found the big cat sitting in the school canteen while they were cleaning the premises on Wednesday. The panic-stricken staff immediately shut the canteen doors



and windows from outside. The incident was immediately reported to the Forest Department and Wildlife SOS.

The rescuer team cut a hole in the

entry door of the canteen so they could insert a camera and torchlight to get a clear visual on the exact location of the leopard. Once they con-

firmed its position, Wildlife SOS veterinary doctor Dr. Nikhil Bangar immobilised the leopard using a sedative injection through the hole.

"The leopard has scratch marks and wounds on the head, ear, neck, chest and tail regions. The injuries indicate that he must have gotten into a territorial fight with another male and had rushed to find shelter inside the school," said Dr. Nikhil Bangar.

"Our team is keeping the leopard under close observation while he recuperates from this stressful experience," said Kartick Satyanaryan, co-founder & CEO Wildlife SOS.

"Ahmednagar is a leopard-prone area and these big cats often wander into human settlements in search of food and shelter. We are grateful to Wildlife SOS for their assistance in this rescue operation," said Pratap Jagtap, RPO Takali Dhokeshwar.

Deity worship enables leopard conservation in Maharashtra

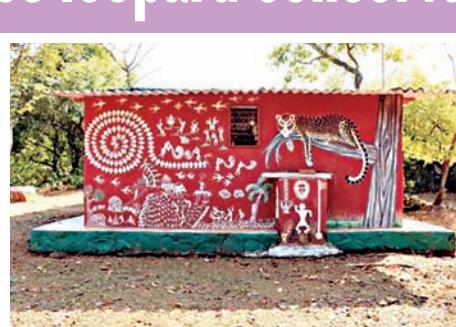
Warlis believe in a reciprocal relationship, where Waghoba will protect them from the negative impacts of sharing spaces with big cats if the people worship the deity and conduct the required rituals, especially at the annual festival of 'Waghbaras.'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A new study led by WCS-India documents how a big cat deity worshipped by indigenous people facilitates coexistence between humans and leopards.

The study, published in a special issue of the journal Frontiers in Conservation Science: Human-Wildlife Dynamics, called understanding coexistence with wildlife, documents how the indigenous Warli people of Maharashtra worship 'Waghoba', a leopard or tiger deity to gain protection from leopards, and how they have lived side-by-side with them for centuries (formerly tigers, too).

The researchers have identified over 150 shrines dedicated to worshipping Waghoba. The researchers note that while there are still negative interactions with leopards such as livestock



main aim of the study is to diversify the way we understand and approach human-wildlife interactions. It does so by shedding light on how local institutions that contribute to co-existence are not devoid of conflict, but have a role in negotiating the conflicts that arise."

Locally produced systems that address issues surrounding human-wildlife interactions may exist in several other cultures and landscapes.

The authors note that while conservation interventions have shown a movement toward the inclusion and participation of local communities, they have to recognize that landscapes have a history before their own point of entry into them. This is relevant for present-day wildlife conservation because such traditional institutions are likely to act as tolerance-building mechanisms embedded within the local belief system.

Further, it is vital that the dominant stakeholders outside of the Warli community, such as the Forest Department, conservation biologists, and other non-Warli residents who interact with leopards, are informed about and made sensitive to these cultural representations because it is not just the biological animal that the Warlis predominantly deal with. The study was conducted by researchers from WCS-India, NINA, Norway, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Norway, and supported by Wildlife Conservation Trust.

The accused can also be seen flouting Covid-19 norms by not wearing a mask. On the other the traffic policeman remained in control while directing his workers to tow the car.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In yet another incident of common man losing civic sense has come to the fore in the state of Maharashtra where a man is seen misbehaving with traffic official. A video of two people including a man and a woman has surfaced where the man can be seen threatening the traffic cop when his car was being towed for illegal parking.

The incident took place in the Mira Road area where a person had put his car in a no-parking area, due to which the



traffic police put a wheel clamp in the tire of his vehicle and looking to tow his car. The accused can also be seen flouting Covid-19 norms by not wearing a mask. On the other the traffic policeman remained in control while directing his workers to tow the car.

talking to someone on the phone and venting out his anger about the cop. He can be clearly heard saying that the cop is trying to make money using the power of uniform.

The undated video which has gone viral has received many reactions. One of the netizens praised the traffic police saying, "We must salute that officer who was completely calm and composed, who didn't utter a single word & the other guy was recording it." Later in a completely different avatar, the accused can be seen sitting on the floor apparently in a police lock-up with tears in his eyes. The viral video shows the man covering his eyes with both hands and ruing over the incident probably after he faced the music for his action. It is not for the first time that such a shocking incident has surfaced. In April, a man was arrested for misbehaving and verbally abusing traffic officials in Mulund.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Arthritis patients may escape Covid death

Arthritis drugs tocilizumab and sarilumab can reduce the risk of death and the need for mechanical ventilation in patients with Covid-19, finds a study. The results, based on analysis of 27 randomised trials in 28 countries involving nearly 11,000 patients, have also prompted the World Health Organisation (WHO) to recommend its use in patients with severe or critical Covid-19 along with corticosteroids. The study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), showed that administering one of these drugs in addition to corticosteroids, in hospitalised patients, reduces the risk of death by 17 per cent, compared to the use of corticosteroids alone. In patients not on mechanical ventilation, the risk of mechanical ventilation or death is reduced by 21 per cent, compared to the use of corticosteroids alone. These are the first drugs found to be effective against Covid-19 since corticosteroids were recommended by WHO in September 2020. Patients severely ill with Covid-19 often suffer from an overreaction of the immune system, which can be very harmful to the patient's health. Interleukin-6 blocking drugs -- tocilizumab and sarilumab -- act to suppress this overreaction. "These drugs offer hope for patients and families who are suffering from the devastating impact of severe and critical Covid-19. But IL-6 receptor blockers remain inaccessible and unaffordable for the majority of the world," WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement. "The inequitable distribution of vaccines means that people in low- and middle-income countries are most susceptible to severe forms of Covid-19. So, the greatest need for these drugs is in countries that currently have the least access. We must urgently change this.

CAN A NON-MUSLIM BE FORCIBLY CONVERTED TO BECOME MUSLIM IN ISLAM?

Nowadays, there are rumours in social media and newspapers that non-Muslims have been forcibly converted to become Muslim. The nuisance creators are making noise in this regard. But these nuisance creators do not see that whether anyone in India at this time has the power to forcibly convert Hindus to Muslim? And whether he/she will become Muslim, if forcibly converted to do so.

Maulana Arshad Madani

Because, to become a Muslim is basically believing in one God (Allah) from the heart and to consider Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to be a true messenger of Allah. A person does not become a Muslim just by reciting the word 'Tawheed (Kalema)' with the tongue and praying 'namaz (salaat)', unless he/she does believe in Tawheed and Prophethood by heart.

While it is clear that the word Tawheed can be uttered by force, but it cannot be observed from the heart by force.

According to the principle stated in the Holy Qur'an in Surah No. 16 / Verse No. 106 / If a Muslim is forced to utter words of disbelief while his heart is satisfied with Islam, he does not become a disbeliever. Similarly, if a non-Muslim is forced to utter the words of Islam, while he does not sincerely believe in the principles of Islam by heart, he will not become a Muslim.

But it is surprising to read few articles written by even educated people in this age on this topic, which gives impression that they are not aware of the conditions of the world and they are not aware of even a, b, c of Islam either.

Rather, I would be right to say that Islam did not give a Muslim the mindset to force non-Muslims to become Muslims, because if that were the case, then more than five million Hindus living in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries would have been converted to Islam. Even the communal minded people of India do not have complaint with the Muslim countries that the Hindus who earn their livelihood there are forcibly converted to Islam because they are helpless. Then one has to think a hundred times about how Muslims in India will do to non-Muslims of India, what is not done to helpless non-Muslims in Muslim countries.

But unfortunately the communal minded

and ignorant people of our country enjoy in doing the false propaganda against Muslims and Islam, as they do not find such enjoyment in anything else.

I don't know Maulana Jahangir Sahib but I know Omar Gautam Sahib. He is a very noble man. He is an educated man. He has accepted Islam by understanding and reading Islamic teachings.

It is not expected from him even by one per cent that he will do such a useless thing, which is not going to have any significant result.

Yes, if a person who has become a Muslim comes to fill the paperwork of conversion according to Indian law, he would have helped him, since he himself had gone through this stage. Also at that time there was no strictness in this matter.

At this point, I think it is appropriate to explain the basic teachings of Islam that are for non-Muslims living in an Islamic country, so that it may be useful for those who are burning in the fire of communal mindset with the aim to open their closed eyes, and to give knowledge to self-educated Muslims about their religion, who can be benefitted from this.

The world knows that the real teaching of Islam is that which has been given in the "Qur'an" or by the Messenger of Allah, Hazrat Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Thus, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says following about non-Muslims who live in an Islamic country:

1. If an enemy attacks them in an Islamic government, then the Islamic government will fight from the side of non-Muslims.
2. Non-Muslims will not be expelled from their religion in any Islamic country. Words from the blessed tongue of the Messenger of Allah tell us this.
3. The lives of non-Muslims shall be safe in an Islamic country.
4. The wealth of non-Muslims shall also be safe in the Islamic government
5. Their caravan, i.e. trade, shall also be

remain safe

6. Their land shall also be remain safe

7. Everything that was already in their possession shall remain as it is in their custody.

8. Their clergy "Rehaban", priests "Mahant" shall not be removed from their posts.

9. One tenth of their agriculture production shall not be taken.

10. There shall not be genocides by the military.

11. No rights they already had shall be taken away.

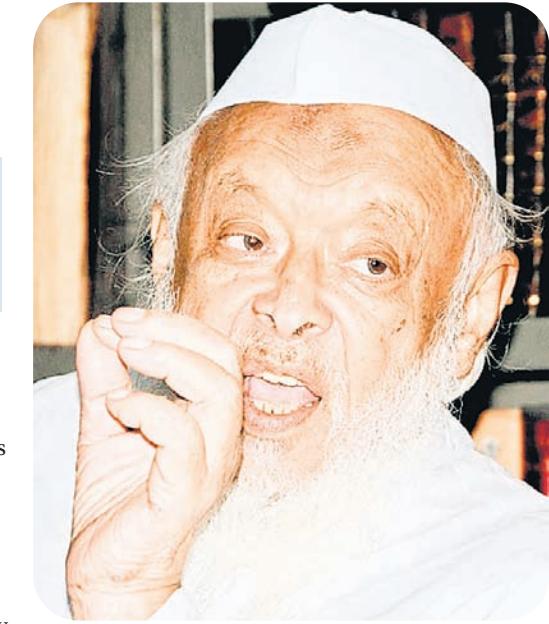
12. Those who are not present will be included in all these rules.

(Books for reference: See "Fatuh al-Baldan" by Bala Zari and "Kitab al-Kharaj" by Imam Abu Yusuf.)

When these Islamic teachings given by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are in an Islamic country, how can a non-Muslim be forcibly converted to Islam in a non-Islamic country? And how can he become a Muslim without accepting it from the heart? That is why one of the wills made by Hazrat Umar (Radiallaho-taalaa-anho), the second caliph of the Messenger of Allah, near his death was that "The non-Muslim people who live in our country are under the responsibility of Allah (God) and the Prophet. Muslims should fight with their enemies on their behalf (Books for reference: See "Fatuh al-Baldan").

I am presenting all these facts because the accusation against an educated and serious man like Omar Gautam is an untrue slander and has no reality.

We have the experience that the Muslims get caught are portrayed as rebels of the country and in addition they are highlighted as the masterminds of the rebellion against the country. And they are sentenced to life imprisonment, and to death penalty also, and they are honorably acquitted by the upper



court. While in prison, the lives of these young men have been ruined.

We go to the courts again and again to say that reprimand orders should be issued against the investigators but it is avoided by saying that the "morale" of the police and government agencies will fall.

But the world says that it may be late but there is no place for injustice from Allah and there is no sound in the stick of Allah.

Because in all such cases the attempts are being made to defame Islam and out of ignorance it is falsely portrayed as the religion of terrorism, and all Muslims are being branded as a terrorist.

Therefore, I wanted to present the instructions given by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that he has given about the non-Muslims living in the Islamic country. So that in view of this, you can judge the reality of the propaganda against Islam and the accusations levelled against educated Muslims in today's situation of India. It is to know that the lives of a few Muslim youths can be ruined, but no valuable service to the country or humanity can be done by this way, whereas today the world needs these valuable services.

(Maulana Arshad Madani is President of Jamiat Ulema Hind. The views expressed are personal)

international

WAR NOT A SOLUTION TO AFGHANISTAN'S POLITICAL CONFLICTS: GOVT-TALIBAN

Tehran | Agencies

War is not a solution to Afghanistan's political conflicts, said a statement issued here at the conclusion of a dialogue attended by members of the Kabul government and Taliban.

The two-day dialogue was held in an attempt to end the decades-long conflict in Afghanistan, Xinhua news agency reported.

In the statement released at the end of the meeting on Thursday night, the warring sides expressed their gratitude for the efforts of Iran in helping push forward the peace process in Afghanistan.

The Afghan government and the Taliban agreed that the continuation of the war would damage the country's interests and they should endeavour to reach a political and peaceful solution to the differences among the concerning parties.

They also decided to discuss the issues that need further consultation, such as the establishment of a mech-



anism for the transition from war to permanent peace and the Islamic system in Afghanistan, as well as ways to achieve the goals during the next meeting expected to be held as soon as possible, the statement added.

Condemning the attacks that target people's homes, offices, mosques,

"For peace one should sacrifice and forgive, should refrain from the maximum demands and pay attention to the demands of the other side," Zarif said at the end of the intra-Afghan dialogue.

"What I demand from you (the Afghan parties) is to seize this opportunity and end the war in Afghanistan as soon as possible and provide the people of Afghanistan with an opportunity for development."

Iran is ready to facilitate the continuation of talks in any way the Afghan parties want, he added.

Hours after the release of the statement on Thursday, local media reported that the Taliban captured the Islam Qala customs post on the border of Iran and Afghanistan.

Following the Taliban's seizure of the border post, the Afghanistan security forces reportedly fled to Iran after clashes erupted in Islam Qala.

Located in Afghanistan's Herat province, the Islam Qala border post is the official land crossing from Iran's eastern Taybad town.

Aid team blocked from assisting Palestinians expelled from homes: UN

United Nations | Agencies

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that the Israeli military blocked the delivery of aid to Palestinians whose homes were demolished and asked an aid team to leave the Jordan Valley site.

The razing of 27 residential and animal structures and water tanks on Wednesday in the Palestinian herding community of Humsa Al Bqai'a is the first of its kind since February, the OCHA said in a statement on Thursday.

The Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) and the military also took food, milk for children, clothes, hygiene materials and toys.

The action involved 11 homes for about 70 people, including 36 children, the office said. Animals had no fodder and water.

Representatives of the OCHA and humanitarian partners visited the community Wednesday evening, but the military on Thursday asked them to leave.

The community rejected an ICA proposal to move it to a different location, OCHA said. The military moved their belongings to the proposed site.

Humanitarians said 11 structures donated as humanitarian aid in February after similar demolitions were destroyed or taken

by the military on Wednesday.

"The repeated destruction of their homes and property, including assistance provided by the humanitarian community is having a devastating economic, social and traumatic impact on the community, particularly children," the OCHA said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is deeply concerned by the demolition of property in the herding community, said Stephane Dujarric, his chief spokesman.

"He reiterates his call on the Israeli authorities to cease demolitions and seizures of Palestinian property in the occupied West Bank," Dujarric told a regular briefing. "Such actions are contrary to international law and could undermine the chances for the establishment of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state."

Israeli authorities this year demolished, seized or forced people to destroy at least 421 Palestinian-owned structures, including 130 donor-funded, displacing 592 people, including some 320 children across the West Bank, according to the OCHA.

The demolitions are a 24 per cent increase in structures, a near 110 per cent increase in donor-funded facilities and over a 50 percent increase in people displacement, compared with the equivalent period in 2020.

SL likely to have higher than expected growth in Q1

■ The ongoing vaccination drive throughout the country and the likely removal of mobility restrictions are expected to ease the impact of the current wave of Covid19 on overall economic activity, thereby facilitating a sustained economic recovery towards achieving a GDP growth rate of around 5 per cent in 2021

statement issued by the country's Central Bank said.

"Indicators for several key sectors of the economy point towards a stronger than expected recovery during the quarter," Xinhua news agency quoted the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) statement released on Thursday as saying.

The CBSL said that growth was weakened in the second quarter due to a third wave of the coronavirus pandemic and preventative measures that disturbed economic activity. "The ongoing vaccination drive throughout the country and the likely removal of mobility restrictions are expected to ease the impact of the current wave of Covid19 on overall economic activity, thereby facilitating a sustained economic recovery towards achieving a GDP growth rate of around 5 per cent in 2021," the statement said.

Canadian MP Jody Wilson not seeking re-election due to 'toxic' Parliament

Ottawa | Agencies

Canadian Independent MP Jody Wilson-Raybould said that she will not seek a re-election since Parliament has "become more and more toxic and ineffective".

"From my seat over the last six years, I have noticed a change in Parliament, a regression. It has become more and more toxic and ineffective while simultaneously marginalizing individuals from certain backgrounds," Wilson-Raybould said in an open letter posted on her Twitter account on Thursday.

Wilson-Raybould, also a former Justice Minister, announced in the letter that she will not run again in the next federal election.

She expressed her disappointment on the excessive power of Canada's political parties and unelected officials in the Prime Minister's Office, as well as the "out-of-date norms" of the first-past-the-post electoral system.

"Federal politics is, in my view,



increasingly a disgraceful triumph of harmful partisanship over substantive action," she said.

Wilson-Raybould pointed that partisanship needs to be reduced and structural changes made to the democratic system in order for the country to tackle major challenges, including recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, reconciliation

with indigenous people and climate change. "It came about through long reflection on and writing about my own experiences in Ottawa, insights others have shared with me, and a growing realization of the depth of the shifts needed in our political culture."

Wilson-Raybould was first elected as a Liberal MP in 2015, becoming Canada's first indigenous Justice Minister.

But she resigned from Justin Trudeau's government and was subsequently ousted from the Liberal Party following the SNC-Lavalin scandal.

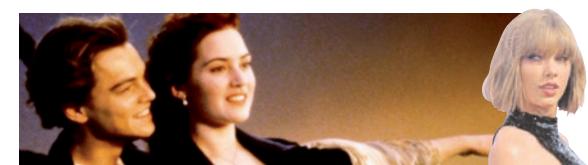
At the centre of the scandal were her allegations that Trudeau and his office pressed her into securing a deferred prosecution agreement for the Quebec engineering firm SNC-Lavalin that would have shielded it from prosecution over corruption charges related to bribes to Libyan officials. The allegations led to a series of explosive committee hearings that eventually led to the ouster of two cabinet ministers, and the resignation of Trudeau's chief secretary.

CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES DROUGHT EMERGENCY AMID NEW HEATWAVE

San Francisco: California Governor Gavin Newsom has decided to add more counties to the state's drought emergency declaration as a new heatwave is scorching much of the western US. Newsom on Thursday declared the new emergency order for nine more counties during a press conference held in front of a drying lake in San Luis Obispo County on the Central Coast of California, making the drought official in 50 of the state's 58 counties, reports Xinhua news agency. The Governor said about 42 per cent of California's population now are in counties that will fall under the guidelines and requirements set for a drought emergency. The Golden State is home to over 40 million residents. Newsom urged residents to voluntarily reduce water consumption. "We are hopeful that people will take that mindset brought into the last drought and extend that forward with a 15 per cent voluntary reduction not only on residents, but industrial, commercial operations and agricultural operations," he noted. In response to the dry conditions affecting the state, Newsom had declared a drought emergency in two Northern California counties in April and significantly expanded the emergency proclamation to 41 of the state's 58 counties in May. "The hots are getting hotter and the dries are getting drier - that is the reality of climate change," said a tweet from Newsom's office. "During the last drought, we made water conservation a way of life and we can do it again," the office added, noting that "Californians can step up again by voluntarily reducing water usage by 15 percent, saving 850,000 acre-feet of water - enough to supply more than 1.7 million households for a year."

Colombo | Agencies

Sri Lanka's economy may have a higher than expected growth rate in the first quarter of 2021, a



Daniel Radcliffe unsure about 'Harry Potter reunion' on 20th anniversary

London | Agencies

British star Daniel Radcliffe, who rose to fame playing the wizard Harry Potter, says there are no plans at the moment for a "Harry Potter" 20th anniversary reunion. The actor is sure there would be some celebration to mark the milestone in November, but adds that his work schedule would probably bar him from getting together with franchise co-stars Rupert Grint and Emma Watson, who played Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger respectively, reports *acehowbiz.com*.

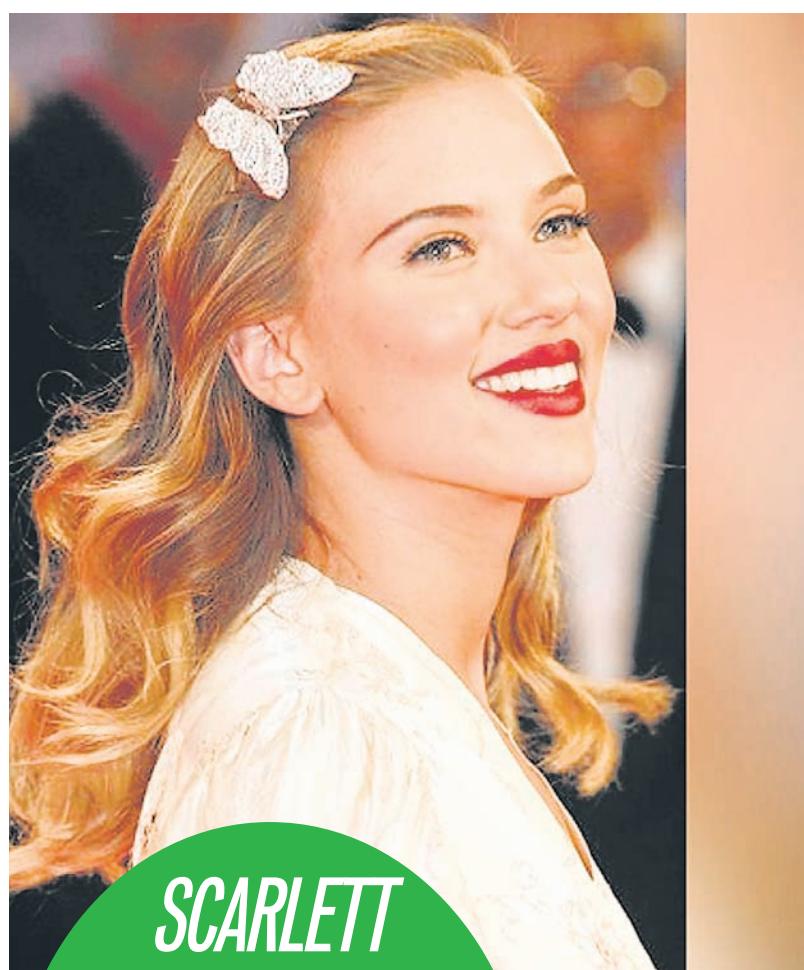
"I'm in the Dominican Republic at the moment, filming, and then I'm going to be busy, kind of working on bits and pieces until the end of the year. So, yeah, I don't know. I'm sure there will be some sort of celebration but I don't know if we will be getting together or anything. I'm sorry if that's a bit of a disappointment to anyone," Radcliffe told *Entertainment Tonight*.

The actor says he has not seen any of the eight "Harry Potter" films, released between 2001 and 2011, he has occasionally caught glimpses while watching TV.

"I've seen bits on TV for seconds before I go, 'Uh!' Or if it's a scene that someone else is in I'll go, 'Oh, cool!'" he said.

Radcliffe has particularly fond memories of filming with Gary Oldman and David Thewlis, who played Sirius Black and Professor Remus Lupin respectively.

"I have really, really fond memories of all my scenes with Gary Oldman and David Thewlis," he said.



SCARLETT JOHANSSON OPENS UP ON BEING SHADOWED BY DAUGHTER

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson says she can't find time to use the bathroom, being a mother to a six-year-old.

The actress, who is rumoured to be pregnant with husband Colin Jost's child, is yet to comment on reports. She has a daughter Rose, with former husband Romain Dauriac.

"She shadows me all the time, which is wonderful..." Johansson said on "The Kelly Clarkson Show", reports *acehowbiz.com*.

She added, "I'm sure in a few years she's not going to want anything to do

with me and so I should soak it all up but there's definitely times where she's on the other side of the bathroom door and I'm like, 'Rose, you've got to give me a minute, you've got to give me a minute. Mummy needs her time!'

"But she means well and I'd rather have it that way than her winding up wanting nothing to do with me," said the actress, who married "Saturday Night Live" actor and writer Jost in October 2020. During the interview, Johansson also spoke about why she shied away from watching "Saturday Night Live".

"I now rarely watch the show without having a sense of...not overwhelming panic, just like a slight overwhelming panic because I just feel like at any moment something's going to fall apart. And that's the excitement of 'SNL' and for all audiences, right? Because it's absolutely live," she said. The actress added: "But when you're emotionally invested in it and not just entertained by it, it takes on a little bit of a different life."



Los Angeles | Agencies

The Kristen Bell and Kirby Howell-Baptiste starrer "Queenpins" is all set to release in September worldwide. The comedy film is written and directed by the husband-wife team of Gita Pulaipilly and Aron Gaudet, and is about two women who mastermind a \$40-million coupon scam.

Given the theme, the filmmaker duo is excited about the prospect of the film releasing in India.

"We know that India is in a phase that has seen the depiction of some of the best scams over the OTT platforms and the success of these series has been phenomenal. We take that as our welcome mat into the Indian entertainment market," they said.



'QUEENPINS'
MAKERS FEEL FILM WILL CLICK IN INDIA AS SCAM STORIES ARE A HIT ON OTT

BTS DROPS NEW SINGLE 'PERMISSION TO DANCE'



Seoul | Agencies

The Korean boy band BTS have released their new track "Permission to dance". Belonging to the dance pop genre, "Permission to dance" is another fun song coming from the band. Musician Ed Sheeran and British producer Steve Mac partook in making the number. The performance spotlights on BTS' energetic charms as usual, and the dance moves are easy to emulate, so anyone can effortlessly groove with the choreography. The band's latest summer smash hit "Butter" has topped the Billboard Hot 100 chart for six consecutive weeks, which marks their longest run at the number one spot. BTS, or Bangtan Sonyeondan, are a septet comprising Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V, and Jungkook. The band, who is also known as the Bangtan Boys, will show the US TV premiere of "Permission to dance" on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" for consecutive nights on July 13 and 14.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Madonna came out in support of Britney Spears and begged to "give this woman her life back!"

Alongside a photo of herself wearing a white tank top with Britney's name written across the chest, Madonna wrote on her Instagram Story: "Give this woman her life back." Slavery was abolished so long ago! Death to the greedy patriarchy that has been doing this to women for centuries."

The caption concluded: "This is a violation of human rights!

"Britney we coming to get you out of jail!" Just weeks ago, Britney made her virtual appearance in court amid her conservatorship legal battle with her father Jamie, who she claimed has "controlled" her life for the past 13 years.

During the hearing, the Toxic singer made shocking claims that she was allegedly not allowed to get married and was forced to get an IUD so that she could not take it out if she wanted to have another baby.

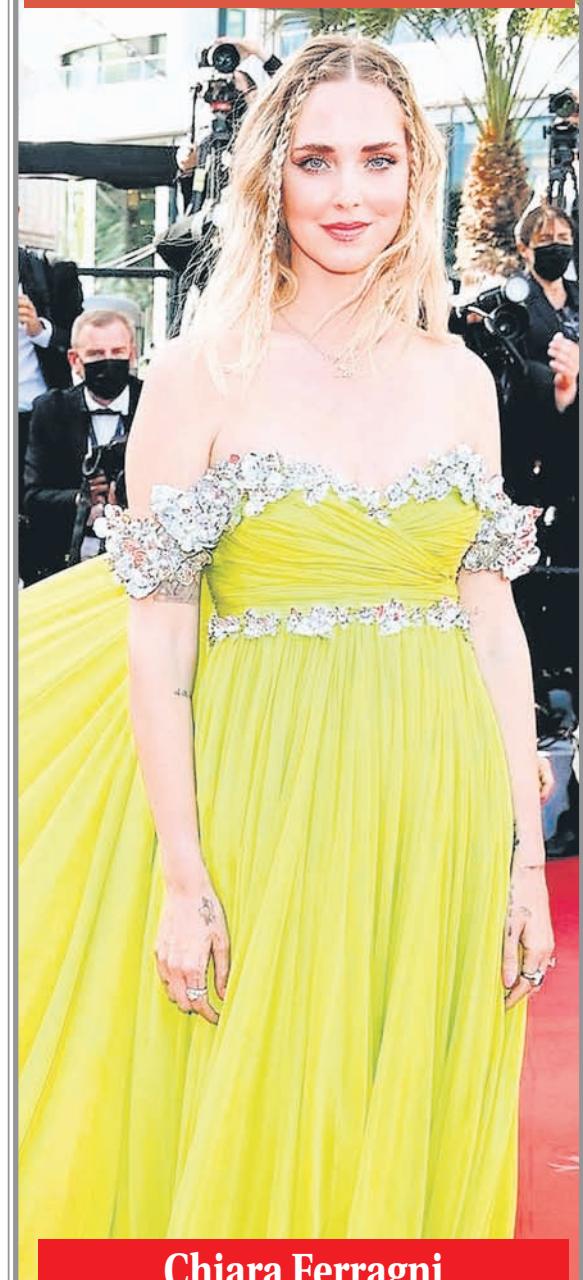
Kim made sure 'each of them got paid the same' on KUWTK

Los Angeles | Agencies

American reality TV star Kim Kardashian reveals she is a bigger workaholic than her mother Kris Jenner. She says she can continue discussing work even when Kris switches off her role from manager to mom and has a drink. "I'm a workaholic, I can talk work way more than she can," said Kim Kardashian, on her work relationship with Kris as guests on Idris and Sabrina Elba's audio show. The mother-daughter duo talked about their experiences in life, business, family, and their television show "Keeping Up With The Kardashians". While talking about their popular television reality series, Kim said she respects everyone equally. She said that it was clear from day one that the whole family has the same hours, so they would be paid equally. "I made sure each of us got paid the same," said Kim on the tricky aspects of working with family. She said that the family has always celebrated each milestone together, as a family. Kim relived the moment when she introduced her family in the first season and how, at that moment, she knew she was nothing without them.

The Elbas' show "Coupledom" is available on Audible.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Chiara Ferragni



INDIA-SRI LANKA ODI SERIES HITS COVID ROADBLOCK, STARES AT CANCELLATION

Colombo | Agencies

India's tour of Sri Lanka has hit a roadblock after emergence of two Covid-19 positive cases in the home team's camp has delayed the start of the ODI series by at least four days and there could be a possibility of its cancellation if more cases appear.

Sri Lanka batting coach Grant Flower and team performance analyst Shirantha Niroshana have both tested positive and the entire team, which arrived from England this week, has been put in isolation.

Although the two boards are yet to make an official statement, it looks likely that all six matches would be played within a period of 10-11 days in case there are no more positive cases.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETES ATTEND FIRST CAMP FOR JANUARY EVENT



Team Absolute | New Delhi

While the Tokyo Olympic Games-bound Indian sportspersons are putting the final touches to their preparations, those who have qualified for the Paralympic Games are also in advanced stage in preparations. The Paralympic Games will be held from August 24 to September 5 in Tokyo. A third set of Indian sportspersons too has started its training for the multi-discipline sports extravaganza – they are the Special Olympics athletes gearing up for the Special Olympics World Winter Games, to be held from January 22 to 28 in Kazan, Russia. In all, 65 athletes including 13 female and 14 male from 15 states attended the floorball national coaching camp at YMCA, to hone their skills for the upcoming event. The camp, executed with the Covid-19 protocols advised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, concluded on Friday.

The daily schedule of the camp covered warm-ups, skill-based practices covering all five skills (dribbling, passing, receiving, flip and shoot) and competition tactics and practice. The camp simultaneously held medical screenings across eye care (called Opening Eyes) and the Dental condition (Special Smiles) of the participating athletes.

Taskin, Muzarabani fined 15% of match fee for breach of ICC Code

Dubai | Agencies

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has sanctioned Bangladesh batsman Taskin Ahmed and Zimbabwe fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani for a clash during the second day of the one-off Test in Harare.

Both the players were fined 15% of their match fees for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct, which carries a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50% of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points.

The players were found to have breached Article 1.1.12 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "inappropriate physical contact with a player, player support personnel, umpire, match referee or any other persons [including a spectator] during an internation-



al match", the ICC informed in a release on Friday.

"In addition to this, one demerit point each has been added to the disciplinary records of the players, both of whom did not have any previous offence in a 24-month period," the ICC statement said.

According to the ICC, in the 85th over of Bangladesh's first innings on Thursday when the players had, after Muzarabani had bowled a

delivery to Taskin, "moved aggressively towards each other and contact was made after words were exchanged face to face".

Both players admitted the offence and accepted the sanctions proposed by match referee Andy Pycroft after on-field umpires Marais Erasmus and Langton Rusere, third umpire IknowChabi and fourth official Forster Mutizwa levelled the charges.

the statement added.

The LPL Governing Council said that it will be difficult to have top players since a lot of them will be busy in the Caribbean Premier League as well as other international series.

"The Council made this decision after assessing that at least one similar premier league and several international tours will be played among the cricketing nations during August 2021, during the period, which the LPL 2nd edition was expected to be played," the statement said further.

Former India players Yusuf Pathan, Irfan Pathan and Sudip Tyagi as well as first-class cricketer Manavender Bisla are expected to take part in this year's edition.



"The Governing Council of the Lanka Premier League is of the view that rescheduling the tournament will enable more players from leading cricket-playing nations to take part in the league,"

Colombo | Agencies

Lanka Premier League (LPL), the T20 franchise league run by Sri Lanka Cricket, has been postponed till November due to the unavailability of foreign players. The tournament, which was supposed to begin on July 29, will now commence on November 19 and end on December 12.

"The Lanka Premier League 2021, which was expected to commence on the 29th July 2021, has been rescheduled to be held from 19th November to 12th December 2021," said a statement from Sri Lanka Cricket.

It termed the unavailability of foreign players as the reason behind cancellation.

LPL postponed due to lack of foreign players

WIMBLEDON: BERRETTINI BEATS HURKACZ TO REACH 1ST GRAND SLAM FINAL

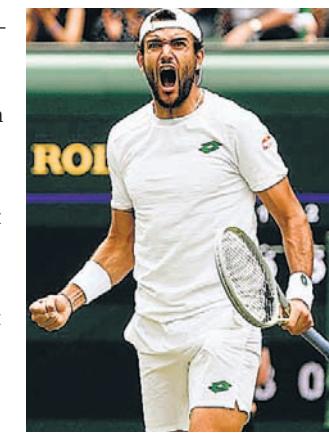
London | Agencies

Seventh seed Matteo Berrettini of Italy stormed into his maiden Grand Slam final with a four-set victory over Hubert Hurkacz of Poland, the man who threw Roger Federer out of the grass-court tournament.

Unleashing an array of powerful ground-strokes that kept Hurkacz under check throughout the match, Berrettini raced to a 6-3, 6-0, 6-7(3), 6-4 victory in two hours and 37 minutes,

becoming the first player from Italy to reach the Wimbledon final. This was the seventh seed's 11th victory on grass as he had come into the tournament with victory in a buildup tournament.

The Italian 25-year-old broke his Polish rival's serve in the seventh game of the first



set and then broke again in the 10th game to win 6-4. The second set was totally one-sided as Berrettini kept Hurkacz's serve under pressure and took it 6-0 in just 23 minutes.

Hurkacz, the 14th seed here, steadied his game in the third set and took it to a tiebreaker and won it easily without giving Berrettini any chances.

Berrettini raised his game again in the fourth and ended his Polish rival's challenge with an early break. Berrettini served 22 aces against five by Hurkacz. He capitalised on six of the 10 break points he earned -- an unusual scenario for his Polish rival who had dropped his serve just four times in five matches. The Italian sent down 60 winners as against 27 by Hurkacz, who also committed 26 unforced errors.

AUSTRALIAN TENNIS STAR KYRGIOS PULLS OUT OF OLYMPICS



Sydney | Agencies

Australian tennis player Nick Kyrgios has pulled out of the Tokyo Olympic Games, citing abdominal injury and absence of fans at venues. "It's a decision I didn't take lightly," he tweeted. Kyrgios says that it was always a dream to play in the Olympics. "It's been my dream to represent Australia at the Olympics and I know I may never get that opportunity again. But I also know myself. The thought of playing in front of empty stadiums just doesn't sit right with me. It never has," he said. Kyrgios confirmed that apart from absence of spectators, the abdominal injury that forced him to retire mid-way in his third-round match at Wimbledon last week was also a reason for his withdrawal. "I also wouldn't want to take an opportunity away from a healthy Aussie athlete ready to represent the country. I will also take all the time I need to get my body right. Good luck to all the Aussies competing and I'll see you back on the court real soon," he said. The Kyrgios statement came just before the Japan government imposed a state of emergency, which meant that crowds won't be allowed to attend events related to the Tokyo Olympics starting on July 23. Tennis Australia will now have to decide on the replacement for Kyrgios in the squad of 11 headlined by Ashleigh Barty.

Olympics countdown

Rahi Sarnobat: The cool cat of shooting range

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rahi Sarnobat's relaxed demeanour and her ability to withstand the most nerve-wracking situations is what sets her apart from many of her compatriots and rival competitors. The scene is from the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang (Indonesia), where despite the air-conditioners running full blast, spectators at the arena were left sweating by the intensity of the competition.

Though Rahi had won gold at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, few knew that she was on heavy medication to alleviate the pain in her left elbow. She did take part in the 2014 Asian Games at Incheon, clinching bronze, but vanished from the scene, no one knows where. After a long steroid therapy and a laparoscopic surgery in 2016, it was the lessons in temperament and attitude ingrained in her by her German coach, which saw Rahi return to the Asian Games in 2018 and achieve glory.

"In 2016, I was put on steroids and in February the same year, I went under the knife. I missed the Rio Olympics quota



cycle because of the injury and couldn't qualify for the Games," Rahi had said after winning the 2018 Asian Games gold.

With the meagre saving she was left with and the prize money received from the Indian government, she hired the German coach.

As the 30-year-old Rahi aims at Olympic glory in Tokyo, she is once again hitting top form, having clinched gold in the ISSF World Cup held recently in the Croatian city of Osijek. She is once again motivated and her driving force is the same German coach, Munkhbayer.

Cavendish equals Merckx's record of most stage wins at Tour de France

Carcassonne (France) | Agencies

Britain's Mark Cavendish equalled the record for most stage wins at Tour de France after he won Stage 13 here on Friday. This was his 34th stage win -- as many as former Belgian cyclist Eddy Merckx has won -- at the annual prestigious race.

"I haven't realised. It is just like my first one. It was what I dreamed of as a kid and it is what I dream of now. I have worked so hard for it," said Cavendish after the win. "For a lot of the day it didn't feel like it was going to happen. I was so on the limit. You saw that at the end slightly uphill," added the 36-year-old.

As many as 154 riders had started stage 13 in Nimes and towards the end, Cavendish prevailed in a close finish.

This was Cavendish's fourth stage win this year but it was also the tightest of



his victories. He has won Stage 4, 6 and 10 before this. "I can't even think about it. I am afraid I am so dead. The 220km in that heat, that wind and that final. I went deep there. I went so deep, the

boys were incredible," he said further. It is unlikely that anyone will break his record soon. Peter Sagan of Slovakia is next best among active riders with 12 stage wins while Andre Greipel has 11.



Shriya Pilgaonkar's short film 'Sita' to screen at Short Film Corner of Cannes

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shriya Pilgaonkar's short film "Sita" will be screened at the Court Metrage Short Film Corner of the upcoming Cannes Film Festival. It has also been officially selected for the International Film Festival of South Asia -- Toronto. Directed by Abhinav Singh, the film is about a young boy who discovers an abandoned body of a baby girl and wants to cremate her. The film explores themes of caste, traditions and mythology. "I'm thrilled that our short film 'Sita' is screening at the Court Metrage Short Film Corner at Cannes this year. We're really happy that the short film is going to be screened at one of the world's most prestigious film festivals," said Shriya.

According to the official website of Cannes Court Metrage, the Short Film Corner is a Forum dedicated to short films. Neither a selection nor a competition, its aim is to promote emerging talents and facilitate interactions between the creation and the industry.

"Sita" will be screened from July 12 to July 16. "I personally love the medium of short films and it's an honour for our film to have this platform. While none of us will be attending, I surely hope to get the opportunity to be part of the Cannes Film Festival in the future," says Shriya.

The actress will next be seen in "The Game Season 2" and "Crackdown 2".

SANYA MALHOTRA TO STAR WITH RAJKUMMAR RAO IN HINDI REMAKE OF 'HIT'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Sanya Malhotra has been roped in to star alongside actor Rajkummar Rao in the Hindi remake of the Telugu blockbuster "Hit". Sanya said: "I have watched 'Hit' and I really liked the concept of the film. When the film was offered to me, I immediately said yes. It is a very interesting and intriguing story that deserves a mass audience. I am looking forward to this one and excited to work with Raj." "HIT -- Homicide Intervention Team", tells the story of a cop who is on the trail of a missing woman. The original released in 2020 and was jointly produced by South star Nani and Prashanti Tipirneni. The film features Vishwak Sen and Ruhan Sharma in the lead roles. The film tells the story of Vikram, a police officer grappling with a personal tragedy while investigating a missing girl named Preethi. The Sailesh Kolana directorial is currently in pre-production and will go on floors soon.



Ayushmann: I use my social media to draw attention to future disruptors

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana says he follows a lot of young poets, singers, performing artistes and dancers who are yet to burst onto the scene and tries using his social media to draw attention to these artistes.

"I follow a lot of incredible young poets, singers, performing artistes, dancers who are yet to burst onto the scene and I'm always awed by their talent. So, I try and use my

social media to draw attention to these really fantastic artists who I feel are the future disruptors. The reason for doing so is rooted in my past," said Ayushmann.

He has been doing this since 2019, and has used the pandemic to actively discover and endorse such talent.

"When I was looking to make a name for myself, I didn't have the power of social media to put myself out there. I didn't have the ways to get the opportunities I could have

got years back. So, I feel if we all can use our social media as a platform to bring out some of the best talents, we would be doing right by our country and the genius it has to offer," he said. Ayushmann believes India has a wealth of talent that needs to be discovered more aggressively.

The actor said: "There is a need to constantly find brilliant new artists because they will be shapers of future. Their honesty to the craft and passion make my day. Anywhere

you look, you will find raw talent in our country. Let's share and celebrate their skills and bring out the future generation of artists from the house next door."

Meanwhile, Ayushmann will soon be seen in "Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui" directed by Abhishek Kapoor, "Anek" directed by Anubhav Sinha and "Doctor G" directed by Anubhuti Kashyap.



'BIGG BOSS' TO STREAM FIRST 6 WEEKS ON OTT BEFORE TV

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The next season of the popular reality show "Bigg Boss" will stream its first six weeks on OTT and then make a gradual shift to television. The new season will be called "Bigg Boss OTT" and will arrive early this year. "Bigg Boss OTT", which will stream on Voot, will introduce a 'janta' factor. The new format will give the common man the uncommon powers of "Bigg Boss OTT" by enabling them to handpick contestants and the contestants' stay, tasks and exit from the show.

Ferzad Palia, Head of Voot Select says: "At Voot, experiences and innovation around content are at the forefront of our strategy. 'Bigg Boss' has witnessed tremendous success over seasons and grown to become India's biggest entertainment property. The launch of Bigg Boss OTT on Voot is another step towards solidifying our 'Digital First' approach as an organisation. We are confident that our loyal fans and subscribers will enjoy a truly world class experience through our 24 hour Live feeds, interactivity and gaming offerings." Actress Shweta Tiwari, an ex Bigg Boss contestant and winner of "Bigg Boss 4", is excited about the OTT streaming of the show.

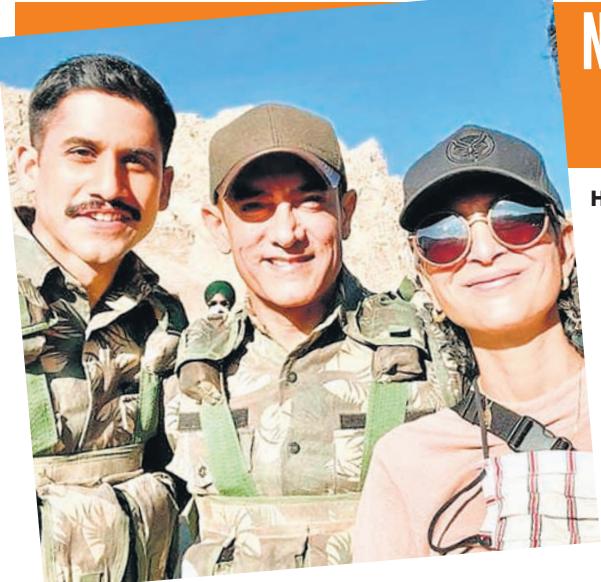
She says: "I'm extremely excited to know that my favourite reality show is arriving early this year. For me, Bigg Boss was a life-changing experience. Not only did it let the audience know me beyond my persona as an actor, but ended up teaching me to be more patient, tolerant and yet assertive. It also gave me friends like family. I watch 'Bigg Boss' every year but I think that as an audience member, I am going to have more power than ever before to be the real judge of the show. That makes this OTT launch absolutely thrilling."

'Bhoot Police' to release digitally on September 17

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The horror comedy "Bhoot Police" has been confirmed for OTT premiere on September 17. A poster of the Pavan Kirpalani directorial film was released on Friday featuring lead stars Yami Gautam, Jacqueline Fernandez, Saif Ali Khan and Arjun Kapoor. "Ab baari hai bhooton ke darne ki! #BhootPolice arriving this 17th September on @disneyplusotstarvip," announced actors Yami Gautam, Arjun Kapoor and Jacqueline Fernandez on Instagram. Earlier this week, the characters of all four actors were introduced on social media, who look like ghost hunters going by the film's title and poster.

While Saif Ali Khan plays a character called Vibhuti, Arjun Kapoor's character is named Chiraunji, Yami Gautam is Maya while Jacqueline plays Kanika. Produced by Ramesh Taurani, Akshai Puri and co-produced by Jaya Taurani, "Bhoot Police" is slated to release on Disney+ Hotstar.



Naga Chaitanya shares on-location still from 'Laal Singh Chaddha' set

Hyderabad | Agencies

Telugu actor Naga Chaitanya features in Aamir Khan's upcoming film "Laal Singh Chaddha", and he took to Instagram on Friday to share his first look in the film.

Chaitanya posted a picture of

himself with Aamir on the social media site. Both the actors are dressed as army men. The picture also has the film's co-producer Kiran Rao and director Advait Chandan.

"Grateful #bala #laalsinghchaddha", Chaitanya captioned the image.

From the picture, it appears that the film, a Hindi remake of the Hollywood hit "Forrest Gump", is being shot in Ladakh.

Chaitanya's wife, actress Samantha Akkineni, reposted the picture and expressed her excitement with the caption: "yay yay yay."



Surabhi Chandra