

absolute india

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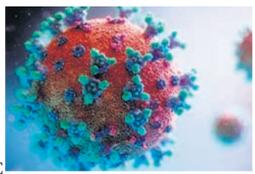


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NCDC REPORT ON COVID VARIANT AY.4 IN INDIA RAISES CONCERN

New variant AY.4.2 had led to pressing of the alarm button in Europe as health experts say that this variant is more transmissible than the Delta variant.

New Delhi: The National Centre for Disease Control genome sequencing report which has found Delta variant sub-lineage cases in India has raised concern. As per the NCDC report, seven cases of new Covid variant AY.4, a sub-lineage of the Delta variant, have been detected in Madhya Pradesh's Indore, while it has been detected in 1 per cent samples in Maharashtra, collected last month.



The NCDC report says that this sub-lineage AY.4 had caused the surge in Covid cases in Indore in September. New variant AY.4.2 had led to pressing of the alarm button in Europe as health experts say that this variant is more transmissible than the Delta variant. However, this variant has been found in very low numbers, they say.

A total of 17 samples of AY.4.2 variant of the Covid-19 virus have also been identified in India. An NCDC official said that the preliminary investigation has revealed that the AY.4.2 hasn't increased the case ratio in India, but it is present here. Apart from AY.4.2, AY.33 and AY.4.1 is also present in India and currently circulating in the country.

WE WILL TALK TO PEOPLE OF J&K, NOT TO PAK: AMIT SHAH

Team Absolute | Srinagar

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that for peace he will talk to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and not to Pakistan.

Addressing a youth rally at Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) on the banks of the Dal Lake in Srinagar, Shah lashed out at former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah.

"Farooq Sahib has suggested that we should talk to Pakistan. Let me clarify, if we will talk, we will talk to people of Jammu and Kashmir and its youth only, no one else." Today, I am speaking my heart. It was posed a series of questions. Today, I am speaking without a bullet proof shield," Shah told the gathering wearing a traditional Kashmiri tweed over-garment called 'Pheran'.

He said no one will be allowed to disrupt the development and peace journey of the Valley. "Why Farooq and Mehbooba failed to do what BJP did in just two years."

"I am often asked by some people

why curfew was imposed in Kashmir and why the Internet was snapped. Let me answer today. This was done to protect and save the lives of our youth. We didn't want vested interests and anti-peace elements to exploit the situation and push our youth on roads to face bullets. This step was taken to save the lives of Kashmiri youth."

He said so far 40,000 people, including security forces personnel, militants and civilians in J&K have been killed in violence. "It is time to come out of this bloodshed and march towards a new journey of peace, development and prosperity. I promise, J&K will get what it deserves by 2024," he said.

"Time has gone when militants would exploit the situation. No one will be allowed to kill civilians and we assure you that peace will remain intact in J&K," he said. Shah said there was a rumour mongering in J&K post-Article 370 abrogation that land and jobs of people would be snatched.

"Give me one example of any village where land of any villager has been

snatched.

"Under the leadership of J&K Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha, 20,000 jobs have been provided and 6,000 more are in offing." "Time is over when people of J&K would have to pay money for jobs. Nepotism and corruption is over," he said. "There was a chief minister who would leave people suffering and spend six months in London every year."

"Now we have young sarpanches, panches and other representatives, who can become MPs, MLAs and also the chief minister. J&K will have a chief minister who will stay with the people in districts."

He said militancy is on the decline in J&K and efforts to replace guns with pens have borne fruit.

"These parties would demand to talk to Pakistan and Hurriyat. This way, they choked Kashmir's economy only to enjoy power." Today, we have succeeded in replacing guns with pens even in the militancy hotbed of Pulwama district besides other districts of Kashmir," he asserted.

DON'T CAST DOUBT ON VACCINATION: SC JUNKS PLEA AGAINST MASS VAX OF COVISHIELD, COVAXIN

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday junked a plea against mass vaccination through Covishield and Covaxin, saying that vaccination is the key to protect people from Covid-19. Refusing to interfere in the matter, a bench comprising Justices DY Chandrachud and BV. Nagarathna told the petitioner's counsel, "We do not want this matter to be argued at all. Let us not cast doubt on the vaccination."



The Counsel appearing for petitioner Mathew Thomas urged the bench to hear his arguments in the matter in detail. However, the bench responded that it was not keen on entertaining the plea.

The top court told the petitioner's counsel that it finds no error with the high court decision in the matter, and it will not entertain the petition. The top court was hearing a plea challenging the Karnataka High Court order, which dismissed a PIL seeking directives to stop mass vaccination of Covishield and Covaxin. The court had also imposed a cost of Rs 50,000 on the petitioners for wasting precious time of the court. In May this year, the high court, dismissing the plea, had said it was not filed in public interest and it was a fit case to impose exemplary costs as it is consumed 45 minutes, which could have been devoted to deal with important issues arising out of Covid-19.

In the high court, the petitioner's counsel had argued that it is not clear under what authority of law the Centre permitted vaccination without completing clinical trials.

PM Modi launches pan-India health mission from Varanasi

Varanasi | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday launched the Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana (PMASBY) from his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi which will be one of the largest pan-India schemes to strengthen healthcare infrastructure.

The Prime Minister said that the scheme, estimated to cost Rs 64,000 crore, would make the health infrastructure self-reliant.

"Arogya concept is needed in everyone's life. We should invest the maximum in physical and mental wellness but, sadly this was not done in the post-Independence period. Due attention was not paid and those who were in power, kept the healthcare system deprived and lacking," he said.

Modi said that the middle-class groups and the poor were worst sufferers in the absence of adequate facilities at the grassroots level.

"This mission will solve these problems. We are focusing on hill states like Uttarakhand and Himanchal Pradesh and also the north-east. We will address the gaps," he said.

The Prime Minister said that special attention would be laid on early detection and 125 districts will have referral facilities.

Secondly, testing would also be stepped up and 730 districts will get integrated testing laboratories.



He said that research centres will also be upgraded and four new National Institute of Virology units would be set up so that the country can be ready to deal with new viral issues and the pandemic.

He said that as the health infrastructure developed, it would generate new employment opportunities too.

The Prime Minister also announced new development projects worth Rs 5,200 crore for Varanasi.

He said that in the past seven years, Kashi had undergone a change with building of roads, ghats, bridges, parking lots and cleaning of the Ganga and Varuna rivers.

"This could have been done earlier but the previous governments lacked political will," he said.

RICKSHAW PULLER IN UP GETS I-T NOTICE FOR RS 3 CRORE

Mathura: A rickshaw puller has approached the police in Mathura district after he was served a notice by the Income Tax (IT) department, asking him to pay over Rs 3 crore.



Pratap Singh, a resident of Amar Colony in Mathura, submitted a complaint at the Highway police station, claiming fraud, after he received the notice from the IT department.

Station House Officer (SHO) Anuj Kumar said no case was registered on the basis of Singh's complaint, but the police will look into the matter.

Singh also uploaded a video clip on social media in which he narrated the sequence of events.

According to him, he applied for a PAN card at the Jan Suvidha Kendra in Bakalpur in March this year after his bank asked him to submit the same.

Subsequently, he got a coloured photocopy of the PAN card from one Sanjai Singh of Bakalpur.

Since he is illiterate, he could not differentiate between an original PAN card and a coloured photocopy of the same, the rickshaw puller said in the video clip.

He had to run from pillar to post for about three months to get his PAN card.

Singh said he got a call from IT officials on October 19 and was served a notice, asking him to pay Rs 3,47,54,896. He said the officials told him that someone had impersonated him and obtained a GST number on his name for running a business and the turnover of the trader for 2018-19 was Rs 43,44,36,201.

K'taka Religious Structures (Protection) Bill gets governor's nod

Bengaluru | Agencies

The Karnataka Religious Structures (Protection) Bill 2021, aimed to put a brake on demolition of temples built on public property in the wake of the Supreme Court order, got the consent of Governor Thaaawar Chand Gehlot on Monday, the sources at Governor's office stated. The ruling BJP in Karnataka, under fire from all corners especially from Hindu outfits on the issue of temple demolition, passed the law during the recently concluded monsoon session to put a brake on temple demolition drive in the state. Sources in the government said that as soon as the government notification is issued, the new bill will come into effect. The proposed enactment 'Karnataka Religious Structures (Protection) Bill-2021' aims to stop demolition of religious structures in the state in the backdrop of the Supreme Court order.



The law says that whatever may be the legal provisions and irrespective of orders or guidelines by courts, jurisprudence and authorities, from the date of implementation of the 'Karnataka Religious Structures Protection Act-2021', the government will protect religious centers in accordance with the stipulated guidelines. The bill assures protection to all religious centres including temples, churches, mosques and other major religious constructions that have come up on public property without permission. Opposition leader

Siddaramaiah had in the assembly said that the BJP brought the ordinance after facing heat from the Hindu Jagaran Vedike and Hindu Mahasabha.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said, from 2010 to 2019 as many as 161 temples, mosques and dargahs were demolished in Mysuru. "If you fix responsibility on ruling BJP for demolition of a temple in Mysuru, who will be held responsible for these demolitions," he questioned the opposition. "Words are dangerous, we should use them carefully over sensitive issues," he said.

'Involves life of people..': SC asks TN, Kerala to discuss Mullaperiyar water level

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Kerala government to refrain from debating the issue regarding suitable height of the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam before it, and rather engage with Tamil Nadu government and the committee.

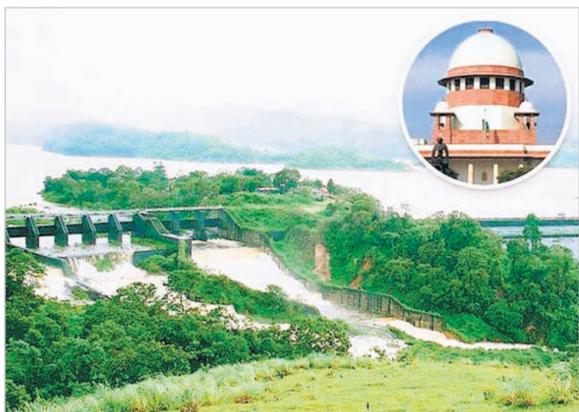
A bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and CT Ravikumar observed that the issue involves the life and property of the people.

Emphasising that the decision must be taken by the expert supervisory committee appointed by the top court, it asked the committee to take a call expeditiously. "We cannot decide the water level, only an expert committee can take a call," said the bench.

It directed all parties to consult each other and take a call, in coordination with state governments, in connection with the water level.

"It is a serious situation on ground. This is not a political arena," the top court said, asking the parties to come back after taking a decision as it scheduled the matter for further hearing on Wednesday.

Senior advocate Jaideep Gupta and advocate G. Prakash, appearing for Kerala government, submitted the water level should not be



allowed to exceed 139 feet, as it will be dangerous to people living downstream. Counsel urged the top court to direct the Tamil Nadu government to keep water level at 137 feet till Tuesday.

Additional Advocate General V. Krishnamurthy, representing the Tamil Nadu government, pointed out that the 2014 judgment of the apex court allows water up to 142 feet.

However, the bench insisted that the issue is serious and all parties should consult each other and take

a call in the matter. The top court was hearing a plea by the Kerala government to ensure that water level is not allowed to exceed 139 feet. However, in 2018, the Supreme Court passed an order to maintain water level at 139 feet during the Kerala floods as a temporary arrangement.

Citing the recent torrential rains which led to increase in water level in the dam's reservoir, the Kerala government asked for a similar relief.

Hundreds of petrol pumps shut indefinitely over fuel price rise

Jaipur: Hundreds of petrol pumps in Bikaner division of Rajasthan have been shut indefinitely to protest against the rise in prices of petrol and diesel due to higher taxes in the desert state which has left the people struggling to get their vehicles tanks filled.

These petrol pumps are situated in various districts including Sriganganagar, Hanumangarh and Bikaner division in Rajasthan.

The petrol pumps association alleged that fuel prices in the neighbouring states of Haryana and Punjab are lower because of which fuel pumps in Rajasthan's Bikaner division are facing heavy losses.

They alleged that thousands of commuters including taxi and truck drivers go to Punjab districts like Abohar and others daily with empty fuel tanks and return with filled tanks as petrol is cheaper by Rs 11 per litre in Punjab.

Dinesh Saraswat, a petrol pump dealer, speaking to IANS said that the daily sale



in Punjab petrol pumps situated at the borders is one lakh litres while it is just 2000 litres in Sriganganagar. "The reason is extra taxes in Rajasthan which makes petrol and diesel expensive. Earlier, only diesel was cheaper there but now the state government has slashed taxes on petrol too which has lowered its price."

With no other option, we have staged this strike for an indefinite period, he added. Sriganganagar in Rajasthan, touching Pakistan on one side, has Punjab as its neighbour on the other.

The strike began Sunday midnight to demand a cut in taxes so that fuel prices come down at par with neighbouring states.

The strike is effective on all vehicles except ambulances and fire brigade services which are being given fuel.

Petrol pump dealers have also demanded a check on illegal sale of bio-diesel fuel. Sriganganagar petrol pump dealers said that the petrol pump owners had informed the government, but no solution has been forthcoming. Petrol here costs Rs 119.69

per litre while diesel is Rs 110.55 which makes it the highest in the country.

Petrol pump dealers in a few regions of Jodhpur division have also gone on strike. In Barmer, petrol pump owners staged a strike from Monday morning till 2 p.m. They ended the strike looking at the festive season, however, they will again go on strike after Diwali, said sources.

Saraswat meanwhile said that petrol should be brought under GST. In Rajasthan, taxes compared to Punjab are higher and should be brought down.



PM MODI INAUGURATES 9 MEDICAL COLLEGES IN UP

SIDDHARTHA NAGAR | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Monday, inaugurated nine medical colleges in Uttar Pradesh, virtually from Siddhartha Nagar.

These nine medical colleges are situated in the districts of Siddhartha Nagar, Etah, Hardoi, Pratapgarh, Fatehpur, Deoria, Ghazipur, Mirzapur and Jaunpur.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the new medical colleges, besides giving a boost to health infrastructure, would also create new job avenues for the youth and those wanting to make a career in the medical sector. "The image of Purvanchal, till now, was that hundreds of children die here due to encephalitis. Now Purvanchal will be known as a region that gives the light of health. This is the first time that so many medical colleges are being inaugurated at one go," he said.

He further said that the



previous government lacked the political will to ensure the welfare of the people.

"They only ensure their own welfare and that of their families. The cycle of corruption ran very fast," he said in an obvious reference to the Samajwadi Party whose election symbol is a cycle.

Meanwhile, eight Medical Colleges have been sanctioned under the centrally sponsored scheme for 'Establishment of new medical colleges attached with district/ referral hospitals' and one Medical College at Jaunpur has been made functional by the state gov-

ernment through its own resources.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, preference is given to underserved, backward and aspirational districts. The scheme aims to increase the availability of health professionals, correct the existing geographical imbalance in the distribution of medical colleges and effectively utilise the existing infrastructure of district hospitals. Under three phases of the Scheme, 157 new medical colleges have been approved across the nation, out of which 63 medical colleges are already functional.

Akhara Parishad gets new chief

PRAYAGRAJ | Agencies

Mahant Ravindra Puri will be the new president of the Akhil Bhartiya Akhara Parishad (ABAP), the apex Hindu religious body of the 13 monastic orders of the country.

He will be replacing Mahant Narendra Giri, who had allegedly committed suicide in the premises of the Baghambari Math in the city, on September 20.

He is the present secretary of Shri Panchayati Akhara Niranjani.

Puri was elected as the new president of the ABAP in a meeting of the seers, called by the general secretary of ABAP Hari Giri, the chief patron of the Juna Akhara, on Monday.

Out of the 13 akharas of the country, representatives of seven akharas had come for the meeting following which it is now evident that ABAP stands divided into two groups.

Puri had the support of seven akharas, representatives of which attended the meeting. As per the practice, two members from each of the 13 akharas are members of ABAP. There are in all 28 members in the ABAP, the president and the general secretary being the additional two.

Earlier, owing to a rebellion within



the parishad, seers of seven akharas had held a meeting at Haridwar on October 21 and elected Mahant Ravindra Puri of Mahanirvani Akhara as the president of ABAP.

Representatives of the seven akharas, including Mahanirvani, Atal, Nirmohi Ani, Nirvani Ani, Digambar Ani, Bada Akhara Udasin and Nirmal Akhara attended the meeting. A new executive committee was formed in the meeting held at the premises of Shri Mahanirvani Akhara in Kankhal, Haridwar. Besides Ravindra Puri, the president of Nirmohi Ani Akhara, Shri

Mahant Rajendra Das was elected general secretary. Along with them, Damodar Das Maharaj was appointed vice-president, Jasvinder Singh Shastri as treasurer, Ram Kishore Das Maharaj as minister, Gaurishankar Das Maharaj as spokesperson and Dharamdas Maharaj and Maheshwar Das as patrons in the new executive.

However, ABAP's general secretary Hari Giri of Juna Akhara termed the election as a malicious attempt to divide the ABAP and did not recognise it. "As I had already called for a meeting of ABAP for October 25, if

these akharas had any intention to prove their majority, they should have attended the said meeting and elected their leader. After all, ABAP elects its office bearers in a democratic way that shies away from contesting the elections as every member of ABAP has the right to stand for president or any other post," said Hari Giri.

Monday's meeting was held with a single point agenda of electing the new president. A meeting of the Akhara Parishad will be called again after three months to select the rest of the executive members.

Will Modi government condemn those trolling Shami, asks Owaisi

HYDERABAD | Agencies

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday asked BJP government at the Centre if it condemns those trolling Indian pacer Mohammad Shami on social media following India's defeat at the hands of Pakistan in Sunday's Twenty20 World Cup match.

Terming the trolling unfortunate and shameful, the Hyderabad MP said it shows how communalism, radicalisation, and hatred against Muslims has spread in the country.

"There are 11 players in the team and there is only one Muslim but you are still targeting him. A win or a loss is part of the game. A team wins and another team loses but the way a player is being trolled on social media and the kind of rubbish being said about him shows how communalism and hatred has spread. Who is responsible for this," he asked during an interaction with media persons.

Owaisi recalled that he had urged the Modi government that India should not play the match against Pakistan as our soldiers are dying in Kashmir and the reason for their killings are terrorists coming from the neighbouring country.



He alleged that the Modi government has no action plan to stop the killings in Jammu and Kashmir.

He pointed out that during the last few days more than 25 civilians were killed. A civilian also died in cross-firing in Poonch.

Owaisi also slammed the seizure

of two-wheelers in the valley and checking of the bikes of school-going students.

"What's so great about it," he remarked when asked to comment on Home Minister Amit Shah removing bullet-proof shields while addressing a public meeting

in Srinagar. He recalled there were no bullet-proof vehicles when he visited Kashmir twice as part of the delegations sent by the Centre.

On India achieving the milestone of administering 100 crore doses of Covid doses, the MP said China crossed 200 crore vaccines in September.

Noting that only 31 per cent Indians have received double dose, he claimed that the Modi government lied to the nation that the entire population will get double dose by December 31, 2021. At this pace, double dose to all people can be achieved only in March-April 2022.

"There is also no truth in the government's Make in India claim as 90 per cent of the doses administered so far were of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine made in Britain," he said.

Asked how many seats All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMM) will be contesting in the upcoming Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Owaisi said that a decision was yet to be taken. "Our party's (UP) president Shaukat Ali said the party is preparing to contest 100 seats. We will sit and decide," he said.

New security system to prevent attacks in Kashmir Valley soon

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In wake of the targeted killings, a new integrated security system will be in place in Kashmir Valley soon in coordination with the Indian Army and the central security agencies, the sources said here on Monday.

The sources also said that Jammu and Kashmir Police will be in the lead role in preventing attacks in coordination with other security stakeholders and they have been asked to strengthen the human intelligence gathering on the ground. The J&K Police made a presentation during a high level security meeting chaired by Union Home Minister on October 23. Round the clock electronic surveillance in vulnerable areas, better intelligence networks and strong patrolling on roads and highways around the cities to prevent entry and exit of the terrorists with more barricading and placing of the security bunkers will be the key features of the new security systems, a government source said. Under the electronic surveillance, drone grids are being set up in those areas where the non-Kashmiri and the migrant labours have been living and in some



places more CCTV cameras are getting installed.

Under the drone grid system, a round the clock control room has been set up to closely monitor the movement of suspicious elements and on identifications of any such movement in the areas, the security personnel on the ground will be alerted soon on a real-time basis. This will be manned by the J&K police and other security forces personnel. The sleuths from intelligence agencies and National Intelligence Agency have been working to pinpoint the real conspirators who activated the hybrid terrorist network to execute the recent killings in Kashmir.

The security agencies have also been keeping eye on over 80 families whose youngsters have left home and are absconding since

long as they believe that these youths might be used by the terrorist organisations to execute these killings.

An official in the government set up said that during the review meeting on October 23, the Union Home Minister asked the officials why the dual threats of radicalisation and home-grown terrorism were on the rise despite massive presence of the forces and extensive outreach effort made by the government?

The meeting held on October 23 in Srinagar was attended by Intelligence Bureau chief Arvind Kumar, CRPF DG Kuldeep Singh, BSF DG Pamkaj Singh, DG of National Security Guard MA Ganapathy, J&K Police DG Dilbagh Singh, Army commanders and other officials.

Centre seeks report on action taken against edible oil hoarders

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre's Department of Food and Public Distribution on Monday asked states and Union Territories to furnish details of the action taken against the hoarders of stocks of edible oils beyond prescribed limits as per its letters and reminders regarding the same, an official statement said.

Except Uttar Pradesh, which has issued a notification regarding this, other states are either in the process of or have not taken any steps, it said.

During a meeting with all states/UTs, conducted virtually, to review the status of stock limit on edible oils, the Department sought details of action taken by the respective states/UTs on its order of October 8 and the subsequent reminders on October 12 and October 22 regarding stock limit on edible

oils. The Centre directed all states/UTs to ensure that the consumers get the benefit of its initiatives on stock limit of edible oils and also advised to speed up the process of issuing stock limit notification in all states/UTs before the festive season, the Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ministry statement said.

In this regard, Uttar Pradesh has taken lead and informed that they have already issued a stock limit order on October 12, which will soften the prices, it said, adding that other states' departments are either in consultation with the stakeholders or have already submitted the proposal to the state government for approval. Chairing Monday's meeting, Joint Secretary, Food and Public Distribution, Partha S. Das stressed that the stock limit has to be notified by each state/UT based on their consumption pattern.

Congress leader's phone tapping charge baseless: Telangana DGP

HYDERABAD | Agencies

Telangana's Director General of Police, M Mahender Reddy on Monday dismissed the allegations by state Congress chief A. Revanth Reddy that phones of the police chief and ministers are being tapped.

The DGP clarified that allegations with regard to tapping of phones of DGP and those of ministers and groupism within the department are absolutely baseless and defamatory in nature.

The Telangana police department has been taking all necessary measures as per the provisions of law for prevention of crime, detection of crime and maintenance of public order and peace, the DGP said in a statement. The Central Government has issued regulations and guidelines with regard to interception of phones under the Indian Telegraph Act. The department has been strictly adhering to these guidelines, while taking measures for prevention of crime and maintenance of public order and



peace in public interest, Mahender Reddy said while reacting to the allegations made by Revanth Reddy, who is also a member of Lok Sabha.

He also stated that the officers of all wings of Telangana Police Department have been working in absolute cohesion with team work. "There are no groups within the department as has been alleged. The postings and placements of the personnel in various wings of the Police Department are done as

per the job needs and based on merits," he said.

Mahender Reddy said it was not in public interest to make such baseless allegations against the police department and the police officers. Making such baseless allegations will have serious impact on the morale and motivation of the police force which in turn will adversely affect public safety and security, he added.

According to the DGP, Revanth Reddy also expressed his view that it would have been better, had the Maoist problem continued. He pointed out that more than 350 personnel of Telangana Police laid down their lives and made supreme sacrifices fighting left wing extremism. A large number of innocent citizens, public representatives including ministers and MLAs lost their lives in the mindless violence perpetrated by Maoists. "Making baseless allegations against police officers risking their lives day in and day out does not augur well for the safety and security of the society at large," the DGP added.

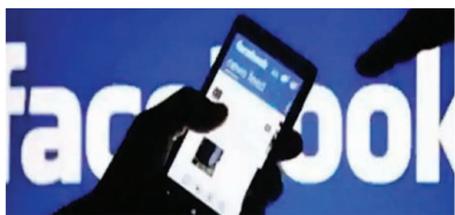
FB has become 'fakebook' says Cong, seeks JPC

He said, "Despite knowing all, why hasn't Facebook designated the RSS and Bajrang Dal as dangerous organisations, based on its own internal reports? The Government of India had been extremely pro-active against Twitter citing Social Media safety compliance, why are they not uttering a word now?"

spokesperson Pawan Kherra said, "It has become 'fakebook' and a JPC probe should be done."

He said, "Despite knowing all, why hasn't Facebook designated the RSS and Bajrang Dal as dangerous organisations, based on its own internal reports? The Government of India had been extremely pro-active against Twitter citing Social Media safety compliance, why are they not uttering a word now?" The internal reports and recommendations of Facebook's security team went against the recommendations of Facebook's safety team; insofar as they prioritised commercial interests over safety of Indian Citizens, and yet no action has been taken by the Government, doesn't this clearly implicate the presence of a quid pro quo? We, therefore, demand that a JPC probe be ordered immediately."

The Congress said, "It proves that 'Fakebook' is nothing but



a subjugated vicious diabolical tool used by the ruling regime and its proxies to propagate bigotry, hate and fear in the minds of the oppressed and marginalised in India," he said.

He alleged that the absolutely callous attitude of the company towards the people of India is reflective in the fact that they spend 87 per cent of their misinformation budget policing English-speaking audiences, whereas those audiences make up only 9 per cent of their base. The Congress spokesperson said, "This was not the first time that the social media platform is exposed, but their trust with bias favouring their all-weather ally: the BJP is nothing new." The Congress spokesperson was speaking on the recent expose where it was alleged that Facebook knew it very well that they weren't equipped to filter hate speech especially in

Hindi and Bengali as per the leaked research documents by a whistle-blower Frances Haugen, a 37-year-old engineer who worked at Facebook, and yet they took no decisive action the perpetrators of such hate.

With about 370 million users of the social media platform in India, in terms of user base, India is Facebook's largest market. To sustain its business in India, the leaks have suggested that an internal assessment by Facebook suggested that only 0.2 per cent of reported hate speech was being taken down, which shows that Facebook was and continues to be having 'damningly' acute awareness about the content against a particular section of Indian society and has consciously chosen not to act against it.

Kherra said, "All remember the incident involving Ankhil Das, who was questioned by the parliamentary panel on the alleged bias by Facebook in dealing with hate speeches, including her own internal postings detailing her explicit support for the ruling BJP. But, despite her resignation, the camaraderie and nexus between the BJP - Facebook never ended."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress has demanded a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the continued 'favouritism' shown by Facebook towards the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and has alleged that the social media platform has become 'fakebook'.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, party



NCP MINISTER: DID SAMEER WANKHEDE USE FAKE CASTE CERTIFICATE FOR GOVT JOB?

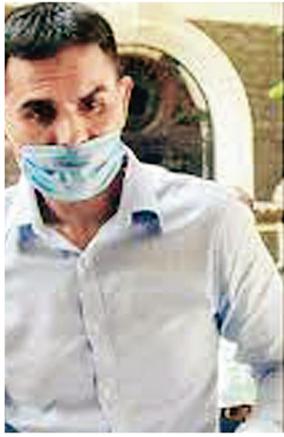
Team Absolute | Mumbai

In another salvo, NCP Minister Nawab Malik on Monday questioned whether the Narcotics Control Bureau Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede submitted a fake caste certificate to get a government job.

The Nationalist Congress Party's National Spokesperson Malik tweeted a purported birth certificate and marriage photo of the embattled Wankhede with telling captions: "Yahanse shuru hua farziwada (the fraud started here) and Pehchan Kaun (guess who)".

The birth certificate shows the NCB chief's name as 'Sameer Dawood Wankhede', and the picture is from his (Wankhede's) first wedding with one Dr. Shabana Qureshi, and he later divorced her to get married with Marathi actress Kranti Redkar.

The NCP minister claimed that as per the birth certificate, Wankhede is a born Muslim but allegedly appeared for the civic services (UPSC) exams through a reserved category and became an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer. "He has forged the documents to get reservations in the (civil



services) examinations and job," Malik contended. Vowing to reveal more dope with evidence, the NCP Minister reiterated that the entire cruise party raid is a fake and everything is being done to malign the Maharashtra government and terrorise Bollywood. Wankhede has not



yet reacted to the fresh revelations by Malik, but it is reliably learnt that he has been summoned to New Delhi by the NCB Director-General to provide an explanation into the stunning allegations levelled by a cruiser ship raid's 'panch-witness' Prabhakar Sail on Sunday.

Sameer Wankhede hits back at NCP's Nawab Malik on caste-wedding fracas

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In another salvo, NCP Minister Nawab Malik raised doubts whether the Narcotics Control Bureau Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede had submitted a fake caste certificate to get a government job to which the latter hit back and vehemently denied the allegations, here on Monday.

The Nationalist Congress Party's National Spokesperson Malik tweeted a purported birth certificate and marriage photo of the embattled Wankhede with telling captions: "Yahanse shuru hua farziwada" (the fraud started here) and Pehchan Kaun (guess who)."

The birth certificate shows the NCB chief's name as 'Sameer Dawood Wankhede', and the picture is of Wankhede's first wedding with one Dr. Shabana Qureshi, whom he had later divorced and got married with Marathi films actress Kranti Redkar. The NCP minister claimed that as per the birth certificate, Wankhede is a born Muslim but allegedly appeared for the civic services (UPSC) exams through a reserved category and became an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer.

"He has forged the documents to get reservations in the (civil services) examinations and job," Malik contended.

In a statement, the NCB Zonal Director said his father is a retired Senior Police Inspector Dnyandeve Kachruji Wankhede with State Excise Department, while his mother is the late Zaeeda, who was a Muslim.

Wankhede also confirmed that he had married (Dr. Shabana Qureshi) in a civil ceremony in 2006 under the Special Marriage Act, 1954. "Both of us divorced mutually through Civil Court... in 2016. Later, in 2017, I married Kranti



Dinanath Redkar," said Wankhede to Malik's charges. He termed the publishing of his personal documents as 'defamatory' and 'unnecessary invasion of my family privacy' intended to malign him and his family members. Wankhede said that the series of acts by Malik in the past few days have put him and his family under tremendous mental and emotional pressure, and he was pained by the "nature of personal, defamatory and slanderous attacks... without justification". Vowing to reveal more dope with evidence, Malik emphatically reiterated that the entire cruiser party raids conducted by Wankhede were fake and everything was being done to malign the Maharashtra government and terrorise Bollywood. Meanwhile, Wankhede has been summoned to New Delhi by the NCB Director-General to provide an explanation into the stunning allegations levelled by a cruiser ship raid's 'panch-witness' Prabhakar Sail on Sunday, but the agency has termed it as a routine meeting with their top brass.

Mumbai Police give protection to NCB witness Prabhakar Sail

Taking cognisance of alleged threats to his life after his revelations, the Mumbai Police on Monday granted protection to the Narcotics Control Bureau's "Pancha Witness" Prabhakar Sail, officials said here.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The development came a day after Sail released an affidavit of October 23 making shocking claims of an alleged extortion bid of Rs 25 crore from actor Shah Rukh Khan's team to secure the release of his son Aryan, nabbed in the October 2 cruiser rave party raids.

Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil announced that Sail has been accorded police security after his affidavit rocked the state on Sunday. To another query, the minister said that Central agencies have suddenly become hyper-active in Maharashtra in the past cou-



ple of years or so. "I have never witnessed such levels of activism in history by one government against another," Walse-Patil remarked. On Monday morning, Sail went to the Mumbai Police Headquarters and met Jt

Police Commissioner, Crime, Milind Bharambe, seeking security for himself and family.

Later, he went to the Sahar Police Station to complete the formalities of security whenever he comes to visit his wife, kids and mother-in-law, who reside in the Sahar village, near the Mumbai Airport.

In his affidavit, among other things, Sail had claimed that of the alleged extortion amount of Rs 25 crore, the final settlement was supposed to be of Rs 18 crore from which Rs 8 crore would be for NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede -- triggering a massive political row.

He also mentioned how he was asked to sign blank papers, told to become a witness, running from one place to another, and apprehensions of threats to his life from the NCB officials. However, Wankhede and the NCB have rubbished all his allegations and moved the Special NDPS Court seeking directions not to take cognisance of Sail's claims, but the plea was rejected on Monday evening.

Witness charges: Special NDPS Court rejects plea by NCB, Wankhede

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a huge setback for the Narcotics Control Bureau, a Mumbai special NDPS court on Monday rejected a plea by the agency and its Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede seeking directions not to take cognisance of "panch-witness" Prabhakar Sail's allegations pertaining to the cruise rave party. The special judge said it cannot pass "blanket orders" to bar courts from taking cognisance of Sail's affidavit in which he has alleged extortion bid from Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan by the NCB to release his son Aryan.

Disposing off the plea, the Special Judge noted the matter is sub judice before the Bombay High Court and said that the NCB was free to move the appropriate forum for remedies. The order came in the pleas submitted this morn-

ing to the special court seeking directions that no cognisance should be taken of Sail's purported affidavit of October 23, except as directed by the special court or a competent court.

The NCB also sought the special court's order that no action should be taken concerning Sail's affidavit without the court's permission to ensure the sanctity of the investigation is not affected or interfered with in any manner.

"Considering the relief claimed in the application, no such blanket orders can be passed. It is for the concerned court or authority to pass appropriate orders at the relevant stage. Moreover, matter is sub judice before the HC in bail applications in the same CR. Therefore no orders can be passed as prayed. Hence application is filed and disposed off, accordingly," the special court's order said this evening.

Wankhede, in his plea had stated that Sail's affidavit was an attempt to undermine the ongoing probe into the case.

Sail's affidavit-statement, which blew up a huge storm on Sunday evening made several stunning allegations raising questions on the NCB prior to the cruiser raids on October 2 evening. Taking serious note, NCB Deputy Director-General, South West Region Mutha Ashok Jain said he had forwarded it to the NCB Director General in New Delhi for necessary action in view of the vigilance-related allegations.

Later on Sunday, Wankhede approached the Mumbai Police seeking protection from possible action that may be precipitated against him to frame him in the case, and he was being threatened with arrest and dismissal from service, etc.

Wankhede leaves for Delhi amid bribe allegations, NCB to initiate probe

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A three-member team led by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede, who led the cruise ship drug bust involving Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, left for Delhi on Monday amid bribe allegations against him. Meanwhile, the NCB vigilance unit head DDG NR Gyaneshwar Singh said that the agency will initiate an inquiry into the allegations of 'extortion' made by an independent witness in the drug case.

Singh said he will record the statements and analyze



the evidence given by the witness, Prabhakar Sail, and submit a comprehensive report to the NCB. He said that certain facts have been reported through social media by the independent witness. On being asked whether Wankhede will remain in his post as it can impact the inquiry, he said we will make a decision on

the evidence found during the inquiry. "We are a professional agency and whenever we notice a thing to be enquired, we will do the inquiry", he said. The vigilance chief added that they would continue to fight the drug menace despite the personal attacks and accusations against the anti-drug trafficking body.

Wankhede has been summoned to the national capital by the NCB Director General to provide an explanation about the stunning allegations levelled by the cruiser ship raid's 'panch-witness' Prabhakar Sail on Sunday.

Guard me from 'legal action,' NCB's Wankhede appeals to Mumbai top cop

Apparently rattled by the revelations of a witness in the raid on a cruise ship rave party, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede on Sunday sought police help to protect him from possible "legal action".

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a letter to the Mumbai Commissioner of Police (Hemant Nagrale), Wankhede

claimed that he has learnt of "some precipitate legal action" for framing him falsely, is being planned by some unknown persons concerning the raid on the cruiser on October 2.

Indirectly referring to a statement by Nationalist Congress Party national Spokesperson and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik last week, the NCB chief wrote: "It is also brought to your notice that threat of jail and dismissal have been issued against the undersigned on public media by highly respectable public func-

tionaries."

In what is viewed as a pre-emptive move, the IRS officer also asked the Mumbai Police chief to "ensure that no such precipitate legal action" is carried out to frame and falsely implicate him with ulterior motives.

Wankhede - who had earlier complained to the city and state police alleging threats to life - reminded Nagrale that NCB Deputy Director-General, South West Region, Mutha Ashok Jain, has already referred the latest matter (the witness'

sensational revelations) to the NCB headquarters for necessary action.

NCB witness Prabhakar Sail's statements have triggered a major political war with the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi allies Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress slamming the central agency and Wankhede.

The MVA partners have demanded a suo moto investigation by the Mumbai Police, setting up of a Special Investigation Team to probe the NCB affairs, intervention of the Supreme Court, etc.

INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT CONDUCTS SEARCHES IN NASHIK

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department carried out a search and seizure operation in the case of a person engaged in the real estate business, primarily operating as a land aggregator in Nashik.

During the search and seizure operation, many incriminating documents including land agreements, notarized documents and other papers evidencing large scale cash transactions for acquisition of properties have been found and seized, the department said in a statement. Such transactions are also corroborated by digital evidence extracted from computers and mobile phones. Further, substantial amount of unaccounted cash was found stored in several private vaults. The I-T Department said that so far Rs 23.45 crore in unaccounted cash has been seized. One locker is under prohibitory orders. The main persons, who had invested their unaccounted income towards purchase of large patches of land, were also searched. Most of these persons are engaged in the wholesale trading of onions and other cash crops in the Pimpalgaon Baswant region of Maharashtra. Incriminating evidence, including records of large cash transactions made by these traders for making investments in properties, have also been found and seized. Several bank lockers found during the search have been put under prohibitory orders.

So far unaccounted income of more than Rs 100 crore has been detected as a result of the search operation. The evidence gathered is being examined and further investigations are in progress.

Suburban services to operate at 100 per cent capacity from October 28

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For the first time since March 22, 2020 rail-ways have decided to operate 100 percent services on suburban section of both Central Railway (CR) and Western Railway (WR) from October 28.

Presently, CR and WR are running 1702 and 1304 suburban services on Mumbai division of CR and WR respectively which is 95.70 per cent of its total suburban services.

CR's chief public relations officer Shivaji Sutar said, "From October 28, CR and WR will run 1774 and 1367 services, respectively."

At present WR carries 18 lakh passengers per day as compared 35 lakh before Covid. On CR, 25 lakh passengers travel now as against 45 lakh in pre-Covid times. After prime minister Narendra Modi announced nationwide lockdown sub-



urban train services were suspended for first time on March 22, 2020. Thereafter, limited number of services commenced from June 15, 2020 for those categorised by state government as essential service workers.

The categories of commuters who were allowed by the state government and approved by Ministry of Railways were subse-

quently enlarged. Maharashtra government allowed permission to fully vaccinated passengers who had completed 14 days since taking second dose to travel in local trains from August 15, 2021.

Sutar said, "Only categories identified by state government and also as per the SOP released by them are permitted to travel.

COVID-19: MAHARASHTRA RECORDS 889 NEW CASES, 12 DEATHS, 1,586 RECOVERIES

Mumbai: Maharashtra on Monday, October 25, recorded 889 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the number of active cases to 23,184. Besides, 12 COVID-19 deaths were reported in the day, taking the number of total fatalities to 1,40,028. 1,586 patients were discharged in the day, taking the tally to 64,37,025. The recovery rate in the state is 97.47%. The case fatality rate in the state is 2.12%. Currently, 1,83,092 people are in home quarantine and 903 people are in institutional quarantine. The Mumbai circle that consists of MCGM, Thane, TMC, Navi Mumbai, KDMC, Ulhasnagar MC, Bhivandi Nijampur MC, Mira Bhayandar MC, Palghar, Vasai Virar MC, Raigad, Panvel MC--recorded 464 new cases. The Nashik circle that which consists of Nashik, Nashik MC, Malegaon MC, Ahmednagar, Ahmednagar MC, Dhule, Dhule MC, Jalgaon, Jalgaon MC, Nandurbar reported 127 fresh COVID-19 cases. The Pune circle that which includes Pune, PMC, PCMC, Solapur, Solapur MC, Satara recorded 238 new cases. The Kolhapur circle that which includes Kolhapur, Kolhapur MC, Sangli, Sangli MC, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri reported 22 new cases.

The Aurangabad circle that which consists of Aurangabad, Aurangabad MC, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Parbhani MC-- reported 18 fresh cases.

PROBE AGENCY "WON'T COME AFTER ME BECAUSE I AM A BJP MP" PATIL

The comments by Sanjay Patil Patil came at a time the opposition has accused the Centre of using investigating agencies to target their leaders and settle political scores.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Days after a BJP leader talked about "sleeping soundly" since he joined the party because there were "no inquiries", his colleague has bragged that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) will not come after him. "The ED won't come after me since I am a BJP MP," Sanjay Patil, a BJP MP from Maharashtra's Sangli, said on Sunday.

Mr Patil's comments at a public function come at a time the opposition has accused the Centre of using investigating agencies to target their leaders and settle political scores. Mr Patil is not the first BJP member to make such a comment.

Earlier this month, a similar pronouncement came from another Maharashtra leader, Harshvardhan Patil, who quit the Congress and joined the

BJP in 2019.

"We too had to go to BJP. He (referring to someone from the opposition sitting next to him on stage) asked why I joined the BJP. I told him to ask his leader why I went to BJP.Everything is easy-going and peaceful (in BJP). I get sound sleep as there are no inquiries," Harshvardhan Patil was quoted as saying by news agency PTI. After his remarks went viral, the four-time MLA from Indapur in Maharashtra later claimed that he was misinterpreted. "I made a statement while I had gone to Maval for a hotel inauguration day before yesterday. That statement is being misinterpreted, which is why I am here to give clarification," he told the media. Patil said he had joined the BJP because he was denied a ticket that was promised to him.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Torn fabric

Social media has been weaponized by bigots to proverbially beat up pliant victims. The recent storm in the social media tea cup over Fabindia's introduction of a new collection titled 'Jashn-e-Riwaaz' during the festive season adhered to a predictable, sickening, dispiriting script. Thin-skinned, self-professed guardians of the Hindu faith took umbrage, alleging that this was an attempt on the part of the company to 'de-Hinduize' Diwali. Fabindia denied that the line was its Diwali collection: there would not be a problem even if it was the case giving in to the poisoning of language, including advertisement lingo, is a mischief that must be resisted at every level. Unfortunately, Fabindia refused to stand up to the bullying and took down some of the promotional tweets of the new range of clothing after social media echoed with calls of boycotting its products. The capitulation of businesses in the face of an ideological witch-hunt has become de rigueur in New India. A jewellery brand of the Tatas, one of India's most respectable establishments, had been singled by an equally toxic campaign because it had chosen to, quite refreshingly, endorse inter-faith marriages, yet another pillar of pluralist India that is now under siege. These vicious campaigns, targeting businesses or political and ideological opponents of bigotry, reveal the double-facedness of Narendra Modi and his government. In the face of criticism, the prime minister is in the habit of mouthing homilies that talk of accommodation. His slogan, 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', is a classic example of this lip-service. Modi falls short when it comes to translating words into action by rooting out engineered divisiveness.

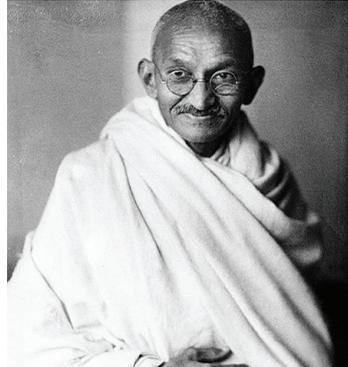
GANDHI, SAVARKAR AND THE IRRELEVANCE OF FACTS

The truth is not the same as what is politically relevant and convenient. This is what critics of Rajnath Singh's recent remarks have missed.

Successful politicians must place rhetoric before reason and reason before facts, even as they try to use all three. Tacitly acknowledged by politicians across all ideologies, this hierarchy recognises that though they may all be necessary, rhetoric, reason and facts are not equally important for the success of a political agenda. In order to blend them into a seamless persuasive mix, practitioners of politics must learn to interweave them in such a way that, taken together, they can cover up mutual weaknesses. Critics not trained in the art of political weaving often miss the synergy that drives a successful political programme. They pounce on factual errors - the polite term for political lies - and are puzzled when exposure fails to produce the expected results.

When Rajnath Singh claimed that V D Savarkar's mercy petitions to the British government were written at Gandhi's behest, he could be accused not simply of lying, but of uttering a political lie. One of the archaic meanings of the English word "utter" is to pass or circulate counterfeit currency. This is a useful reference because political lies can be understood in analogy with currency. When you or I try to print money, we become criminals no matter what we wanted to spend the money on. But when a government "prints money" to spend more than it earns, this act is evaluated entirely on the basis of what is done with the money. In a roughly similar way, the impact of a political lie depends on the larger project it supports rather than the factual deficit it incurs.

That is why establishing the facts of the matter in painstaking detail to expose the falsity of Singh's claims is unlikely to dent the political project that he espouses. In the big picture, the facts of Savarkar's petitions (like their number or tone) do not matter much. What matters is the ideological work that the figure of Savarkar is made to do, the kind of political reason that he symbolises. And since he is also invoked as a referent, the same



holds for Gandhi - what matters is not what he said or wrote in some specific context, but the larger political project that he is made to represent. At this point, we run into a different set of problems arising from the fact that the dominant political discourse relies excessively on "great men". Political debate in India often becomes a matter of your great man versus mine. This is problematic because the great man tends to be an indivisible icon who must be worshipped or despised in toto. Political competition takes a theological form, with rivals denounced as worshippers of false gods. When the great man becomes a political icon, the historical individual fades into the background, and the details of his life get separated from his iconic avatar. Simply put, the great-man-as-icon becomes "fact-proof", and inconvenient biographical facts are met with "hurt sentiments", followed by the forceful reassertion of hagiography. How do we escape this impasse? One way out is to focus attention on the iconic role of the great man rather than his factual biography. What is the form of political reason that he is supposed to represent? What is the larger narrative attached to his name, the story in which followers are



invited to find their place? And most importantly, what are the non-negotiable parts of this story?

The task seems relatively simple for Savarkar-as-icon: He stands for "Hindutva". More accurately, iconic-Savarkar represents an idea of India in which Muslims and Christians - all the communities whose "punyabho" (or sacred place) is not within the geographical borders of India - can be second-class citizens at best. Regardless of the details about Savarkar-as-person, Savarkar-as-icon is designed to represent this ideal. This is where no room can be spared for ambiguity or interpretation - are we for this ideal, or against it? Choosing to fight on this ground (rather than on biographical details) raises the risks without improving the chances of victory, but it allows for a sharp focus on what is at stake. A second method of avoiding dead-ends is to break down the monolith of the great man into coherent biographical segments. For example, what if we counterpose the Savarkar of the Ratnagiri anti-caste campaigns (roughly 1925 to 1937) to the Savarkar of

Hindutva? At this time, Savarkar was pursuing a programme for the eradication of caste distinctions that was far more radical than that of Gandhi. This is the phase of the "Jatyuchhedak Nibandh", the writings on caste eradication. Would the proponents of Hindutva be willing to accept this avatar of Savarkar and all of its implications? Shifting the debate to this level allows more room for manoeuvre by refusing the all-or-nothing frame of the monolithic great-man.

Finally, there is the most difficult option of all - subjecting one's own great man to similar scrutiny. Gandhi is the obvious exemplar: Unlike Savarkar's worshippers, those who worship Gandhi-as-icon have enjoyed state power for decades. Because of this, the iconic avatar of Gandhi has been normalised to such an extent that it is difficult to map its ideological boundaries. Broadly speaking, Gandhi-as-icon stands for an inclusive India where every community is assured of full membership. Such an avatar is usually surrounded by a halo of taken-for-granted legitimacy. But what about the less-discussed and more controversial aspects of this avatar such as the claim that the celebrated inclusionary acts associated with this icon have often demanded the surrender of agency? The starkest example here is the Poona Pact, which gave birth to reservation but paralysed Dalit and Adivasi political mobilisation for four decades. The "trusteeship" model of paternalistic relations between capitalists and workers could be another example. It is sobering to reflect on the fact that, for a long time, Gandhi-as-icon provoked more hurt sentiments than any other in our political pantheon.

Iconic great men matter because of what they symbolise, they are not monoliths - neither ours nor theirs are infallible.

international

JOINT MILITARY FORCES ARREST SUDANESE PM AMID COUP REPORTS

Khartoum | Agencies

Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, members of the Transitional Sovereignty Council's civilian component and several other ministers have been placed under house arrest by joint military forces amid reports of a coup, the Ministry of Information and Communications said on Monday.

"Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, in a message from his house arrest, asks Sudanese to hold on to peace and occupy streets to defend their revolution," the Ministry said on its Facebook account.

"Internet service cut off mobile phone networks, and bridges closed by military forces," it said. "The joint military forces storm the radio and television headquarters in Omdurman, and detain a number of employees." "The country's military is yet to officially



comment on the development and the Prime Minister's current location remains unknown. According to witnesses, internet services have been suspended in Khartoum and army and paramilitary troops were deployed across the capital city, the BBC reported. The report added that the airport has been shut. Since October 16, a group defecting from the Forces of

Freedom and Change Alliance (FFC) has staged an open sit-in in front of the presidential palace, demanding the dissolution of the government.

The FFC, which represents the civilian component in the ruling coalition, rejects the dissolution of the government and accuses the defectors of attempting to jeopardise the democratic transition and support the military to turn against the revolution.

Since the announcement of foiling a coup attempt on September 21, the differences between the military and civilian partners in Sudan's transitional government have continued to escalate.

Sudan is ruled by a 39-month transitional period under a transitional government of military and civilian elements, established after the ouster of former President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. Monday's development has been condemned by the US, UN, European Union and the Arab League.

JAPAN'S RULING LDP LOSES 1 OF 2 UPPER HOUSE BY-POLLS

Tokyo: Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lost in one of two Upper House by-polls held ahead of the general election this weekend but won the other. As two LDP lawmakers resigned, the by-elections for vacant seats in the upper chamber of Parliament took place in the Yamaguchi and Shizuoka constituencies, reports Xinhua news agency. The by-elections, which were the first national contests held since Prime Minister Kishida Fumio took office on October 4, were closely watched as a bell-weather for the general election. Shinnosuke Yamazaki, who was supported by the opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan and the Democratic Party for the People, defeated the LDP's Yohei Wakabayashi with 650,789 votes to 602,780 votes in the Shizuoka constituency.

Moon, Biden expected to meet next week

Seoul | Agencies

South Korean President Moon Jae-in and his US counterpart Joe Biden are expected to hold a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of a G20 summit in Italy or the UN climate summit in Glasgow a senior official said on Monday.

Moon and Biden are scheduled to participate in the G20 summit next week, as well as the COP26 climate talks on November 1 and 2, when world leaders will assess achievements since the Paris agreement to limit global warming, reports Yonhap News Agency.

Asked whether the two leaders could meet on the margins of the global summits, the official replied: "I expect President Moon and President Biden to meet at G20 or COP26."

The official said, however, no specific timing has been decided, indicating there may be a "pull aside" meeting rather than formal bilateral talks. Before joining the G20 summit, Moon will meet Pope Francis at the Vatican on Friday to discuss peace on the Korean



Peninsula and efforts to end the pandemic.

Moon and the Pope are expected to exchange their opinions on ensuring peace between the two Koreas, the official said.

Pope Francis had earlier called for peace on the Peninsula and expressed a willingness to visit North Korea. This week's talks will be Moon's second meeting with the Pope after they met in October 2018. During the 2018 meeting, Moon delivered a verbal invitation from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, to which the Pope expressed a willingness to visit the North if Pyongyang sends an official invitation.

N Korea slams Canada, France for monitoring illicit maritime activities

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea's Foreign Ministry on Monday denounced Canada and France for dispatching patrol planes near the Korean Peninsula to monitor Pyongyang's activities, violating a UN Security Council resolution, calling it a "military provocation" endangering the security situation in the region.

A North Korean Ministry researcher made the comments in a statement posted on its website, referring to the surveillance operations as an "imprudent" act that will "destroy security balance in the region and result in aggravating the political situation", reports Yonhap News Agency. Accusing Washington of "inciting" the countries' military activities in the region, the Ministry claimed such moves are part of US efforts to keep China and Russia in check.

Last week, the Canadian Defence Ministry announced the deployment



of a CP-140 aircraft to Kadana Air Base in Okinawa, Japan, "to support ongoing multinational efforts to counter North Korea's attempts to evade sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)". Earlier this month, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said France will engage in monitoring illicit maritime activities, including "ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels" prohibited by the UNSC resolutions.

"The US and the Western countries should be aware that their military provocations will not only hurt the regional situation but also their own national security," the statement said.

Support for Aus govt falls to 3-year low

Canberra: Voter support for the Australian government has fallen to a three-year low months from the general election, according to a new poll. The latest Newspoll published on Sunday night revealed that primary support for the governing Coalition has fallen to 35 per cent, the lowest figure since November 2018, compared to 38 per cent for the Opposition Labor Party, reports Xinhua news agency. Labor now leads the Coalition 54-46 on a two-party preferred basis, the equal worst result for the government during this term. If replicated at the next election, which must be held by May 2022, the poll result would see Labor returned to the government for the first time since 2013 in a landslide. The poll was conducted during a fortnight dominated by the Coalition's climate policy in the lead-up to the upcoming COP26 summit in Glasgow.

Libya announces plan for prez, parliamentary polls

Tripoli | Agencies

Libya's High National Elections Commission (HNEC) has announced a plan for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

According to the plan, the polling day for the first round of the presidential elections is determined in the Commissioner's proposal that is approved by the House of Representatives (Parliament), Xinhua news agency quoted Imad Al-Sayah, the head of HNEC, as saying at a press conference here.

The second round of the presidential elections will be held simultaneously with the parliamentary polls, Al-Sayah said.

"The Commissioner will announce the results of both electoral processes simultaneously upon completion," he added.



Al-Sayah also said the recommendation forms will be uploaded in advance on the official website of the HNEC "to give enough time for candidates to prepare and submit them as soon as the nomination begins".

The total number of registered Libyan voters, both at home and abroad, is 2,865,624, according to the HNEC.

The UN-sponsored Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) in February selected a new executive authority of a unity government and a presidency council, ending years of political division in the North African country.

The new authority's main task is to prepare for the general elections to be held on December 24 this year, as endorsed by the LPDF.

UZBEK PREZ POLLS RECORD HISTORIC TURNOUT

Tashkent: Voting for Uzbekistan's presidential election ended with over 80 per cent turnout which was described by the Central Election Commission as a historic achievement for the country.

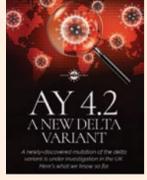
"Uzbekistan's presidential election was held in accordance with international norms, domestic legislation and in line with democratic principles, open and transparent," commission chairman Zayniddin Nizamkhodjaev said on Sunday. According to the commission, more than 19 million voters had registered for the election, with about 970 international observers and over 1,000 media representatives observing the voting. Polling stations across Uzbekistan opened at 8 a.m. on Sunday evening and closed at 8 p.m., while preliminary results are due on Monday afternoon. Incumbent President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, nominated by the ruling Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party, runs for a second term in office. During election campaigning, Mirziyoyev promised to continue reforms to launch more industrial projects, provide jobs and raise living standards in the populous Central Asian nation. Other candidates include Alisher Kadirov from the National Revival Democratic Party, Maksuda Varisova from the People's Democratic Party, Bahrom Abduhalimov from the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party, and Narzullo Oblomurodov from the Ecological Party.





STATE ON ALERT AFTER CASES OF NEW DELTA VARIANT AY.4.2 FOUND

Bhopal: The government of Madhya Pradesh has issued alerts regarding a new COVID-19 variant that has been detected in people. As per reports, the AY.4.2 variant is a sub-lineage of the Delta variant and seven new cases have already been detected in Indore city. Indore Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr BS Saitya said that two army officers posted in the Mhow Cantonment were infected with the new mutant. This came after a report was released by the National Centre of Disease Control (NCDC) that stated that the samples for testing were collected in September. In Maharashtra, the AY.4.2 variant has been detected in 1% of samples.



According to scientists, this new variant is 15 per cent more transmissible than the original Delta variant and it could be more infectious and cause major symptoms.

The new variant has been named as VUI-210CT-01 by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The variant has been under tight scrutiny. It is also known as 'Delta Plus'. The UK has been monitoring the new variant that has been classed as a Variant Under Investigation (VUI) relating to its increased growth rate. There is no evidence of AY.4.2 being more deadly than other variants found until now. The AY.4.2 consists of two mutations - Y145H and A222V.

Many researchers and scientists think that this variant might be the cause of the surge seen in the UK.

'Change Name Of Web Series': MP Home Minister To Prakash Jha

"In the name of the web series, an attempt is being made to deliberately target Hinduism for a long time. Considering the spirit of the majority society, Prakash Jha should consider changing the name of his web series Ashram," Narottam Mishra tweeted.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra stopped short of defending the violence by Bajrang Dal men on sets of the web series directed by Prakash Jha, during his vocal condemnation of the director's work, but backed the right-wing group's demand to change the name of the web series.

Mishra in a tweet said such television content is an "attempt to deliberately target Hinduism". The state, he added, will take action against the Dabur's advertisement on a same sex couple observing Karva Chauth that has stirred up controversy.

"I also support this. Why is the web series named Ashram? They will understand (the consequences) if they name it (web series or stories) after others" (religion)? We consider the ransacking as wrong. Four persons were arrested and further legal steps will be taken. But, Jha saheb (Prakash Jha), think about your mistakes too," Mishra said, referring to the web series.

To underscore his point, he later tweeted, "In the name of the web series, an attempt is being made to deliberately target Hinduism for a long time. Considering the spirit of the



majority society, Prakash Jha should consider changing the name of his web series Ashram."

"We are going to issue a permanent guideline following the dispute over the shooting of Ashram-3. Now, (the producer-director) will need to show the script of the story to the administration before seeking permission, if they are going to shoot objectionable scenes which hurt the sentiments of any religion," Mishra said. "Why are advertisements, movies made only on Hindu religion?" Narottam Mishra told reporters. "We strongly object to

such acts. If you have the courage, do it with other religions also," he added, echoing the Bajrang Dal supporters who went on a rampage on the sets of his web series Ashram 3 in Bhopal, during Sunday's shooting.

Yesterday evening, men from Bajrang Dal had vandalized the set and manhandled the film crew. Cellphone videos shot by witnesses showed the group members chasing the crew, managing to catch at least one of them and beating him mercilessly with a metal light stand.

After the violence, Bajrang Dal leader Sushil Surhele had demanded that the name of the web series be changed.

"We have given only a warning today by protesting here. Prakash Jha has said that he is in talks to change the show's title. I repeat the show's name will have to be changed from 'Ashram' or won't be filmed here in Bhopal," he said.

"They made Ashram 1, Ashram 2 and were shooting Ashram 3 here. Prakash Jha showed in Ashram that the guru was abusing women. Does he have the guts to make such a film on a church or madrasa? Who does he think he is?" he added. The minister also said the state will take action against Dabur's Karva Chauth ad featuring a same sex couple.

'PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission' will strengthen health institutions: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal 64 thousand crore PM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that "PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission" will



prove to be a milestone in the direction of strengthening the health infrastructure of primary, secondary and sub-health centers and existing national health institutions. Chouhan took part in the Prime Minister Modi's programme through VC from Indore district.

Chouhan has expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for initiating the 'PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission' to ensure availability of better medical facilities in urban and rural areas and for strengthening health services. Chief Minister has said that with the expansion of health services through the 'PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission', simple, accessible and affordable health facilities will be available to the people. It may be noted that PM Modi launched the Rs

Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission today.

Modi said that the New India is where work should be done for fulfilment of every aspiration. The PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission is being launched to provide uniformity to the health infrastructure of the entire country. Under this mission, health infrastructure of the entire country will be taken to a high level. Along with this, better health facilities will be provided to the people of all sections of the society. PM Modi said that with enhanced facilities in the field of health, seats of doctors and paramedical staff are also being increased in medical colleges. This scheme will not only improve the health infrastructure of the country but will also create new employment opportunities.

BJP, Cong trade barbs over vandalism of Prakash Jha's set

Team Absolute | Bhopal

After a group of Bajrang Dal members created a ruckus on the set of web-series 'Ashram-3' in Bhopal and smeared ink on its director Prakash Jha, a political war broke out between the BJP and the Congress over the issue on Monday.

Veteran Congress leader Digvijaya Singh, who has often been vocal against right wing politics, called the Bajrang Dal a "group of goons." Attacking Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra, Singh said, "how long will people of the state tolerate such goons?"

"Bajrang Dal, an outfit of the RSS has become a group



of goons. It can be seen here in Bhopal," Digvijaya Singh said while reacting to the controversy of 'Ashram-3' shooting in Bhopal.

Singh said that Bhopal has become one of the prominent location for film shooting. "Prakash Jha is a popular director. Bhopal police should have provided securi-

ty to him," Singh added. Responding to Digvijaya Singh's remarks, BJP MLA (Hujur-Bhopal) Rameshwar Sharma said, "Will those who are making web-series on Ashram dare to make a film ever on Madrasa?"

Earlier on Monday, Narottam Mishra objected to the 'Ashram-3' shooting alleging that director Prakash Jha is portraying a bad image of Hindu culture and it will not be tolerated. He also said that the state government will introduce some changes with regard to giving permission to film shootings in Madhya Pradesh. He said film directors now would have to submit a copy of the script to the administration to seek permission for shooting.

CM PLANTS COCONUT SAPLING



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday planted a coconut sapling in the Chief Minister's residence premises. Coconut is considered auspicious and fortunate in Indian culture. Therefore it is used in worship, rituals and auspicious works. Coconut water contains good amount of electrolytes, which removes fatigue and weakness and provide a feeling of freshness. One coconut contains about 600 mg of potassium.

Kamal Nath flays Shivraj govt for 'mishandling' Covid pandemic

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former Madhya Pradesh Minister Kamal Nath on Monday accused the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government of "mishandling" the Covid situation, especially during the second wave.

In a video message, ahead of the coming bypolls, he criticised the Chouhan government's "callous" attitude towards its people when the state was reeling under Covid-19. "Many lives were lost due to shortage of oxygen, beds and necessary medicines in the state during Covid. The Shivraj government had promised to provide compensation to all the affected families, but not a single family being has been compensated so far," Kamal Nath, who is also the state Congress chief, said. He said that this is



the first election in the state since the pandemic and the people should not forget the harrowing time. "At a time when people were banking on the state for help, Chouhan and his ministers failed them. Now is the time to settle scores with the government," he said. He also alleged that under the Bharatiya

Janata Party (BJP) rule, the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated. The state, he said, had seen tremendous developments in the last 15 years, but now, the crime against women and children is on a rise. Children are being kidnapped everyday, women are being subjected to sexual assault and law and order situation is on the brink of collapse, he claimed.

Meanwhile, just days before the October 30 bypolls to the Prithvipur, Raigon, and Jobat Assembly seats and the Khandwa Lok Sabha constituency, the Congress faced yet another blow with another party MLA joining the BJP on Sunday. Sachin Birla, from Khargone district, switched over to the saffron party. Birla resigned just two days prior to the Congress leader and fellow Gujjar Sachin Pilot's rally in Khandwa.

"NAGADA" is Exhibit of the Week of the month at IGRMS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the Latest and popular online series of Indra Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) entitled "Exhibit of the Week" the "NAGADA" (A Single Membrane Musical Drum) collected from 2010 was put on display on Monday. The Community of Oraon, Ranchi, Jharkhand. It's Measurement Height - 92cm., Cir. - 333cm., Dia. of the opening end - 103cm., displayed in the audience as the fourth Exhibit of the month of October, 2021 through official website, Facebook, Instagram and twitter page of the IGRMS.



In this regard Praveen Kumar Mishra, Director, IGRMS said that Nagada is a single membrane musical drum. It has been collected from the Oraon community of Jharkhand. This traditional instrument is usually accompanied with Sahnai and Dhank (double membrane musical drum) for dance and rituals during the marriage ceremony, Jatra and festivals like Sarhul & Karma. It is also used during 'Bishu

Sendra' or annual ceremonial hunting expedition held during the month of 'Phagun'. It is found in different sizes. People use it as per their choice or convenience to carry.

This huge sized drum is made of hemispherical shaped hollowed iron body prepared by the local blacksmith caste 'Lohar' and the final process is done by the 'Ghasi' caste with the parchement of leather membrane of buffalo.

Skin is tightened with leather strings which are tied in criss-cross pattern around the body. It facilitate in providing louder musical sound. It is played with two sticks to produce the required tone.

Among the Oraon Nagada is the most important musical instrument. It is not only made to reveal their love for music and entertainment, but also the way of communication among them by sending messages of joy and emergency. Even today, when they undertake ceremonial hunting expeditions in dense forest in groups, they divide themselves into small sub-groups and each group essentially carries a Nagada for communicating different messages like successful hunting, asking help from other sub-groups or returning to pre decided place etc.

Visitors can see this object from home through the Official site (https://igrms.com/wordpress/?page_id=6495) and Facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/NationalMuseumMankind>). Instagram and twitter page of the IGRMS.

Bajrang Dal activists ransack set of 'Ashram'; throw ink at Prakash Jha

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bajrang Dal activists allegedly ransacked the set of the third season of web series 'Ashram' here and also threw ink at its producer-director Prakash Jha, accusing him of portraying Hindus wrongly, police said.

The windscreens of two buses of the crew were also broken in stone-pelting, they said.

Bajrang Dal also threatened to stop the series' shoot. Superintendent of Police (SP), Bhopal south, Sai Krishna Thota, said that some people raised objections and staged protests over the name of the web series when its shooting was underway at Old Jail Premises located in Arera Hills.

"Bajrang Dal activists objected that this web series hurt the sentiments of Hindus as it contains obscene scenes," he said.

The protesters also threw ink on Prakash Jha and pelted stones, the officer added.

Thota said that the windscreens of two buses were damaged due to stone-pelting and one person was injured. He said that immediately after the incident, police personnel reached the spot and brought the situation under control. No person has been arrested in this regard so far, he said. Bajrang Dal activists also raised slogans against Prakash Jha and Bollywood actor Bobby Deol, who is in the lead role in the web series Ashram, accusing them of hurting the

Hindu sentiments, eyewitnesses said. Talking to reporters, Bajrang Dal's state convener Sushil Surhele said the activists of his organisation will not allow the shooting of 'Ashram' in Bhopal.

"Prakash Jha wrongly portrayed the arrangements in a Hindu ashram in its previous seasons by showing the exploitation of women by gurus. There have been ashrams in Sanatan Dharma for the past thousand years that played important role in building social values. There is no truth in what has been shown in this web series," he said. Will Jha dare to make such a web series on other religions, he asked.

"We blackened the face of Prakash Jha and are searching

for Bobby Deol, who should learn from his elder brother Sunny Deol (Bollywood actor and BJP MP), who has played roles in patriotic movies," he added.

So far, no statement was issued on behalf of Prakash Jha. Talking to reporters, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Irshad Wali said strict action will be taken against those involved in the incident. "Three-four vehicles were damaged and we will identify the people involved in this ruckus. Action will be taken against such persons," he said. In a statement posted on Twitter, the Producers Guild of India said it strongly condemns the "brazen acts of violence, harassment and vandalism" faced by the crew.

Peoples participation gives amazing results to the campaign: CM

Chief Minister appeals for second dose of vaccine
More than 6.89 crore vaccines have been administered so far in the state

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that when all the citizens make collective efforts in any campaign, the results are amazing. So far 4 crore 97 lakh 87 thousand 412 citizens have received the first dose of corona vaccine and one crore 91 lakh 42 thousand 331 citizens have received the second dose with the public participation in corona vaccination in the state. The combined efforts of all have played an important role in stopping the third wave of Corona. To maintain effective control over corona infection, the second dose of vaccine is also being administered to cent percent citizens. A target has been set to administer the second dose of the vaccine to all the people of the state by December 2021. We will all make efforts together, the people of the state will soon be able to get a safe shield of protection from Corona.

Chouhan has appealed to the people of the state that those who have not yet received the second dose of vaccine, should get the vaccine on priority with responsibility. Chouhan said that we all need to be careful from corona. By applying the second dose of corona vaccine, a strong protective shield develops in the body.



Security is guaranteed. He said that Madhya Pradesh has been a leader in the country in administering vaccine dose. This vaccination campaign is a living example of "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas" and everyone's effort.

Chouhan said that last year during the festivals of Navratri, Dussehra, Eid and Deepawali, there was a terrible fear of corona in everyone's mind. Effective control of corona infection could be possible only after the first dose of corona vaccine was administered to more than 90 percent of the citizens in the state. This year, during these festivals, people had self-confidence, fear had vanished. There was awareness among the citizens. People continuously adopted all necessary measures to prevent corona. He said that corona is not gone yet. In order that its infection does not increase again, it is necessary for everyone to get a second dose while adopting measures to prevent corona.

Chouhan said that by applying the first dose of corona vaccine, there was a ray of hope among small shopkeepers, entrepreneurs, workers, people doing roadside business. They were able to do their business fearlessly. He called upon to make the festivals grander and free from fear by getting the second dose of corona vaccine. He appealed to the people of the state to remain vigilant about corona and adopt appropriate behaviour for prevention.

Till October 25, 6 crore 89 lakh 29 thousand 743 doses of corona vaccine have been applied in the state. Of these, 4 crore 97 lakh 87 thousand 412 have been given the first dose and one crore 91 lakh 42 thousand 331 citizens have been given the second

REPAIR WORK OF ROADS IN BHOPAL CONTINUES



Bhopal: As per the instructions of Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh, the work of repairing the roads damaged due to rain is going on in Bhopal. This work is being carried out by the Capital Project Administration from Campion School to Manisha Market, Manisha Market Shahpura to Chuna Bhatti Square, Administrative Area Arera Hills roads and Mandakini Junction in Kolar to Char Batti Square via JK Hospital. Repairing work like filling all the potholes etc. on the road connecting Subhash Nagar to Raisen Road and Vineet Kunj to Danish Kunj intersection, RRL square to Barkheda Pathani etc., has been completed. In this sequence, 30 percent work of asphaltation on the road from Vidhan Sabha to Shaurya Smarak has been completed.



Angelina Jolie on playing Thena in 'Eternals'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Angelina Jolie, who is all set to play the superhero Thena in the upcoming Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) movie 'Eternals', has talked about what makes her character so interesting. Talking about Thena in a global press conference, Angelina said: "I was attracted to this project for many reasons. I am a fan of MCU. Was a big fan of Chloe's (Zhao, director). And then when they first talked to me about the story, I just wanted to be a part of this family". Before I even knew very much about who I was gonna play. Um, but as I learned about Thena, and that's one of the special things that Chloe brings to this, is she's known for, bringing reality to a film. 'Eternals' also features Kumail Nanjiani, Salma Hayek, Kit Harington, Richard Madden, Brian Tyree Henry, Gemma Chan, and Barry Keoghan. 'Eternals' will light up the screens on Diwali on November 5. Jolie said that a lot of the stars were cast to bring out something from their own lives, "something within ourselves, that maybe we weren't even aware of. And then let it live and let it grow within the film. So, she is maybe the most fantastic I've ever played in a superhero. And yet, my children said it was the most like me." The actress shared that it is "hard" to talk about Thena. "But her vulnerability, and her, what she's trying to balance. And that being able to be in the same woman who is also considered very strong. I think we often have to present to be fully together to be strong. And yet, I think she holds both, which most people do. And it's important to see it," Jolie said.

really, it was the cast. It was the idea of what this family would be. The star added that she "just wanted to be a part of this family". Before I even knew very much about who I was gonna play. Um, but as I learned about Thena, and that's one of the special things that Chloe brings to this, is she's known for, bringing reality to a film. 'Eternals' also features Kumail Nanjiani, Salma Hayek, Kit Harington, Richard Madden, Brian Tyree Henry, Gemma Chan, and Barry Keoghan. 'Eternals' will light up the screens on Diwali on November 5. Jolie said that a lot of the stars were cast to bring out something from their own lives, "something within ourselves, that maybe we weren't even aware of. And then let it live and let it grow within the film. So, she is maybe the most fantastic I've ever played in a superhero. And yet, my children said it was the most like me." The actress shared that it is "hard" to talk about Thena. "But her vulnerability, and her, what she's trying to balance. And that being able to be in the same woman who is also considered very strong. I think we often have to present to be fully together to be strong. And yet, I think she holds both, which most people do. And it's important to see it," Jolie said.



Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Lisa Kudrow pay tribute to James Michael Tyler

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actresses Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, and Lisa Kudrow have paid a heartfelt tribute to their late 'Friends' co-star James Michael Tyler, who passed away due to prostate cancer aged 59. Aniston took to Instagram to share a sweet post to Tyler. "Friends would not have been the same without you," Aniston wrote, alongside a post that featured a scene from an episode of 'Friends', as well as a headshot of Tyler's character on the show, Gunther. "Thank you for the laughter you brought to the show and to all of our lives," Aniston continued. "You will be so missed #JamesMichaelTyler"

The scene she shared, came from the series finale, in which Gunther, the manager of the Central Perk coffee shop where the eponymous friends frequented, finally confesses his long-

held secret love for Rachel in the culmination on a long-running gag throughout several seasons of the series, reports etonline.com.

Cox also paid tribute to Tyler, sharing a photo of him from the set and a message honouring his memory. "The size of gratitude you brought into the room and showed every day on set is the size of the gratitude I hold for having known you," she wrote. "Rest In peace James."

Lisa Kudrow remembered Tyler with a sweet post as well, sharing the same snapshot at Cox, writing: "James Michael Tyler, we miss you. Thank you for being there for us all. #jamesmichealtyle"

Tyler was first diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2018, and went on the Today show this past June to open up about his diagnosis and to encourage others to get tested as early and regularly as possible. He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Carno, whom he wed in 2017.

Rust' production shuts down till probe complete

Los Angeles | Agencies

The producers of the movie 'Rust' are pausing production while sheriffs investigate the circumstances of the death of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins that occurred when a gun handled by veteran star Alec Baldwin discharged on Thursday.

Actors were rehearsing for the Western film, which was shooting at the Bonanza Creek Ranch near Santa Fe, when the gun was discharged after Baldwin had been told it was a "cold" or unloaded gun, reports variety.com.

The Santa Fe Sheriff's search warrant executed Friday indicated the deputy arriving at the scene was told that assistant director Dave Halls did not know there was a live round in the gun when he yelled "cold gun". "As we go through this crisis, we have



made the decision to wrap the set at least until the investigations are complete," said the statement from the 'Rust' production company.

The letter went on to say that director Joel Souza is recovering, and the production is "supporting him however we can".

Producers reiterated that they are conducting an internal review of safety protocols, but reminded that "we are limited in our ability to say anything further publicly or privately" since it is an ongoing investigation.

"Our hearts are with all of you, as we all go through this tragic time and mourn the loss of our colleague and dear friend, Halyna Hutchins," the statement said.

It went on to say that the producers remain in close touch with Hutchins' family.

The production team said that it had arranged in-person and virtual grief coun-

sors for cast and crew members. Producers will also be making a donation to the AFI Halyna Hutchins Scholarship Fund and will be matching any donations by the crew.

"Although our hearts are broken, and it is hard to see beyond the horizon, this is, at the moment, a pause rather than an end. The spirit that brought us all to this special place remains," the statement from the production team said.

The Santa Fe Sheriff's Office has set a news conference regarding the investigation on Wednesday.

A petition has been created asking Alec Baldwin to "use his power and influence in the Hollywood film industry to make change and ban real guns on film sets".

Over 22,000 people to date have signed the petition, including actors Olivia Wilde and Holland Taylor.

UK ROYAL NAVY OFFICERS WATCH 'NO TIME TO DIE' IN GOA

Los Angeles | Agencies

A special screening of the latest James Bond film 'No Time to Die' was held in Goa for 80 Royal Navy officers from the British naval frigate HMS Richmond which is anchored here in the coastal state, an official statement said. Inox, one of the country's leading multiplex chains hosted the screening. "Inox hosted a special screening for 80 naval officers. The screening was organized so that the company got a chance to witness their colleague, Honorary Commander Daniel Craig's final outing as the British super spy James Bond," a statement issued by Inox Leisure said in a statement. "Daniel Craig was ranked as Honorary Commander in the Royal Navy - the same rank he shares with James Bond in the fictional world of the James Bond series of movies since 2006," the statement also said.

Craig's last film as the legendary spy also features Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon.

"Daniel Craig is well known for being Commander Bond for more than a decade, a naval officer who keeps Britain safe through missions across the globe. Inox is proud and honoured to host the members of the oldest service in the British armed forces - the Royal Navy," Atul Bhandarkar, regional director, West, Inox Leisure, said.



KRISTEN STEWART 'TRIED TO GET TALLER' TO PLAY PRINCESS DIANA

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Kristen Stewart, who stars as the late royal in the new film 'Spencer', said that she wanted to alter her height to match Diana's physical stature.

Kristen told 'The Sunday Times' newspaper: "I tried to get taller. I'm 5ft 5in. She had such beautiful stature. I thought, 'I wish I could grow my femur! But I'm playing Diana, I'm not her.'" The movie is set at Sandringham over a weekend at Christmas 1991 and follows Diana's decision to end her marriage to Prince Charles and Kristen was determined to find the "inner fire" of the princess, reports femalefirst.co.uk. The 'Twilight' star said: "She's at her lowest point, but there's still this inner fire. Just don't let it go out."

She also reflected on the way film roles have changed for women as they can be "curious, honest and messy" on screen. Stewart said: "We're just allowed to exist now in a way that feels curious, honest and messy."

"Films have been made for a long time by men and you can tell. We are getting to a place, though, where we can destigmatise things that should not be taboo. We've been conditioned our entire lives to go, 'We're OK! We don't feel anything! I don't have cramps right now!'"

"If men had periods they'd have two weeks off a month. But, anyway, it's an exciting time to make films, as women can externalise feelings that have been suppressed forever."

'Spencer' has raised concerns that it could upset Diana's sons Prince William and Prince Harry but the actress believes that things have changed as the pair have been allowed to make their own "choices and mistakes".

The actress said: "They have been saddled with the burden of our curiosities for their entire lives and that is the job. (Diana's) legacy is clearly in her boys."

First BTS online concert in a year delivers message of hope amid pandemic



Seoul | Agencies

K-pop supergroup BTS delivered a message of hope to its global fans on Sunday during an online concert livestreamed from an empty stadium in Seoul to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

'BTS Permission To Dance On Stage' was the group's first global online concert in about a year since the BTS MAP OF THE SOUL ON:E in October last year, reports Yonhap news agency. The seven-member band opened the show

with 'On', the title track of its fourth full-length album, 'Map of the Soul: 7', presenting the group's powerful dance moves.

The song's lyrics that go, "The power of the things that make me, 'me' / Even if I fall, I come right up, scream," sounded like words of comfort for those who have suffered from the pandemic.

The group then heated up the atmosphere by performing their hit numbers, such as 'Fire', 'Dope', 'DNA', 'Blood, Sweat and Tears' and 'Fake Love'.

After the opening stage, Jimin said, "We've been looking forward to today a lot, and we're grateful and honoured to

be able to prepare (this concert) and meet you like this again. I will perform harder for you who are not here today." Jungkook said, "Although we cannot see you today, it's an honour that we can show us to you. We'll do our best in today's concert."

RM added: "I think we are the most like ourselves when we sing and dance on stage. It feels hard, because it's been a while."

The group did not miss its global hit songs, such as 'Dynamite', which earned it the first No. 1 on the Billboard main singles chart for a K-pop act, and its other Hot 100 chart toppers, including 'Life Goes On' and 'Butter'. There was no individual performance from the beginning through the end, with the group singing and dancing all together.

V, who experienced pain in his calf muscles during a rehearsal the previous day, took part in the show seated on a chair and without choreography. "There was a mistake while practicing and rehearsing for the concert," he said. "I'm really okay, so you don't have to worry so much... If I can, I want to run to the stage."

Following the online event, BTS will have its first in-person concerts in Los Angeles in two years next month. 'BTS Permission To Dance On Stage - LA' will be held at SoFi Stadium on November 27 and 28, and December 1 and 2, with all tickets already sold out.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

LIVEB



Kate Beckinsale



T20 WORLD CUP: BATTERS, MUJEEB STAR IN AFGHANISTAN'S 130-RUN ROUT OF SCOTLAND

Sharjah | Agencies

A collective batting effort followed by a masterly five-wicket haul from Mujeeb Ur Rahman meant that Afghanistan annihilated Scotland by 130 runs in a Group 2 match of Super 12 stage in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at Sharjah Cricket Stadium here on Monday.

After scoring an imposing 190/4 in 20 overs, Mujeeb, along with Rashid Khan (4/9), spun a web around Scotland's batters, from which there was no escaping as they were bundled out for 60 in the 11th over.

The mammoth win in the opening match of the tournament is also Afghanistan's biggest win in T20Is in terms of run margin.

Chasing a mammoth target, Scotland's George Munsey began by taking three boundaries in the first nine balls of the innings. Kyle Coetzer joined the act with two boundaries against Naveen-ul-Haq in the third over.

But Rahman's entry in the fourth over turned the match on its head as he scalped three wickets. Coetzer was the first wicket to fall, clean bowled by a googly. On the next ball, Calum MacLeod was trapped lbw by another googly. Richie Berrington survived the hat-trick delivery but was trapped lbw by Rahman's googly as well. In the matter of five balls, the match swung in Afghanistan's favour.



In the next over, Matthew Cross chased a wide delivery against ul-Haq. The outside edge flew to the right of Shahzad, who dived full stretch to grab a one-handed catch. Munsey hit Mujeeb for a six but Mujeeb disturbed his stumps on the very next ball of the final over of power-play.

Scotland's batting slide continued as Rashid Khan trapped Michael Leask lbw in his first over. In the next over, Mujeeb picked his first five-

wicket haul in T20Is as Mark Watt was bowled through the gate. Khan took the last three wickets to bring an end to Scotland's misery.

Earlier, Afghanistan's batters smacked 11 sixes with every batter contributing. They were off to a flying start, reaching fifty in 5.1 overs, the fastest half-century by a team in the tournament. It was down to Hazratullah Zazai and Mohammad Shahzad scoring seven boundaries between themselves. But pacer

Safyaan Sharif delivered the first breakthrough for Scotland as Shahzad holed out to deep mid-wicket, ending a 54-run partnership.

Post power-play, Scotland were able to slow down as Zazai was taken out by a toe-crushing yorker from Mark Watt, which deflected from the toe-end of his bat and hit off-stump. Najibullah Zadran began with a boundary off Chris Greaves. On the other hand, Rahmanullah Gurbaz started slow but joined the run-making party by sweeping Greaves for a six followed by a paddle for four more.

From overs 15 to 18, Afghanistan hit five sixes, three of which came off Gurbaz's bat. But the partnership was broken by Josh Davey as his slower full toss was sliced by Gurbaz to extra cover. Zadran reached his fifty in 30 balls with a single. Though Zadran fell on the final ball of the innings off Sharif, he had done his work of taking Afghanistan to the highest score of the tournament so far as 63 runs came off the last five overs.

Brief scores:

Afghanistan 190/4 in 20 overs (Najibullah Zadran 59, Rahmanullah Gurbaz 46, Safyaan Sharif 2/33, Mark Watt 1/23) beat Scotland 60 all out in 10.2 (George Munsey 25, Chris Greaves 12, Mujeeb Ur Rahman 5/20, Rashid Khan 4/9) by 130 runs.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL HOCKEY: RESHMA SCORES SEVEN AS JHARKHAND WIN 28-0

Jhansi | Agencies

Hockey Reshma Soreng scored seven goals while Pramila Soreng and Albelia Rani Toppo scored five goals each as Hockey Jharkhand thrashed Hockey Andaman & Nicobar 28-0 in a totally one-sided match at the 11th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2021 here on Monday.

Hockey Jharkhand eased past Hockey Andaman & Nicobar 28-0 in their Pool F match. Reshma Soreng scored in the 12th minute, 13th, 20th, 28th, 40th, 42nd, and 45th minute to complete his tally of seven goals in the first match of the day. Pramila Soreng (7', 19', 40', 49', 60') and Albelia Rani Toppo (16', 26', 31', 32', 55') netted five goals each. Betan Dung Dung (15', 23', 38') and Simta Minz (21', 33', 53') scored a hat-trick each, while Roshni Dumdung (6', 46') and Captain Subhasi Hemrom (44', 50') scored a brace each. Shamy Bara (56') netted one goal for Hockey Jharkhand.

In other matches, Delhi Hockey, Hockey Karnataka,



Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh Hockey, and Kerala Hockey registered victories in their respective matches on the fifth day of the competition on Monday.

In Pool F, Delhi Hockey earned a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Hockey Rajasthan. Babita (10') and Manisha (37') scored one goal each for Delhi Hockey, while Captain Beena Pandey (44') scored the only goal for Hockey Rajasthan. Hockey Karnataka defeated Tripura Hockey 11-0 in their Pool G match. Pavithra PA (18', 27', 47') scored a hat-trick, while Shaina Thangamma MP (7', 26') and Anjali HR (50', 53') scored a brace each. In other matches, Delhi Hockey, Hockey Karnataka,

MG (48'), Vidya KS (50'), and Captain Nisha PC (56') scored one goal each. In the other Pool G match, the Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu defeated Telangana Hockey 8-0. Captain Rubasri N (26', 55') scored a brace, while Kavya R (7'), Suguna R (16'), Kamaleshwari A (22'), Nivetha (27'), Malarvizhi S (29'), and Jayaprathsa S (59') scored a goal each.

In Pool H, Uttar Pradesh Hockey defeated Hockey Jammu & Kashmir 12-0. Komal Sahani (40', 55', 57') scored a hat-trick, while Nilanjali Rai (7', 41'), Sonal Tiwari (20', 28'), Anshika Singh (42', 53') and Reetu Singh (44', 54') scored a brace each. Shreya Singh (49') scored one goal for Uttar Pradesh Hockey.

'With you Shami', cricketers condemn online attack on India pacer

Dubai | Agencies

Several cricketers, past and current, on Monday came out in support of pacer Mohammed Shami, who has been receiving derogatory and hateful comments on social media after India lost to Pakistan at the ICC T20 World Cup match here on Sunday.

The Virat Kohli-led side started its ICC T20 World Cup campaign on a disappointing note as it lost its opening encounter by ten wickets, with Shami emerging as the most expensive bowler on the night, giving away 43 runs in 3.5 overs. The trolls linked his below-par performance to his religion.

To which, former Indian opener Virender Sehwag tweeted, "The online attack on Mohammad Shami is shocking and we stand by him. He is a champion and anyone who wears the India cap has India in their hearts far more than any online mob. With you Shami."



Agle match mein dikado jalwa."

Harbhajan Singh wrote: "We love you @MdShami11." Whereas, current leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal stated, "We are so proud of you @MdShami11 bhैया." Former India pacer RP Singh also tweeted: "@MdShami11 is an Indian cricketer and we are proud of him. To target him after the loss against

Pakistan crushed India for their first-ever victory against the archrival in a T20 World Cup game. Mohammad Rizwan (79 not out) and captain Babar Azam (68 not out) struck superb unbeaten half-centuries and eased Pakistan to 152-0 in 17.5 overs in Group 2 of the Super 12s.

Facebook removes online abuse hurled at Mohammed Shami

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After pacer Mohammed Shami faced online abuse following India's defeat to Pakistan at the ICC T20 World Cup match, Facebook on Monday said that it quickly removed the comments that hurled abuse at him.

In a statement to IANS, the social network said that no one should have to experience abuse anywhere, and "we don't want it on our platforms."

"We quickly introduced measures to remove the comments that directed abuse at an Indian cricketer and we'll continue to take action against those that violate our Community Standards," the Facebook spokesperson said.

"We have recently announced updates to our bullying and harassment policy that increases protections for all public figures," the spokesperson added. The Virat Kohli-led side started



its ICC T20 World Cup campaign on a disappointing note as it lost its opening encounter by 10 wickets, with Shami emerging as the most expensive bowler on the night, giving away 43 runs in 3.5 overs. The trolls on social media platforms linked his below-par performance to his religion.

Facebook does not allow attacks on people based on their protected characteristics, which includes race, religion,

nationality or sexual orientation. This includes the use of emojis when used in a hateful context.

Bullying and harassment are not allowed on the platform, but when they do occur, the company takes it very seriously. Several cricketers, past and current, also came out in support of Shami, who received derogatory and hateful comments on social media.

"When we support #TeamIndia, we support every person who represents Team India. @MdShami11 is a committed, world-class bowler. He had an off day like any other sportsperson can have. I stand behind Shami & Team India," tweeted legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar. Former Indian opener Virender Sehwag posted: "The online attack on Mohammad Shami is shocking and we stand by him. He is a champion and anyone who wears the India cap has India in their hearts far more than any online mob. With you Shami. Agle match mein dikado jalwa."

Women's National Boxing: World medallists Manju, Jamuna storm into semis

Hisar | Agencies

Extending her brilliant winning run in the tournament, Railway Sports Promotion Board's (RSPB) boxer Manju Rani entered the 48kg semi-finals with a decisive 5-0 win over Punjab's Minakshai in the 5th Elite Women's National Boxing Championships here on Monday.

The 21-year-old Manju, who won the silver medal on debut at the 2019 World Championships, packed unbelievable power that certainly took her opponent from Punjab completely by surprise, as she had no answers to Manju's precise punches.

Another boxer made into the semi-finals of the 48kg category was Tamil Nadu's S Kalavani, who beat Himachal Pradesh's Jyotika Bisht by a similar margin in the quarter-finals bout. Another star of the Day 5 was Assam's Jamuna Boro, who entered the last-4 stage in the 54kg category with a dominating 5-0 win over Gayatri Kasnyal of Uttarakhnad. The 2019 World Championships bronze medallist Jamuna was too quick for Gayatri, who often found herself on the wrong foot while attempting to evade Jamuna's jabs.



In the 52kg category, the 2019 Asian Championships bronze medallist T'langana's Nikhat Zareen put up an impressive show against Assam's Manju Basumatary and made her way into the semi-finals with a comfortable 5-0 victory.

Equally powerful was RSPB's Shiksha in the 54kg category, who outperformed the reigning youth world champion Babyrojisana Naorem of Manipur 5-0 to progress into the semis. In the 50kg category, Punjab's Komal continued her fine showing and entered the semis after beating Maharashtra's Anjali Gupta 5-0.

Impressive Advani, Mehta qualify for World Snooker Championships

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Indian No. 2 Pankaj Advani (PSPB) stamped his supremacy with an impressive win against National Champion Aditya Mehta in the World Snooker Qualifiers, a BSFI National Selection Tournament here on Monday, as both clinched their spots in the upcoming World Snooker Championships.

The 36-year-old Advani, who early last month won the Asian snooker crown, maintained his excellent form and succeeded in winning all 12 matches (6 each in the Y-Camp and Z-Camp). The National runner-up Advani accumulated 10,760 points (3,560 National points, 3,600 points each from Y and Z Camps) to take pole position.

National champion Aditya Mehta (PSPB), who finished with four wins and two defeats, was placed second with 10,156 points (4,000 Nationals, 2,916 Y-Camp, and 3,240 Z-Camp) while in third place was Laxman Rawat (PSPB) with 9,396 points (3,240, 3,240 and 2,916).

Both Advani and Mehta qualified to represent India in the upcoming World Snooker Championships, which is likely to be held in Doha, Qatar in November or December.

The genial genius Advani demonstrated his



hunger for success as he reasserted his dominance over Indian No. 1 Mehta by recording a 4-1 win against the lanky Mumbai-based cueist in the concluding round Z-Camp match.

The Bengaluru-based Advani, who had also won the previous outing 4-1, played steadily and mixed caution with aggression. He grabbed every opportunity to put together small useful efforts and managed to dictate terms before going on to wrap up the match with the frame scores reading 80(63)-08, 32-70, 70-00, 86-15, and 68-49 in his favour.

Advani had earlier quashed the challenge from India No. 3 Rawat (PSPB) by pulling through in six frames in an interesting contest. He started with a bang rolling in a neat 139-point break in the first frame and completed a deserving 139-00, 22-61, 84-46, 93-07, 28-74, and 60-31 victory.

Earlier, Mehta scraped past Laxman by a tight 4-3 margin to snatch a crucial fifth win. In an absorbing contest in which the lead repeatedly changed hands, Mehta produced a face-saving run of 61 in the decider to snatch a tense 55-58, 60-16, 80-00, 108(76)-07, 00-104(96), 40-65(55) and 77(61)-14 verdict.

Pushpender Singh (RSPB) with 7883 points and Dhvaj Haria (PSPB) beat Aditya Mehta (PSPB) 4-1 (80(63)-08, 32-70, 70-00, 86-15, 68-49); Mehta (PSPB) beat Laxman Rawat (PSPB) 4-3 (55-58, 60-16, 80-00, 108(76)-07, 00-104(96), 40-65(55), 77(61)-14); Pushpender Singh (RSPB) beat Neeraj Kumar (RSPB) 4-1 (66-15, 88(56)-43, 71-14, 50-70, 66-30); Advani (PSPB) beat Rawat (PSPB) 4-2 (139(139)-00, 22-61, 84-46, 93-07, 28-74, 60-31).

Results - Men's Z-Camp (2nd leg): Pankaj Advani (PSPB) beat Aditya Mehta (PSPB) 4-1 (80(63)-08, 32-70, 70-00, 86-15, 68-49); Mehta (PSPB) beat Laxman Rawat (PSPB) 4-3 (55-58, 60-16, 80-00, 108(76)-07, 00-104(96), 40-65(55), 77(61)-14); Pushpender Singh (RSPB) beat Neeraj Kumar (RSPB) 4-1 (66-15, 88(56)-43, 71-14, 50-70, 66-30); Advani (PSPB) beat Rawat (PSPB) 4-2 (139(139)-00, 22-61, 84-46, 93-07, 28-74, 60-31).

AFC U-23 Asian Cup Qualifiers: India put it across Oman 2-1

Dubai | Agencies

The India Under-23 football team defeated Oman 2-1 in their opening fixture of the AFC U-23 Asian Cup 2022 Qualifiers at the Fujairah Stadium in Dubai, UAE, with Rahim Ali (6th minute) converting a penalty, before Vikram Partap Singh (37th minute) doubling the lead to earn a crucial victory.

Waleed Salim scored a consolation goal in added time for the Oman on Sunday night but the three points came into India's kitty.

Igor Stimac, after the recent success in the SAFF Championship in Maldives where the senior team defeated Nepal for the title, got into the act quickly in pursuit of qualification to the AFC U-23 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2022 for the first time ever since the inception of the tournament in 2013. He started with the experienced Dheeraj Singh under the bar and two full-backs in Ashish Rai and Akash Mishra. Deepak Tangri and Narendra Gahlot manned the defence,



while India's U-17 FIFA World Cupper duo of Jeakson Singh and skipper Suresh Wangjam captain took care of the midfield, while Rahul KP and Vikram Partap Singh were deployed at the flanks. Rahim Ali and Aniket Jadhav were at the attacking third. Before the opponents could settle down, India started attacking from the flanks and in the fifth minute, Vikram earned a penalty that Rahim Ali converted. Omani goalkeeper

er Ibrahim Yousuf had guessed the right way, but Rahim's spot-kick was placed perfectly, as the ball went past the upright and into the side netting.

Six minutes later, Akash floated in a superb cross from the left but the goalkeeper leapt above Aniket to grab it. Vikram and Rahul kept the Omani midfield on its toes, something that helped them slam the second goal in the 37th minute. Akash split the midfield and passed it onto an onrushing Rahim Ali, who rounded off his marker and pushed the ball onto an unmarked Vikram towards his right. The youngster made no mistake to slot it home past an onrushing keeper. That goal gave India the upper hand before half time. On resumption, India could have made it three through Aniket Jadhav, but he was ruled offside. Stimac made a few changes towards the end and the boys responded well to hold their fortress against Oman. Bryce Miranda, who was thrown into the fray in the 71st minutes, almost scored his first goal in the 80th. India have joined the Kyrgyz Republic at the top of Group E with equal points and an identical goal difference.

Corporates with deep pockets bag IPL's Lucknow, Ahmedabad franchises

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The next edition of IPL will see two new corporates with deep pockets enter the league WITH new teams.

According to reports, the Sanjiv Goneka-led RPSG Group has won the bid for the Lucknow franchise, while private equity firm CVC Capital Partners has got its hands on the Ahmedabad franchise.

Reports claim that RPSG Group placed a bid of over Rs 7,000 crore for the Lucknow team, whereas CVC bought the Ahmedabad franchise for more than Rs 5,000 crore. Since the beginning, IPL



entertainment, sports, education, infrastructure, and plantations. It had a revenue of Rs 26,634 crore as on March 31, 2021 and gross assets worth Rs 47,400 crore. private equity firm CVC was established in 1981 and has assets under management worth \$125 billion. The CVC's private equity platform manages \$97 billion of assets. The credit platform of the firm manages \$29 billion of AUM. It is majority owned by employees and led by Managing Partners. The mega auction for the 15th edition of the Indian Premier League, IPL 2022, will be held later this year in December.



67TH NATIONAL FILM AWARDS:

Rajinikanth, Dhanush, Kangana, Manoj Bajpayee receive honours



Bharati K Dubey | New Delhi

Actors Rajinikanth, Kangana Ranaut, Manoj Bajpayee and Dhanush were feted on Monday at the 67th National Film Awards which were announced earlier

this year. The awards are being presented at the Vigyan Bhawan in the capital. Manoj and Dhanush received their awards for Best Actor for 'Bhonsle' and the Tamil film 'Asurani', respectively.

Kangana Ranaut was honoured with the Best Actress award for her performances in the Hindi films 'Manikarnika: Saheb Phalke Award for his outstanding contribution to the world of Indian cinema. The veteran actor received a standing ovation as he was conferred the award. Rajinikanth's family including his wife Latha, and daughter Soundarya Rajinikanth too were present at the event.

He recalled his days of struggle. "When I was the bus conductor, he identified the acting talent in me and encouraged me to join the cinema. All my producers, directors, co-artists, technicians, distributors, exhibitors and the media, press and all my fans. Tamil people - without them I am no body. Jai Hind!"

"Chhichhore" director Nitesh Tiwari and producer Sajid Nadiadwala dedicated the Best Film Award to late Bollywood star Sushant Singh Rajput, who passed away in 2020.

Vijay Sethupathy was awarded the Best Supporting Actor for his performance in 'Super Deluxe'.

Malayalam film 'Marakkar: Arabikadalinte Simhan' (Marakkar: Lion of the Arabian Sea) received the National Film Award for Best Feature Film. The film has been written and directed by Priyadarshan, and stars Mohanlal. The actor was also present at the awards show.

The Tashkent Files' won two awards - Best Supporting Actress, which went to Pallavi Joshi and for Best Dialogue Writer.

The 67th National Awards were delayed since last year due to the pandemic.

T Series and Emmay Entertainment release the trailer of John Abraham and Divya Khosla Kumar's much-awaited film - Satyameva Jayate 2

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After the massive success of the 2018 hit - Satyameva Jayate, John Abraham and director Milap Milan Zaveri have reunited for its sequel. The makers who have been creating a strong buzz around the film with different posters and teasers have finally released the trailer of the much-awaited action-packed Satyameva Jayate 2 which also stars Divya Khosla Kumar.

The film promises to deliver high octane action, drama, and mass dialoguebaazi, which will be loved by the audiences who are eagerly waiting for a theatrical release amidst pandemic. The trailer shows John on a mission to fight against injustice, corruption, and misuse of power. Talking about his excitement, actor John Abraham said, "I am very happy that cinemas have now re-opened even in Maharashtra and the audiences will be able to experience Satyameva Jayate 2 in theatres. A film like Satyameva Jayate 2 is meant for the big screen and for the masses/people who have not been able to watch movies in theatres due to the pandemic. The response by all the exhibitors who saw the rushes has been encouraging, they are also looking forward to the film."

Divya Khosla Kumar added, "It's been such a pleasure working with John and Milap. Satyameva Jayate is an iconic film



and I am positive that the second installment will only be a feather to the cap of the film franchise. I hope the audience and my fans embrace me and my performance! The cinemas have now opened and Satyameva Jayate 2 promises to pack a punch for all cinema goers!"

Milap Zaveri shared, "I'm ecstatic by the amazing response to the trailer! It's John's first triple role and the masses, as well as the class audience, have loved him in it. Divya's beauty and talent is being raved about. The dialogues have hit the bull's eye as has the action. I think audiences are charged up to see the masala entertainment film has to offer." Producer Bhushan Kumar (T-Series), "We are excited to share the trailer Satyameva Jayate 2 with the audiences finally. The film is entertaining and massy, I hope it is showered with

love, just like the first one at the theatres." Producer Monisha Advani (Emmay Entertainment) signed off, "It is very emotional for us to release this next installment of the Satyameva Jayate series. Organically seeded from the love received by the first part, Milap, Divya, John, Nikkhil, Bhushan and our entire teams have worked tirelessly through the pandemic to ready this film for theatres. We are grateful for the patience afforded by our fans and audiences & hope to exceed their expectations when we show in cinemas all over... this is masala entertainment at its best!"

Satyameva Jayate 2 produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar (T-Series), Monisha Advani, Madhu Bhojwani, Nikkhil Advani (Emmay Entertainment) is slated to release on Thursday, 25th November 2021.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Acclaimed actor Pankaj Tripathi is all set to showcase his acting prowess as a shrewd police officer in 'Bunty Aur Babli 2'. He hopes he has done justice to the character he is playing the film.

Pankaj said, "I'm grateful to find projects that are different and 'Bunty Aur Babli 2' is a supremely funny film. I just loved the character that was offered to me by my director Varun V. Sharma and YRF and I hope I have done justice to the role. I have been looking for a role like this because it gives me the creative freedom

Pankaj Tripathi turns shrewd cop in 'Bunty Aur Babli 2' trailer

to just entertain audiences through comedy."

He added: "I play a cop named Jatayu Singh, who through his shrewdness, manages to pit the two Buntys and Babbis in an epic fight for supremacy. While the two battle it out to prove who is the biggest con-artist, I have my eyes on the prize to be the most acclaimed cop."

"I'm the one who gets the original Bunty-Babli out of hiding to chase the new Bunty and Babli. What follows is madness and a laugh riot for audiences to be thoroughly entertained."

'Bunty Aur Babli 2' is set to release worldwide on November 19.

ARYAN KHAN GETS MEDIA HIGH ON DOPE!

VINOD MIRANI | Mumbai

Looks like we are in the news again! The film people, especially the stars and their families somehow always stir up the media, electronic as well as the print. But, most of all, their deeds, if they involve government agencies, dominate the social media, which is more vocal and hence powerful. The stars do crave for attention and the media needs them as much, too. They even spend big bucks to get attention but, at times, there comes a media glare that puts them in a spot. Unfortunately, at such times they end up buying space. Know what I mean if you check the entertainment and info media pages of the last few days.

Aryan Khan, the 23-year-old son of Shah Rukh Khan, along with his friends, has been accused of using banned drugs at a rave party while on a Goa-Mumbai cruise liner. Nobody or just a few would know or care to know the names of those others who have also been arrested. As far as the media, including the social media is concerned, the news would mean nothing if a star or a star son was not involved.

As the story goes, there was a tip off to the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) about a rave drug party slated to take place on a cruise liner. The NCB personnel traveled on the same cruise pretending to be fellow revelers and, in due time, raided the rave party. One of those involved in the party happened to be Aryan Khan, the son of actor Shah Rukh Khan. All hell broke loose as the news spread. Shah Rukh always knew how to use media to his own advantage. There were three Khans in contention during his time and he got himself branded as King Khan, making sure it was picked up and duly amplified by the media. So far so good. All is fair in competition. But, making comments just to stand out from others to sound, kind of, hep, modern, open-minded and so on can have implications.

Shah Rukh Khan with wife Gauri Khan was

being interviewed on the popular TV show, on Star TV. When asked by the anchor, Simi Garewal, if he will spoil his son, Shah Rukh had replied with something to the effect that he had told his son when he was barely three-years-old that he can go ahead and have sex, do drugs and enjoy life. Of course, the proud mother, Gauri, had intervened to say that the son was three-years-and-two-months! Now that the son has decided to live up to the advice, so be it. To his credit, it must be told that, at least, Shah Rukh, is not seen in any media or TV channels, lamenting his son's arrest or defending him. Well, the son also needs to learn the implications of things he does.

Shah Rukh Khan may have hogged the headlines in the media hundreds of times, both paid and merited. His son Aryan made the headlines for the first time, well ahead of his time and all for a wrong reason. But, if he wishes, he can make headlines again all his life, and turn what is happening now into an experience while growing up.

Take the case of Sanjay Dutt, for example. Sanjay was convicted for his involvement in the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts and convicted for the possession of arms. He was found guilty and sentenced. He spent his time in jail. Anywhere else, any other profession or busi-



ness, the man would have been branded, distanced socially as well as in business. But, Sanjay came back to films as a celebrity! The people, moviegoers as well as others did not only forgive him but, in fact, sympathized with him. He was 'Bichara Sanju'!

Similar has been the case with Salman Khan, accused of causing deaths of footpath dwellers while driving under the influence of alcohol in Mumbai one late night. He is also an accused of being involved in another case of hunting black buck during a film shooting outing in Rajasthan. It has been years now, he has been in and out of jail. But, people have nothing but sympathy for him. In fact, he has given some of his biggest hits during this period of braving court visits and spending some days in jail. Earlier, late actor Raaj Kumar, enjoying a huge following for his stylized acting and dialogue delivery, while working for the police force, had caused the death of a person. He had to attend his shootings taking leave from custody. Thereafter, he went on to build a successful acting career.

Aryan Khan can be certain, such hiccups will never haunt him in life were he to choose a career in films! In film business, especially for a star, such things don't matter because, they don't matter to the masses.

As for people who try to justify what Aryan was indulging in, it is strange. Nobody says,

Hey, kid, okay you made a mistake. Try to get over it or some such. Instead, the reactions are: Oh, he is only 23, a kid. Now, whoever defines a 23-year-old as a kid is a juvenile himself! In fact, when Shah Rukh Khan did his first few assignments like Wagle Ki Duniya, Dil Daria and Fauji (which earned him popularity) on television, he was 23 himself! And, by the time he came up with his first super hit, Deewana, along with Rishi Kapoor and Divya Bharti, his 28th birthday was celebrated on the sets of the film.

The other aspect of the film industry is jumping to the defense of another star or kin. Any such case or a death in a filmy family, the condolences and funeral attendance depend on how successful is his or her survivor, not what the deceased's own merits were. There are numerous examples.

So, some like Suniel Shetty, Salman Khan, Hrithik Roshan (he has issued a sermon for Aryan) and others have jumped to either the defense of Aryan or condoled him or his father! Missing logic and commonsense, is it not? In simple words, it defines hypocrisy. Who is awarding brownie points here!

Then there are those calling it 'singling out of Aryan' just because he is a star son! Is it? There are others who have been taken in by the law for the same case. But, your sympathies are limited to Aryan Khan and, they may be 23 or 21 or whatever more, but how do you care? You don't know them because they are not star kids and they don't matter, do they? In fact, those who say such things are singling out Aryan and drawing attention to him!

And, if it is any consolation, over the last few years, the biggest of film celebrities have hit the headlines for drugs issues. The investigations nets spread around biggest of names in the film industry. These matters have a tendency to evaporate soon. Has any celebrity ever been jailed in a drugs-related case? (Vinod Mirani is a veteran film writer and box office analyst. The views expressed are personal)

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sharvari Wagh