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COAL INVENTORY CRITICAL, INDIA STARES AT POWER CRISIS THIS FESTIVE SEASON

“To meet this demand, additional coal is required. The production from Coal India is low now, as monsoons have just ended when the production is typically low. Imports are not an option, as global prices have touched historic high levels.”

Power sector analyst

DIWALI WITHOUT LIGHTS!

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India may be staring at an acute power crisis this festive season with half of the country's thermal power reducing generation, as coal inventories hit critically low levels while surge in power demand post the Covid-induced lockdowns is not being supported by record global prices of fuel that has shot up more than three times in just over a couple of months. The situation is critical for state-run power generation units where poor financial condition of utilities has prevented them from proper stocking of coal. The development in the Indian market is a reflection of what is happening



globally. For India, the competition in the global coal market is coming from China, the world's largest coal consumer. Large scale shortage in China has meant that it is going on a coal hunt worldwide to address the energy crisis at home. This has pushed up coal prices from all major suppliers, with the price of Indonesian coal (5,500 Kcal) shooting up to over \$100 per tonne from just about \$50-60 per tonne a few months ago, while Australian non-coking coal has touched a price of over \$200 per tonne. What the high global coal prices has done is that it has prevented domestic generation companies from buying coal abroad to meet the local rise in demand.

▶ OVER HALF OF THE COUNTRY'S 135 COAL-FIRED PLANTS ARE SITTING ON COAL STOCKS OF LESS THAN THREE DAYS, WHILE IN OTHERS AS WELL, FUEL INVENTORIES ARE WELL BELOW THE STIPULATED 22-DAY STOCK, DATA FROM THE CENTRAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY SHOWED.

▶ THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE CRISIS WOULD CONTINUE THROUGH THE FESTIVE SEASON WITH COAL INDIA SCRAMBLING TO MEET THE RISING DEMAND FOR FUEL IN THE ABSENCE OF SUPPORT FROM IMPORTS.

UP POLICE 'BUSY' WITH CREMATIONS, ARRESTS DELAYED

POLITICAL HIERARCHY BEGINS

The Uttar Pradesh government has set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the Lakhimpur-Kheri incident. The six-member SIT will be headed by Additional SP Arun Kumar and will include Deputy SP Sandeep Singh and three inspectors. The FIR against Ashish Mishra was filed 24 hours ago and he has been charged with murder and causing death by negligence. The police inaction is fuelling the anger of the farmers as well as opposition leaders over the incident.

Team Absolute | Lakhimpur Kheri

The UP Police have apparently not found time to arrest Ashish Mishra, the son of Union minister Ajay Mishra Teni, because they were 'busy' -- first with the negotiations and then with post-mortems and cremations. The farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, who were protesting against the visit of Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Maurya on Sunday, said the minister's son was at the wheels of an SUV that mowed down a group of people, killing four and injuring several others. The violence it triggered led to four other deaths. A

REPORT Autopsy report reveals death of farmers due to shock, haemorrhage, no bullet injury found. The autopsy report of four farmers who died in UP's Lakhimpur Kheri confirmed that death was due to shock, excessive bleeding and haemorrhage. The farmers' bodies claimed that four farmers identified as Nakshatra Singh, Daljeet Singh, Lavepreet Singh and Gurvinder Singh died as vehicles mowed the protesters down on the Tikunia-Banbirpur road.



“We were first busy with the negotiations with the farmers and then with the post-mortems and then with getting the cremations done. The attitude of the police is towards the victim, and not the accused.”

S.N. Sabat, ADG Police (Lucknow Zone)

Agitation to continue: SKM



New Delhi: A day after an agreement with the administration over the issue of death of four farmers among nine killed at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Tuesday said the agreement was only to pave way for the last rites of those deceased farmers, but the agitation will continue. The SKM has demanded the immediate arrest of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ashish Mishra Teni, who belongs to BJP, and his accomplices. The SKM also demanded dismissal of Teni and Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar from their posts immediately.

WILL QUIT IF THERE IS ANY EVIDENCE: UNION MINISTER

"I will resign from my post if a single proof emerges against my son being on the spot where the incident took place."



'ILLEGALLY CONFINED, NOT ALLOWED TO MEET LAWYER': PRIYANKA GANDHI

Sitapur (UP): After the Uttar Pradesh Police formally arrested Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, she alleged that she has been "illegally confined and not allowed to meet her lawyers". Narrating her arrest Priyanka Gandhi said, "I have been placed under arrest as verbally informed to me by the arresting officer DCP Piyush Kumar Singh, CO City, Sitapur, under section 151 at 4.30 a.m. on October 4, 2021. She alleged in her statement that she has not been served with any order or notice. "Nor have they shown me an FIR," she alleged. "I have not been produced in front of a magistrate or any other judicial officer either. I have also not been allowed to meet my legal counsel who has been standing at the gate since morning. Presently I am not going into the details of the completely illegal physical force used on my colleagues and me at the time of my arrest as this statement serves merely to clarify the continuing illegality of my confinement at the PAC compound in Sitapur, UP," she added.



NEET-SS EXAM PATTERN CHANGE

MEDICAL EDUCATION HAS BECOME A BUSINESS: SC

▶ ON THE ASPECT OF SYLLABUS CHANGE, THE BENCH TOLD THE NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINATIONS (NBE) COUNSEL, "WHAT WAS THE HURRY. YOU HAVE AN EXAMINATION PATTERN WHICH HAD BEEN GOING ON FROM 2018 TO 2020..."

▶ THE BENCH TOLD THE CENTRE TO CONSIDER RESTORING THE OLD SYLLABUS, AND BRING CHANGE FROM NEXT YEAR. GIVING A DAY'S TIME TO CENTRE'S COUNSEL, THE BENCH SAID: "THINK OVER AND FALL IN LINE". THE BENCH WILL CONTINUE TO HEAR THE MATTER ON WEDNESDAY.



"The impression we get is, that the medical education has become a business and medical regulation has also become a business". This would become a tragedy for medical education in the country. If there is obduracy center's part, arms of law are long enough to prevent that".

The Bench

vacant seats. The bench noted that usually seats are vacant never in government colleges, rather it is always private colleges. The bench, in more than two-hour long hearing, emphasized that the interest of students is far higher than that of the institutions and private institutions have made investments, and in this scenario, a balance needs to be struck. The bench noted, "Now all questions are from general medicine. What this does is privileging students who have done general medicine at the cost of all other feeder specialties?"

MOODY'S CHANGES INDIA'S RATING OUTLOOK TO STABLE

New Delhi: Global ratings agency Moody's Investors Service on Tuesday changed India's ratings outlook to stable from negative. Accordingly, Moody's affirmed the country's foreign-currency and local currency long-term issuer ratings and the local-currency senior unsecured rating at Baa3. Moody's also affirmed India's other short-term local currency rating at P-3. Besides, it pointed out that risks stemming from a high debt burden and weak debt affordability remain. Furthermore, Moody's expects that the economic environment will allow for a gradual reduction of the general government fiscal deficit over the next few years, preventing further deterioration of the sovereign credit profile. The affirmation of the Baa3 ratings balances India's key credit strengths, which include a large and diversified economy with high growth potential, a relatively strong external position, and a stable domestic financing base for government debt, against its principal credit challenges, including low per capita incomes, high general government debt, low debt affordability and more limited government effectiveness."

One out of seven in 15-24 yrs of age feels depressed in India: UNICEF

In the UNICEF survey across 21 countries, only 41 per cent of young people in India were willing to seek support for mental health problems, compared to an average of 83 per cent for 21 countries.

▶ THE REPORT NOTES THAT AS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HEADS INTO ITS THIRD YEAR, THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUES TO WEIGH HEAVILY. THE DISRUPTION TO ROUTINES, EDUCATION, RECREATION, AS WELL AS CONCERN FOR FAMILY INCOME AND HEALTH, IS LEAVING MANY YOUNG PEOPLE FEELING AFRAID, ANGRY, AND CONCERNED FOR THEIR FUTURE.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has created serious concerns about the mental health of children and their families, says UNICEF report on mental health 'The States of the World's Children 2021'. The report has illustrated in stark terms how events in the wider world can affect the world inside our heads.

As per the report, India was the only one of 21 countries where only a minority of young people felt that people experiencing mental health issues should reach out to others. According to data from UNESCO, over 286 million children up to grade 6



were out of school in India between 2020-2021. UNICEF's rapid assessment in 2021 found that only 60 per cent could access digital classrooms. Many would not be able to continue their education.

The report notes that even before the Covid-19 crisis, children and young people carried the burden of mental health conditions without significant investment in addressing them.

WHO TO DECIDE ON GRANTING EMERGENCY USE LISTING TO COVAXIN NEXT WEEK

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The World Health Organization (WHO) will meet next week with an independent group of experts to take a final decision on whether to grant Emergency Use Listing (EUL) to Covaxin.

The WHO will carry out the risk and benefit assessments next week with the experts and take a final call on granting the much-awaited EUL to Covid vaccine Covaxin.

It added that the EUL process of WHO and the technical advisory group of independent experts is centred on determining if a manufactured vaccine is quality-assured, safe and effective.

Indigenous vaccine Covaxin, which has been developed by Bharat Biotech, has not received emergency use approval from the WHO.



Phase III trials of two-dose Zydus vax approved

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has permitted Zydus Cadila to conduct Phase III trials of ZyCoV-D, the two-dose regimen of its needle-free Covid vaccine. Zydus Cadila had started testing the two-dose regime of the vaccine with 3 mg in each dose soon after being granted an Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA). The Ahmedabad-based healthcare manufacturer's three-dose RNA vaccine, apart from two-dose one, will soon be introduced under India's mass vaccination drive.

BJP makes clean sweep in Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation polls

Gandhinagar: Crushing the opposition by bagging 41 ward seats in the civic polls, the BJP ensured that it will rule the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation (GMC), polling for which was held on Sunday. This thumping victory gives the ruling party in Gujarat much more confidence for the assembly elections slated next year.

The BJP scored over arch rival Congress, bagging 41 ward seats out of the total 44 seats. Two seats were claimed by the Congress with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) debuting in the political arena here with one seat.

The GMC saw approximately over 56 percent polling in eleven wards of the state's capital. This was higher than in the last elections held in 2016, which was 52.02 percent. Polling went off peacefully with no untoward incident reported anywhere.

With the entry of the Aam Aadmi Party in the political scenario of Gujarat, the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation elections saw a three pronged battle on Sunday.



NHA REVISES HEALTH BENEFIT PACKAGE OF AYUSHMAN BHARAT PM-JAY

The National Health Authority (NHA) on Tuesday revised the health benefit package of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

Team Absolute | New Delhi Accordingly, the rates of some health packages have been increased by 20 per cent to 400 per cent in the revised health benefit package (HBP). Around 400 procedure rates have been revised and one new additional medical management package related to black fungus has also been added. The HBP 2.2 is expected to be rolled out from November 2021.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said, "The revised version of HBP 2.2 will strengthen the empanelled hospitals to provide better healthcare services to the beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY. The revised packages for oncology will enhance can-



cer care for the beneficiaries in the country."

He also said that the addition of new packages related to black fungus will be a huge relief to the beneficiaries. Mandaviya expressed confidence that the rationalised HBP will further improve the uptake of the scheme at the private hospitals, leading to reduced out-of-pocket expenditure for the beneficiaries.

R.S. Sharma, CEO, National Health Authority (NHA), said that since the beginning of the AB PM-JAY scheme, new packages have been added to cover more disease conditions and the regular rates of the packages are being revised to provide better healthcare services.

The NHA has revised the rates in radiation oncology procedures, medical management procedures

like for dengue, acute febrile illness etc., surgical package treatment for black fungus, and other procedures like right/left heart catheterisation, PDA closure, arthrodesis, cholecystectomy, appendectomy etc.

Under the medical management procedures, the rates for ICU with ventilator has been revised by 100 per cent, rates for ICU without ventilator by 136 per cent, rates for HDU has been revised by 22 per cent while prices for routine ward has been revised by 17 per cent.

Currently, the Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY has 1,669 treatment procedures out of which 1,080 are surgical, 588 medical and one unspecified package.

The scheme was launched with HBP 1.0 with a total of 1,393 packages. The scheme aims to provide free and cashless healthcare services of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year to over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families.

Since the beginning of the scheme, more than 2.2 crore eligible AB PM-JAY beneficiaries have been provided with health coverage for secondary, tertiary and day care procedures for the treatment of diseases and medical conditions.

Hanging bridge collapses in Assam, 24 school students hurt



SILCHAR | Agencies

At least 24 school students were injured, three of them seriously, after a hanging bridge collapsed in southern Assam's Karimganj district when the students were on their way home after school, officials said on Tuesday.

A district administration official said that the four-year-old hanging bridge over

river Singla collapsed at Cheragi area when around 100 girls and boys of Cheragi Vidyapith High School were crossing it on Monday afternoon, with all of them falling into the river. On hearing the noise, local people jumped into the river and rescued them. Three critically injured students have been shifted to the hospital after a doctor, staying nearby, rushed to the spot and started treatment on

the bank of the river. Villagers said that a major tragedy was averted as there was not much water in the small river.

Students and villagers regularly used this bridge to reach their destinations as it is the only bridge in the area.

With the collapse of the bridge, many villages under the Ratabari Assembly constituency have now been cut off.

Will be confined to state politics till end of my career: Siddaramaiah



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah who met Sonia Gandhi here on Tuesday said that he will only focus on state politics and all speculation about him being offered a role in national politics is speculative.

In a tweet he said, "It was a courtesy call from @INCIndia President Smt Sonia Gandhi. We discussed about strengthening our party at State & National levels. The news of me

being offered a position in central Congress team is speculative & far from the truth". "I am more interested in State politics. I will be confined to State politics till the end of my career. I had conveyed this to @INCIndia leader Shri @RahulGandhi when I was invited before," he added.

Sources said, Sonia Gandhi discussed about internal rift in the state and asked the former Chief Minister to take everyone along in the state. The Karnataka leader was called to the national capital by the Congress high command to discuss further strategy regarding state politics.

However, Siddaramaiah when asked said he is not interested in national politics. Sources say he is being offered a national role at the AICC level and the Congress wants to bring a backward leader to Delhi to counter BJP and make inroads in the section.

The Congress leadership is in overdrive to resolve all the internal issues in the states specially those going for polls to stop exodus and strengthen the party, which is key to the Congress success.

GIRL INJURED IN ACID ATTACK IN J&K'S SHOPIAN



Srinagar: A girl was injured in an acid attack on Tuesday in J&K's Shopian district, police said.

Police sources said a girl in Kral Check village of Shopian was attacked with acid by unknown persons in the afternoon. "The girl suffered injuries on her left shoulder and was shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment where from she has been referred to Srinagar," a source said.

Police reached the spot and an FIR has been registered in the crime.

AP govt advisor refutes state's links with Guj drug bust

AMARAVATI | Agencies

The emergence of a Vijayawada angle to the massive drug bust by the DRI in Gujarat recently has developed into a political battle between the ruling YSRCP and the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Andhra Pradesh.

In the latest development on Tuesday, Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, advisor to the Andhra Pradesh government, accused the TDP and some regional media houses of peddling fake news.

"Based on the information that some person named Sudhakar had given either his or his in-laws' address, they are going to the extent of saying 'AP has become a safe haven for drug suppliers'. This is absolutely false, there is no truth



in these allegations. The TDP, its leaders and allied sectors are merely spreading fake news to meet their political agenda," Sajjala said while speaking to the media. In September, the DRI had seized 2,988.22 kg of heroin with an estimated street value of Rs 2,000 crore from

the Mundra Port in Gujarat. The consignment originated from Afghanistan, and was shipped to Gujarat from the Bandar Abbas Port in Iran. The GST number used for the consignment allegedly belonged to a company registered in Vijayawada. Ever since, the TDP has been targeting the ruling YSRCP on the issue.

Sajjala also stated that the YSRCP and the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, like all other Indians, want the investigating agency to take the case to its logical conclusion and punish those responsible for such a serious offence as severely as possible. He also pointed out at the huge quantities of ganja or marijuana seized by the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) as a proof of the state government's resolve to fight the drug menace.

Kerala to have new quarantine rules for international travellers

Thiruvananthapuram | Agencies

Kerala Health Minister Veena George said that the state will have new mandatory quarantine stipulations for international travellers from Monday, on the basis of Union Health Ministry guidelines.

Travellers from UK will have to undergo ten-day quarantine at home or destination address, according to the new guidelines. Passengers from South Africa, Brazil, and Europe will have to undergo a seven-day quarantine mandatorily on arrival.

The Minister, in a statement, said that all international travellers



irrespective of their vaccination status will have to take RT-PCR tests on reaching the airports in the state. Travelers from other countries will have to undergo self-monitoring for 14 days if their test negative in RT-PCR test. Samples of passengers from coun-

tries like Botswana, the UK, New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil, European nations, of the Middle East, Bangladesh, China, Mauritius, and Zimbabwe will be sent for virus mutation tests. The Centre had ordered 10-day mandatory quarantine for passengers arriving from the UK, after it imposed such quarantine measure for Indian visitors. George also said that three RT-PCR tests are required for an international passenger to the state - One prior to 72 hours of the journey, the second on arrival at an airport in the state, and the third eight days after arriving in the state.

THIRD CIVILIAN KILLED IN A SINGLE DAY IN J&K

Srinagar: Continuing their civilian murder spree on Tuesday, the militants killed one more civilian in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district. Police sources said the militants shot and killed Muhammad Shafi Lone, a civilian in Naidkhai area of Bandipora district.

This is the third civilian killing by militants in Kashmir on Tuesday. Earlier, Makhani Lal Bindroo, owner of Bindroo Medicate was killed by militants at his shop near Iqbal Park in Srinagar city. Bindroo had sustained four bullet wounds and doctors at the SMHS hospital in Srinagar said he was dead on arrival.

A non-local vendor -- Virender Paswan, a resident of Bhagalpur in Bihar, who was selling Bhelipuri in Lal Bazar area of Srinagar, was also killed by militants. Following a spate of civilian killings by the militants, tension was palpable in Srinagar city as people rushed home.

Three UP scientists found faking RT-PCR reports

JALAUJI | Agencies

Three molecular biologists-cum-junior scientists in a UP medical college have landed in trouble for faking a number of RT-PCR test results by deliberately showing them positive when they were negative. So far, 15 such reports have been found.

The junior scientists include two women working on ad-hoc basis in the microbiology lab in Government Medical College in Orai in Jalauji.

Medical College Principal, Dr D. Nath said it was found during routine observation that while cases in the rest of the places were declining, they were on the rise in Jalauji. When the matter was discussed with District Magistrate Jalauji, Priyanka Niranjan, it was decided that the reports should be cross-checked. All the samples were then simultaneously sent to the Jhansi Medical College, the King George's Medical University, and Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Lucknow,



where the samples turned out to be negative. The administration has recommended appropriate departmental action. The report also alleges that the trio, in order to cover up the matter, went to local media with false claims in an attempt to mislead everyone. "On the basis of recommendations given by head, Microbiology Lab, Dr Gopal, and after consultation with the District Magistrate Jalauji and Chief Medical Officer (CMO), I have sent details to my seniors recommending stern action.

No two-finger test on female officer who alleged rape: IAF chief

Indian Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari on Tuesday said that no "two-finger test" was done on a female officer who had accused a colleague of rape.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Addressing the annual conference ahead of the IAF Day on October 8, he said: "No two-finger test was done. The information regarding the two-finger test is misreported. Air force law is very strict. Actual fact is this test was not done... disciplinary action will be taken based on report of inquiry."

The rape victim had alleged that she was subjected to the banned test and questioned about her sexual history in the rape case against a fellow colleague.

The woman officer had registered an FIR on September 20 in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore alleging that she was raped by a Flight Lieutenant under the influence of alcohol on September 10. She alleged



that she suffered an ankle injury on September 10, for which she had taken a painkiller. Later that night, she had two drinks with a group of friends when the accused had served her one of the glasses. The woman officer claimed that even as she was in a subconscious state, she saw the accused enter the room and sexually assault her.

She told the National Commission for Women that she was subjected to a two-finger test at the Air Force Hospital later.

In a press note, the NCW said it has taken cognisance of the woman Air Force officer being subjugated to the two-finger test, and "strongly condemned" the action of Indian Air Force doctors.

Light two diyas on Diwali: Modi to PM Awas Yojana beneficiaries

Lucknow | Agencies

Addressing a three-day urban conclave in Uttar Pradesh's state capital Lucknow on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana to light two 'diyas' in their houses on Diwali this year.

"I have learnt that 7.5 lakh diyas will be lit in Ayodhya during 'Deepotsav' and if all those people who have benefitted from the PM Awas Yojana light two diyas each outside their houses, we will have 18 lakh diyas because nine lakh people have got their houses under this scheme. Let us compete with the power of light," Modi said.

"Even Lord Ram will be happy if you do this," he added.

Speaking at the 'New Urban India Conclave', the Prime Minister said his government had not only increased the size of houses under the scheme but also ensured facilities like water and power.

"A house becomes a home when



one has basic amenities. The previous state government did not give houses to the poor even though the Central government was providing all the money. After Yogi Adityanath became Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, he has already given nine lakh houses," Modi added. He said, "The opposition always

wants to know what Modi has done. Today I am telling them that I have made three crore poor people into 'lakhpatis' (rich) through just the PM Awas Yojana."

The Prime Minister stressed that the use of technology cannot only ensure development but also ensure a better and healthier life for the people.

"Lucknow is known for 'pehle aap, pehle aap' but this is the time to say 'pehle aap' to technology. Whether it is waste management, sewage treatment plants, electric buses or pre-fabricated houses -- all this is possible only through technology," he said.

By introducing LED lights on streets, an amount of Rs one lakh crore had been saved which is now being used in other welfare schemes, Modi added.

The Prime Minister spoke virtually with three women who had been given houses under the PM Awas Yojana and gave the keys of the houses to 75,000 beneficiaries. He laid the foundation of 75

development schemes worth Rs 4,737 crore to mark 75 years of India's Independence and dedicated them to the people. Modi also flagged-off 75 electric buses.

Earlier, the Prime Minister saw an exhibition put up for the urban conclave, highlighting the new development schemes.

नाम परिवर्तन

में समरजीत सिंह आत्मज श्री शंकर सिंह निवासी -मकान नम्बर 10, कृष्क नगर, जेल रोड, कर्शद, गोपाल सर्वसाधारण को सूचित करता हूँ कि मेरे 10वीं 12वीं एवं सभी अंकसूची पर मेरा नाम समरजीत सिंह राजपूत दर्ज है एवं मेरे शासकीय दस्तावेज में समरजीत सिंह दर्ज है जो कि सही एवं सत्य है एवं दोनों नाम एक ही व्यक्ति के हैं। अतः भविष्य में सभी शासकीय एवं गैर शासकीय दस्तावेजों में मुझे समरजीत सिंह के नाम से जाना एवं पहचाना जाए।



'Third wave not imminent:'

HC ASKS MAHARASHTRA TO CONSIDER PHYSICAL MEETINGS OF BMC STANDING COMMITTEE

The court, while hearing a PIL by two BJP councillors, also directed the chairman of the Shiv Sena-led BMC's standing committee to allow petitioners to physically attend the panel meeting being conducted on Tuesday afternoon.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Observing that prevailing pandemic situation in the city does not indicate any imminent "third wave" and that most of the public amenities are being made open to the citizens, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed the Maharashtra government to consider within five days as to why the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) cannot be allowed to conduct its standing committee meetings through physical mode.

The court, while hearing a PIL by two BJP councillors, also directed the chairman of the Shiv Sena-led BMC's standing committee to allow petitioners to physically attend the panel meeting being conducted on Tuesday afternoon.

A division bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Makarand S Karnik was hearing a PIL by two members of the standing committee in BMC, Vinod Mishra and Makarand Narwekar, belonging

to the BJP. The petition challenged the notice issued by BMC secretary on October 1 pertaining to convening of the meeting of the panel through virtual mode on Tuesday from 2 pm.

Advocates Amogh Singh and Jeet Gandhi for the petitioners raised the grievance that the meeting is scheduled to be held through the virtual platform, thereby depriving them an opportunity to remain physically present for the same, as their voices and views were not being considered through online mode.

The petitioners referred to earlier instances of "malfunctioning" of the virtual platform which had disabled them from effectively participating in the virtual meetings of the Standing Committee. The PIL sought to stay the notice of the meeting and to direct the BMC to conduct further meetings of the panel in the physical presence of the members.

Senior advocate Anil Sakhare, representing the BMC, said that from April 16, all

meetings of the panel have been conducted in virtual mode and denied allegations that petitioners were disabled from participating in earlier meetings held virtually due to technical issues. Thereafter, Sakhare, on instructions received from the officers of the civic body, submitted that only the Chairman of the Standing Committee and the members of the Opposition parties will be permitted to attend the meeting on Tuesday physically while the rest of the members will be required to join it through the virtual platform.

Partly allowing the prayer in PIL, the bench observed in the order, "The prevailing situation in Mumbai does not point to any imminent third wave of the pandemic. Schools and colleges have re-opened, and children are attending the schools and colleges physically. All the courts in the State of Maharashtra are functioning as in the pre-pandemic days. Markets, malls, restaurants, etc. are open and vehicular traffic on the road is also substantial. Offices are also

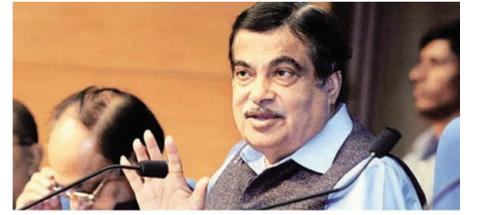
functioning as if Covid was a thing of the past."

The Court added, "In such a situation, it defies logic as to why only a few of the Standing Committee members including its Chairman would be permitted to attend the meeting physically and the rest required to attend through the virtual platform. If any member of the Standing Committee wishes to participate in the meeting physically, he should be allowed to do so."

The HC then permitted the petitioners to physically attend the panel meeting scheduled on Tuesday. Disposing of their plea, the court noted: "We wish the Government in the appropriate department to take an appropriate decision as early as possible, but not later than five days next, as to why physical meetings shall not be permitted to be conducted by the Municipal Corporation. A decision must be given in this regard before the next meeting of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Corporation."

Mumbai-Nashik highway project will be completed in 2.5 years: Gadkari

Rs 5,000 crore will be spent on the project which will reduce the time taken to travel between the two cities to 2 hours, the Union Minister said.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone for twelve national highway stretches worth Rs 1,678 crore and extending up to 206 km in Nashik on Monday, and announced that Rs 5,000 crore will be spent on the Mumbai-Nashik highway.

"Rs 5,000 crore will be spent on the Mumbai-Nashik highway. The journey between Mumbai and Nashik will be covered in just two hours. The project will be completed within two and a half years," he said. Currently it takes about 3 hours and 35 minutes to cover the 166.2 km Mumbai-Nashik stretch.

The minister said he also wants to address the noise pollution created by vehicle horns. "The in-built horns in vehicles generate harsh sounds that are loud and unfriendly to the ears. It also irritates the mind. Therefore, the government has planned to replace them with more friendly horns," he said, suggesting that in future all vehicles could utilise the sounds of Indian musical instruments for horns. The minister also expressed concern over the high number of deaths due to road accidents and assured that infrastructure upgradation also factored in measures to make travel more comfortable and less dangerous. Minimising the loss of human lives in road accidents is a prime focus, he said.

Yellow alert for four days in Kolhapur

Team Absolute | Kolhapur

The city was lashed by heavy rain on Monday for one hour grinding normal life to a standstill.

A sudden rise in temperature by about 3 degrees Celsius was observed along with high humidity in the morning. The heavy rainfall in the evening along with the lightning provided some relief to the citizens.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a 'yellow alert' for Kolhapur for the next four days with the probability of heavy to very heavy rain in most parts of the district.



Satara has been issued a yellow alert till October 8 while for Sangli and Solapur districts, the alert is from October 6 to 8. Heavy rainfall has been predicted in most parts of western

Maharashtra. Kolhapur district recorded 5.2mm rainfall in the 24-hour period ending at 8am on Monday. Kolhapur city and Karveer region received the highest rainfall (13.2mm)

while the heavy rainfall prone zone of Gagan Bawda received the least 0.1mm rainfall.

Sangli district recorded 8.2mm rainfall till Monday morning and Miraj region received 26.2mm rain. The Shirala region recorded 0.1mm rain.

In Satara, 3.4mm rainfall was recorded in the 24-hour period. Wai received 13.7mm, while Phaltan and Patan region received the least amount of rainfall 0.1mm.

In Solapur, merely 0.7mm rainfall was recorded in some parts of the district.

NCB NABS 4 MORE IN CRUISE SHIP RAVE PARTY CASE

Mumbai: The Narcotics Control Bureau has nabbed at least four more persons in connection with the rave party busted aboard a cruise ship on Saturday, officials said here on Tuesday. They are Abdul Qadir Abdul Qayyum Sheikh, 30, Shreyas Surendra Nair, 23, Manish Udayaraj Darya, 26 and Avin Dinanath Sahu, 30. This takes the total arrests to 12 so far, including Aryan Khan, the son of megastar Shah Rukh Khan and producer Gauri. Among the fresh arrests, at least 2 are alleged to be drug conduits aboard the Cordelia Cruise luxury ship raided thrice by the NCB.

Maharashtra government to restore forts in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Once considered impregnable by military standards, a majority of the forts in Mumbai are in ruins. In fact, in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, which also comprises parts of Mumbai's adjoining coastal districts of Thane, Palghar and Raigad, there are close to three dozen small, medium and big size forts. Mumbai city itself has around a dozen forts.

The Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi in Maharashtra has decided to

restore six of the forts of Mumbai. At a meeting presided over by state's Cultural Affairs Minister Amit Deshmukh, it was decided to take half a dozen Mumbai forts for development.

These six forts are Sewri Fort, Worli Fort, Bandra Fort, Dharavi Fort, Mahim Fort and St George. "A development plan for the development of these forts must be prepared at the earliest," Deshmukh said. The meeting was also attended by Vilas Thorat, Deputy Secretary of Cultural Affairs department and Dr Tejas Garge, Director

of Directorate of Archaeology and Museums.

The forts in the bustling commercial capital and its suburban areas withstood the ravages of time for centuries - but commercial development of land and neglect from authorities is threatening their existence.

Every fort or garrison has its own history and heritage. Some of these forts come under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) while some of them come under the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums of Maharashtra.

Pune Airport to remain shut for 14 days from October 16

"We have received a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) from the Air Force that the runway will remain closed from October 15, 8 pm to October 30, 8 am for works," said an AAI official



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Residents-led cleanliness drive at Mahim has earned praise from a cross section of society. The eminent citizens who appreciated the efforts of the residents to keep their neighbourhood clean and green included mayor Kishori Pednekar.

Using Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary (October 2) which is celebrated as Rashtriya Swachhata Divas as an occasion to send the message of cleanliness and sanitation, the residents joined hands to underline the message that clean environment keeps the ecosystem hygienic and it also helps in reducing air-borne and water-borne diseases like Malaria, Dengue, Typhoid, Leptospirosis etc.

"The cleanliness drive in Mahim helps in reiterating the importance of Mahim in the city. Initially Mumbai existed between Colaba and Mahim alone. Mahim has an 800-year-old fort, very old Mahim Dargah, many churches, mosques, temples, famous



schools and hospitals. Any good initiative

begun at Mahim is noticed and applauded," said Mahim resident and managing trustee of Mahim Dargah and trustee of Haji Ali Dargah Sohail Khandwani. He added that Mahim Dargah's management would always join hands with any initiative aimed at welfare of citizens and keeping the environment clean. Diabetologist and Mahim resident Dr Wasim Ghori and a few others had kicked off the cleanliness drive in Mahim under the

umbrella of Mahim Residents Forum in June this year. The core of the Forum comprises, apart from Dr Ghori, Anwar Khan, Oswald Rodrigues, Alwyn Ferao, Jamal Sorathiya, Joscelyn Dias, Hanif Khatib, Ibrahim Khan, AS Motiwala, Uwais Ali, Ghulam Bhoira, Arif Ahmed and Akbar. "Clean-Up Mahim Initiative, under the aegis of Mahim Residents Forum had begun its activities in June 2021 to improve sanitation and cleanliness in Mahim by engaging with local residents, public,

visitors and BMC authorities in the spirit of collaboration, co-operation and support," said Dr Ghori.

Dr Gori explained that as part of Rashtriya Swachhata Divas celebrations, youngsters from different areas of Mahim participated with enthusiasm in Mahim Beach Football Tournament to carry forward the message of "Swachh Mahim, for All."

The aim of holding the Mahim Beach Football Tournament was also to engage the youth in physical activities and keep them away from the menace of drugs. "Clean-Up Mahim Neighborhoods Initiative seeks to transform Mahim, a historical place, into a clean and green, beautiful Neighborhood. All these initiatives are taken by alert, socially responsible and conscious citizens of Mahim," said Dr Ghori. This initiative hasn't been entrusted to any single BMC Official; it has been put forward as a live project 'of the people, by the people and for the people' of Mahim. It is turning into a movement.

Aryan needs appointment to meet Pa at home, SRK takes permission of NCB to meet son in lockup!

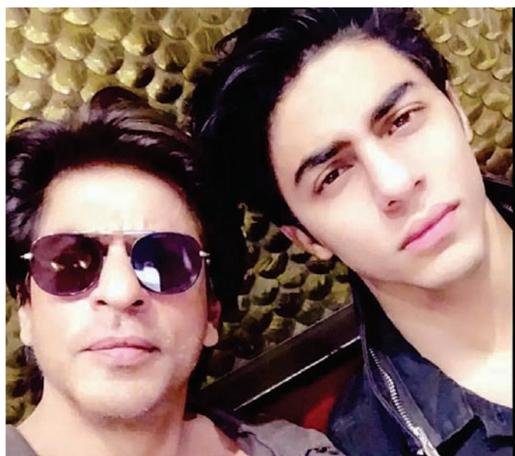
Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a plot straight out of the all-time favourite American comic book "Richie Rich", the poor rich Aryan Khan has reportedly told the Narcotics Control Bureau sleuths that his father and mega-star Shah Rukh Khan remains so busy that occasionally, he needs an appointment just to meet him.

Ironically, life became a full circle when a couple of days ago, SRK had to take the NCB's permission for a brief meet with his son in the agency lock-up, when the 24-year-old cried before his celeb dad, though eventually it has surfaced that no drugs were recovered from him.

Aryan, along with at least 10 others, was rounded up and arrested at various times on Sunday-Monday in the NCB's first-ever raid on a luxury ship, the Cordelia Cruises, as it was preparing to lift anchor for a fun-filled two-night gala voyage to Goa with around 1,300 affluent passengers on board.

The other youngsters in the NCB net are: Munnum Dhamecha, Arbaaz Merchant, Vikrant Chhoker, Nupur Sarika, Ismeet Singh, Mohak Jaiswal and Gomit Chopra, and the rest nabbed in the second NCB operation aboard the cruiser on Monday. The NCB's swoop - which shook the Bollywood core as the future potential superstar-kid of the one of the reigning actors was involved - almost sounded unbelievable till a video clip of a dazed Aryan sitting on a bench inside the agency office in south Mumbai emerged on Sunday evening. At Monday's court hearing, during one heated moment in the arguments, Aryan's lawyer Satish Maneshinde even said that it was not as if



"Khan (Aryan) was selling drugs in the ship, if he wants, he can buy the ship". During their detention for several hours, their subsequent arrest

and now in NCB custody till October 7, there has been support bordering on concern from Bollywood circles on Aryan's well-being inside the dank and inhospitable agency lockup. Worried about her son's dietary health, an anxious Gauri Khan this morning rushed to the NCB office armed with a few packets of McDonalds burgers in her car, fondly hoping that Aryan would relish them.

Expectedly, the NCB sleuths sternly but politely disallowed her pleas and punctured the venture on "security grounds", just as they have refused to permit the other accused the luxury of home-cooked food in the lockup after they were picked up and brought down-to-earth from the luxury ship.

Nevertheless, the rave-party accused youth are not exactly starving and in the past couple of days, they have been treated to street fare like "puri-bhaji, dal-chawal, sabzi-parathas" from roadside stalls, plus plates of biryani or pulao from a nearby restaurant, which is reputedly a hot favourite with even the NCB sleuths.

The usual band-box style of aura and glam appearance of Aryan and the other boys-girls was starkly missing, and most did not seem to have changed their attire for nearly 3 days - a far cry from their routine of wearing and discarding designer outfits at the drop of a hat!

In the past three decades, the only other two notables who spent time behind bars were Sanjay Dutt and Salman Khan - and both had sparked off a similar media frenzy with oodles of love doodling in from their fan-brigades.

While Dutt completed his full sentence in the Yerawada Central Jail, Pune, as a full-fledged convict, Salman spent a total of around 3 weeks in Rajasthan jail as an undertrial.

TWO MINOR BOYS DROWN IN ARABIAN SEA

Mumbai: Two minor boys drowned in the Arabian Sea off south Mumbai, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Disaster Control said on Tuesday. The tragedy occurred when a group of eight youngsters went for a swim opposite the Priyadarshini Park in Malabar Hill. However, two of them failed to return ashore. After a massive search operation, the Mumbai Fire Brigade recovered the bodies of Mohammed Dilshad Shaikh, 12, and Rehman Rizwan Shaikh, 15, early on Tuesday. The cause of the incident is being investigated as it is still not clear whether the boys could not swim or were trapped in the strong sea currents, especially since that rocky stretch is regarded off bounds for entering the water, according to locals.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Exodus of Indian students for education

As international borders reopen with the Covid situation easing, studying abroad is set to grow in the coming years and according to new forecast, over 18 lakh Indian students are set to opt for foreign colleges and universities by 2024. While the demand for studying abroad is increasing and the outflow is also increasing, student expenditure is soaring and is likely to touch \$75-85 billion by 2024, which will be an increase of more than 2 times from 2019. While the sector faced a stunted growth in 2020-21 as international borders were closed to combat Covid, it is now expected to regain momentum as things become normal, according to the report by Bengaluru-based market research firm RedSeer. According to engagement manager at RedSeer, We are bullish about this segment's growth in the coming years. Our research shows that the total number of Indian students studying abroad will stand at around 18 lakh by 2024. Nearly 7,00,000 students applied to study abroad in 2019. In 2019 alone, around 420k students headed out but the total number of applicants was around 1.7 times. This colossal increase is due to factors like rise in GDP in the past two decades leading to more consumption and awareness about education abroad. The growth in the outflow rates had outpaced domestic student growth by 6 times in 2016-19 which shows the massive demand that this segment is witnessing. The research shows that currently, 770k Indian students are studying abroad from 440K in 2016 which is a 20 per cent growth. On the other hand, the growth in the domestic region has been merely 3 per cent when compared to the demand for education abroad.

Asad Mirza

Proposals for a European Union (EU) army have re-emerged after the Afghan fiasco - but many member states still remain hard to convince, about its feasibility.

It seems that the EU has learnt the lessons of the abrupt end of the US-led mission in Afghanistan and furthermore after AUKUS, that the US is a trying to build a coalition of English speaking Anglophonic nations in the defence realm and that time has now come for them to guard their interests themselves.

In her annual state of the union speech in the European Parliament in Strasbourg recently, Ursula von der Leyen, a former German defence minister, described the withdrawal of the US-led mission in Afghanistan, and the subsequent collapse of President Ashraf Ghani's administration troubling. She urged the European leaders to acquire the "political will" to build up its own military force to be deployed at or prevent any future crises.

She is also reported to be working with the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, on issuing a "new declaration" on EU-Nato relations by the end of the year. She has also said there would be crises where the EU's own military force should operate independently from both the UN and Nato.

Germany's current Defence Minister, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer has said that von der Leyen is right. Real EU defence depends on the political will of the member states. That's why Germany and France must lead any such exercise.

European solidarity
For some, this state of affairs revived the old idea of a European military - with the EU's chief diplomat himself urging the bloc to create a collective armed force.

"The need for more European defence has never been as much evident as today after the events in Afghanistan," EU foreign affairs representative Josep Borrell told journalists at a meeting of the bloc's foreign and defence ministers in Slovenia recently, where the Afghanistan debacle featured prominently.

The EU needs to create a "rapid response force" of 5,000 soldiers, Borrell said. EU military committee chairman Claudio Graziano also agreed with the idea, which should be supported with a genuine "will to act" he is reported to have said.

This phrase appeared once again, when Macron talked about Afghanistan with visiting Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte at the Elysee Palace. The two leaders gave a joint statement urging the EU to develop "strategic autonomy" so it can take "more responsibility



for its security and defence".

Going one step further France has recently inked a defence deal for supply of 13 Rafal jets and 3 frigates to Greece. By choosing French Rafal, Greece rejected the bid by US's Boeing for F-16 planes.

Critics of the proposal

The idea of common defence, one attacked by some critics of the EU as evidence of fomenting nationalism building, has a long and chequered history. It dates back to 1990s and the Yugoslav Wars. A joint 1998 statement by France's then President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair declared that the EU "must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces", an assertion which fits Emmanuel Macron very well today.

In 1999, the EU agreed to raise a contingent of 50,000-60,000. In 2007, the bloc created a network of two "battle groups" of 1,500 troops from each country. They have since never been requisitioned.

Proponents of an EU armed force that operates independently of Washington will also have to win over sceptics within the bloc; the Baltic states and Poland are not in favour of any new defence pact excluding the US.

In addition perceptions within the EU states differ as to what is a threat to its interests. For example the Baltic states consider Russia as an existential threat as per geopolitical realities but Russia is a key energy partner for Germany, and an ally for Hungary.

Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel also

backed the EU army idea in 2018, amid suggestions that the EU "could no longer count on the United States" under Donald Trump's leadership. Other European leaders who had advocated for such an army have included Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Italy's former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Czech President Milos Zeman and former Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka.

Pushes for an EU-force have public support, too. A 2017 Eurobarometer poll collated by Statista found that 74 per cent of respondents in the Netherlands and Belgium supported the idea. In France and Germany, backing for the proposal was 65 per cent and 55 per cent respectively, but in EU's traditionally more neutral countries, like Austria (45 per cent), Ireland (46 per cent), Finland (42 per cent) and Sweden (40 per cent) it was mellowed. In the UK, only 39 per cent of survey respondents were in favour.

Other critics of the proposal include Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg himself, who has warned that an EU force "cannot defend Europe" without NATO assistance.

Military analysts say that most EU governments can't investment more in defence and they are further concerned about the risk of undermining Nato. In 2019 EU's 27 member states' expenditure on defence stood at 1.2 per cent of the GDP compared with 3.4 per cent by the US.

International security and defence analyst Brooks Tigner

has also pointed to potential funding issues. In a 2018 opinion piece for the Atlantic Council, Tigner wrote that while the idea for an EU army might appear "impressive on paper", but none has any realisation of what the collective cost of operations might be. He added that the bloc would have to resolve a plethora of other "technical, legal, and administrative differences" that would "boil down to the most mundane things such as soldiers' rights".

A leaders' summit dedicated to European defence will be convened by von der Leyen and tMacron, in the first half of next year, when France holds the rolling presidency of the EU. The concept of an EU army would be debated and discussions will be held about "why this has not worked in the past" at the next summit von der Leyen has said.

Overall, as in the past, this time too it seems that the idea might get turned down due to its feasibility but it would help politicians like Macron and other European leaders to root for more nationalism and nationalistic tendencies, independent of the US.

(Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, inter-faith and current affairs. Views expressed are personal)

international

TAIWAN WARNS OF 'CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES' IF CHINA INVADES ISLAND

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Taiwan has warned of "catastrophic consequences for regional peace" if China takes over the island after days of incursions by Beijing's warplanes, Daily Mail reported.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen vowed to "do whatever it takes" to guard Taiwan against invasion as she indicated that without help from the country's allies "authoritarianism has the upper hand over democracy."

Nearly 150 Chinese warplanes have breached Taiwan's airspace since Friday, including 56 jets on Monday in a dramatic

increase in aggression.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has described the seizure of the self-governed democracy as "inevitable" and Beijing has ratcheted up pressure on Tsai since she was elected in 2016 on a mandate of an "independent" Taiwan, the report said.

Chinese state media has issued chilling warnings in recent days, including asking "whether Australia is willing to accompany Taiwan... to become cannon fodder" after its foreign minister reached out for help preparing his defences.

Australia has been on the receiving end of Chinese wrath over the last few weeks after it signed a new

security pact with the UK and the US.

As part of the deal, Washington and London agreed to share nuclear submarine technology with Canberra. This has infuriated Beijing as it will dramatically shift the power balance in the South China Sea. In an article published on Tuesday, Taiwan's president Tsai said: "They should remember that if Taiwan were to fall, the consequences would be catastrophic for regional peace and the democratic alliance system." "It would signal that in today's global contest of values, authoritarianism has the upper hand over democracy."

ONLY 44% S.KOREANS THINK UNIFICATION WITH PYONGYANG NECESSARY: POLL

Seoul: Only 44 per cent

of South Koreans think that reunification with North Korea is necessary, a survey revealed on Tuesday.

According to the poll of 1,200 adults by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University, 44.6 per cent replied that unification is necessary, recording the lowest percentage since the survey began in 2007, reports Yonhap News Agency. The proportion of those who replied that unification was unnecessary stood at 29.4 per cent, it showed. The institute cited the North's demolition of the inter-Korean liaison office last year and the breakdown of the Hanoi summit in February 2019 between then US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un as some of the factors that affected the latest results. Among those surveyed, an all-time high of 82.7 per cent said they considered the US as a partner for cooperation, while 70.7 per cent said they believe Washington will help Seoul if a war breaks out on the Korean Peninsula.

The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.8 percentage points with a 95 per cent confidence level.



Palestinian Prez says ready for peace process with Israel

Ramallah | Agencies

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told a visiting US official that he is ready to go for a peace process with Israel based on international resolutions.

The official Palestinian news agency (Wafa) reported that Abbas made the remarks during a meeting held in the West Bank city of Ramallah with Hady Amr, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Israel and Palestinian Affairs.

Abbas told Amr that it is necessary to hold an international conference for peace in the Middle East under an international framework to end the Israeli occupation and establish a Palestinian state based on 1967 borders. Xinhua news agency reported on Tuesday citing Wafa as saying.

"The current situation is unacceptable," Abbas told Amr, calling for exerting pressure on Israel "to stop its practices against the Palestinians and stop settlement activities and annexation of the Palestinian land".

The Wafa report said that Abbas

explained to Amr the meaning of the online speech he (Abbas) addressed last week before the UN General Assembly, which included initiatives aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. On October 2, Abbas said that if Israel doesn't accept the principle of the two-state solution, the Palestinians will go for other options, including the implementation of the UN Security Council's resolution passed in 1947, or choose to establish a democratic state. Direct peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, which were backed by the United States for nine months, had stopped in 2014 due to deep disagreements on Israeli settlement and the recognition of establishing a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders. Israel occupied the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which are claimed by the Palestinians, in the 1967 Middle East war and has controlled them ever since. The Palestinians want to establish an independent Palestinian state on the territories that Israel occupied in 1967, including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

Employment in Germany to return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022

Berlin | Agencies

Employment in Germany could return to and even exceed the pre-Covid-19 pandemic levels in 2022, the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) said in a forecast.

Following the Covi-19 crisis, the number of employees subject to social security contributions in Germany could rise by 550,000 to 34.42 million in 2022, Xinhua news agency quoted the forecast as saying.

"This will set new record highs," said IAB's head of research Enzo Weber in a statement.

"However, employment subject to social security contributions is still well off the growth path that would have been expected without the crisis."

The IAB expects employment to increase in almost all sectors of the German economy. In particular, recovery is expected in the second half of the year in catering and tourism as well as in the transport, cultural, sports and trade fair sectors. As demand

for labour rises in the wake of the economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, bottlenecks in the labour market would once again become more relevant.

"This is currently affecting sectors, such as parts of the hospitality industry, which have lost a lot of employees during the lockdowns and which now need to restock in a short period of time," Weber said.

According to the IAB, the unemployment rate in Germany will decline from the current 5.4 per cent to 5.1 per cent in 2022, a level only slightly higher than in 2019.

The recovery of the country's labour market has already started.

In September, the unemployment rate was 0.8 percentage points below the figure of the same period of last year, according to the Federal Employment Agency (BA). "It is particularly encouraging that the impact of the pandemic on the labour market is diminishing and that employment is growing significantly," Labour Minister Hubertus Heil said.

Nobel Prize in Physics awarded for discoveries in climate, complex physical systems

Three scientists from US, Germany, and Italy were on Tuesday awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics 2021 for their contributions in discovering climate and complex physical systems.

Stockholm | Agencies

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the Physics Nobel to Syukuro Manabe, Klaus Hasselmann, and Giorgio Parisi "for groundbreaking contributions to our understanding of complex physical systems", said a statement.

Manabe from Princeton University, US and Hasselmann from Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Hamburg, Germany were jointly awarded "for the physical modelling of Earth's climate, quantifying variability and reliably predicting global warming".

Parisi from Sapienza University of Rome, was awarded the other half "for the discovery of the interplay of disorder and fluctuations in physical systems from atomic to planetary scales".

Manabe and Hasselmann laid the foundation of our knowledge of the Earth's climate and how humanity influences it, while Parisi got rewarded for his revolutionary contributions to the theory of disordered materials and random processes.

"Three Laureates share this year's Nobel Prize in Physics for their studies of chaotic and apparently random phenomena. Complex systems are characterised by randomness and disorder and are difficult to understand. This year's Prize recognises new methods for describing them and predicting their long-term behaviour," said the statement from the Academy.

Manabe demonstrated how increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere lead to increased temperatures at the surface of the Earth. In the 1960s, he

led the development of physical models of the Earth's climate and was the first person to explore the interaction between radiation balance and the vertical transport of air masses. His work laid the foundation for the development of current climate models.

About ten years later, Hasselmann created a model that links together weather and climate, thus answering the question of why climate models can be reliable despite weather being changeable and chaotic. He also developed methods for identifying specific signals, or 'fingerprints', that both natural phenomena and human activities imprint in the climate. His methods have been used to prove that the increased temperature in the atmosphere is due to human emissions of carbon dioxide. Around 1980, Parisi discovered hidden

patterns in disordered complex materials. His discoveries are among the most important contributions to the theory of complex systems. They make it possible to understand and describe many different and apparently entirely random materials and phenomena, not only in physics but also in other, very different areas, such as mathematics, biology, neuroscience and machine learning. The discoveries being recognised this year demonstrate that our knowledge about the climate rests on a solid scientific foundation, based on a rigorous analysis of observations. This year's Laureates have all contributed to us gaining deeper insight into the properties and evolution of complex physical systems," said Thors Hans Hansson, chair of the Nobel Committee for Physics, in the statement.



CONGRESS ANNOUNCES CANDIDATES FOR BY-POLLS; BJP TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT SOON

The Congress party has gave ticket to Mahesh Patel from Jobat and Kalpana Verma from Raigaon while it has fielded Rajnarayan Singh Purni from Khandwa Lok Sabha seat. The grand old party has already announced the name of Nitendra Rathore in the Prithvipur assembly seat.

Zafar Alam Khan | Bhopal
www.absoluteindianews.com

The preparations for by-polls to Khandwa parliamentary constituency and three assembly seats, scheduled for October 30, have began taking shape in Madhya Pradesh with the Congress announcing candidates for all four seats before the BJP.

The by-polls, touted as semi-finals before the 2023 assembly polls, have generated much interest. On Tuesday, the Congress announced former MLA Rajnarayan Singh Purni as its Khandwa Lok Sabha candidate. The three-time legislator is considered close to Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh.

Kalpana Verma, a zilla panchayat member from Satna who had lost 2018 assembly polls, has been given a ticket for Raigaon seat (reserved for scheduled caste candidates), while Mahesh Patel, Alirajpur Congress district president and son of former MLA late Vesta Patel, has been offered ticket for Jobat seat (reserved for scheduled tribe candidates).

The party had already announced Nitendra Singh, son of former minister Brajendra Singh Rathore, as the candidate for the Prithvipur seat in Niwari district. The seat fell vacant following the



death of Rathore. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Tuesday that the BJP will announce its candidates soon as the process of selection has been completed. He said the BJP does not take much time for candidate selection as it does not look for dynasties or families but focuses on party workers. He added that there was no groupism in the saffron party, not does the party has people suggesting different names as candidates.

However, the CM's statement came just a day after BJP workers, mainly supporters of former MLA Madho Singh Dawar, put up resignations in Jobat to protest the induction of former Congress MLA Sulochana Rawat and her son Vishal Rawat into the party. They protested the prospects of either of them getting the ticket from Jobat.

The Khandwa Lok Sabha ticket is most likely to go to Harshvardhan Singh Chauhan son of prominent BJP leader Nand Kumar Singh Chouhan, whose death vacated the seat earlier this year. However, former minister Archana Chitnis and former MP Krishnamurari Moghe are also notable contenders for this seat. Similarly, the Raigaon ticket is likely to go to Pushpraj Bagri, the son of deceased MLA Jugal Kishore Bagri. However, Pushpraj had lost the 2013 election on BJP ticket to Usha Choudhary, who was then with Bahujan Samaj Party, but later switched over to the Congress.

The Prithvipur candidate selection might be toughest for the BJP as the party has performed very poorly in the constituency in 2018 polls, when its candidate Abhay Singh Yadav was relegated to fourth position behind Samajwadi Party

and Bahujan Samaj Party candidates. SP candidate Shishupal Yadav, who came second in 2018, has now joined BJP and is a strong contender for the ticket. However, his outsider tag has caused rift among the local BJP workers. Besides, Abhay Singh's father Akhand Patap Singh, a former minister, has filed nomination as independent candidate on the seat, opening up another front.

The Congress candidate selection was also not bereft of drama as former president of MP Congress Committee and former union minister Arun Yadav, considered strongest contender for the Khandwa Lok Sabha seat, retracted his claim just two days ago with a letter to Sonia Gandhi. Though Yadav cited personal and family reasons for his decision, the BJP sought to play it up as fallout of internal politics in Congress and an insult to a prominent OBC leader. Yadav is not on good terms with ex-chief minister Kamal Nath. While Digvijaya Singh was publicly supporting his candidature, sources said the Rajya Sabha member was also not rooting for him that much.

Independent MLA Surendra Singh Shera had also been openly seeking the Congress ticket for Khandwa for his wife Jayashree Singh.

Diesel crosses Rs 100 per litre-mark, petrol over Rs 111 in Bhopal, Indore

This is for the first time that the diesel price has crossed the Rs 100 per litre mark in Indore, claimed Paras Jain, the vice-president of Madhya Pradesh Federation of Petroleum Dealers Association.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Diesel prices crossed the Rs 100 per litre mark in Bhopal and Indore on Tuesday, while the petrol rates went over Rs 111 per litre in the two major cities of Madhya Pradesh, as rates were increased again after international oil prices hit the highest mark since 2014.

In the state capital Bhopal, the price of diesel reached Rs 100.1 per litre, while petrol stood at Rs 111.10 per litre, Ajay Singh, the president of Petrol Pump Dealers Association (PPDA), told PTI.

Among other parts of the state, the price of diesel in Balaghat district was at Rs 101 per litre, he said.

In the industrial hub of Indore, the price of diesel reached Rs 100.11 per litre after registering an increase of 32 paise and the petrol rate went up to Rs 111.18 per litre after a 26 paise hike, it was stated. This is

for the first time that the diesel price has crossed the Rs 100 per litre mark in Indore, claimed Paras Jain, the vice-president of Madhya Pradesh Federation of Petroleum Dealers Association.

Jain, who has been running a petrol pump since decades, recalled that at one time, diesel was sold at Rs 1.61 per litre in 1977.

However, PPDA president Ajay Singh said there was a scope for reduction in fuel prices in the state. "The Centre realises a fixed amount of tax on per litre fuel irrespective of the prices. However, the state government charges Value Added Tax (VAT) on percentage basis. So, the state has a scope to reduce it," Singh said.

The present hike is a fall-out of the rise in crude oil prices in the international market, he said. Some consumers expressed unhappiness over the fuel price hike and its constant upward trend. "I don't understand when the rise in prices of petroleum products will stop. My business was badly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and to add to this, the hike in fuel prices has ruined my budget," said Rajesh Gupta, a trader, who was visiting a petrol pump in Indore for a refill. Meanwhile, state Congress spokesman Anurodh Jain demanded that the VAT on petrol and diesel be brought down immediately to provide relief to people, and these fuels be brought under the Goods and Services Tax (GST). "Transporters are increasing freight charges due to the spiralling prices of petrol and diesel, resulting in inflation of essential commodities," Jain said.

PM Modi to to distribute 1.7 lakh e-property cards

- Distribution of rights records will be done in 3000 villages of 19 districts
- PM to hold virtual dialogue with the beneficiaries of Sehore, Harda and Dindori districts

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute rights records to one lakh 71 thousand beneficiaries in 3000 villages of 19 districts of Madhya Pradesh under the Swamitva Yojana on October 6. Along with this, he will also hold virtual dialogue with the beneficiaries of Sehore, Harda and Dindori districts. The Prime Minister will give guidance by making them aware about the Swamitva Yojana and the benefits of the scheme. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan from Harda district will participate in the state level programme of Swamitva Yojana in the Jan Kalyan and



Suraj Abhiyan being run in Madhya Pradesh from September 17 to October 7. Beneficiaries and public representatives from other districts will join the programme through video conferencing. Madhya Pradesh is also included in the 9 states where the Swamitva Yojana has been implemented on pilot basis. In Madhya Pradesh, the implementation of Swamitva Yojana has been started in three phases by covering 10 districts

each in a sequential manner. With the help of Survey of India under the Swamitva Yojana, maps are being prepared on the habitation areas in villages through drones and by conducting door-to-door surveys. So far, the process of survey has been started in 42 districts of Madhya Pradesh, in which 24 drones are working in 24 districts. Out of these, drone works have been completed in 6500 villages.

In order to provide maximum benefits of the scheme to the beneficiaries in Madhya Pradesh, the rules of the survey have been simplified as per the present requirement. In this, giving the status of legal documents to electronic documents, completing the survey in a time-limit, preparing the records with transparency, making the survey process online and adding the name of the surveyor on the spot through the app, etc are included. This process has been appreciated at the national level and other states have also observed the process to implement it here.

CM PLANTS MADHU KAMINI SAPLING IN SMART GARDEN



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a sapling of Madhu Kamini in Smart Garden. Chouhan plants saplings every day as part of his resolve. Madhu Kamini is a medicinal plant. It is an evergreen and ornamental tree. Its small, fragrant flowers bloom in spring. Flowers are used in the production of perfumes and cosmetics.

BJP to remember iconic personalities of SC/ST community

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a big outreach programme, the BJP in Madhya Pradesh is aiming to bring Dalit and tribal people closer to the party.

As part of this initiative, the party will highlight the lives and personalities of freedom fighters and prominent personalities from the SC and ST communities.

The party's Madhya Pradesh in-charge, P. Murlidhar Rao, told IANS that it is a movement to restore the pride of Dalit and tribal heroes whose contributions have been forgotten.

"With public participation, we will remember the forgotten heroes of the SC and ST community and their contributions will be told to the current generation," he said.

Rao explained that the BJP will recognise and remember the contribution of all the iconic figures from

the SC/ST community, including freedom fighters or those who worked for the nation's pride and sacrificed their lives for the country.

"It will be a movement of cultural pride where people will remember the contributions of unknown or unsung heroes from SC/ST community. It will start soon," Rao said.

Last month, while addressing an event in Jabalpur, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said, "It is very unfortunate that the previous governments committed the crime of forgetting and not recognising the contributions and sacrifices of freedom fighters belonging to the SC/ST community." Shah had mentioned that Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to organise the 'Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav' in honour of those freedom fighters who have not been given due recognition.

CM GARLANDS THE PORTRAIT OF RANI DURGA VATI

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Veerangana Rani Durgavati on the occasion of her birth anniversary.

Chouhan garlanded the picture of Rani Durgavati in the auditorium at his residence. Chief Minister has tweeted that "The saga of Veerangana Rani Durgavati ji, who reduced the Mughal rulers to complete helplessness with her battle skill, dexterity and valour, will give today's daughters the courage to always move forward and fight for the truth."

"Tremendous respect on the birth anniversary of the great heroic queen Durgavati ji, synonymous with heroism and courage who fought fearlessly in the battlefield for the protection of the motherland and self-pride."



Woman-daughter murdered in Jabalpur, bodies exhumed

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

In a shocking incident, the bodies of a woman and her daughter were exhumed from some bushes in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday.

A team of the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) has been asked to assist the police in the investigation of the case.

According to information, mother Babli Jharia, 40, and her daughter

Nisha Jharia, 15, living in ward number 15 under Barela police station area of Jabalpur, were missing for the past few days. A case of missing person was registered and the police was searching for them.

On Tuesday, the police came to know about bodies buried in the bushes on the banks of a canal in Kashi Mahagan area of the city. On the basis of the information, the police exhumed the bodies with the help of the FSL team and sent them

for post mortem.

According to the police, the two bodies that have been exhumed are of Babli Jharia and her daughter Nisha Jharia. "It appears both of them were brutally murdered over a love affair," police said after a preliminary investigation.

Jabalpur Superintendent of Police Siddharth Bahuguna told reporters that the matter is being investigated. More details will be shared later.

CM PRESENTS RS. 10 LAKH CHEQUE



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan presented a cheque of Rs. 10 lakh to Anjali Dangi, wife of Late Rambabu Singh Dangi, a journalist from Vidisha. Rambabu Singh Dangi died untimely in a road accident on August 20, 2020. A cheque of Rs 10 lakh was presented to his wife Anjali Dangi under the Journalist's Health and Accident Group Insurance Scheme. Commissioner Public Relations Sudam Khade, Additional Director Public Relations Suresh Gupta and Chief Regional Manager of United India Insurance Madan Mohan Khichi were present.

State government committed for all-round development, upliftment and protection of honor of tribal community: CM

- CM braces up for development at Jhabua tribal convention
- Chief Minister gifts many development works to Jhabua district 2017 Wednesday.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, while addressing the tribal convention in Jhabua today said, that the state government is committed for the development, upliftment of the tribal community and to protect their honor and dignity. Vanvasi regions are being expanded rapidly and this will continue. He said that today I have braced up for the development of Madhya Pradesh. He said that the country is taking a new turn for development under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said that today I call upon the tribal community with open arms to change their lives. The government of Madhya Pradesh has introduced various schemes for them.

Chouhan was addressing a tribal convention in Jhabua today. Chouhan dedicated and laid the foundation of several development works costing more than Rs 140 crore in the tribal convention. He said that on November 15, Tribal Pride Day would be celebrated with much zeal. A huge convention will be held in Bhopal on this occasion. He also invited the entire Vanvasi Samaj for this

Chouhan said that in many small cases, people of the tribal community have frequently visit courts, hence cases which are not of serious nature will be withdrawn. Chief Minister said that Late Shri Dilip Singh Bhuria of Jhabua played an important role in the making of the PESA Act. This act passed in 1996 was not implemented by the then government, but our government will implement it. He said that this act is not against any community, it will be implemented with social justice and harmony. The people of the village will decide the development of the village. The



money of the village will be spent in the village itself. Chouhan said that the money for the business of tendu leaves would be provided to the Vanvasis through forest committees. The Chief Minister said that 'Sickle Cell Mission' would be started from November 15. In this, free treatment of sickle cell disease especially among tribals will be provided. Chouhan said that the then governments never allowed the forest dwellers to move forward. Our government has made every possible effort for the development of tribal community and will continue to do so. Irrigation facilities, schools, colleges, ashrams, hostels, roads etc. have been expanded rapidly in Jhabua region. He said that our government started free bicy-

cle scheme for girls studying in the other villages, increased scholarship and now the government is also bearing the fees for engineering and medical colleges. Not only this, we are also providing opportunities to the children of forest dwellers to study abroad.

Chouhan said that the work of adding the names of poor people by conducting a survey, whose names are not in the 2011 survey list, is being started. Instructions have been given to the district administration in this regard. Chief Minister said that the government will allot a plot to every family to build a house. The person who is residing in a joint family, will be given the amount for construction of house with the plot by taking them in the category of separate family. Chouhan said that this year 24,000 houses are being built in rural areas of Jhabua. This process of building houses will continue.

Chouhan said that the Revenue Department will start a campaign for name transfer and property distribution from October 7. People's representatives should monitor this campaign, if there is a complaint of transaction anywhere in it, then he will not be spared.

Chouhan said that the culture of forest dwellers is the culture of happiness. He said that every year Jhabua Utsav would be celebrated here. Local artists will get opportunities on this. Chief Minister also instructed the Jhabua Collector regarding the preparation of ration slips for the poor. He said that the names of the poor, whose names have been left out in the eligibility slip, should be added. Chouhan said that there is no dearth of funds for the poor in the treasury of Mama. Now "Ration Aapke Dwar" scheme will be implemented in remote villages. Ration will be sent from door to door in villages in vehicles. Vehicles of the youths of the area will be engaged for ration transport. These youths will be provided loan from the bank for the vehicle. For distribution of ration, every youth will be given 26 thousand rupees per month, so that he will be able to support his family after paying the installment of the bank.



BEING TRUTHFUL

Actress Zoe Kravitz will play Catwoman in Matt Reeves' upcoming 'The Batman' film and revealed how she wanted to give an honest impression to movie heads.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kravitz told Another magazine: "I read the script. Then (Reeves) talked with me again to hear my thoughts, to see if we were on the same page. I didn't know him well and it was a bit of a process. "When these big opportunities come up, these big roles, and you really want them, it's heartbreaking when you don't get them. You put a lot of energy into it." She added: "The thing that I tried to keep in check throughout, though, was just wanting to be agreeable and likable to get the role. (I didn't

want) to read the script and say, 'I love it. I love everything about it'. Then I go to the audition and I have this puppy dog energy."

The 32-year-old actress shared how she tried to show the director her feelings surrounding the character and believe it was instrumental to her landing the part in the movie, which is set to be released next year and stars Robert Pattinson as Batman, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said: "It was important to give him an idea of what it's really like to work with me. To say what I really think and, if we're on set together, to ask the questions I want to ask. I tried to come at it from the angle where I am showing him what I see and feel about this character. I believe that's why it happened and I got the role."

Kravitz added: "Matt's a fantastic director, and he's really into talking about the character. We had some really good conversations. I had some thoughts about the character once I'd read the script and they were welcomed."



Andy Serkis: There's nothing black and white about 'Venom' at all

Los Angeles | Agencies

Director Andy Serkis has shared his take on the character of 'Venom'. He says there is nothing black and white about it at all. 'Venom: Let There Be Carnage' director Serkis said: "In many ways this kind of film is what I love about storytelling. The way these comics work and the universe these characters exist in allows you so much - it allows for really truthful heartfelt emotional themes and it also allows for huge amounts of humour and thrills. The movie brings back Eddie Brock, played by Tom Hardy, and his symbiote 'Venom' who unleash a terrifying villain, serial killer Cletus Kasady played by triple Oscar nominee Woody Harrelson and his alien alter-ego 'Carnage'.

He said: "There's nothing black and white about Venom at all - there are so many grey areas and that's true with both the characters of Venom and Eddie Brock and of Cletus Kasady and his symbiote Carnage. "They are hugely damaged individuals and both have lots of baggage. In fact there isn't a single character in the movie that doesn't have that. And I love that you can really fully investigate the baggage that they are all carrying."

"And (screenwriter) Kelly Marcel has really extracted the most out of that with very complex underlying psychological issues with all of the characters and the thing that binds them is this notion of wanting family. They all strive to somehow connect and want an idea of what love is."

Tony Bennett remembered Lady Gaga

New York | Agencies



On Sunday's episode of '60 Minutes', Lady Gaga spoke with Anderson Cooper about recently performing with legendary crooner Tony Bennett, who is battling an Alzheimer's diagnosis, and the emotional moment he said her name onstage for the first time "in a long time," reports Billboard.com.

Lady Gaga joined Bennett onstage in August for two shows at the Radio City Music Hall in honour of his 95th birthday and possibly his last time performing to a crowd. Bennett and Lady Gaga released an album in 2014 titled 'Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga: Cheek to Cheek Live!' Bennett's representative confirmed to The Hollywood Reporter that

the singer's second collaborative album with Lady Gaga, 'Love for Sale' will be his last studio album and he would not resume his touring schedule. Bennett and his family revealed in February that he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 2016.

Rami Malek feels British royals appreciate normality

Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winning actor Rami Malek recently met the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge Prince William and Kate Middleton at the world premiere of 'No Time To Die' in London, and the actor revealed how he approached talking to the British royals.

He explained: "For me, I just try to treat them like I would anybody else. I'm sure a dose of normality is probably something that is quite refreshing to them."

The star previously met the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at the BAFTAs, and Malek always tries to ask them about themselves and their family whenever their paths cross, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He told 'Entertainment Tonight': "I remember we were at the BAFTAs, and I met them and they have a lot of questions to ask you. "But it is nice to just say, 'How are you doing? How are you dealing with all of this? I know you just had kids, one kid, specifically', so just try to be normal because they live a very unusual life, I imagine."

Malek happened to be seated behind the royals at the premiere, which was also attended by Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall.



William Shatner will be on its Oct 12 space mission

Los Angeles | Agencies

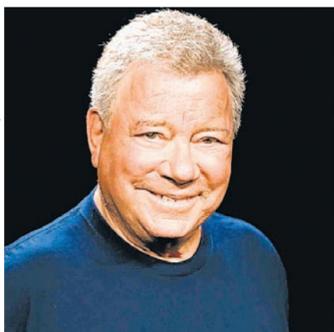
It's official. William Shatner, the man a generation has grown up seeing playing the grim-faced Captain James T. Kirk in the American sci-fi series 'Star Trek', will head to what the opening line of the Gene Roddenberry-created inter-galactic drama described as "the final frontier -- where no man has ever gone before".

According to a report by Space.com, on October 12, the 90-year-old actor will take off on a sub-orbital flight in the Jeff Bezos-helmed spacecraft 'Blue Origin', from the New Shepard launch site in Texas, USA. He will be accompanied by Audrey Powers,

vice-president of missions and flight operations. They will fill the last two seats on the company's second crewed flight, the website said quoting a statement from Blue Origin.

"So now I can say something," a delighted Shatner tweeted on Monday. "Yes, it's true; I'm going to be a 'rocket man!'" The reference was an ironic acknowledgement of the phrase made popular in the context of the North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un by former US President Donald Trump.

Shatner, who will be the oldest man ever to travel to space, reprised the role of Captain Kirk in seven 'Star Trek' films spawned by the television series. He is now



the host and executive producer of 'The UnXplained' on The History Channel.

Shatner and his crewmates will fly just shy of three months after Blue Origin's first crewed flight, which carried Bezos, and three other passengers on a 10-minute foray



into space that reached 107 kms in altitude, according to Space.com.

"I've heard about space for a long time now," Shatner said in a statement issued by Blue Origin. "I'm taking the opportunity to see it for myself. What a miracle."

Britney Spears thanks #FreeBritney activists after legal victory

New York | Agencies

Less than a week after a judge granted Britney Spears' request to have her father Jamie Spears removed as a conservator of her estate, the pop star has taken to Twitter to thank her activist fans for changing her life, reports Billboard.com.

"#FreeBritney movement...I have no words," Spears tweeted Monday.

"Because of you guys and your constant resilience in freeing me from my conservatorship...my life is now in that direction!!!! I cried last night for two hours cause my fans are the best and I know it..."

Spears tweeted the message alongside a video of her vibing to Kanye West's 2016 song 'Fade'. 'The Life of Pablo' song peaked at No. 47 on the Billboard Hot 100 and went top 10 at Rhythmic Airplay.

Last Wednesday, L.A. County Superior Court Judge Brenda Penny granted Spears' petition to immediately suspend her dad as conservator of her estate, saying that having him in the role no longer served the star's best interests. Shortly after the decision was made public, Britney shared a video of herself flying a plane for the first time, noting on the Instagram post that she was "on cloud 9."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Carla Ginola



IPL 2021

Kishan, Coulter-Nile power Mumbai to 8-wicket, keep playoff hopes alive

Sharjah | Agencies

A sensational bowling performance by Nathan Coulter-Nile (4/14) and James Neesham (3/12), followed by a spectacular fifty by Ishan Kishan (50 off 25) powered Mumbai Indians to 8-wicket win over Rajasthan Royals in the 51st match of the IPL 2021, to keep them alive in the qualification race for the playoffs at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium, here on Tuesday.

With this win, five-time champions Mumbai, who were tied on 10 points with Rajasthan and Punjab Kings before this game, levelled KKR on points (12) but are a place below them in 5th due to an inferior net run-rate.

Chasing a paltry target for victory, openers gave Mumbai a blistering start. Rohit Sharma smashed 22 of 13 balls before being dismissed by Chetan Sakariya.

However, Sharma's wicket did not hamper Mumbai's progress as Ishan Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav continued the onslaught to take MI to 56/2 after 6 overs. Mutaqizur Rahman dismissed Yadav for 13 but it was too late for RR. Eventually, an unbeaten 25-ball 50 from Kishan and Hardik Pandya (5) guided MI to an 8-wicket win in 8.2 overs to go up to 12 points and more importantly improve their net run-rate to -0.048. This was also



the biggest victory for MI in terms of balls left (70).

Earlier, openers Evin Lewis and Yashasvi Jaiswal gave Rajasthan Royals a flying start. The duo hit multiple boundaries and took Rajasthan to 26/0 after three overs. However, Mumbai fought back with quick

wickets. Coulter-Nile gave his team the breakthrough as he dismissed Jaiswal for 12. Jaiswal looked to cut a wide delivery short outside off stump but ended up nicking it to keeper Kishan.

Jasprit Bumrah then removed the dangerous Evin Lewis (24 off 19

balls), leaving Rajasthan struggling at 41/2 in 5.3 overs.

James Neesham, playing his first match of UAE leg of IPL 2020, then struck on his very first ball to get rid of Rajasthan skipper Sanju Samson (3). Few overs later, the Kiwi all-rounder grabbed his second wicket of the game as he dismissed Shivam Dube (3), who dragged a full and wide delivery outside off stump onto the stumps.

Thereafter, Rajasthan kept on losing wickets one after another and struggled to score all throughout the innings. All the batters -- Glenn Phillips (4), David Miller (15), Rahul Tewatia (12), Shreyas Gopal (0), Chetan Sakariya (6), who came to bat next couldn't get going and got out cheaply.

In the end, Rajasthan somehow managed to post a total of 90/9 in 20 overs. This was the lowest total at Sharjah in IPL history and the lowest for RR this season.

Brief scores:

Rajasthan Royals 90-9 in 20 overs (Evin Lewis 24 off 19, D Miller 15; Nathan Coulter-Nile 4/14 and James Neesham 3/12) lost to Mumbai Indians 94 for 2 in 8.2 overs (Ishan Kishan 50 off 25, R Sharma 22; Mustafizur Rahman 1/32).

Namyaa Kapoor stuns field, clinches 25m pistol gold in World Championships

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Fourteen-year-old Namyaa Kapoor of Delhi stunned the field including compatriot Manu Bhaker who won bronze, to be crowned the junior women's 25m pistol world champion at Lima's Las Palmas Shooting Range.

According to information received here on Tuesday, Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar clinched the junior men's 50m Rifle 3-Positions gold to make it a clean sweep for India in the two medal events listed on Day 6 of the ISSF Junior World Championships being held in Lima, Peru.

Namyaa got 36 hits out of 50 in the final to finish ahead of silver-winning Frenchwoman Camille Jedrejewska and Manu, both of whom ended with 33.

Camille and Manu had to be separated through a shoot-off, which lasted for four rounds before Camille piped Manu 4-3 in the decider. This was Manu's first bronze after three gold medals in the World Championship. However, the day belonged to Namyaa who qualified for the finals in sixth place with a score of 580 after two rounds of qualification. While she was behind her "seniors" Manu and Rhythm Sangwan, who finished 1-2 with scores of 587 and 586 respectively, in qualifying, there was no stopping her in the final where she missed just three of the first 20-shots to win by quite a margin in the end. Rhythm ended up fourth in the eight-woman final. In junior men's 50m Rifle 3-Positions, only Aishwary made it to the finals among the five Indians in the fray. He equalled the junior world record score of 1185 in qualification to top the field. The youngster then went on to smash the junior world record in the final with a score of 463.4, finishing almost seven points ahead of second-



placed Frenchman Lucas Kryzys, who won silver with a score of 456.5. Gavin Barnick of the USA won bronze with 446.6.

Among the other Indians in the field, Sanskar Havelia was 11th with 1160, Pankaj Mukheja 15th with 1157, Sartaj Tiwana 16th with 1157 and Gurman Singh finished 22nd with a score of 1153. With the addition of three medals including two gold, India have now extended their lead on the top of the medals table with eight gold, six silver and three bronze medals.

I-League qualifiers

Kenkre FC register 2-1 win over Kerala United FC

Bengaluru | Agencies

Kenkre FC put up an impressive display of grit and determination to win their opening Group B encounter 2-1 against Kerala United FC (KUFC) at the Bangalore Football Stadium, here on Tuesday.

After trailing 1-0 early in the second half with a goal from winger Bujair Valiyattu, Kenkre FC came from behind to register victory over KUFC, thanks to goals from substitute Lester Fernandez and striker Ranjeet Singh. The win sends Kenkre FC to the top of Group B, with the remaining matches in the group yet to kick-off.

The match began with both teams going through the motions to grow into the game in the first ten minutes, as KUFC implemented a rigorous high press to try and



win the ball back high up the pitch. In the 29th minute, the play was called to a halt for one minute by the referee for a cooling break. KUFC immediately upped the ante after the cooling break, restarting play with a renewed attacking vigour. However, the match remained at a stalemate at the halfway point.

Kerala United made the breakthrough three minutes after half time, as they eventually added the final product to their promising patterns of

play. As Akhil P fed the ball out to the left flank, Salman K found himself in space to produce a good cross, which was flicked on at the near post by Nimshad Roshan.

Bujair Valiyattu timed his run perfectly to come in at the far post and rifle the ball high into Tenzin's goal to make it 1-0 for Kerala United.

That match finished with a 2-1 win for the side from Maharashtra, leaving it all to do for KUFC for the rest of the group stage matches.

BOXING: LOVLINA GETS DIRECT QUALIFICATION FOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

New Delhi: The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has decided to give Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) a direct qualification for the women's world championships, scheduled to take place in Istanbul, Turkey in December.

However, the rest of the boxers will have to go through the trials. "The gold-medallists in each weight category will represent India in the AIBA women's world championship except 69kg (as) Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain will see direct qualification for the world championships," the BFI wrote on their Twitter handle. The Women's National Championships will take place at St Joseph's International School in Hisar from October 21-27. This event will also mark the return of the Elite Women's National Championships after a gap of more than one year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The tournament will be played as per the AIBA's revised 12 weight divisions-48kg, 50kg, 52kg, 54kg, 57kg, 60kg, 63kg, 66kg, 70kg, 75kg, 81kg, and +81kg-with the last date of registrations being October 8 by number and October 13 by name.



Sam Curran ruled out of IPL 2021, T20 World Cup with back injury

London | Agencies

England all-rounder Sam Curran has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL 2021 and the upcoming men's T20 World Cup with a lower-back injury, the England & Wales Cricket Board confirmed on Tuesday.

Sam's brother Tom Curran has been drafted into the England squad as his replacement and Reece Topley has also been added as a travelling reserve.

The 23-year-old Sam, playing for Chennai Super Kings, complained of pain in his back after the match against Rajasthan Royals at Abu Dhabi on Saturday. He did not bat and leaked 55 runs in his four overs in the game.

The scans later revealed the nature of his injury and ruled him out of the marquee international tournament that begins on October 17.

England, the 2010 champions, will begin their quest for a second T20 title with a warm-up fixture against India in Dubai on October 18. In the Super 12 phase of the tournament, they are grouped alongside Australia, South Africa and defending champions West Indies.



India not to send hockey teams for 2022 Commonwealth Games

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian hockey teams have officially pulled out of the 2022 Commonwealth Games citing, among other issues, the Covid-19 situation in the UK and the close break between the CWG and Asian Games in China.

Hockey India president Gyanandro Ningombam has informed the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) of its decision on Monday.

IOA president Narinder Batra had raised the issue regarding there not being enough time between the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham from July 28-August 8, 2022, and the Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou, China from September 10-25, 2022. With Covid-19 protocols in force and there being



no indication that the same will not be there during the Games, Hockey India has decided not to send its teams to England as the Asian Games is also a qualifying event for the next

Olympics in Paris in 2024. The Hockey India president also raised the issue of the quarantine period for Indian travellers because the Indian vaccines are not recognised by the UK

government, terming it discriminatory. Though Batra had raised concerns on the short window between the CWG and Asian Games -- because of the churning in international sports calendar due to the Covid-19 pandemic, earlier too, Hockey India's letter comes a day after England Hockey had pulled out of its team from the upcoming men's Junior World Cup in Bhubaneswar. The IOA and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games organising committee have earlier clashed over their latter's decision to not include shooting in the programme. India had tried to host the shooting and archery events at Chandigarh next year but dropped the plan after the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) indicated that the medals won at the Chandigarh event won't be added to the Birmingham tally.

Indian women go down to Tunisia in international friendly

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian senior women's team lost to Tunisia by a solitary goal in a friendly match played at the UAE FA Stadium in Dubai on Monday night.

Tunisia scored an early goal through Heuij and defended well throughout the match to deny the Indian women's team.

The Indian team will now travel to Bahrain where India will be playing against Bahrain and Chinese Taipei. The matches are part of India's preparation for the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022, and the first



exposure tour under Head Coach Thomas Dennerby.

The Indian team had beaten UAE 4-1 in their last friendly match in Dubai, with Manisha Kalyan, Pyari Xaxa, Sweetie Devi and Anju Tamang scoring one goal apiece. But on Monday night, India found the higher-ranked Tunisia a tough nut to crack.

Punjab Kings still have a mathematical chance of qualifying for playoffs

Dubai | Agencies

The KL Rahul-led Punjab Kings side can still make it to the top-four in IPL 2021 if they win their final league game -- against Chennai Super Kings on October 7 -- by a big margin and hope the other results go their way.

Sunday's (October 3) loss against Royal Challengers Bangalore punched a big hole in Punjab Kings' hopes of qualifying for the playoffs. KL Rahul's side had things under control going into that game against Virat Kohli's side, and a win in their remaining two games would have been good enough to put them on 14 points, which would have put them in a good position to make the playoffs.

However, now they can only get to a maximum of 12 points and will then have to rely on other results to qualify for the playoffs. Apart from winning their final match, KL Rahul's side would hope that no other team gets past 12 points as well.

For that to happen, both Mumbai Indians and Rajasthan Royals will need to win just one of their remaining two



matches, while Kolkata Knight Riders will have to lose their final group game. For PBKS, the ideal set of results would be for Mumbai to win against Rajasthan Royals but lose to SRH, Rajasthan Royals to lose against Mumbai Indians but win against KKR. If this scenario were to present itself, four teams would be tied on 12 points, meaning the qualification would get down to net run rate. At the moment, Punjab Kings have a net run rate only bettered by Kolkata Knight Riders amongst the teams in contention for the last playoffs spot. If all teams end on 12 points, PBKS would finish in fifth position on the table as things stand, with Kolkata scraping through on better net run rate. Punjab Kings therefore would hope for a big win over Chennai Super Kings in their final group game, or hope that KKR are beaten heavily by Rajasthan Royals in their final group game, so as to be able to leapfrog the 2014 champions on the points table. Things aren't ideal for Punjab Kings heading into their final group game. Nevertheless, KL Rahul and his team would be keeping their hopes up come October 7. They would hope to get one past CSK by putting in a spirited performance. All's not lost for Punjab Kings yet.





Minissha Lamba turns vegetarian

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Minissha Lamba is enjoying excellent health as she is in the pink of her health and turning to vegetarian has had a major impact in her life. She has described as one of the best things

that's happened to her. Minissha did not like the fact that we love the endangered species and love seeing their magnificence and majesty and let the chickens and other animals to be slaughtered for consumption. She refuses to have selective empathy and now she has turned vegetarian and the shift has also enhanced her fitness and energy levels. She is on a purple patch and we aren't questioning that. The bodies are constantly evolving and we can cater to every

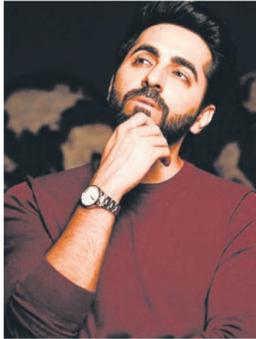
need of their nutrition and diet need by being vegetarian. Let's just hear it from her and here is what she has to say, "I didn't feel it was right to feel compassion for tigers and lions and elephants seeing them been poached, or other magnificent species on the brink of extinction but not feel compassion for the chicken that is bred as an animal of slaughter. Living terrible lives and dying for our consumption. I can't have differential empathy when it comes to loving nature."

The actress refuses to have selective empathy towards animals and love them as a whole

Ayushmann Khurrana: I'm a total director's actor

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ayushmann Khurrana says he naturally gravitates towards edgy content and that he is a complete director's actor. On the third anniversary of 'Andhadhun', directed by Sriram Raghavan, Ayushmann thanked the director for choosing to collaborate with him. Ayushmann said: "I naturally gravitate towards edgy and disruptive scripts and 'Andhadhun' was a combination of everything that is fresh, unique, path-breaking." He added: "Sriram Raghavan is one of the best directors of our country and I'm fortunate that I got the opportunity to creatively collaborate with him." The film revolves around a boy named Akash, a piano player pretending to be visually-impaired. He unwittingly becomes entangled in a number of problems as he witnesses the murder of a former film actor. Ayushmann said that he "surrendered" to Raghavan's vision and his mastery. "I'm proud that Andhadhun is part of my filmography. It is a project that made me unlearn and learn a lot. Playing a blind man who plays the piano was not an easy task." The actor reveals that he was hand-held by the director all through the preparation process and shoot which resulted in him delivering a brilliant performance that earned him the Best Actor award at the National Film Awards.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Taapsee Pannu says the song 'Zidd' from her upcoming film 'Rashmi Rocket' is the spirit of her character Rashmi.

'Zidd' is sung by Nikita Gandhi, composed by Amit Trivedi and written by Kausar Munir. The song showcases the spirit of 'Rashmi' who decides to fight against all injustice to protect her respect, honour, and even her identity.

Taapsee shared: "'Zidd' is full of energy and the lyrics are spot on. This song showcases the grit and determination of Rashmi

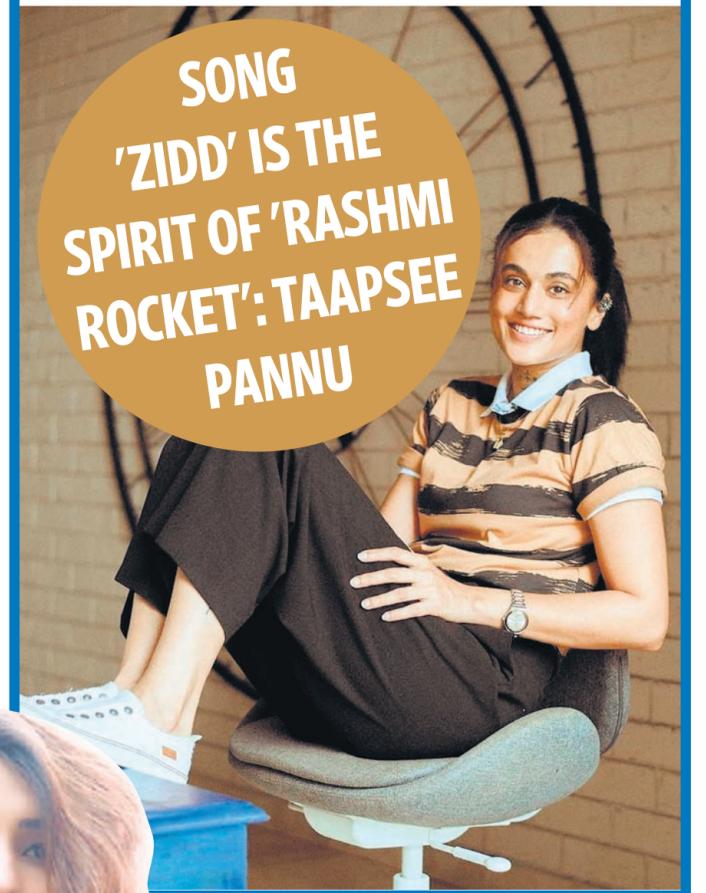
who has decided to win against all odds! I would say that this song in a way is the spirit of Rashmi."

She added: "Amit Trivedi has done a wonderful job and it has been beautifully sung by Nikita Gandhi."

Produced by Ronnie Screwvala, Neha Anand and Pranjal Khandhdiya, written by Nanda Periyasamy, Aniruddha Guha and Kanika Dhillon and directed by Akarsh Khurana, the film also stars Supriya Pathak, Abhishek Banerjee, Priyanshu Painyuli and Supriya Pilgaonkar.

It is set to premiere on ZEE5 on October 15.

SONG 'ZIDD' IS THE SPIRIT OF 'RASHMI ROCKET': TAAPSEE PANNU



'Sanak' will inspire you to be a better version of yourself : Vidyut Jammwal

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Action hero Vidyut Jammwal is gearing up for the release of his upcoming high-octane actioner 'Sanak: Hope Under Siege'. He says the film will inspire people to be a better version of themselves.

The makers on Tuesday released the trailer of the film directed by Kanishk Varma. It also stars Bengali superstar Rukmini Maitra, Neha Dhupia and Chandan Roy Sanyal among others.

Fighting to save his loved one from a high-risk situation, in the trailer Vidyut is seen pushing the envelope. Apart from being an action thriller, the trailer of 'Sanak' also touches upon the love story between Vidyut and Rukmini.

Vidyut said: "The film was shot during the

pandemic time and as every other Indian, we went to work and we have come up with this film. Once you watch it, I can guarantee you that it will inspire you to be a better version of yourself and to help people around you." Producer Vipul Amrutlal Shah added: "We are so excited to bring 'Sanak' to Indian audiences. Our films really haven't explored the hostage drama space in depth and detail and 'Sanak' is our attempt at doing just that." 'Sanak: Hope Under Siege' is presented by Zee Studios in association with Sunshine Pictures Pvt Ltd and will be streaming from October 15 only on Disney+ Hotstar Multiplex. It is a Vipul Amrutlal Shah production, directed by Kanishk Varma.



YAMI GAUTAM SUFFERS FROM SKIN CONDITION CALLED KERATOSIS PILARIS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Yami Gautam has revealed that she is suffering from a skin condition called Keratosis pilaris and said that she developed the condition during her teenage years and that there is no cure for it. Yami also shared a bunch of unedited pictures embracing her skin on Twitter. Alongside the images, she wrote: "Hello friends, I recently shot for some images and just when they were about to go in for post-production (a common procedure) to conceal my skin condition called Keratosis-Pilaris, I thought, 'Hey Yami, why don't you embrace this fact and accept it enough to be OKAY with it.' Keratosis pilaris is a condition that causes rough patches and small, acne-like bumps on the skin. Yami added: "I also



found the courage to share my truth with you. Phew! I didn't feel like airbrushing my folliculitis or smoothing that 'under-eye' or 'shaping up' that waist a tiny bit more! And yet, I feel beautiful." She revealed that she has been dealing with it for many years and has now decided to let go of all her fears with the post.

"I developed this skin condition during my teenage years, and there is still no cure for it. I've dealt with it for many years now and today finally, I decided to let go of all my fears and insecurities and found the courage to love and accept my 'flaws' wholeheartedly," she concluded.

Taniya Kalra: Con woman in 'Girgit'

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Actress Taniya Kalra who was last seen in Sidharth Shukla's digital series 'Broken But Beautiful 3', will be seen in yet another show 'Girgit'. Taniya will essay the role of 'Shamoli', a con woman, in her next stint. 'Shamoli' is a control freak and a narcissist.

Talking about playing a control freak character, Taniya said: "I play 'Shamoli' in the series. She is the manipulative and assertive one in a duo that you'll see in the series. Anyone can easily fall for her. I play a con-girl and her endeavour is simple, that she needs to gather money that not only satisfies her basic needs but more."

Furthermore, the actress added: "I auditioned for the show and when I was handed over the script, I found it pretty interesting and something really different; something I've never done before. I've never been a part of a show like 'Girgit'. It is quite intriguing. I wanted to play with the character since I got the liberty to do so. And I did." This will be Taniya's first big project as a protagonist.

Taniya is currently dubbing for the project, though the shoot for the series has already been wrapped up.

The show has already been shot and is currently in post-production. 'Girgit' will be streaming in the last week of October on ALTBalaji and MX Player.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Krystle Dsouza