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FARMERS RE-ENERGIES THEIR PROTEST AGAINST CONTENTIOUS FARM LAWS

BHARAT REMAINED BANDH

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella group of some 40 farmers' unions protesting against three agriculture laws of the Centre, on Monday said its call for a 'Bharat Bandh' received an 'unprecedented and historic' response from more than 23 states and not a single untoward incident was reported from anywhere.

► The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) had called for schools, colleges, workplaces and shops across the country to remain shut, but it said emergency services will be allowed to operate.

► Major opposition parties, including the Congress, and several state governments have lent their support for the strike, which began at 06:00 local time (00:30 GMT) and last until 16:00 local time.

► The southern state of Kerala has almost completely shut down, according to news reports, and there have been rallies and protests in other states. Traffic in Punjab, Haryana and on highways connecting Delhi to neighbouring states has been disrupted.



'Reports have come in from hundreds of locations in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal about the bandh, and numerous events to accompany the same,' the statement said.

"We are hopeful that this time (Bharat Bandh) the government will listen to our demands. Farmers from all over India are with us. No matter how long we have to stretch this protest, we will not step back."

Rakesh Tikait, Leader, BKU

"Prime Minister should think about the problems being faced by the farmers, especially now when the input costs have increased, and not about the 'billionaire friends for whom the farm laws were brought."

Congress

"The farmers non violent satyagraha is intact today but the exploitive government doesn't like this and that is why #Bharat is Bandh #IStandWithFarmer s."

Rahul Gandhi, Leader, Congress

"The Uttar Pradesh government has taken a step in the right direction by increasing the prices of sugarcane but I would appeal to the government to show more generosity to improve the pathetic state of the farmers who are reeling under debt."

Varun Gandhi, Leader, BJP

PUNJAB, HARYANA GETS ENORMOUS RESPONSE

Chandigarh: The 10-hour nationwide shutdown on Monday on the call by farmers' unions to demand scrapping of three Central farm laws got enormous response in Punjab and Haryana where tens of thousands of farmers blocked major highways, including National Highway 1 linking Delhi.

Shops and other commercial establishments were closed in most towns as traders extended their support to the agitating farmers. They opened their establishments only after the shutdown was over.

However, there was no report of any untoward incident from anywhere in the states. Emergency medical services were exempted from the blockade. But traffic across Punjab and Haryana was hit badly for several hours as farmers, farm labourers, commission agents, trade and employee unions and activists of political parties squatted on national highways. Even an Indian Army convoy was halted for half an hour in Jalandhar town with farmers allowing it to move ahead after checking documents.

FARMER DIES OF CARDIAC ARREST

A farmer, who was protesting at the Singhu border against the three contentious farm laws, died due to cardiac arrest on Monday, the police said here. The deceased farmer, identified as Baghel Ram, 55, was a resident of Khela village in Punjab and was a member of Kirti Kisan Union (KKU). Earlier there were reports of chaos due to farmer's death, but the police denied all such reports.

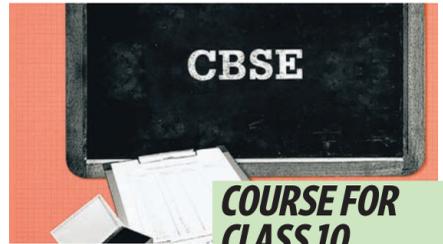
PARTIAL RESPONSE IN NORTHEAST

Guwahati/Agartala: The Bharat Bandh called evoked a partial response in the Northeastern states on Monday. In Assam, a majority of the offices remained open barring some business establishments. However, normal life was crippled in southern Assam as government and private offices, shops and markets and all other institutions were. The officials said that air and train services across the Northeastern region were normal and no untoward incident was reported so far. In Tripura, the shutdown was partial. In some sub-divisional areas many shops and markets were closed, but in most parts of Tripura life was normal, but presence in government offices, banks and educational institutions were little less.

CBSE ISSUES SYLLABUS, MARKING SCHEME, SAMPLE PAPERS FOR CLASS 10, 12 SKILL SUBJECTS

■ The skill subject will be 100 marks, 50 for theory and practical each.

■ A total of 42 skill subjects are available in class 10 and 18 for class 12. The syllabus of term one examination of skill subjects has been released by CBSE.



COURSE FOR CLASS 10

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ahead of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) class 10 and 12 board examination 2022, the sample paper and the marking scheme of all skill subjects have been issued. This time section-wise questions will be asked in skill subjects for both classes 10 and 12. All the chapters of the skill subjects have been divided into three sections by the board, and each section will have questions by the stated chapters only. A total of 42 skill subjects are available in class 10 and 18 for class 12. The syllabus of term one examination of skill subjects has been released by the board. The skill subject will be 100 marks, 50 for theory and practical each. Therefore, term one will be for 25 marks, which will be divided across three sections. The course and marking scheme of the one-hour examination has been sent to the schools. For classes 9 and 11, the skill subjects will be taken as a sixth subject, meaning if a student fails in any one of the main subjects, he/she can replace it with a skill subject.

COURSE FOR CLASS 12

For class 12, CBSE has included these topics in the syllabus - Electrical Technology, Electronics Technology, Multimedia, Taxation, Office Production and Practice, Soft Hand, Cost Accounting, Retail, Information Technology, Web Application, Automotive, Financial Market Management, Textile Design, Design, Salesmanship, Music Production, Business Administration, Tourism, Banking, Marketing, Health Care, Insurance, Horticulture, Computer Application, Geospatial Technology, Beauty and Wellness, Agriculture, Food Production, Front Office Operation, Conditioning Refrigeration, Medical Diagnostic, Food Nutrition, Mass Communication, Fashion Studies, Yoga, Child Care and Education, Library and Information Science. Students should note that the CBSE will tamper-proof all the 10 and 12 mark sheets, certificates and migration certificates. A QR code will be issued to view all types of certificates.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The morchha claimed that the response to the bandh call was 'more widespread than before' and nearly all opposition political parties extended an unconditional support to it. Reports have been pouring in about the overwhelmingly positive and resounding response to the Bharat Bandh call to mark 10 months of peaceful protests with rightful demands from the 'annadaatas' of the country. Spontaneous participation from various sections of the society was witnessed at most places, it said in a statement.

The SKM said the bandh was observed peacefully in "more than 23 states" and not a single untoward incident was reported.

'DON'T TREAT DOCTORS AS FOOTBALLS'

SC fumes at last minute changes in NEET SS syllabus

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday pulled the National Medical Commission (NMC) and the National Board of Examination (NBE) over last-minute changes to the syllabus for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) PG Super Speciality exam 2021, emphasising that doctors cannot be left at the "mercy of insensitive bureaucrats" and warned of issuing strictures, if a solution is not found.

The bench shot a volley of questions at NBE's counsel in connection with the notification, which was issued in the middle of ongoing preparations by the students.

"Why has the notice been issued? Students start preparing for super speciality courses months and months in advance," it said. "What is the need to change before the exam? Why can you not proceed with the changes



from the following year?" "Doctors cannot be left at the mercy of insensitive bureaucrats," it said, telling the NBE and the NMC to hold consultation with Health Ministry, to resolve the matter. Unhappy with the NBE counsel's response, the bench shot back: "Don't treat these young doctors as footballs in the game of power. Hold the meeting and put your house on order." The bench told NMC counsel that it was dealing with lives of doctors and added that notice was issued initially and then the pattern was changed.

BOMBAY HC, VERSITY BUILDINGS TO OPEN FOR TOURISTS

Mumbai: Iconic Bombay high court and Mumbai University buildings will now be open for tourists as part of Heritage Walks during weekends.

Maharashtra Tourism Department on Monday signed MoU with respective authorities. The Maharashtra Tourism Department signed a heritage tour memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Bombay high court and Mumbai University to allow tourists to visit these iconic buildings on non-working days -- Saturdays and Sundays, MTDC said on the occasion of the World Tourism Day. While Mumbai University will be open for tourists on Sundays and public holidays, and the tour will be conducted by TOGA (Tourist Guide Association) guides, it added. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has launched a revamped multilingual website on Maharashtra tourism. It is available in 9 languages, including English, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati, Telugu, French, Japanese and Spanish.



MP govt announces stricter laws to check illicit liquor

Rajesh Rajora, Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Madhya Pradesh, said that in taking permission from the District Collector, the place of sale of toxic substances, maximum quantity of storage, safety measures, suppliers of toxic substances, method of storing, stocks register, the necessity of maintaining the sales register, labelling of the toxic substances and the measures to be taken at the time of transportation need to be mentioned. Compliance with the conditions of the licence will be mandatory.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government has announced stricter laws after recent deaths due to alleged consumption of spurious liquor in several districts across the state.

The use of methanol and other toxic chemicals used for industrial and other purposes in the manufacturing of illicit liquor in the state led to the loss of several lives.

Methanol was found in recent spurious liquor incidents reported in Morena, Ujjain and Mandasaur districts. The Union Home Ministry has issued instructions to all Collectors and Superintendents of Police to strictly enforce The

Poisons Act, 1919, and the Madhya Pradesh Poisons (Possession and Sale) Rules, 2014.

Now it will be imperative to get permission from the District Collector for the sale of all types of poisonous substances notified in the rules mentioned in Central and state Acts. Violation of these rules will lead to a jail sentence of up to one year.

District Collector will be able to issue search warrants for the investigation of the premises in which toxic substances are kept. Assistant Police Sub-Inspector and Naib Tehsildar level officials will be able to check the stock and sale registration of toxic substances.

BENGAL BJP CHIEF HECKLED BY TMC SUPPORTERS

Kolkata: On the last day of the election campaign for the Bhabanipur assembly seat bypoll on Monday, tension escalated in the south Kolkata area ahead of the September 30 elections, as Trinamool Congress supporters allegedly physically harassed former BJP state chief Dilip Ghosh while he was campaigning for Priyanka Tibrewal who is pitted against Mamata Banerjee. The incident happened near Jadu Babur Bazar (Jadu Babu's Market) in Bhabanipur area where Ghosh's way was blocked by some Trinamool supporters and he was pushed to the side of the road. The supporters started giving slogan "Joy Bangla" - a slogan coined by Mamata Banerjee to counter BJP's "Jai Shri Ram" - and shouted at him to go back.

Dengue's D2 strain causes concern for high grade fever, shock syndrome

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A new variant of the Dengue has been observed in over 11 states in the country which has become a big concern for health experts. Though, the dengue outbreak is under control, several cases of high fever caused by the new variant of Dengue DENV 2 is being reported in many cities across the country. Among the multiple variants -- DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3 and DENV-4 of the dengue virus, DENV 2 or the

strain D2 is considered to be the most severe and can even lead to fatal internal bleeding and shock.

Dr Balram Bhargava, Director-General, Indian Council of Medical Research, told the media that the strain is particularly virulent and capable of inducing mortality.

If a person was infected by one sero type in the past, a second infection by another sero type increases the risk of causing dengue hemorrhagic fever. Rest, hydration and managing fever with paracetamol is advisable. One should avoid taking analgesics and aspirin.



POLICE OFFICER FACING EXTORTION CASE SHOULD FACE JAIL: SC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday said that the police officers, who cosy up with the government of the day and also make money through wrong channels, face payback after the change in the government.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice NV. Ramana, orally observed that policemen, falling in this category, must not be protected and they should be jailed.

It told counsel of a suspended IPS officer that his client cannot take protection



from arrest in every case, and pointed out that things take a wrong turn when people start

extracting money as they were close to the government.

"This is what happens if you're close with the government and do these things. You have to pay back one day," said the bench. Initially, the bench noted that it was not inclined to grant interim protection from arrest to the official facing extortion charges.

The top court was hearing a plea by suspended IPS officer Gurjinder Pal Singh, who had earlier moved the top court seeking protection in a case of disproportionate assets and sedition filed by the Chhattisgarh government.



MODI LAUNCHES AYUSHMAN BHARAT DIGITAL MISSION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that digital infrastructure was taking everything from 'Ration to Prashasan' (ration to administration) to the common Indian in a fast and transparent manner.

Prime Minister Modi was speaking after launching the 'Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission' through a video conference.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the campaign for strengthening the health facilities, that have been going for the last seven years, is now entering a new phase. "Today we are launching a mission that has the potential of bringing a revolutionary change in India's health facilities," Modi said. The Prime Minister underlined that with 130 crore Aadhaar numbers, 118 crore mobile subscribers, about 80 crore Internet users and about 43 crore Jan Dhan bank accounts, there is no such big connected infrastructure anywhere in the world.

"This digital infrastructure is bringing everything from ration to administration (Ration to Prashasan) to the common Indian in a fast and transparent manner. The way technology is being deployed in governance reforms today is unprecedented," the Prime Minister said.



The Prime Minister pointed out that the 'Arogya Setu' app helped a lot in preventing the spread of corona infection. He lauded Co-WIN for its role in making India achieve a record administration of about 90 crore vaccine doses today, under the free vaccine campaign. Continuing with the theme of the use of technology in health, the Prime Minister said that there has also been an unprecedented expansion of telemedicine during the Covid pandemic period. So far about 125 crore remote consultations have been completed through e-Sanjeevani.

"This facility is connecting thousands of countrymen living in far-flung parts of the country every day with doctors of big hospitals of cities while sitting at home," he said. The Prime Minister remarked that Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY has addressed a key headache in the lives of the poor and so far more than two crore countrymen have

availed the facility of free treatment under this scheme, half of which are women.

The Prime Minister emphasized that diseases are one of the key reasons to push families into the vicious cycle of poverty and women of the families are the worst sufferers as they always relegate their health issues to the background.

Modi said that he has made it a point to personally meet some beneficiaries of Ayushman and has experienced the benefits of the scheme during the interactions.

"These healthcare solutions are a big investment in the present and future of the country," he said. The Prime Minister said that Ayushman Bharat - Digital Mission will now connect the digital health solutions of hospitals across the country with each other and the Mission will not only make the processes of hospitals simplified but also will increase ease of living. Under this, every

citizen will now get a digital health ID and their health record will be digitally protected. The Prime Minister mentioned that India is working on a health model that is holistic and inclusive. "A model which stresses preventive healthcare and, in case of disease, easy, affordable and accessible treatment," he said. He also discussed unprecedented reforms in health education and said a much larger number of doctors and para medical manpower is being created in India now as compared to seven-eight years ago. He further mentioned that a comprehensive network of AIIMS and other modern health institutions is being established in the country and work on establishing one medical college in every three Lok Sabha constituencies is going on.

He also talked about strengthening the health facilities in villages and informed that in the villages, primary health centre networks and wellness centres are being strengthened. "More than 80,000 such centres have already been operationalised," the Prime Minister said. Referring to 'World Tourism Day' observed on Monday, the Prime Minister said that health has a very strong relationship with tourism because when our health infrastructure is integrated, strengthened, it also improves the tourism sector.

Panchjanya calling Amazon as East India Company corroborates CAIT's view



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has greatly appreciated the lead article carried by forthcoming edition of Panchjanya which has cited Amazon as East India Company. It said the article has corroborated the constant stand of CAIT since last two years that both Amazon & Flipkart are trying to become second edition of East India Company in India.

CAIT said that it's a matter of fact that the business model of these two companies are similar to that of East India Company selling goods at a cheaper rate irrespective of the quality dominating their choice and making them habitual of purchasing cheap goods, killing competition and then enter into crony capitalism and monopolise the market in their favour and then selling goods at a higher price and

in absence of any competition leaving no choice to consumer but to purchase the goods at their dictated price.

This is exactly what East India Company did and invaded the Country. Both Amazon & Flipkart want to invade our Country's both economy and social culture through capturing e-commerce and retail trade of India. CAIT urged the Central Govt to immediately notify the e-commerce rules under consumer Protection Act to put a break to sinister designs of Amazon and Flipkart. The inordinate delay is killing smart traders at the hands of Amazon and Flipkart. So far more than 2 lakh shops have been forced to close due to mal-practices both these companies which is irking traders of the country and therefore implementation of rules is utmost necessary.

Man accused in several cases of Delhi riots nabbed by police

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has arrested a person who was accused in several cases of rioting that had occurred in North-East Delhi in February 2020, an official said here on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off about the presence of the accused identified as Mohd Salam alias Chand Babu at Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh, the police constituted a team to nab the proclaimed offender.

After thoroughly going through several CCTV footages, the police team conducted a raid and arrested the accused from near Govt Hospital in



Bulandshahr.

The police said that on sustained interrogation, the accused disclosed that he was very angry after the CAA

bill was passed, as he perceived that this law was "against Muslim Community who would be forced out of India".

Faleiro slams Congress leadership, says Mamata better suited to take on BJP

Panaji | Agencies

The Congress party is functioning contrary to "every ideal and principle" of its founding fathers, former Chief Minister Luizinho Faleiro said on Monday, after he announced his resignation from the party, while also questioning the resolve of the "divided Congress family" to take on the BJP and put the country "back on the rails of development and progress".

The Congress has described his exit, after more than 30 years in the party, as a voluntary retirement scheme package from the TMC at the lag end of his career.

"Madam, the Congress in Goa is not the same party for which we had sacrificed and fought. It is functioning contrary to every ideal and principle of its founding fathers upheld by Smt Indiraji, Shri Rajiv ji and you. Shri Rahul Gandhi too has been uncompromising in his fight against the forces that seek to destroy the fabric of our nation," Faleiro said in his resignation letter addressed to party president Sonia Gandhi.



"However, the Goa unit of the party has become a cruel parody of what Congress stands for. Led by a coterie of leaders who prioritise personal gains over

the responsibility we owe to our people, we have utterly failed to even be an effective opposition," Faleiro also said. At a press conference held later on Monday, Faleiro indirectly questioned the resolve of the Congress, led by Sonia Gandhi, to combat the BJP and usher in development. "We have to see who has got the power to face the present dispensation which is ruling in Delhi and ruling in Goa. Definitely, I will support Mamata Congress because she has fought, she has succeeded... She symbolises women empowerment which can bring this country back on the rails of development and progress," Faleiro said, describing the Congress as a "divided house".

Faleiro also said that his objective was to bring together Congress breakaway groups like the YSR Congress, Nationalist Congress Party and the Trinamool Congress to take on the BJP.

He however did not spell out his plans how he would bring about the proposed coming together of four political parties (INC included).

'I am still alive, will tour every district', says Deve Gowda

Bengaluru | Agencies

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda on Monday said that he is still alive and he would take up a tour of all the districts of Karnataka to strengthen his party, the JD(S).

Hitting back at Karnataka Opposition leader Siddaramaiah for calling JD(S) a 'B' team of the BJP, Deve Gowda said it is time one should ask who helped the BJP form the government in the state.

Siddaramaiah had launched a poignant attack on JD(S) recently and questioned the credibility of former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy in public rallies.

Responding to Siddaramaiah's sharp attack on



JD (S) that it is not a statewide party, Deve Gowda said, "I will explain to the people why our party (JD (S)) should survive. Siddaramaiah who came to the limelight from JD(S) tried to finish off the party by joining hands with MLA Zameer Ahmad Khan and a bureaucrat Ateeq. After distributing money for all masjids, Siddaramaiah could win only 78 seats in the last state assembly elections," he explained.

"I visited and consoled Siddaramaiah after the death of his son. If he wanted to anoint his son to the higher position, let him do it after winning elections. Siddaramaiah, you should talk the truth," Deve Gowda said.

Tamil Nadu Cong leader offers gold rings, coins for enrolment of people in party

Chennai | Agencies

With people reportedly shying away from the grand old party, a Congress district committee president in Tamil Nadu has offered gold coins and rings to the cadres if they get more people to join the party.

The offer was made by the South Chennai Central District Committee president of the Congress, M.A. Muthalakan who on Sunday announced that he would reward the party cadre who would enrol the maximum number of people. He promised a 8 gm gold ring to the party cadre who enrolls the maximum number of people in the party.

Muthalakan also announced a 4 gm gold ring to the party worker who enrolls the second largest number of people. Gold coins will

be given to others who enrol people in the party.

Interestingly party state president, K.S. Alagiri and AICC secretary Srivella Prasad were present at the function.

The Congress party in Tamil Nadu which had a rich legacy is now reportedly finding it difficult to get people to join it. Political observer, R. Padmanaban of the Socio-Economic Development Foundation, while speaking to reporter said, "The Congress is piggy backing on the DMK and the party is not getting fresh blood. Hence in his desperation, the party district president would have given such an offer to the cadres in the hope that at least by this method some people will join the party."

Is Locket Chatterjee now on way to Trinamool Congress?

Kolkata | Agencies

Is actor-turned BJP MP Locket Chatterjee on her way to Trinamool Congress? An exchange of words between Chatterjee and Trinamool Congress spokesperson Kunal Ghosh on Twitter has fuelled the speculation.

Rumours started swirling after state Transport Minister Firhad Hakim, three days back, hinted that a "big leader from BJP" is set to join the Trinamool in a few days and also claimed that the saffron party will disintegrate in the state. Though Hakim didn't mention any name, a tweet from Ghosh escalated the possibility further.

In a tweet on Monday, Ghosh wrote: "Thanks and congrats 'star campaigner' @me_locket for not campaigning at Bhabanipur. In spite of many requests from BJP U hvn't (haven't) come. As a friend wish your success wherever u r (You are). World is too small. Hope those days will return again when u (you) started your political innings."

Chatterjee, however, promptly replied to refute his claim. "You should focus on ensuring that Mamata Banerjee doesn't lose from



Bhabanipur", she wrote.

The issue didn't end here but Ghosh retweeted, writing: "Don't worry. Mamata will win by a large margin. U (You) want this also. I know that u hv (You have) to write in favour of yr (your) party. But still, I thank u (you) that even in this reply also u didn't mention the name of the BJP candidate".

He also quoted a Hindi film song "Kahi pe nigahen/Kahin pe nishana...", providing further fodder to the rumours.

Though there was no confirmation either from the party or from the BJP leader herself but, if the speculation comes true then, after Babul Supriyo, it will be a huge blow to the BJP and it is expected that the party will do everything possible to stop this.

Rubbing any possibility defections in the party, Bengal BJP chief Sukanta Majumdar said that she was busy with her duties in Uttarakhand, which goes to polls next year. Chatterjee, the BJP MP from Hooghly, was made the co-in-charge of the hill state earlier this month.

Gujarat gets first female Speaker of Legislative Assembly

Gandhinagar | Agencies

Monday saw the first woman Speaker of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly, Dr Nimaben Acharya who will preside over the two-day monsoon session which began on Monday. She was escorted to her chair by Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel, former speaker Rajendra Patel and Leader of Opposition Paresh Dhanani.

The post of the Speaker of the House fell vacant with the resignation of Trivedi who has been made a cabinet minister with portfolios like revenue, disaster management, law and justice and legislative and parliamentary affairs. The BJP nominated Acharya for the post of Chairman and the opposition Congress supported it. The BJP has also nominated Jethabhai Bharwad, Shehra constituency legislator, for the post of Vice-Chairman of



the house, which has been approved by the Gujarat Assembly Secretary, while the Congress has fielded its six-time MLA Anil Joshiyara from Bhiloda constituency for the post.

Even before the election of the Speaker of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly, Acharya tendered her resignation from the post of Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Acharya said that she will try to do justice to the chair, while accepting the responsibility.



GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT EDUCATION, LIVELIHOOD AND HOUSING OF THE POOR: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that water would be made available through lift irrigation scheme in the villages of Jhirniya region of Khargone district. Khandwa and Khargone will be made power hubs. Jhirniya will be given the status of Nagar Panchayat. These announcements were made by Chouhan in a public meeting at Jhirniya in Khargone district under Jan Kalyan and Suraj programme.

Chief Minister said that the government is concerned about education, livelihood and housing for the poor. Families are getting bigger, so every poor and homeless will be provided land for house. Chouhan said that Sambal Yojana has been started again for the poor.

Chief Minister said that there is no dearth of money for the poor in the government's treasury. The government wants to take forward the mothers, daughters and sisters. That is why we increased the reservation of women in local bodies. He said that the products made by the sisters would be promoted. Employment opportunities will be provided to the women of self-help groups. Uniform for school children will be made only



by women of self-help groups. There will be no contractor in this. Chouhan said that PESA Act will be implemented for tribal welfare in scheduled areas. There will be no need to wander for ration in remote villages and ration will be given to the poor by visiting their homes. He also announced to fulfill the various demands raised by public representatives in Jhirniya. Chouhan inaugurated 16 power sub-stations costing Rs.321 crore 80 lakh and performed bhumi-pujan of 13 sub-stations to strengthen the power system and make supply accessible under the

Jan-Kalyan and Suraj Abhiyan. Similarly, he transferred the ex-gratia amount of 321 crore 35 lakh to the account of 14 thousand 475 workers under the Mukhya Mantri Jan-Kalyan Sambal Yojana and the assistance scheme for construction workers through a single click. Chouhan dedicated and laid the foundation stone for 71 development works costing Rs 173 crore for Khargone district. At the beginning of the programme, Chouhan performed puja of the girls. At the end of the programme, Chouhan benefitted the beneficiaries of various schemes. He

also honoured the employees who rendered excellent service during the control of Corona pandemic. Agriculture Minister and Minister in charge of Khargone district, Kamal Patel said that today is a big and historic day of joy for the state as well as Khargone district especially Jhirniya. Today Khargone district has got a big gift of development. An electricity sub-station costing Rs 42 crores has been dedicated at Jhirniya. This will bring new light of development in this area. Re-implementation of Sambal Yojana has been started to help the needy. He said that all-round and comprehensive development of the entire state is being done including Khargone. Due to the actions and behaviour of Chief Minister Chouhan, people have great affinity towards him. MP Gajendra Singh Patel said that development is taking place at a fast pace in the state. A new development story is being written. Drinking water problem in Jhirniya will be resolved soon. For this, rapid efforts are being made to set up lift irrigation projects. While delivering the welcome address, he apprised Chief Minister Chouhan about the various demands of Jhirniya region.

Seven Maoists killed in MP in last 3 years

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In the last three years, seven wanted Maoists have been eliminated in Naxal-affected areas in Madhya Pradesh. Several development works are being carried out in such terror-prone areas and employment is being provided to migrant workers with police personnel maintaining a strict vigil. In addition to the number of Maoists killed, three terrorists have been arrested.

According to the information released by the Madhya Pradesh Public Relations department, a meeting of Chief Ministers of all Maoist-affected states was held on Maoist extremism in New Delhi under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday.

During the meeting, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan gave details about the efforts being made by his government for controlling terror and increasing development activities in Maoist-prone areas.

Chouhan said in 2020-21, Rs 802 crore was given by the state government to provide employment to 12 lakh migrant workers in Maoist-affected districts. In the last five years, construction work worth Rs 375 crore has been carried out as well.

The Chief Minister said the joint action by police in three states -- Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra -- has yielded the desired results. Search operations have been increased by the police. Maoist documents and interrogation of the nabbed Maoists reveal that crores of rupees from contractors could not reach them.

Chouhan told the meeting that apart from taking armed action to control Maoism in



the terror-affected districts in the state, developmental work is being continuously carried out. Employment is being provided to the people in the terror-prone areas under the MNREGA scheme on a large scale.

During the last five years, the state government has constructed 430-km long roads and 14 bridges by spending Rs 375 crore from its own resources. Apart from this, 1,405 km roads have been constructed in Naxal-affected districts under the Madhya Pradesh Rural Connectivity Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana with an expenditure of Rs 72 crore.

Chouhan said that after reconsidering the forest rights claims cancelled earlier in Madhya Pradesh, 34,000 'pattas' (legal document issued by the Government in the name of the actual owner of a particular plot of land) have been given to tribal men and women.

Chouhan informed that the Madhya Pradesh Scheduled Tribe Debt Release (Amendment) Act-

2020 has been passed for the economic empowerment of the tribal community in Madhya Pradesh due to which the loans given to the tribal community living in the Scheduled Tribe areas have been waived. The work of implementing PESA (Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas) law in a phased manner is being started in the state. The state rules will be amended to empower 'Gram Nyayalayas'

Under the 'Devaranya' scheme, technology for production of medicines and a market linking them is being made available in the Scheduled Tribe areas. The activities undertaken by the state Forest department have generated employment in Balaghat, Mandla and Dindori districts.

Chouhan informed that in Balaghat, Mandla and Dindori districts, 23,113 women self-help groups have been formed directly linking 2.74 lakh families. These self-help groups are working in advanced farming, marketing of animal husbandry products and non-agriculture sector.

CM to dedicate and perform bhumi-pujan of construction works to improve school education

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will online dedicate and perform bhumi-pujan of construction works worth 264 crores on the occasion of completion of 20 years of Jan Kalyan and Suraj to improve school education in the state. Chouhan will dedicate and perform bhumi-pujan of 45 newly constructed buildings of School Education Department and 71 newly constructed buildings of Tribal Affairs Department at Minto Hall, Bhopal on Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 6.30 PM. Tribal Affairs and

Scheduled Castes Welfare Minister Meena Singh, Public Works and Cottage and Village Industries Minister Gopal Bhargava and Minister of State for School Education (Independent Charge) and General Administration Inder Singh Parmar will also be present on the occasion. The programme will be broadcast live on CM Webcast, CM Madhya Pradesh, Public Relations and School Education Department's Facebook and Twitter pages along with DD MP and other regional channels. In the programme, along with the dedication of newly constructed high school

buildings, higher secondary school buildings, hostels and multi-purpose buildings of the School Education Department constructed at a cost of about Rs. 51 crores 40 lakhs, bhumi pujan of 71 school buildings of Tribal Affairs Department to be built at a cost of Rs 213 crores 80 lakhs will be done. School students will be benefitted by the construction of these buildings. The Tribal Affairs Department will construct schools and hostels in Alirajpur, Umaria, Khargone, Jhabua, Dhar, Barwani, Mandla, Ratlam, Shahdol, Seoni and Hoshangabad districts.

CM PLANTS MANGO SAPLING

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a mango sapling at his residence. KP Yadav, Member of Parliament from Guna, was also present on the occasion. Chouhan is planting saplings every day as per his resolve.



Mango is called the king of fruits because of its taste, aroma and appearance. There are more than a thousand varieties of mango, out of which only 40-50 varieties have been found suitable from the commercial point of view. Mango is an easily available fruit of India that can be easily planted in almost every state. Dussehri, Lagda, Chausa, Fajri, Alphonjo, Totapri, Bombay Green etc. are the major varieties of mango. Nur Jahan, produced in Kattiwada of Alirajpur district in Madhya Pradesh, Sundarja of Rewa have their unique identity. Amrapali, Mallika, Gajariya, Dahiyad etc. are some of the local varieties in the state. The bark of the mango tree is full of special medicines. On auspicious occasions, mango leaves are decorated at the doors of the houses.

75 आज़ादी का अमृत महोत्सव

जन कल्याण और सुराज अभियान

17 सितम्बर से 7 अक्टूबर, 2021

नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

नई शिक्षा, नई उम्मीदें

स्कूल शिक्षा विभाग के अंतर्गत 16 जिलों में 45 नवीन विद्यालय एवं छात्रावास भवनों का लोकार्पण

जनजातीय कार्य विभाग के अंतर्गत 11 जिलों में 71 शैक्षणिक भवनों (छात्रावास, उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय एवं उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय में उन्नयन हेतु अतिरिक्त कक्ष) का भूमिपूजन

28 सितम्बर, 2021 समय : सायं 6:30 बजे | स्थान : मिनटो हॉल, भोपाल

प्रधानमंत्री जी की पहल पर लागू नई राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति ज्यादा रचनात्मक, सक्षम, कौशलवान और आत्मनिर्भर पीढ़ी का निर्माण करेगी। नीति के क्रियान्वयन में मध्यप्रदेश देश में अग्रणी।

“हम शिक्षा के स्तर में सकारात्मक सुधार कर गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षा के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं। इस दिशा में आगे बढ़ने के लिए प्रदेश में सबसे पहले नई शिक्षा नीति लागू की गई है।”

शिवराज सिंह चौहान, मुख्यमंत्री



EDITOR'S SPECS

MAMATA'S CONTROVERSY

After the union ministry of external affairs disallowed Mamata Banerjee to go to Rome to attend a programme organised by a non-governmental organisation, the chief minister came down heavily on the central government saying that she was stopped only out of 'jealousy'. The controversy cropped up after the state government received a letter from the ministry of external affairs mentioning that the chief minister has been invited to an event in Rome which, the letter said was, "not conducive of participation for a state chief minister". The event is scheduled to take place in Rome on October 6 and 7. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was invited to Rome by the Community of Sant' Egidio - a Catholic association dedicated to social service - to participate in the international event in Rome, the World Meeting for Peace "Peoples as Brothers, Future Earth", on 6 and 7 October this year where Pope Francis, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are likely to be present. Mamata accepted the invitation. It was decided that she would visit Rome after the by-election in Bhabanipur. Mamata was also preparing to go to Rome but this sudden letter from the central government has changed everything. Speaking at a public rally in Bhabanipur, the chief minister didn't conceal her anger. "The Prime Minister can go abroad. Why I shall be disallowed to attend a function abroad? I was stopped only out of jealousy," a furious Banerjee said. Previously the chief minister was also disallowed to go to Chicago where she was supposed to address a gathering at Belur Math, the global headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, to mark 125 years of Swami Vivekananda's historic speech at the Parliament of Religion, Chicago. At that time also the chief minister had termed it as an 'unholy conspiracy'.

The Hocus Pocus about Quad and AUKUS

SAEED NAQVI

Robert Blackwill, US ambassador at the time of anti-terror fireworks over Afghanistan, had established a tradition of seating guests at lunch around a circular table, where he grandly held forth, initiating a discussion. "Imagine I am Henry Kissinger" would be one of his opening gambits. An idea was tossed up. A discussion followed. The one who spoke the most, ate the least, because all plates were removed in one swoop.

On one such occasion, before soup was served, the ambassador announced with considerable satisfaction that Pakistan's President Musharraf had decided to join the global war on terror as the frontline state.

Seated to my right the late Pranab Mukherjee, was agitated. He whispered his anger to me. It was uncanny. What he whispered was exactly the question shaping up in my mind. I raised my hand: "You are aware that New Delhi had complained consistently about cross-border terrorism from Pakistan particularly since 1989." Pranab Da (as Mukherjee was affectionately addressed) completed my question in his typical arrangement of words: "It is most worrying no doubt - you now have Pakistan as the frontline state in your war against terror?" pause. "They perpetrate terror against this county."

Blackwill spoke volumes in two brief sentences: "Musharraf has joined us in our global war on terror. What you are talking about is your old regional quarrel." Juxtapose this with the Quad-AUKUS equation.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, as Prime Minister, had hosted President Bill Clinton for full five days in January 2000, just the previous year. Clinton spent just five hours in Islamabad, mostly chastising Musharraf for disrupting regional peace since Kargil. New Delhi was in seventh heaven. Terms of endearment with Washington had radically altered.

In a little over a year, had George W Bush, reversed that equation? Pakistan was incorporated into the global war on terror even as New Delhi cried foul. Pakistan was in the 'A' team against terror; we were not.

Likewise, there is this idea of Quad in which New Delhi is such an enthusiastic par-



icipant. Australians and the Japanese did, frequently, vent their scepticism, invested as they were in the Chinese economy. After the American debacle in Kabul, however, Tokyo's misgivings on Quad were all over the Japanese media. The haemorrhage had to be forestalled.

With the suddenness of revelation came the announcement of AUKUS (Australia, UK, US), the powerful military alliance in Indo-Pacific of which India alas, is not a partner. So New Delhi is trying to pack content into an abruptly devalued Quad. Did Prime Minister Narendra Modi's photograph with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on the margins of the UNGA, flatter New Delhi? Pardon my complexes, does not a leader wearing AUKUS plus Quad badges dwarf the one with a frayed Quad pinned to the lapel? I would not go as far as the wag who takes the uncharitable view that the US takes India for granted exactly as secular political parties regard the Muslim vote: where else can they go?

AUKUS must have been in the works for some time but it was sprung upon the world when the US felt the earth move from beneath its feet in Kabul. The furious response from France only disguises anger in the EU which is talking of security outside NATO. That AUKUS is a purely Anglophone grouping should not be a surprise. Games have been played before to keep some clubs racially segregated.

For instance, when the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 placed a question mark

on the need for NATO, Margaret Thatcher, then on a trip to Helsinki, was asked by a reporter: Now that the Soviet threat has gone, what was the justification for Britain's nuclear deterrent?

Thatcher shot back, "We still have a problem in the Middle East." Thereafter, along with George Bush the senior, she began to put together "a coalition of the willing" ostensibly to oust Saddam Hussain from Kuwait. Saddam-in-Kuwait was the ignition point, not the larger perspective against which Operation Desert Storm of 1991 was designed.

Anglophone dominance of the world order since World War II, faced a challenge. Soviet collapse had brought about a reunification of Germany. This at a time when the Japanese economy was booming. It was easy to raise the spectre of AXIS, without actually mentioning the 'A' word.

France, always ready with its own compass to navigate world affairs, initially dragged its feet on the coalition led by US and UK. President Francois Mitterrand was among the last to join the "coalition of the willing". It was the biggest military coalition since 1945 -- a grouping of 39 countries. Given their obsession, Pundits may be interested to know that Pakistan was part of that coalition.

As one who covered the story from Baghdad, I am possibly the only Indian witness who can confirm that the show was run exclusively by US and Britain. There were two separate press briefings,

for the US and British media by their respective spokesmen. French journalists, like the lonesome me, were on the outside. It may be added in parenthesis, that the British media on this occasion were the poor cousins. From the terrace of the Al Rashied hotel, Peter Arnett of the CNN inaugurated what came to be known as the global media. The war was brought live into the world's drawing rooms. John Simpson of the BBC, by comparison, cut a sorry figure, walking around with a satellite telephone. It was only after being beaten by the CNN during Operation Desert Storm that the BBC World Service TV was launched.

To revert to AUKUS, yes, the French fury is understandable. Not only was a \$90 billion submarine order being stolen, but an Anglophone dominated world order was being perpetuated. This is what infuriated President Emmanuel Macron. It just so happens that the turn of events has also provided Macron with an occasion to fall back on a de Gaulle style nationalism just when his ratings are plummeting and all manner of candidates are tossing their hats in the ring for the next elections.

(Saeed Naqvi is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues. The views expressed are personal.)

international

N KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCHES SHOW SERIOUS THREAT: US OFFICIAL

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea's recent missile launches show the "seriousness of threat" posed to the US and South Korea, a Pentagon official said on Monday, amid a conciliatory gesture from Pyongyang after a series of weapons tests.

Siddharth Mohandas, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, made the remark at the start of the biannual 20th Korea-US Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) in Seoul to discuss regional security situations and pending alliance issues, reports Yonhap News Agency.

"North Korea's recent missile launches remind us of the seriousness of the threat we face together," Mohandas said, calling the alliance the "linchpin" of peace and security in the region against such challenges.

The remarks came two days after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong, said the North could declare a formal end to the 1950-53 Korean War, as suggested by South Korea, and even discuss an inter-Korean summit if Seoul drops what she called a "hostile policy" against Pyongyang.

Kim Yo-jong's statement came amid



concerns over the North's recent cruise and ballistic missile launches, and signs of the reclusive regime reactivating a key nuclear reactor at its mainstay Yongbyon complex. Earlier on Monday, US reconnaissance aircraft, including a Global Hawk, were spotted flying over the Korean Peninsula in an apparent move to track North Korea's activities following the missile launches. Referring to the recent talks of a formal end to the Korean War, Deputy Defense Minister Kim Man-ki said: "It is time a more close coordination between the South Korea-U.S. alliance is required." During the two-day meeting, the two sides plan to

discuss "major pending security issues", such as the assessment of the security situation on the Korean Peninsula and the policy coordination on North Korea, according to the Defense Ministry.

Also on the table during this week's meeting will be the conditions-based transition of wartime operational control (OPCON) of South Korean troops from Washington to Seoul and ways to strengthen defense cooperation between the two countries, the Ministry said. Launched in 2011, KIDD is a comprehensive defense forum between Seoul and Washington that usually meets twice a year.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO RECOGNISE TALIBAN: ITALIAN FM

Kabul: Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio has said that it was impossible for his country to recognise the caretaker Taliban government in Afghanistan, adding that at least 17 of the appointed ministers were "terrorists", the media reported on Monday. In a statement on Sunday, Di Maio said that the Taliban are accused of human rights violations which will not be recognised by Italy, reports Khaama News. He added that the people of Afghanistan should be provided financial support by the international community and the world must get together to prevent an influx of refugees that will destabilise the regional nations. Di Maio's statement came after Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said that the caretaker government in the war-torn nation will soon be recognised as they are in contact with the UN. Respect for women and human rights, establishing inclusive government, not allowing Afghanistan to become safe haven of terrorism are the preconditions for the recognition set by the international community.

Germany's centre-left SPD wins polls: Provisional results

Berlin | Agencies

Germany's centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) led by incumbent Vice Chancellor Olaf Scholz, has won the general election with 25.7 per cent of the vote, beating the conservative union CDU/CSU and bringing an end to the Angela Merkel era, according to the provisional election results released on Monday.

The SPD's share of the vote surged by 5.2 percentage points from four years ago, while its main rival the conservative union of Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its sister party Christian Social Union (CSU) suffered heavy losses, reports Xinhua news.

The provisional results showed the CDU/CSU union took only 24.1 per cent of the vote in Sunday's parliamentary election, 8.9 percentage points lower than in the last polls.

It marks the end of the



dominant role of the conservatives led by Merkel for over a decade in the country's Bundestag, or the lower house of Parliament.

Meanwhile, the Green Party received 14.8 per cent of votes in the election, making it the third-largest political faction in parliament, followed by the business-friendly Free Democratic Party (FDP) and the right-wing and Eurosceptic party Alternative for Germany with 11.5 per cent and 10.3 per cent respectively,

according to the Federal Returning Officer.

Scoring 4.9 per cent of the vote, the far-left Die Linke (Left Party) failed to pass the five-per cent threshold to enter Parliament.

Sunday's elections were of great importance as Merkel will no longer continue in politics after almost 16 years in office.

As she will retire from her political career, Germany and, to some extent, the European Union will enter a new era with unclear prospects.

Japan issues 1st gender bonds to promote female empowerment, education

Tokyo | Agencies

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) issued the country's first gender bonds on Monday to promote empowerment and education of women and ensure gender equality in developing nations.

Through issuing bonds with maturities of 10 years and 20 years, the government-backed aid agency in total raised 20 billion yen (\$181 million) to fund projects in places where women do not have the same opportunities as men to receive education, work, and participate in political activities, reports Xinhua news agency.

According to JICA, women-focused assistance became even more important in the current situation,

as more females were subject to domestic violence and deprived of chances for employment or education during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, and that people spent more time at home under some anti-virus measures partly caused the increase in violence against women. Gender equality is among the 17 sustainable development goals set by the UN. The JICA's gender bonds are part of the social bonds designed to address various challenges. Besides gender bonds, JICA has launched bonds designed to achieve specific targets such as "TICAD bonds" to help African development and the bonds to help developing countries improve medical systems and enhance public health amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sudan PM says current dispute not between military, civilians

Khartoum | Agencies

Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok said that the current dispute in the country is not between the military and civilians, but it is between those who support democratic civil transformation and those who seek to block it.

"Unity of the forces in the revolution is the guarantee to prevent the transition from all threats getting in its way," Hamdok said in a speech broadcast on Sunday by Sudan's official TV.

The Prime Minister urged all parties to strictly commit themselves to the constitutional document, refrain from unilateral positions and fully shoulder their responsibility, reports Xinhua news agency.

He stressed that the empower-



ment removal committee is one of the gains of the revolution that must

be defended and preserved.

Earlier on Sunday, the security forces withdrew from guarding the headquarters of the empowerment removal committee amid growing tensions between the military and civilian components in the transitional government. Since the announcement of foiling a coup attempt on September 21, the differences between the military and civilian partners in the transitional government have further escalated.

Sudan is ruled amid a 39-month transitional period under a transitional government, established after the ouster of former President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

The transitional period is set to be followed by elections to form a new government.

Govt increases majority in Iceland's parliamentary polls

Reykjavik | Agencies

The Iceland's coalition government increased its majority by two seats from 35 to 37 in the country's 63-seat Parliament following the September 25 elections.

But the results of the election left the future cabinet coalition open as the success of the coalition parties still remains uncertain, reports Xinhua news agency.

Altogether eight parties were represented in Parliament. Of the three coalition parties, the liberal-conservative Independence Party remains the largest in the country with 24.4 per cent backing and 16 seats.

The centre-right Progressive Party became the election winner and second

largest in the coalition, increasing its support by 6.6 percentage points to 17.3 per cent and raising its seats from eight to 13.

Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir's Left-Green Movement was down to eight seats from its previous 11, with 12.6 per cent backing, down 4.3 percentage points. Among the opposition parties, Social Democratic Alliance, the People's Party, and the Pirates all received six seats respectively, while the Liberal Reform Party gained five and the Centre Party, three. For the first time, the Icelandic Parliament will have more female MPs (33) than male MPs (30). Jakobsdottir said on Sunday that talks to form a government will be complicated.



BHARAT BANDH PEACEFUL IN MAHARASHTRA, EVOKES MIXED RESPONSE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra witnessed a mixed response to the 10-hour-long Bharat Bandh called by Samyukta Kisan Morcha having support of all non-BJP parties, here on Monday.

While the SKM action elicited fair to good participation in the semi-rural and rural areas, the response ranged from dull to negligible in semi-urban or urban centres of the state but remained peaceful all over with tight police deployment.

Large number of farmers, labourers and political activists came out in huge numbers in districts like Thane, Palghar, Nashik, Nandurbar, Dhule, Pune, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Solapur and others, but in most urban centres like Mumbai, Thane, Nagpur, life was near-normal.

The SKM leaders and organisers said that while the Bharat Bandh was total in Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Kerala and others states with a complete shutdown, it got extensive support in Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh,



Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh.

Farmers were supported in the nationwide agitation, trade unions, women, youth and students' organisations plus almost all major non-BJP parties across the country, with educational institutions, some government and private offices, wholesale or retail markets and other bodies remaining closed.

The SKM said that the Bharat

Bandh passes off peacefully in Maharashtra and rest of India with no reports of any violence or untoward incidents, and the organisers appealed not to inconvenience the common public or disrupt essential supplies in any manner.

Top leaders like Balbir Singh Rajewal, Dr Darshan Pal, Gurnam Singh Chaduni, Hannan Mollah, Jagjit Singh Dallewal, Joginder

Singh Ugrahan, Shivkumar Sharma, Yudhvir Singh, Yogendra Yadav, Dr Ashok Dhawale, Dr Ajit Nawale and others led the agitation in different parts of the country.

Maharashtra's ruling alliance partners Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress leaders also came out in full support of the agitation in Mumbai, Pune, Aurangabad and other cities.

Maha Congress' Rajani Patil to be elected unopposed to RS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Senior Congress leader Rajani Patil is set to be declared elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha after the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party decided to withdraw its candidate for the bypolls here on Monday, party sources said.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of Rajiv Satav due to Covid-19 in May, with Patil and Upadhyay filing their nominations for the vacant seat.

The north-Indian Upadhyay's candidature was considered strategic for the BJP in view of the upcoming civic elections in the state and also the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, both due early 2022.

Last week, the ruling ally Congress's state President Nana Patole and party leader in the legislature and Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat had met Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis and urged him to allow the elections unop-



posed. An anxious Congress argued that as per traditions, whenever such elections are held to fill up a vacancy due to the death of a sitting member, they are usually unopposed. On the other hand,

the BJP contended that they would have not put up a candidate if the Congress had fielded Satav's family member, but instead, the party nominated a former MP for the seat.

Now, ED raids ex-Sena MP Anandrao Adsul, son's home

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday raided the home of former Shiv Sena MP Anandrao Adsul and his son Abhijit Adsul in connection with a complaint of alleged scam worth Rs.900-crore in the City Cooperative Bank Ltd, here.

A former five-time MP from Amravati and Buldhana Lok Sabha seats, Anandrao Adsul is the chairman, while his son Abhijit is a director in the Mumbai-based bank.

Hours after the ED team visited the Sena leader's home in suburban Kandivali, Anandrao fell ill and was rushed to a nearby hospital.

The ED had summoned the father and son for questioning on Monday following a complaint lodged by independent MLA from Badnera, Ravi Rana, the husband of former actress and independent MP from Amravati, Navnit Kaur-Rana. In the complaint, Rana has accused the Adsuls of alleged misappropriation of the City Cooperative Bank Ltd.'s depositors' funds to the tune of Rs 900-cr -- a



charge stoutly denied by the father-son duo. Terming the complaint as 'motivated and managed' by Rana, the Adsuls claim that when the bank's annual turnover is Rs 800-crore, how can there be a scam of Rs 900-crore as alleged by the MLA, and demanded a free and impartial probe into the matter.

In the past, the ED had raided the Adsuls' residences and offices and had questioned them in the case.

We want NEET, students and parents tell Maharashtra govt

With state in process of reviewing the entrance examination following TN's decision to abolish it, parents and students oppose move, citing transparency brought by the eligibility test

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As Maharashtra is reviewing the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance for medical admissions, following Tamil Nadu passing a bill to exclude NEET in the state, parents of aspirants have voiced their opposition. NEET, which determines medical admissions across the country, began in 2016. However, TN passed a bill to do away with NEET in the state and mandated that medical admissions would take place based on Std 12 marks, triggering ripple effects in

some states.

Soon after TN's decision, Maharashtra medical education minister Amit Deshmukh announced the state's plan to review the test. "We are currently in the process of taking a stock of the situation, starting from if a state can demand such an exemption to if it will be a comfortable option for students in Maharashtra. After discussions, state's decision will be taken," stated Deshmukh. Deshmukh's statement, which came on the heels of state Congress chief Nana Patole's letter to chief minister (CM) Uddhav Thackeray seeking scrapping of NEET, has led to major discussions in Maharashtra.

Sudha Shenoy, said, "This just means bringing back the old chaotic process of medical admission. More so, when the Supreme Court has already ruled in favour of NEET when it was implemented in 2016, can a state have power to overrule it? Yes, we understand that there could be flaws with the system but

those can be corrected. Eliminating the test is not an option."

Shenoy said parents were happy in 2016 when the exam was implemented across the country, as it meant the students did not have to appear for multiple entrance tests to bag a seat at medical institutions. She said, "NEET not only ensures parity in merit as it is one test across the nation; it also promises transparency in the admission process. All of this will be lost if TN's decision is replicated here in Maharashtra." She also said that several students in TN are also planning to move court against the government's stand.

There is also severe opposition in the state about exempting Maharashtra from NEET from this year as NEET exam has already been held. "Rules of a game are decided before it starts, not at the time of declaring the result. These students have prepared for NEET for two years straight. And in this process, they tend to ignore Std 12

studies as one only requires above 50 per cent in board exams to qualify for a medical seat," said Brijesh Sutaria, a concerned. He said he along with other parents has already started taking steps to meet with the Union minister of health Mansukh Mandaviya and Deshmukh to present parents' concerns. Sutaria said high scoring NEET candidates from TN are most likely to move court. He said that decisions regarding any change in exams should be taken at least two years in advance.

Shreya Mulay, an aspirant, said, "If NEET is not there, then the same stress is going to be multiplied due to different curriculums and multiple admission processes. Moreover, there will be a question on uniformity." Another aspirant, Aditya Lele, feels that NEET is the best option to ensure uniformity as well as transparency. "No teacher can interfere with your marks in NEET. No other system can ensure the same level of transparency."

MVA govt won't last long as DNAs of SS, NCP, Congress different: Ravi

Team Absolute | Thane

BJP general secretary CT Ravi has said the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in Maharashtra would not last long as the DNAs of the three ruling parties were different.

He also claimed that the sentiments of people in the state were against the MVA government. The Shiv Sena had parted ways with the BJP after the 2019 Assembly polls and formed the government with the NCP and the Congress. Before that, the Sena shared power with the BJP for five years (2014-19) with Devendra Fadnis as the chief minister.

Ravi, who is BJP's in-charge of Maharashtra, was speaking to

reporters at Kalyan in Thane district on the sidelines of his party's organisational meeting.

"Following the statements of the Shiv Sena leaders there is a discussion that the BJP and the Sena would come together once again and that the days of the MVA government are numbered," he said.

He was apparently referring to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's recent speech, in which he addressed leaders including Union minister Raosaheb Danve of BJP as former and possible "future colleagues". The CM's remark had triggered speculation as to whether a political realignment was in the offing.

"The DNAs of the three ruling parties - Congress, NCP and Shiv

Sena - are different. In the last election, the BJP and the Sena had contested the election jointly and people voted for the leadership of Fadnis. But despite that, the Shiv Sena betrayed the BJP and joined hands with the Congress and the NCP to form the MVA government," Ravi added.

But we are observing as to how many days this government survives and we are of the opinion that it won't last long, he added.

The BJP leader said that during the tour of Maharashtra, he has observed that the atmosphere was against the MVA government.

"In democracy, the citizens are the judges...In the coming days, they will themselves take a decision on this," he said.

LIQUOR WORTH LAKHS STORED ILLEGALLY, 3 ARRESTED

Thane: The liquor was manufactured in Goa and was being stocked for sale in Maharashtra, official said. Liquor worth ₹ 37.80 lakh stored illegally in a tin shed in Ambemath in Thane district was seized by a flying squad of the Maharashtra excise department, leading to the arrest of three people, an official said on Monday. The Indian made foreign liquor (IMFL) was manufactured in Goa and was being stocked for sale in Maharashtra, despite such sale being prohibited, said Thane excise flying squad inspector Nandakumar More. "The raid was conducted in Kumbhari on Saturday.

We seized IMFL worth ₹ 37.80 lakh, three cars worth ₹ 6.25 lakh, labels worth ₹ 5 lakh, mobiles phones and cash totaling ₹ 57,500. The three men have been remanded in state excise custody till September 28," he said.

I-T raids on steel rolling mills in Maharashtra

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Income Tax Department carried out a search and seizure operation on September 23 on a group of four major steel rolling mills based in Jalna, Maharashtra. These companies are engaged in the business of manufacturing steel TMT bars and billets mostly using steel scrap as raw material. The operation was conducted in more than 32 premises spread across Jalna, Aurangabad, Pune, Mumbai and Kolkata.

During the course of the operation, many incriminating documents, loose sheets and other digital evidence was seized.

These evidences clearly indicate the involvement of the companies in large scale unaccounted financial transactions made outside the regular books of accounts, including inflation of purchases using entry providers, unaccounted cash expenses and investments, etc., the I-T department said in a

statement. The evidence found also indicates the laundering of substantial amount of unaccounted income earned by the companies in the guise of share premium and unsecured loans using shell companies, the statement added: Evidence for unaccounted purchases in excess of Rs 200 crore has been found. A huge quantity of unaccounted stock was also found in the factory premises of the companies.

In all 12 bank lockers were unearthed during the search operation. Unaccounted cash of more than Rs 2.10 crore and jewellery amounting to Rs 1.07 crore has been seized from different premises.

The evidence unearthed so far, indicates that unaccounted income is likely to exceed Rs 300 crore and the four companies have already disclosed additional income to the extent of Rs 71 crore consequent to the search, the department said. Further investigations are in progress.

It's housefull: Bollywood biggies queue up for theatrical releases

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As soon as Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced that all cinema halls and drama theatres in the state will reopen from October 22, a slew of Bollywood filmmakers declared the release dates of their upcoming films.

The reopening comes after 18 months after the box-offices were shut in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic plus the series of lockdowns since March 2020.

Following the news, filmmakers, producers, distributors and cinema hall owners welcomed the decision and expressed their excitement online.

Speaking about the same, Gautam Dutta, CEO, PVR Limited told reporter: "It is heartening to see the locking of release dates by the producers of Big Ticket Bollywood movies starting this festive season and beyond in view of the recent Maharashtra government announcement for reopening of cinemas." He added that Hindi movies have a universal appeal in our country cutting across regions and geographies and hence crucial for the revival of the entire film exhibition industry. "The multiplex industry thrives on a constant supply of content week on week and a clear horizon of the Hindi film pipeline will surely help to stabilize the film exhibition business". Alok Tandon, CEO - INOX Leisure Ltd, too welcomed the Government of Maharashtra's decision to allow cinemas to reopen from October 22 and the announcements of release dates made by various production houses.

Talking to IANS Tandon added: "We now have both passion and content on our side to stage a remarkable comeback



and entertain film lovers." "The emerging content line-up also augurs well for the financial health of the cinema exhibition sector, and should hasten the recovery process. We would like to assure all our guests about our safety protocol which would ensure a safe and hygienic movie watching experience." "The second half of 2021 looks bright.

The first Bollywood big film, which is slated to hit the silver screen is Akshay Kumar-starrer 'Sooryavanshi'. It will be released on October 22. The next film to see the light of day in the theatres is Yash Raj Film's 'Bunty Aur Babli 2'. The Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukerji-starrer and family entertainer will hit theatres on November 19, 2021. Helmed by Varun V. Sharma, the film also features Siddhant Chaturvedi and debutante actress Sharvari. The vigilante action film 'Satyamev Jayate 2', which will see action hero John Abraham in a double role is locked for November 26.

Ayushmann Khurrana-Vaani Kapoor's progressive love story 'Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui', which is directed by Abhishek Kapoor, is scheduled to drop on December 10 this year. Filmmaker Sajid Nadiadwala also made an official announcement of a slate of big ticket releases including 'Tadap - An Incredible Love Story' featuring Ahan Shetty and Tara Sutaria on December 3. Kabir Khan's '83' featuring Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone is out on Christmas 2021. Upon the reopening of the theatres in Maharashtra, Nadiadwala "welcomed" Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's "historic decision". He added: "I am really happy for the cinema hall and multiplex owners since this decision will boost their revival. With big festivals around the corner, there couldn't be better time to start than Diwali." Allu Arjun's Telugu film 'Pushpa', which revolves around the red sanders heist in the hills of Andhra Pradesh, too will release in December. The film will be clashing with Ranveer's '83' on Christmas. Actor Shahid Kapoor on Sunday announced the release date of his much awaited film 'Jersey'. The film will be released in theatres on December 31. It is the official Hindi remake of National Award-winning Telugu film by the same name. The original film starred actor Nani. This is not it! Makers are optimistic as they have even released a slate for 2022 releases. Prabhas and Pooja Hegde's romantic film 'Radhe Shyam' is slated to release on January 14. The release date for Akshay Kumar-starrer big budget period drama film 'Prithviraj' has been announced as January 21. Superstar Aamir Khan's 'Lal Singh Chaddha', which is an official Hindi remake of Hollywood film 'Forrest Gump' will release on Valentine's Day next year.

Job prospects dimming without classroom learning, open colleges in Maharashtra soon: MCCA president

Sudhir Mehta said that not allowing students vaccinated against Covid-19 to attend classes does not have any scientific basis.

Pune | Agencies

Maharashtra government's decision not to reopen colleges and universities has met with industry leaders' dismay. Sudhir Mehta, president of the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCA), told The Indian Express that not allowing students vaccinated against Covid-19 to attend classes does not have any scientific basis.

Classroom learning is set to resume from October 4 for classes 5-12 in rural areas and for classes 8 to 12 in urban areas, given the drop in Covid-19 cases. However, no decision has been taken

about colleges in the state. Even though students took offline examinations, classes have been held online for a long time.

Mehta said the prolonged closure of colleges is a matter of grave concern. "Students are not being allowed to come to classes. However, most of them are meeting their friends and socialising. This continued closure of colleges does not make sense," he said. MCCA had earlier urged colleges and universities to ensure they carry out special vaccination camps for students and restart regular offline classes. Without regular classes, students who pass out will find it difficult to get jobs, said Mehta. "Most employers would think twice before rolling out an offer letter to students who have not attended practical classes. Given the lull in case, I fail to see why (offline) classes are not being allowed," he said. Vaccination among students has been good with vaccines being easily available now.



Doja Cat was called Amy Winehouse during her teens

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Doja Cat has said that she was likened to late singer Amy Winehouse, who died of alcohol poisoning in 2011, during her teenage years because of her make-up style. Doja Cat said: "I used to do a giant cat-eye and the kids (in my high school) used

to call me Amy Winehouse and other names that they thought were funny but weren't.

"I've been learning how to do this cat eyeliner over the years, and I finally perfected it."

Doja Cat, whose real name is Amala Ratna Zandile Dlamini, eventually purchased an eyeshadow palette and just "went crazy" with it, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The 'Juicy' hitmaker Elle.com: "I had

every colour in the rainbow and I went crazy with that. I definitely didn't know how to prime my eyes, so nothing looked that great, but I kept going."

Doja Cat earlier revealed that she's become more restrained on social media since finding fame.

The rapper was hugely enthusiastic about social media before she released her debut album 'Amala' in 2018, but she shared that she's become more cautious with her posts over recent years.

Ben Affleck healthier than ever, thanks to JLo



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Ben Affleck has reportedly been living a healthier lifestyle ever since rekindling his romance with ex-flame actress-singer Jennifer Lopez.

Affleck has been to rehab several times to work on his sobriety over the years, and avoiding alcohol is even "easier" now that he's back with Lopez because she doesn't drink alcohol and leads a very healthy lifestyle, reports aceshowbiz.com. A source told Closer magazine: "Jen is very aware of what she puts in her body and how she treats herself, and Ben has been taking that on board. She doesn't drink alcohol, which has made it easier for him to quit, and follows a clean, organic diet, with lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and protein."

The source added: "He feels better than ever, thanks to Jen."

The actor, who has Violet, 15, Seraphina, 12, and Sam, nine, with former wife Jennifer Garner, in 2020 shared how his addictions caused him to develop "depression and anxiety", and called for more to be done to "destigmatise" mental health. But ultimately, he does think speaking out about his struggles has helped him tackle the "shame" he felt about his demons.

KATHERINE HEIGL VOICES SUPPORT FOR BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORKERS IN INDUSTRY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Katherine Heigl has pledged to support behind-the-scenes workers in the entertainment industry. She credits the crew she has worked with over the years for making her who she is today. Heigl has spoken out about the reported working conditions on 'Grey's Anatomy' in 2009, when she said to have worked a 17-hour day on set, and in spite of the backlash she subsequently encountered, the actress doesn't intend to back down amid her fight for justice.

Heigl in a post on Instagram wrote: "I've celebrated life's big and small milestones with my crews. First real love. Marriage. Babies. Turning 21. Turning 30. Turning 40." "The crews I've worked with all these many many years have been just as instrumental in making me who I am as anything else lasting and important in my life. They have been family in that way and I have always and will always continue to support and stand by them." The actress subsequently addressed the backlash she encountered more than a decade ago, after she decided to speak up on the issue, reports femalefirst.co.uk. She said: "Some of you may remember over ten years ago I was very vocal about the absurdity of the working hours crews and actors were being forced into by production. Even Diane Sawyer interviewed me and not so kindly informed me 'no one feels sorry for you'. I very publicly and for many many years after got my a** kicked for speaking up. She is determined to fight for justice and to speak her mind on the issue."

Sophie Ellis-Bextor was raped at 17

Los Angeles: In a shock revelation, 'Murder on the Dancefloor' singer Sophie Ellis-Bextor has said she was raped at the age of 17 by an older man, who was 29 at that time.

Ellis-Bextor was invited into her alleged attacker's flat after meeting at a gig. The 'Take me home' and 'Wild forever' song-maker was studying history for A-Level at the time. The man had said he would show her his study books, but things soon escalated, reports femalefirst.co.uk. Now 42, the singer said: "Jim and I started kissing and before I knew it we were on his bed and he took off my knickers. I heard myself saying 'No' and 'I don't want to', but it didn't make any difference. "He didn't listen to me and he had sex with me and I felt so ashamed. It was how I lost my virginity and I felt stupid. I remember staring at Jim's bookcases and thinking: I just have to let this happen now." The singer said he was never "violent" with her, but she now feels the need for her voice to be heard, 25 years on. She added: "My experience was not violent. All that happened was I 'wasn't listened to'. Of the two people there, one said yes, the other said no, and the yes person did it anyway. The older I've become, the more stark that 29-year-old man ignoring 17-year-old me has seemed." Ellis-Bextor has no plans to "name and shame" her alleged rapist.



Lashana Lynch fulfills childhood dream with 'No Time To Die' character

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Lashana Lynch has described her 'No Time To Die' character Nomi as the woman she hoped to see on screen when I was a "little girl".

Lynch told Baz Bamigboye's column in the Daily Mail newspaper: "Nomi is the woman I hoped to see on screen when I was a little girl. She's highly skilled yet vulnerable. She's learning on the job - as I had to."

The movie, which is set to be Daniel Craig's last as 007, sees Nomi team up with Bond to rescue a kidnapped scientist and Lynch said that the intense stunt training has set her up for life.

The 'Captain Marvel' actress said: "They gave me everything to ensure I was ready for the rest of my career."

She also talked about that there is "mental and energetic" sparring between Nomi and Bond during the movie. She said: "They psych each other out."

Bond producer Barbara Broccoli hopes that Lashana will return as Nomi in the next film but ruled out the prospect of her replacing Craig as the iconic spy.

Asked if she will become a regular in the franchise, Broccoli said: "One hopes. (But) James Bond is a male character."

Broccoli's fellow producer Michael G. Wilson also shared that there is no rush to find Craig's replacement and that the search will begin next year.



SEASON 5 OF 'THE CROWN' TO OPEN IN NOVEMBER 2022

New York | Agencies

Netflix has announced that Queen Elizabeth will take a year off and return in the new season of 'The Crown' in November 2022, variety.com reported.

The proclamation was part of Netflix's Tudum jubilee, a global celebration of the streamer's global commonwealth of film and TV titles. After sweeping the Emmy awards in its fourth season, 'The Crown' will return with an all-new cast playing the British royal family, including Imelda Staunton as Queen Elizabeth, Jonathan Pryce as Prince Philip, Lesley Manville as Princess Margaret, Dominic West as Prince Charles, Elizabeth Debicki as Princess Diana, and Olivia Williams as Camilla Parker Bowles. Jonny Lee Miller will also appear as Prime Minister John Major.

This will be the third and final cast cycle for 'The Crown', which launched in 2016 with Claire Foy playing Queen Elizabeth at the start of her reign for two seasons. Then the show took a year off following Season 2, and returned in 2019 with Olivia Colman leading the cast as the Queen for Seasons 3 and 4.





IPL 2021

ROY, WILLIAMSON STEER SUNRISERS HYDERABAD TO EASY WIN VS RR

Dubai | Agencies

Jason Roy and captain Kane Williamson played some brilliant cricketing shots to guide Sunrisers Hyderabad home against Rajasthan Royals in the 40th match of the IPL 2021 here on Monday. Hyderabad registered their second win of this season after beating Royals by seven wickets at the Dubai International Stadium.

Chasing 165, SRH got off to a blistering start as a flurry of boundaries unleashed by openers Roy (60) and Wriddhiman Saha (18) took SRH past 50 in just 4.5 overs. Eventually, SRH got to 63/1 at the end of the Powerplay as Saha was dismissed by Mahipal Lomror.

Roy hit a quick-fire half-century on his debut for Hyderabad before Rajasthan's Chetan Sakariya ended his blitzkrieg.

Mustafizur Rahman then removed Priyam Garg for a duck, leaving Rajasthan at 119/3 in 13 overs. He bowled a slower ball. Garg showed the full face of the bat, but could only chip that back to the bowler, who went low and across to his right to complete the take.



Abhishek Sharma (21 not out) then joined forces with captain Williamson (51 not out). They stitched 48 runs off 33 balls to comfortably reach the target with nine balls to spare. Earlier, skipper Sanju Samson smashed a brilliant 82 off just 57 balls to help Rajasthan Royals

post 164/5. In the process, RR captain also surpassed De'hi Capitals's Shikhar Dhawan in the 'Orange Cap' race as he became the league's highest run-getter. The first innings powerplay was very eventful. Bhuvneshwar Kumar removed Evin Lewis on the

very ball of his first over, young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and skipper Samson then guided RR to 57/1 at the end of the 7th over.

Jaiswal was dismissed for 36 as RR managed to get to 77/2 after 10 overs. Rashid Khan dismissed Liam Livingstone (4) cheaply to leave RR three down.

Courtesy of a few big hits from Mahipal Lomror (29 not out), RR crossed 100 in the 14th over. He stitched an important 84-run stand with his skipper to take the side past 150. Liam Livingstone (4), Riyan Parag (0), and Evin Lewis (6) failed with the bat.

In the fag end of the innings, a good comeback from Hyderabad as they scalped two wickets and gave away just 18 runs in the last three overs.

Briefscores:

Rajasthan: 164/4 in 20 overs (Sanju Samson 82, Yashasvi 36, Siddharth 2-36, Bhuvneshwar 1-28); Hyderabad: 167/3 in 18.3 overs (Jason 60, Williamson 51 not out, Abhishek Sharma 21 not out, Lomror 1-22).

India lose 0-5 to China in Sudirman Cup badminton

Vantaa (Finland) | Agencies

India went down 0-5 to China in their second Group A encounter of the Sudirman Cup mixed team badminton competition here on Monday. The second successive defeat means India are out of the race for the quarter-finals.

India, who had started the tournament with a 1-4 defeat to Thailand on the opening day Sunday, as China turned out to be too strong. India have put up a depleted side, playing without top singles players PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal and the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty.

The absence of Sindhu and Saina was again felt as India failed to win a single match against China. M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, who won a match against Thailand on Sunday, put up a decent fight before going down to China's Liu Cheng and Zhou Hao Dong 20-22, 21-17.

In the women's singles, Aditi Bhatt lost tamerly 21-9, 21-8 to Chen Yi Fei while Sai Praneeth was beaten 21-10, 21-10, and the women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy lost in two games to Lei Wen Mei and Zheng Yu 21-16, 21-13. In the last tie, Kidambi Srikanth and Rituparna Panda went down 21-9, 21-9 to China's Feng Yan Zhe and Du Yue in the mixed doubles as the match ended 5-0 in favour of the defending champions. China had earlier defeated hosts Finland 5-0 on Sunday. India now play hosts



Finland in their last group match on Wednesday while China take on Thailand.

Moeen Ali retires from Test cricket

London | Agencies

England cricket stalwart, all-rounder Moeen Ali, has decided to call time on his Test match career.

Ali, 34, who made his Test debut back in 2014 and went on to represent England in 64 Test matches, scored a total of 2,914 Test runs, with his highest being an unbeaten 155.

He took 195 Test wickets including 5 five-wicket hauls and scored five Test match centuries during his career.

Discussing his decision on Monday, Ali said, "I'm 34 now and I want to play for as long as I can. I've enjoyed Test cricket but that intensity can be too much sometimes and I feel like I've done



enough of it and I'm happy and content with how I've done." Ali hopes that his Test career will inspire and open the door for other British Muslims to play for England. Ali thanked his coaches, captains and all of his family for their support during his Test career.

Arsenal take north London bragging rights; Wolves beat Southampton

London | Agencies

Arsenal continued their recovery with a 3-1 win over Tottenham Hotspur in the north London derby thanks to an impressive first-half performance. Goals from Emile Smith-Rowe after 12 minutes, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang after 27 minutes and a third from Bukayo Saka just six minutes later on Sunday evening saw Arsenal flying, while Spurs looked chaotic.

Arsenal eased off in the second half, but it wasn't until the 79th minute that Son Heung-min side-footed home a consolation goal. Arsenal were content to sit deep in the closing minutes, although Lucas Moura saw his effort tipped onto the bar deep into injury time.

Raul Jimenez's first goal in 336 days gave Wolverhampton a 1-0 win away to Southampton and lift his side away from the danger zone.



Last year, the Mexican who fractured his skull in a game, scored an excellent

solo effort just after the hour to frustrate a Southampton side that was guilty of missing too many chances, Xinhua reports.

Gabriel Jesus's second-half strike gave Manchester City a vital 1-0 win away to Chelsea. Bruno Fernandes missed an injury-time penalty as Aston Villa beat Manchester United in the Premier League for just the second time in 46 matches courtesy of Kortney Hause's diving header in the 88th minute. Brentford scored a late equalizer through Yoane Wissa as they shared six goals with Liverpool, while Everton cruised past Norwich 2-0, who have lost all six games this season.

Jamie Vardy scored twice for Leicester City in their 2-2 draw at home to Burnley and also netted an own goal as Burnley battled to a point, while Newcastle United remain winless after an entertaining 1-1 draw away to Watford.

Shafali Verma and Radha Yadav sign up for Sydney Sixers in WBBL

Sydney | Agencies

Two-time Women's Big Bash League (WBBL) champions Sydney Sixers have signed up Indian youngsters Shafali Verma and Radha Yadav ahead of seventh season of the tournament. The announcement of Shafali and Radha signing up with the Sixers comes a day after the duo of Smriti Mandhana and Deepti Sharma were announced to join defending champions Sydney Thunder.

On Sunday, Shafali scored 56, her maiden half-century in ODIs as India ended Australia's 26-match winning streak. She is expected to open the batting alongside Australia's Alyssa Healy. Radha, the left-arm spinner, is a part of India's squad for the



T20I series against Australia in October.

Shafali and Radha will join Healy, Ellyse Perry, Ashleigh Gardner, Stella Campbell, Erin Burns and former Australia batter Nicole Bolton. "This is a very good opportunity for me and my goal is to just enjoy myself, to make some new friends and have fun. I want to play WBBL and back myself and just believe in myself," said Shafali in a statement by the club on Monday.

IPL 2021 playoffs: Mumbai Indians still have a chance

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ever since Mumbai Indians suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Royal Challengers Bangalore in their IPL game in Dubai, questions are arising in everyone's mind -- 'is it end of road for Rohit Sharma-led side?' or 'do they still have a chance to qualify?'

The defending champions have now slipped to the seventh spot in the tally with 8 points in ten matches following their crushing defeat on Sunday. At the end of the first leg of the IPL 2021 season, Mumbai were at the fourth position but after the disappointments in the second phase, three successive defeats, their road to the play-offs has become very difficult. But it is not over yet!

Now only four matches are left to play for them. While things look bleak at the moment, one can never count out Mumbai Indians, who have time and again shown their ability to arrest their slide and bounce back.

If Mumbai manage to win four out



of four, their total will go up to 16 (points), which should ideally give them the fourth and final slot in the playoffs. However, it will not be that easy as they will have to battle it out against strong Delhi Capitals, Punjab Kings, Rajasthan Royals and the

Sunrisers Hyderabad to do so.

And if the men-in-blue win just three out of four matches, then also they can qualify. But at 14 points, they will have to depend on other results. For the record, MI also have the worst Net Run Rate among the teams bat-

ting for spots in the the playoffs. But ending up with lesser than 14 points will result in Mumbai's exit from the league, marking the first time since 2018 that the team failed to reach the playoffs.

Dennerby names 23-member Indian women's squad for UAE friendlies

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian women's team head coach Thomas Dennerby has named a 23-member squad for the upcoming friendly matches in the UAE and Bahrain, starting from Saturday, October 2, 2021.

The team, that is currently camping in Jamshedpur with the help of the Government of Jharkhand, will travel to New Delhi on September 29, from where they will travel to the UAE for two friendly matches against the United Arab Emirates national team (October 2) and the Tunisia national team (October 4).

The team will subsequently travel to Bahrain, where they will play two friendlies against the Bahrain national team (October 10) and the Chinese Taipei national team (October 13). Head coach Thomas Dennerby stated, "After training for about a



month in Jharkhand, we are extremely happy to be going for these friendly matches in the UAE and Bahrain. These matches will be essential for us to gauge how far the girls have progressed during the training camp, as they will be pitted against some tough teams." "We are all looking forward to these matches, and are thankful to the authorities for arranging

them during such difficult circumstances in a pandemic," he said.

Schedule:	
October 2	: UAE vs India
October 4	: India vs Tunisia
October 10:	Bahrain vs India
October 13:	India vs Chinese Taipei

RCB players feed on Kohli's aggression, says Dale Steyn

Dubai | Agencies

Virat Kohli is known to wear his emotions on his sleeves when playing cricket.

Whatever the format, Kohli is aggressive in his outlook and likes taking the game to the opponent. Most of his teammates feed on his aggression.

In a set up like the Indian Premier League (IPL) where each team has many young and uncapped players who look up to the stars to model their game on, an aggressive player like Kohli makes a huge impact.

That is the reason why the Royal Challengers Bangalore want Kohli to continue to be aggressive, says former South Africa and RCB pacer Dale Steyn.

Speaking exclusively on Star Sports' live feed of select dugout, Steyn said, "I think the guys prefer to see him be more aggressive, it seems to get him to play a bit more fluently. It kind of sparks the younger players too, a lot of the younger guys have massive respect for Virat, and they admire him so much that they kind of follow in his direction. Royal



Challengers Bangalore have recovered from their defeat to Chennai Super Kings to beat Mumbai Indians on Sunday and are hoping to cement their place in the knockouts as early as possible.

Stop cursing India for Kiwis, England pull outs, BCCI official to Pakistan

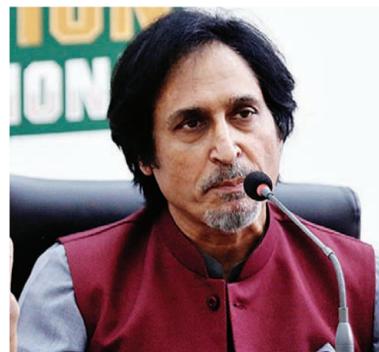
Chetan Sharma | New Delhi

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has recently faced a severe blow after New Zealand and England cancelled their respective tours. The Kiwis cited security as a reason whereas England stated the 'mental and physical well-being' of the players was an issue.

The cancellation of the tours has affected Pakistan financially and 'morally' as well. The newly appointed chairman of PCB Ramiz Raja lambasted the two nations for abandoning their respective series.

However, now some of the Pakistan ministers and former cricketers have started 'dragging India's' name in their statements. They are also allegedly blaming the Indian cricket board (BCCI) for the cancellation of their tours.

To this, a senior BCCI official told correspondent that Pakistan has an old habit of 'using' India's name in all their 'big or small news' that too without any proof. "We wish Ramiz Raja good



luck...Pakistan cricket reaches new heights under him. We want to clear one thing that the BCCI has no role in the cancellation of England and New

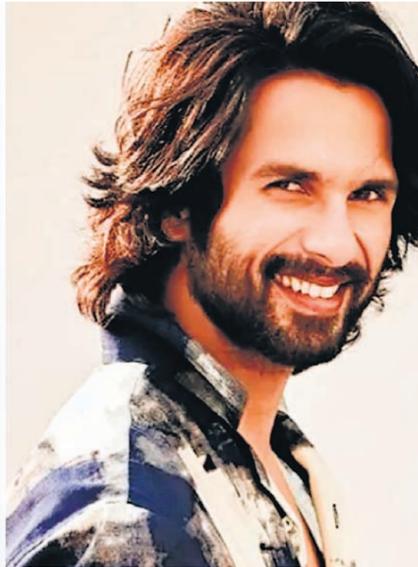
Zealand tours to Pakistan."

"We don't have time for all this...And also, I don't know why some ex-Pakistan players are cursing the IPL (Indian Premier League) for no reason? I read somewhere that Raja said that the Aussie players have even changed their DNA for the sake of the money they make by playing in the IPL. He accused Aussies of playing happily against India without their usual aggressive approach.

"Now from where the IPL came here? What kind of frustration is that? We understand that you are feeling bad but there is no need to drag India everywhere," the official added.

New Zealand abandoned their tour hours before the first ODI was scheduled to take place in Rawalpindi on September 17, because of a security threat. Days later, the England team pulled out, citing the mental and physical well-being of players.

Pakistan's information minister Fawad Chaudhry had said the "e-mail was generated from India through a VPN showing the location of Singapore".



SHAHID KAPOOR WANTS TO WORK WITH SAMANTHA AKKINENI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Shahid Kapoor made an interesting revelation on Monday, where he praised actress Samantha Akkineni and said that he would like to work with her soon. In a Twitter question and answer session with fans, a fan asked Shahid of his opinion on Samantha's acting in web series 'The Family Man 2'. Shahid replied to that question and said: "Totally loved her on the show. Would love to work with her some

time." Shahid has recently wrapped up the shoot with directors Raj and DK, who were also the brains behind the popular crime thriller series 'The Family Man 2'. He also announced the release date of his film 'Jersey' on

Sunday. The film will release on December 31, 2021.

Samantha, who played a negative role in the web series, is gearing up for the release of her next film 'Shaakuntalam'.

Female-led stories are going to rule OTT: Wamiqa Gabbi

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, who plays a pivotal role in the Anushka Sharma-produced web series 'Mai', says female-led stories are here to stay.

Reflecting on the series, which will be streamed on Netflix, Wamiqa said, "What matters most today is the representation of women in stories that make a difference. I am honoured to be a part of this amazing project and work with such super-talented artistes. I don't think my Netflix debut could be anything bigger than this." 'Mai' also features well-known actress Sakshi Tanwar.

"I believe that content-driven stories with women as protagonists are going to rule the roost. It is a great feeling to be a part of this strong female-led community and I cannot wait to see how audience reacts to the film," Wamiqa added. She was last seen in the web series 'Graham', another female-led story centred around the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

'Sardar Udham' to release digitally on Oct 16

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Vicky Kaushal's upcoming film 'Sardar Udham' will be released on Amazon Prime Video on October 16. The teaser of the movie 'Sardar Udham', which opens with the protagonist meticulously piecing together a document. The focus shifts to a stack of passports, each reflecting a different name - Ude Singh, Frank Brazil, Sher Singh, with the latest one, with 'Udham Singh' being scrawled across it, being added to the pile.

Chronicling the lesser-known story of the legendary Indian revolutionary, Sardar Udham Singh, the film delves deep into his boundless courage to avenge the death of his countrymen, in an event that shook the British Empire. Vicky took to Instagram to share the teaser. He captioned it: "On the birth anniversary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, I'm proud to bring to you the story of his ally - Sardar Udham Singh - one man, many aliases, one mission."

Directed by Shoojit Sircar, the Amazon Original Movie is produced by Ronnie Lahiri and Sheel Kumar and is set to release on Amazon Prime Video during Dussehra on October 16.



Arjun Bijlani wins 'Khatron Ke Khiladi 11'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

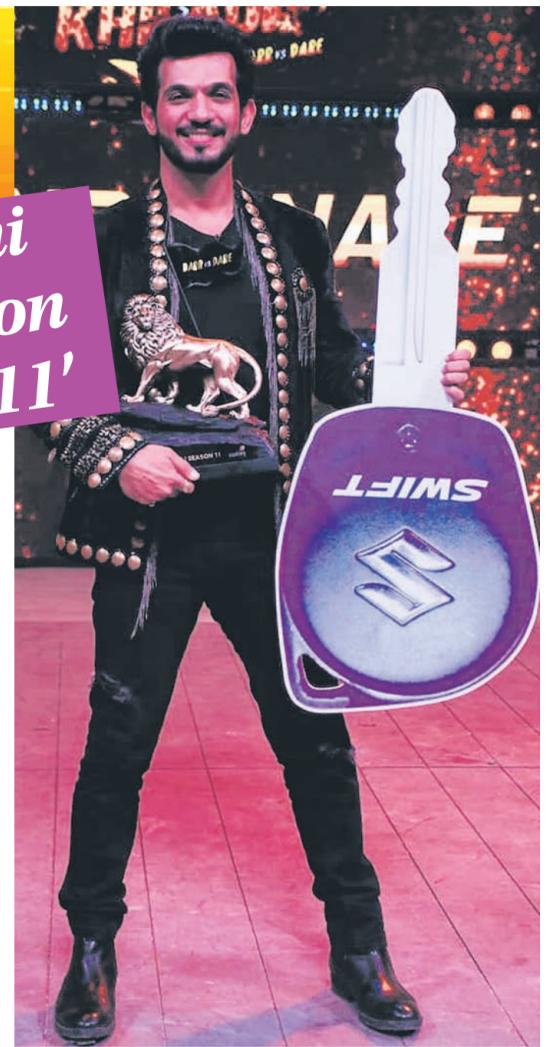
'Khatron Ke Khiladi 11' winner Arjun Bijlani is on "top of the world", for it has been arduous journey to the winner's trophy and Rs 20 lakh in the reality show presented by Bollywood's hit director Rohit Shetty.

After his victory was announced on Sunday night, Arjun said in a conversation with IANS: "This was such a long and tough journey. I had to do a lot of hard work to perform well in the show. Sometimes I felt like I would give up, but I kept moving ahead and was able to reach the finale."

He added: "And even after I reached that stage, it felt like there was a huge distance between me and the trophy. The finale stunt, moreover, was really tough. I am so happy that I finally won the trophy."

The stunt was performed by Arjun Bijlani, Vishal Aditya Singh and Divyanka Tripathi. Arjun was able to pip first runner-up Divyanka by 20 seconds and lift the trophy, plus take home the cheque and a car. Vishal gave up midway.

Being on 'KKK11' came with its share of dangers, as suggested by the show name. Arjun said: "My left shoulder was dislocated and I was recommended surgery. I chose not to go for that option and I never told anyone about my injury. It was really tough for me to do the stunts. Still, I managed."



Rasika Dugal, Akshay Oberoi honoured at Iconic Achievers Awards

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actors Rasika Dugal and Akshay Oberoi have been honoured at the Iconic Achievers Awards this year. While Rasika has bagged the award of the 'Most Versatile Actor Of The Year', Akshay won the honour of 'The Most Enterprising Actor Of The Year'. Talking about the same Rasika said: "I'm honoured to be recognised

as the Most Versatile Actor at Iconic Achievers Award. Every new role is an experience and an experiment. It is very heartening when that is acknowledged and applauded. I'm grateful to the jury and the audience who have appreciated me in the different roles I have had an opportunity to take on."

"I feel honoured and happy to receive this award. I thank viewers for showing me love and appreciating my

performance in every project. There is nothing more satisfying than to see the audience enjoying my work and connecting to the characters I've played," shared Akshay. On the work front, Rasika will next be seen in projects like 'Lord Curzon Ki Haveli' and 'Delhi Crime Season 2'.

Akshay's upcoming projects include 'Inside Edge Season 3' and 'Those Pricey Thakur Girls' among others.

Anil Kapoor honoured as Brand Endorser of the Year

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Anil Kapoor has been awarded the Brand Endorser of the Year award by the International Advertising Association (IAA) here recently. Anil, who currently endorses 13 brands, was awarded at the IAA Leadership Summit. Talking about the honour, Anil tells IANS: "It is humbling to receive the Brand Endorser of the Year Award by IAA. Nothing feels better than knowing brands trust you with their products and are ready to mount the campaign on your shoulder. For me, a brand endorsement is more of a responsibility than a job." International Advertising Association, with IAA Leadership Awards, honours Excellence in Marketing that has had a direct impact on a product or service in terms of overall growth for the brand and company every year. Meanwhile, on the work front Anil will be seen in 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo' with Neetu Kapoor, Varun Dhawan and Kiara Advani. The actor also has 'Animal' with Ranbir Kapoor in the pipeline.



Amayra Dastur