

absolute india

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI



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From here on, India's path becomes more treacherous...

Nations need to address risks of loss, damage from climate change: OECD

TIME TO ACT

- ▶ These risks are unevenly distributed across countries and people, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable, which is a compelling reason to act now, it said.
- ▶ These risks flow from three types of climate hazards, each subject to uncertainties: increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events, more gradual changes, such as sea level rises, and from the potentially dramatic global effects of crossing critical thresholds in the climate system.
- ▶ The risk of losses and damages depends not only on the hazards but also on the exposure and vulnerability of people, assets and ecosystems to those hazards.
- ▶ The most important way to mitigate climate risks in the future is to act now and to urgently put the world on a path to net zero emissions by 2050, the report says.



"A large proportion of the world's current and future populations will face more frequent and intense climate events. The increasing number of governments adopting net zero emissions goals by 2050 is encouraging, but this needs to be translated into real action and real outcomes."

Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General, OECD

Glasgow | Agencies

As governments face the challenge of delivering on their net zero commitments by 2050, a new OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) report on Monday said they must focus in parallel on reducing and managing the inevitable risk of further losses and damages from climate change.

report says the risks of further impacts on economies, ecosystems, businesses, and people are unavoidable and will increase with the extent of warming.

All countries need to reduce their exposure and vulnerability to the risks of losses and damages from climate change now. Developed countries and large emitting emerging economies have a responsibility to take the lead in cutting emissions.

responsibility to provide finance, technology and capacity building to help developing countries with the climate risks they face, the report says. Among other recommendations, the report calls for more to be done on a global level to monitor and study climate tipping points. Improved data on climate extremes and impacts in developing countries is needed to underpin decision-making and must be complemented by international partnerships that

Leaders converge for climate talks

Around 120 leaders came together in UK's Glasgow on Monday at the start of COP26, launching two weeks of global negotiations to help determine whether humanity can drive forward the urgent action needed to avoid catastrophic climate change. Moving from the promise of Paris, announcements in key sectors will start to show how Glasgow will deliver. This includes new commitments on consigning coal to history, electric cars, reducing deforestation, and addressing methane emissions. Building on the publication of the \$100 billion delivery plan, which the Presidency requested the Canadian and German governments lead, finance will remain a key priority. Discussions will centre on how the countries most vulnerable to climate change can access the finance needed to deliver climate adaptation and boost green recovery from the pandemic. Further to the commitment to mobilise finance, the opening of COP26 saw several new finance announcements to progress action on the \$100 billion and address adaptation finance.

2013 Patna serial blasts: 4 convicts sentenced to death

PATNA | Agencies

A special NIA court in Patna on Monday sentenced to death four of the nine persons it had held guilty of carrying out bomb explosions during then NDA Prime Ministerial candidate Narendra Modi's 'Hunkar Rally' in Gandhi Maidan in 2013. The special National Investigation Agency court had on October 27 convicted nine out of 10 accused.

Out of the other convicts, two have been given life sentence, two others 10 years imprisonment, and one 7 years imprisonment.

Gurvinder Singh Malhotra, the special judge of the NIA court, announced the quantum of punishment 8 years after the serial bomb blasts that shook Patna on October 27, 2013 during the Hunkar rally. The case was transferred to the NIA on November 6, 2013. The four convicts who have been awarded the death penalty are Imtiaz Ansari, Haider Ali alias Black Beauty, Noman Ansari and Muzibullah



Ansari. Umar Sidiqqi and Azharuddin Kuresi have been given life imprisonment, while Ahmed Hussain and Feroz Aslam were awarded 10 years rigorous imprisonment and Ifthikhar Alam has been given a 7-year jail term. The court said that the charges of sedition, criminal conspiracy, murder, attempt to murder and UAPA levelled

by the NIA have been proven. Narendra Modi came to Patna to address a rally for the 2014 parliamentary elections. While he was addressing the rally, serial bombs exploded in Gandhi Maidan, the venue of the rally as well as at Patna railway station. Six persons died and over 89 persons were injured in the blasts.



Ex-SBI chairman's bail plea rejected in loan scam case

Jaiapur: The Chief Judicial Magistrate of Jaisalmer Court on Monday rejected the bail application of former SBI chairman Pratip Chaudhury, arrested in the Jaisalmer hotel loan fraud case, and sent him to judicial custody till November 15. He will be in judicial custody for 15 days till November 15, they added. Pratip Chaudhury was arrested from Delhi on Sunday and brought to Jaisalmer on Monday. The case relates to a hotel group in Jaisalmer which took a loan of Rs 24 crore from SBI in 2008. When the hotel group did not pay full installments of the loan, the bank allegedly went against the RBI rules and declared it NPA after confiscating the property. It is alleged that later the property was also sold in a wrong manner. At present, the value of this property is being said to be around Rs 200 crore.

Commercial LPG Cylinder to cost more than Rs 2,000

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) prices for commercial cylinders were increased by Rs 266 on Monday. In the national capital, 19-kg commercial cylinders will cost Rs 2,000.50 from Rs 1,734 earlier, according to news agency ANI. However, the domestic LPG cylinder rates were kept unchanged.



Rs 15 on October 6. Prior to that, the rates of subsidised and non-subsidised LPG rates were increased by Rs 25 on October 1. The government policy provides for the supply

of 12 cylinders of 14.2-kg each per household at subsidised or below-market rates. Any quantity over this had to be bought at market price or non-subsidised rates.

In another set of development, petrol and diesel prices were hiked for the sixth consecutive day across the country.

In Delhi, with a hike of 35 paise a litre, the price of petrol rose to Rs 109.69 per litre while the price of diesel surged to Rs 98.42.

In Mumbai, the rates of petrol and diesel increased to Rs 115.50 and Rs 106.62 per litre respectively. A litre of petrol now costs Rs 110.35 in Kolkata and diesel costs Rs 101.56 per litre. Petrol and diesel cost Rs 106.35 and Rs 102.59 per litre respectively in Chennai.

AKHILESH STIRS CONTROVERSY WITH JINNAH REMARKS

Lucknow:

Samajwadi Party (SP) President Akhilesh Yadav has stirred major controversy by glorifying Muhammad Ali Jinnah at a party rally in Hardoi. "Sardar Patel, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Jinnah, they all came out of the same institution. They all studied at the same institute, they became barristers and gave freedom," he said at the rally on Sunday. Remembering Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on his birth anniversary, Akhilesh Yadav said: "Sardar Patel used to know the land, Sardar Patel took decisions holding the land, he used to understand the land so he made his decisions and that is why he is known as the Iron Man of India." The BJP, however, has slammed the SP President for saying that Jinnah was a hero of India's freedom movement and accused Akhilesh Yadav of indulging in Muslim appeasement and putting vote bank politics above national sentiments.



Six countries recognise India's Covaxin

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that six countries have recognised India's vaccination certificate. The countries are Australia, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, State of Palestine, Mauritius and Mongolia.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After Australia recognised Bharat Biotech's Covaxin for allowing entry of travellers who had received the vaccine, five more countries on Monday recognised India's vaccine certificate. These five countries recognised both Covaxin and Covishield.

Earlier, in the day Australia recognised Bharat Biotech's Covaxin along with Covishield for allowing entry of travellers who had received the vaccine. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), the Australian drug regulator, announced that it has recognised two more Covid-19 vaccines not registered in Australia but used widely internationally, which includes Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and BBIBP-CorV (manufactured by



Sinopharm, China). The TGA further stated that with recognition of Covaxin, and BBIBP-CorV, along with the previously announced recognition of Coronavac (manufactured by Sinovac, China) and Covishield (manufactured by AstraZeneca), means many citizens of India and China as well as other countries in the region where these vaccines have been widely deployed will now be considered fully vaccinated on entry to Australia.

PROTEST WILL STRENGTHEN FROM NOV 27: TIKAIT

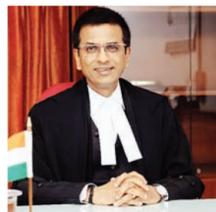


New Delhi: Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait on Monday said that farmers will strengthen their agitation from November 27 at protest sites by reaching Delhi borders with tractors. "Central Government has time till November 26, after that, from November 27, farmers from villages will reach Delhi borders from all around with tractors and strengthen the agitation at protest sites. #FarmersProtest," Tikait said in a tweet. Earlier on Sunday, Tikait also warned that the Centre saying that if the administration pulls down farmers' tents at protest sites, they will set up tents at police stations and District Magistrate's offices.

Dabur ad had to be withdrawn due to 'public intolerance': Justice Chandrachud

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Supreme Court judge, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud on Saturday said the Karva Chauth advertisement featuring a same sex couple, which was yanked off following outrage from a section, was pulled down "on the ground of public intolerance".



Last week, Dabur had to withdraw an advertisement, which featured two women celebrating Karva Chauth together, and tendered an unconditional apology for "unintentionally hurting people's sentiments". The advertisement faced backlash on social media platforms from a section of people and Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra issued a warning to Dabur India to withdraw the "objectionable" advertisement or face legal action.

that there are real-life situations which show that there is great divergence between ideals of the law and the real state of the society today.

"Just two days ago all of you may have seen an advertisement of a company, which was required to be pulled down. It was an advertisement on Karva Chauth for same sex couple, it had to be withdrawn on the ground of public intolerance. Our laws have rights for women, the Constitution recognises those rights," he said. Elaborating on the rights, he added these rights extend to matters such as property and succession and they also extend to the workplace.

Half of India's workforce willing to return to offices by Jan

▶ NEARLY 70 PER CENT OF ORGANISATIONS IN INDIA ARE EXPLORING HYBRID OPERATING MODELS, AS IT SERVICES AND GLOBAL CAPABILITY CENTRES (GCCS) ARE LIKELY TO BE EARLY ADOPTERS OF A LONG-TERM HYBRID WORK MODEL.

▶ FEMALE WORKFORCE IN THE TECH INDUSTRY IN INDIA IS EQUALLY INTERESTED IN RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE AND ADAPTING TO NEWER WORKING MODELS.

▶ ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, BOTH EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS ARE EQUALLY INTERESTED IN MAKING A COMEBACK TO THE WORKPLACE IN A HYBRID SETUP.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

As India reopens, over 50 per cent of the workforce in the country is likely to return to offices for up to three days a week starting January, a Nasscom report said on Monday.

The workforce up to age 25 are most likely to return to the workplace by this month, followed by employees aged 40 and above in the following months, according to the report brought out by the IT industry's apex

body in association with job portal Indeed.

While 28 per cent of employees are interested in returning to the workplace in a month, 24 per cent of the workforce would prefer to return to the workplace after 6 months. Nearly 57 per cent of organisations will reach readiness to re-open office spaces within 3 months and 72 per cent of organisations are looking at up to 50 per cent of their workforce returning to office in 2022, the findings showed.

NEET DECLARES RESULT, HYD'S MRINAL KUTTERI SECURES TOP RANK

New Delhi:

Mrinal Kutteri, a resident of Hyderabad has topped the NEET exam, result of which was announced on Monday evening. Tanmay Gupta from Jammu and Kashmir created history on Monday by becoming the first ever from the UT to top the NEET 2021 exams in the country. He shares the top rank with two others -- Mrinal Kutteri and Karthika Nair. The National Testing Agency (NTA) declared the result of NEET 2021 exam, paving the way for admission in medical colleges across the country.



Mrinal has got 100 per cent marks and secured all India rank No 1, followed by Tanmay Gupta from Delhi who secured second position, and Karthika Nair at third place. Karthika is also top among female candidates. The agency has put the result on its official website and also sent email to students. The Supreme Court on October 28 had allowed the NTA to release the NEET result, after which the results were announced. Due to delay in examination results, the new session of 2021-22 could also be delayed.



BITCOIN SCANDAL IN K'TAKA TAKES NEW TWIST AS BJP LEADERS SAID TO BE UNDER PROBE

Bengaluru | Agencies

The Bitcoin and drugs scandal in Karnataka, which has already put the ruling BJP and opposition Congress at loggerheads, has created further ripples as the involvement of two powerful ruling party leaders is said to have come to light during the course of investigations.

The scandal is now interlinked with the Bitcoin scandal that has taken place at international banks at a time when the investigation by the Bengaluru police and City Crime Branch is not being pursued and the case is being handed over to the CID.

It has been alleged that two powerful politicians belonging to the BJP have received a big amount to protect the accused and this fact has come to light in the probe of central agencies. According to sources, this is expected to create ripples in state politics.

The central agencies have kept vigil on cyber crimes in the state, cyber activities in coastal Karnataka and economic offences which have a direct link to the Bitcoin scandal. The political involvement in the scandal has become a roadblock for the investigators, according to sources.



The agencies have briefed the Central government on the developments in Karnataka and have been told to keep vigil on the developments in this regard.

The development is said to have shaken some big ruling party leaders in the state, and sources hint at major political developments in the state.

The scandal presently is being investigated by the special team of the CID and it is preparing to submit

a preliminary charge sheet in the case related to use of Bitcoins to purchase drugs from the dark net.

The main accused in the case Srikrishna Ramesh a.k.a Sriki is alleged of supplying bitcoins to VIP customers.

Sriki was arrested by City Crime Branch sleuths last year in connection with drug peddling, and during investigations, the Bitcoin scandal emerged.

The police had seized 31 Bitcoins worth Rs 9 crore later, and the CCB had submitted a charge sheet in the case in March 2021. The case was handed over to CID for further investigations.

It was also brought out in the probe that the main accused Sriki was into hacking, including of a government portal. CCB sleuths have given inputs regarding hacking to Interpol and also recommended the Enforcement Directorate move for seizure of property. Congress leader and former Home Minister Ramalinga Reddy has demanded a judicial probe into the scandal.

State Congress President D.K. Shivakumar has claimed that the Bitcoin scandal involves police, politicians, and industrialists and the BJP wants to close the case. Closing cases is the strength of BJP, he claimed.

Reacting to allegations, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has stated that a detailed investigation is underway on the case and there is no question of protecting any person, however influential he is. The government will hand over the case to ED or CBI, once the investigation is completed, he added.

Pilot, Hardik pressed in UP to corner BJP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel on Monday were in Uttar Pradesh to attack the government on various issues.

Both the leaders come from Patel and Gujar community which has strong presence in the state.

Sachin Pilot addressed a press conference in Lucknow to highlight the issue of fuel price rise and on the apology of ex-CAG Vinod Rai. Pilot accused the BJP of profiteering at the cost of common man's suffering.

Pilot, who is staking claim for the post of Chief Minister in his home state of Rajasthan, has roots in Uttar Pradesh and Congress says he is bouncing back in the party a year after he revolted against Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. Hardik Patel was deputed in Rai Bareilly, in the constituency of party president Sonia Gandhi where he participated in Pratigya Yatra which ended on Monday. Hardik Patel is said to be the top choice to lead the state Congress unit. The Congress in UP is trying to place itself as a major player ahead of assembly polls and party General Secretary In charge Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has been trying to woo women raising promises.



Priyanka Gandhi on Monday said that her party has prepared a separate manifesto for women for the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. The other assurances include an honorarium of Rs 10,000 per month to ASHA and Anganwadi workers; appointment of women to 40 per cent posts according to the provisions of reservation; pension of Rs 1,000 to old widows; and opening of 75 skill schools that will be named after the brave women of the state. The Congress is trying to bring the women power on its side for the assembly polls. Priyanka Gandhi had promised last month that all class 12 passed girls will be given smartphones while all graduate girls will get electric scooters if her party forms government in the state and 40 per cent tickets to women in upcoming elections in the state.

CBI takes over UP Bike Bot scam, lodges FIR against firm and promoters

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday took over the Bike Bot scam of Uttar Pradesh and registered an FIR against the company and its promoters on the request of the state government.

The CBI stated that over 200,000 investors were duped of over Rs 15,000 crore which is bigger than the Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam of Rs 13,000 crore.

The probe agency named Chief Managing Director Sanjay Bhati of the company along with 14 others.

Launched in August 2017, the accused had allegedly floated a ponzi scheme in the name of Bike Bot, supposedly a bike-taxi service, where an investor could invest in one, three, five or seven bikes, operated by the company.

The promoters promised that the investor would be



paid monthly rent, EMI and bonus in case of investment in multiple bikes and further incentives on adding additional investors in the investors' chain system.

The accused also allegedly allotted franchises in various cities but in reality the bike taxis hardly operated in these cities. According to the CBI officials, money was collected from the gullible cus-

tomers and repayments to them continued till early 2019 after which it was stopped. The promoters of Bike Bot launched another scheme in 2018 for e-bikes, stating that the petrol bikes were facing issues related to registration and operation and took almost double the investment amounts taken for petrol bikes.

Centre likely to seek reports from NCB on handling of cruise ship drug case involving Aryan Khan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is mulling to seek a report from the Narcotics Control Bureau over the handling of the recent arrests made in the cruise ship drug case involving Bollywood superstar Shahrukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, sources said here on Monday. According to sources, the Ministry has taken a serious view on the alleged charges of corruption against the Mumbai Zonal Director of NCB Sameer Wankhede and also the way the arrests were made in the case.

They also said that top officials of the Ministry have expressed their reservations on the way the details of the investigation were leaked to the media that made a perception that Aryan Khan was selectively targeted being a son of a celebrity and the probe agency did not have adequate evidence against the arrested persons.

Sources, aware of these developments, claimed that Union Home Minister Amit Shah was also annoyed



with the NCB officials about the new turns in the case which took place during the last week, and reportedly spoke to some BJP leaders in Mumbai to know the facts in the case.

To look into the alleged corruption charges levelled against Wankhede,

the NCB constituted a five-member probe team under the Deputy Director General (DDG) of northern region Gyaneshwar Singh, which visited the NCB zonal office in Mumbai on October 27 and took statement of Sameer Wankhede.

However, the vigilance team allowed him to remain in-charge of this case and to continue his probe in the drugs case. The five-member probe team also collected some documents and recordings from the Mumbai office, the DDG said, adding that the vigilance team also summoned the witnesses to record their statements.

The NCB ordered a vigilance inquiry into the claims made by a witness in the cruise drug case, Prabhakar Sail, who alleged that an extortion bid of Rs 25 crore was made by some agency officials, including its Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede to set free film Aryan Khan. The sources in the agency also said that the vigilance team will also look into the close proximity of an independent witness Kiran Gosavi with Aryan Khan too.

However, Gosavi, an independent witness in the drugs-on-cruise case, was arrested by the Pune Police in connection with a 2018 cheating case registered against him here in Maharashtra.

Ex-MLA, 29 others held for gambling at farmhouse allegedly owned by Tollywood star

Hyderabad | Agencies

Cyberabad police on Monday stepped up investigations into a gambling case in which 30 people, including a former MLA, were arrested from a farmhouse allegedly belonging to a Tollywood actor.

The farmhouse near Manchirevula in the Rangareddy district was raided by the police on Sunday after it had been tipped off about a major gambling game had been organised in it. Those arrested include a former MLA from Mahabubabad, Sriram Bhadrirah, and some realtors. The police have booked



the accused under the Telangana Gaming Act and seized Rs 6.77 lakh in cash, apart from 33 mobile phones, three cars and 29 gambling sets. Bhadrirah, incidentally, had been arrested earlier in 2017 for allegedly assaulting a realtor using the butt of his licensed gun.

According to the police, the main accused in the case is G. Suman, a resident of Manikonda in Hyderabad. He had taken the farmhouse on rent for a day ostensibly for a birthday party, but allegedly invited over several people for a gambling game instead.

'Namami Gange' enters Guinness World Record

Team Absolute | New Delhi

"Namami Gange", the flagship programme of the Modi government for ensuring a clean Ganga, on Monday created a Guinness World Record by uploading the most photos with handwritten notes on its Facebook page in an hour.

Ahead of the three-day "Ganga Utsav 2021" beginning on Tuesday, "Namami Gange" had planned to set a world record for uploading the most photos by people from across the country between 11 a.m. and 12 noon.

Earlier, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), an initiative of the Jal Shakti Ministry, had urged Ganga lovers, conservationists, activists and the general public to prepare a message with a hand-written poem or a memoir or an article in the name of "Maa Ganga", click a photo with it and share it on the "Namami Gange Facebook event" page. The Guinness World Records certificate



said: "The most photos of handwritten notes uploaded to Facebook in one hour has been achieved by Namami Gange, India in Delhi, India on 1 November 2021"

Adjudicator, Guinness World Records, Rishi Nath, presented the certificate at a ceremony to Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Shekhawat.

FB, Instagram remove over 30 mn content pieces in India in Sep

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Meta, the newly-formed parent company of Facebook and its family of apps, on Monday said that it has removed over 30 million pieces of content in September on Facebook and Instagram in India, as it faces intense security over user data privacy.

The social network acted upon 26.9 million pieces of content across 10 policies for Facebook and over 3.2 million pieces of content across 9 policies for Instagram in compliance with the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, the company said in its monthly report.

"This report will contain details of the content that we have removed proactively using our automated tools and details of user complaints received and action taken," a Meta spokesperson said in a statement.

"In accordance with the IT Rules, we've



published our fourth monthly compliance report for the period for 30 days (01 September to 30 September)," the

spokesperson added.

In September, Meta received 708 reports through the Indian grievance mechanism,

and responded to all of those reports. Of these reports, Facebook provided tools for users to resolve their issues in 589 cases.

The social network took action on 33,600 pieces of content related to hate speech and 516,800 pieces of content in the adult nudity and sexual activity category in the country.

Meta also took action on 307,000 pieces of content related to bullying and harassment in India.

"We use a combination of Artificial Intelligence, reports from our community and review by our teams to identify and review content against our policies," said the Meta spokesperson.

All tech giants have been directed to produce monthly compliance reports under the new IT rules 2021.

WhatsApp banned 20.7 lakh accounts in India in the month of August. In the period from June 16-July 31, WhatsApp had banned 30.2 lakh accounts in India in compliance with the new IT rules.

Country's first transgender constable dies in Bihar accident

PATNA | Agencies

Two persons including the country's first transgender constable died while crossing a railway track in Bihar's Kaimur district on Monday.

Rachit Raj who was earlier known as Rachana Kumari and Rupa Kumari died at Bhabhua road railway station. Eyewitnesses said they were crossing the railway track around 9.30 a.m. when a superfast train which has no stop there hit them.

"We have received a message about Rachit Raj, a transgender constable who was deployed in confidential branch in SP office of Kaimur and relative Rupa Kumari died in the tragic accident," said Faiz Ahmed Khan, DSP of Mohania range.

The 2018 batch constable had qualified for the post at the age of 20 after passing the class 12 examination.

As per his statement on September 22, he claimed



that despite being a female he was attracted towards girls rather than boys when he was 17 years old. He did not like to wear girls clothes. When he started using social media since 2016, he said he was attracted towards girls.

Rachit faced several social hurdles to establish his identity as a transgender.

Rachit had given an affidavit in the court to become a transgender. He revealed his identity under the transgender protection act 2019.



IT IS NECESSARY TO CONNECT MASSES WITH THE SOLAR ENERGY CAMPAIGN: CM

- Roadmap for solar energy expansion will be prepared and reviewed every month
- Disseminate information on setting up of solar projects up to two MW to the public

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that we are making electricity from solar energy. It is necessary to connect this campaign of solar energy with the masses. Chouhan said that it is necessary to make solar energy the focus of self-reliant Madhya Pradesh. Solar energy is also essential for environmental protection. Therefore, progress should be reviewed every month by making a roadmap for solar energy expansion. In the energy literacy campaign in the state, people will also be motivated to conserve energy through awareness, information communication and demonstration of practical ways to save energy. The Chief Minister was reviewing the New and Renewable Energy Department from the residence. Chouhan reviewed the



Kusum Yojana. The scheme has three components, which include provisions related to installation of solar projects up to two MW by farmers, farmer groups, cooperative societies and panchayats, installation of stand-alone/off grid solar agriculture pumps in place of diesel pumps and solar energization of individual grid connected pumps or entire agriculture feeder. Chief Minister explained the need to encourage Kusum Yojana. He said that information regarding setting up of solar projects up to two MW should be ensured to reach the people.

Chouhan said that competition to save electricity will have to be created among the people of the state. Rewards should be arranged for saving more electricity. There should be separate rewards for individual and institutional efforts to save electricity.

It was decided in the meeting that online training would be made available through mobile apps and web portals to save electricity in energy literacy campaign. On completion of training, certificates related to energy literacy will be provided to the concerned. In this campaign, all the people of the state will be connected sequentially. In rural areas, activities will be conducted through Jan Abhiyan Parishad. Chouhan said that energy literacy campaign should be conducted intensively to save and utilize energy. In this it is necessary to motivate the farmers to use energy efficient pumps. Citizens have to develop an understanding that using unnecessary electricity is tantamount to burning one's own money. Modules of 15 minutes on saving electricity will also be included in the curriculum of schools and colleges.

CM SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN EXPRESSES GRATITUDE

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed gratitude on behalf of the people of the state for the best wishes extended by President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the foundation day of Madhya Pradesh. The President Kovind while conveying his best wishes on the state's foundation day has wished for a bright future for the people of the state. PM Modi has congratulated the people of the state on the state's foundation day by tweeting.

Modi has said that "I wish that this state, rich in natural resources and art culture, should continue on the path of progress". Navnirman (new building) of Madhya Pradesh is our priority.

Toy cluster to be built in Budhni: CM

Budhni Toy Festival Virtually launched by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that with a view to promote the toy art of Budhni and to create employment opportunities, a toy cluster would be constructed in Budhni. Chouhan was addressing the virtual inauguration of Budhni Toy Festival organized from November 1-14 at Dussehra ground in Budhni from his residence.

Chouhan said that one product of every district is being promoted under 'Ek Zila-Ek Utpad Yojana.' This will help in increasing employment opportunities. Chouhan said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given the mantra of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat.' We have prepared a roadmap for Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh during Corona crisis. Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh means to bring the light of development to the poor. Only when the common man becomes self-reliant, can Madhya Pradesh be made self-reliant. He said that full care would be taken to provide wood to the sellers of toys at affordable prices and to arrange employment for them.

Chouhan said that the wooden toys of Budhni are much in demand. We will work on priority to promote this art. He talked about the economic progress of talented wood craftsmen. Chouhan said that Budhni's toys would be recognized at national and international level. No stone will be left unturned in promoting the art of traditional wooden toys. Wooden toys are not harmful. Necessary steps will be



taken to supply training, raw material and capital to the artisans engaged in this art. Promotion and marketing of the art of toys will be done by talking to IIM portal and big companies. Chouhan said that Budhni would be made self-sufficient. Chouhan congratulated the toy manufacturers. He said that today Corona is under control, but still there is need to take precautions. He congratulated and honored Corona warriors who did amazing work. The Chief Minister said that due to or collective awareness, the third wave has not come in the state, but for complete protection, both doses of the vaccine must be administered. Public Health and Family Welfare Minister and in-charge minister of Sehore district Prabhuram Choudhary said that today is an auspicious day that Toy Festival is being organized at Budhni on the inspiration of Chief Minister Chouhan. Budhni has been famous for its kashta kala. Such events will help Budhni's art establish in the state as well as at the country and international level and vocal for local will be promoted. People of Budhni will get employment and business will increase.

Governor presented the ideal of inspiring by effort

- PATEL LAUNCHED CLEANLINESS CAMPAIGN BY SWEEPING UP HIMSELF
- CLEANLINESS CAMPAIGN ORGANISED AT RAJ BHAVAN ON STATE FOUNDATION DAY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On the occasion of Madhya Pradesh Foundation Day, Governor Mangubhai Patel, with presenting the ideal of inspiring by effort, launched the cleanliness campaign at Raj Bhavan. Governor Patel reached the police barrack located in the Raj Bhavan complex on Monday. There he himself took up the task of cleaning the courtyard with a broom along with the officers



and employees of the Raj Bhavan. Patel said that cleanliness is not a one day task. For clean surroundings, 365 days of work is necessary. Cleanliness is everyone's responsibility. Everyone's cooperation and efforts are the basis of cleanliness. On the inspiration of Patel, Principal Secretary of Raj Bhavan along with the officers and employees participated in the cleanliness drive. Also helped in cleaning the police barrack premises by picking up garbage. Patel also inaugurated the

newly expanded section of the first floor of Raj Bhavan Secretariat on Monday. He gave necessary directions after inspecting various branches of officers, meeting arrangements of the employees of the Secretariat, record rooms etc. He said that cleanliness is a personal responsibility. A clean environment can be created only by doing work.

Officers and employees of Raj Bhavan including Principal Secretary to Governor DP Ahuja were present.

Fought alone but will win MP by-polls: Kamal Nath

The former Chief Minister said, "People of the state are with me. I have fought the polls alone against the BJP, government, administration and money power. Congress will win the polls."

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Congress Madhya Pradesh unit president Kamal Nath exuded confidence that in spite of the might of the BJP, government, administration and money power, it is going to sweep the bypolls held for three assembly and one Lok Sabha seat.

Polling was held in three Assembly constituencies Raigaon, Jobat and Prithvipur and the Khandwa Lok Sabha seat on October 30 and counting will be held on November 2.

Ahead of the counting day, Kamal Nath was full of self-confidence and said that the people of the state have supported the Congress.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, the former Chief Minister said, "People of the state are with me. I have fought the polls alone against the BJP, government, administration and money power. Congress will win the polls." Responding to a question on whether the Congress will win the polls, Kamal Nath said: "Every section of society is annoyed. Farmers are annoyed due to rising



prices of fertiliser, MSP and justice, youth are unemployed, small businessmen are unhappy. Taking all this into account, people will choose the Congress over the BJP."

The Congress has started gearing up for the 2023 Legislative Assembly polls.

Kamal Nath is also of the view that politics has changed. It has penetrated deep into local areas too. Until a party has its members in every village, it is difficult to achieve success, he added.

When asked if his contest is with Chief Minister

Shivraj Singh Chouhan or BJP state in-charge Vishnu Dutt Sharma, the veteran Congress leader said his contest is with the saffron party.

The BJP's chief minister and state in-charge keep on changing, but people decide how the government has functioned, which government worked better for them, he added.

On Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra announcing 40 per cent seats for women candidates in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, Kamal Nath said the fair sex will be given the opportunity if they are capable.

On unity in the party after he became the state president, Kamal Nath said every leader was active in his/her area. They gave suggestions, a strategy was made and places wherever feasible were visited. Kamal Nath said he served as Chief Minister for 15 months but could not achieve all he wished for the state. "I wanted that Madhya Pradesh gets a distinct image, investments were brought in, revolution in agriculture area, employment opportunities, increase in financial activities and GDP."

Radio-collared Tiger from Panna reserve found dead

- The matter came to light after a de-skinned carcass of a tiger was recovered in a paddy farm in Singhpur forest range. "Three villagers have been detained and are being interrogated. Efforts are on to nab the poachers and they will be arrested soon," said the official.

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The carcass of a male radio-collared tiger, on dispersal from Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR), was found in Satna district.

As per an official, "Heera" was one among the two frequently spotted tiger siblings in the Tiger Reserve's Akola forest range. After receiving information late on Sunday night, senior officials reached the



spot and launched an investigation. The pair of the two tigers Heera and Panna were popular among the tourists as both used to be spotted together often. The matter came to light after a de-skinned carcass of a tiger was recovered in a paddy farm in Singhpur forest range. "Three villagers have been detained and are being interrogated. Efforts are on to nab the poachers and they will be arrested soon," said the official. He said the radio-collar of the tiger was recovered 300 meters away

from the spot where the carcass was found. Heera coded as P234-21 was among the three tigers radio-collared for satellite-based mapping of landscape and dispersals by the forest department and Wildlife Institute of India (WII)-Dehradun. The last signal received from its collar was on October 13. "PTR was searching for it on the basis of last location. Villagers spotted the carcass and informed the forest officials," said an official requesting anonymity.

CM CONGRATULATES THE STATES ON THEIR FOUNDATION DAY

Bhopal: Extends greetings on the foundation day of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Lakshadweep and Puducherry Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has greeted the people of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Lakshadweep and Puducherry on their foundation day. Chouhan has tweeted that "All the states should progress on the path of progress without break and the life of the citizens should be continuously simple and joyful". May the state touch new heights of development and happiness and prosperity may come in the lives of the citizens.

CM PLANTS NEEM SAPLING IN SMART CITY PARK

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Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a Neem sapling in Smart city park today. Chouhan plants a sapling every day in fulfillment of his resolve.

Along with Chouhan, three beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Yojana, Ashok Rathore, Vrindavan Chaurasia and Iman Khan also planted saplings today. Ashok Rathore runs a grocery kiosk, Iman Khan a paan shop and Vrindavan Chaurasia runs a vegetable cart. All the three beneficiaries had taken a loan of ten thousand rupees each under the Pradhan Mantri Swanidhi Yojana, on timely repayment of which they were again sanctioned a loan of twenty thousand rupees each. Chouhan wished them a bright future.



Along with giving cool air in summer, Neem tree is such a tree, every part of which is effective in the treatment of some disease. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is

known as the supreme medicine. Neem may be bitter in taste, but its benefits are like nectar. Neem is also very useful from environmental point of view.

Chief Minister Chouhan dedicates Raag Bhopali Emporium

RAAG BHOPALI WILL GIVE GLOBAL RECOGNITION TO ZARI-ZARDOZI ART OF BHOPAL: CM

- Zari-Zardozi and Jute products of SHGs to be linked with Amazon, GEM Portal and Aajeevika Mart
- Self-help groups are taking the form of movement in the state
- Platform for Zari-Zardozi, Jute, Readymade Fabrics, Jewellery, Didi Cafe and artists at Raga Bhopali Center for Excellence

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Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that today on November 1, we are not only celebrating Madhya Pradesh Foundation Day with much pomp but also with the resolve that this foundation day of Madhya Pradesh should prove meaningful. Till now MoUs were being signed with big companies. Today Didi Radha Meena of Self-Help Group is signing the MoU. This symbolizes women empowerment. Self-help group is taking the form of a movement in the state.

We have decided that from the various products being manufactured in different districts, one product from each district will be selected and branding and marketing for it will be done nationally and internationally. Products of Zari-Zardozi and Jute of Bhopal district were fixed under the Ek Zila-Ek Utpad scheme. The aim is to preserve and save this art and the handicrafts of Bhopal district that are becoming



extinct should be saved. Chouhan was addressing the gathering at the dedication programme organized at Raga Bhopali Emporium near number 10 market. Chouhan said that Zari-Zardozi is the specialty of Bhopal. Its product will be linked with modern companies by providing training to local women as per the current needs and market demand. This will also provide employment to the women and will also help in establishing this unique identity of Bhopal at the national and

international level. Chouhan said that the initiative of Raag Bhopali has also been linked with NIFT. Their designers will provide training to the self-help group didis. Their products will be linked to Amazon, GEM Portal, Aajeevika Mart. Chouhan tasted the delicacies at Didi Cafe in Raga Bhopali complex. He appealed to the general public that here they will get a taste of purity and traditional dishes along with cleanliness. Contrary to fast food, it is also healthy. Chief Minister appealed to the general public to buy their products and also enjoy the delicacies at Didi Cafe to encourage this initiative being taken by the women of self-help groups.

Chouhan visited the training room, showroom, Zari-Zardozi training center etc. at Raga Bhopali Center for Excellence. Chouhan studied the nuances of Zari-Zardozi work and got acquainted with the process. Raag Bhopali has been developed in the community building of Public Works Department located at 10 no in Arera Colony. It is an effort towards the advancement of self-help group women and to save, preserve and encourage the traditions, heritage, art, culture of Bhopal. It will provide extensive opportunities for training, branding and marketing of Zari-Zardozi and Jute products. Experiments in the field of food, traditional dishes will be served in the villages and streets of Bhopal at Didi Cafe. Raag Bhopali will also be the center of creativity from the waste material. Along with this, local artists will also be able to organize their programmes here. Raag Bhopali is going to become a mirror for hard working artisans of Bhopal. It will become a center for the best products made by the didis of self-help groups of Bhopal district.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Covid leaves several Delhi kids orphaned

Over 100 children in Delhi have been orphaned due to Covid, while nearly 2,500 have lost either of their parents, according to state government statistics. The Women and Child Development Department said that it has identified over 250 orphaned children, while in the last one year, the national capital has seen more than 6,000 children who have lost both parents, or their father. Around 40 per cent of these deaths was due to Covid-19. It said that of the orphans, 230 need care and security, and those who lost either parent, 5,000 need support and security, and it has identified such children and begun measures for their benefit. It assured that all these children will be rendered all the care and support they need. These figures, the Department said, have been gathered from all the child protection officers, child welfare committees and anganwadi workers, under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, and other sources from all the districts. Bank accounts have been opened for 170 children who lost both parents so that financial aid can be sent to them. The Delhi government has also launched the Chief Minister's Covid Financial Assistance Scheme, under which the family of Covid-19 victims will be given Rs 50,000, as well as a monthly amount of Rs 2,500. Children left orphaned by Covid will get the Rs 2,500 per month till they turn 25 years old, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced. He said that the government will not wait for people to apply, but functionaries of the government will go the people's houses and help them fill up the forms and directed officials not to decline the aid due to lack of documentation. In such case, the government functionaries concerned will be held responsible.

WHEN YOU (AND EVERYONE ELSE) EXPECT INTEREST RATES TO RISE

Suyash Choudhary

The last few weeks have been notable from a global rates environment standpoint, particularly in developed markets. Markets across many such geographies have brought forward their expectations for interest rate hikes, as unprecedented supply side shortages (including energy shocks) meet equally unprecedented fiscal stimuli in some of these economies, thereby challenging the 'transitory' narrative on inflation. Developed markets, at least in the near term, are facing the kind of inflation one normally associates with their developing counterparts. Front end rates, which are most susceptible to interest rate hike expectations, have risen sharply in many geographies over the past month; more than doubling in some cases over this relatively brief span.

A notable aspect of this phase has been the fall in long term yields and the consequent flattening of the yield curve in many such places. In the US for example, the gap between 30 year and 5 year government bond yields has less than halved from what it was in early May of this year. This seems to be market's warning that even as it expects the Fed to start normalising sooner than earlier expected (market is now pricing in 2 rate hikes next year, on the heels of the completion of the so called taper program), it has if anything brought down its expectation of peak rates in this cycle. This is possibly on the back of evolving views on longer term trend growth rates, which in turn could be on a re-assessment of the durability of growth multipliers from the stimulus, the longer than expected squeeze on the supply side, the evolving Chinese policy priorities and associated lower expected growth rates there, and expected relatively tighter financial conditions over the next couple of years than before. There may also be 'technical' factors in play here, so that the extent of flattening may be getting exaggerating. However, the underlying message as summarised here may still hold relevance.

India also hasn't been able to escape these global disruptions. However, with the government bond supply for the second half of the year being much better controlled and due to the global nature of this sell-off, the brunt has been felt by the swap curve. Across tenors (1 - 5 years) swap rates have risen by a very notable 50 bps or so since mid-September. And this after the October policy not yielding to the hawkish end of expectations and with RBI leadership (Governor and Deputy Governor) not deviating much from the previous script in the subsequent policy minutes as well.

When everyone is expecting to say that interest rates have to rise is stating the obvious. Supply side pressures are real, India's growth is coming back strongly, and we cannot be immune to global developments. However, while this expectation makes for a good summary headline it is equally important to scratch beneath the surface and enter the realm of nuance when one is talking about portfolio constructions and optimal strategies.

First, and what is noteworthy about these global develop-



ments as highlighted in yield curve movements above, is that market is not resetting higher the peak policy rate expectations. If anything these are being brought down, likely for the reasons mentioned above. In that sense, this is a very different global cycle than 2003 - 08 and will likely be much shallower marked with significant global growth volatility from quarter to quarter. Thus, our lower-than-last-cycle peak rate expectation probably holds even for the arguably most near term over-stimulated large global economy. Second, India's realities are somewhat different than many other economies around the world. We rush to clarify that this observation is not meant to justify insulation to global developments (after all emerging markets will get constrained by tightening in developed economies) but to merely draw some distinctions around the likely path of policy ahead. In our view, the defining distinction for the intensity of the inflationary shock and its probable persistence is the quantum of the fiscal response administered as Covid response. As is well known US saw an unprecedented fiscal stimulus over two calendar years, arguably much in excess of the size of the problem. Some other economies were relatively more modest in their response, but standalone still quite significant. Even some emerging markets went aggressive with their fiscal expansion. In contrast India's response was very nuanced last year focusing on direct spending for welfare of the most susceptible citizens while using credit and liquidity measures largely for industry in general. With the crisis stabilizing, the fiscal stance has turned even more nuanced this year with the year to date deficit the narrowest in many years on a variety of parameters. Given this, while supply side pressures are very much showing in India's inflation as well, CPI isn't on a run-away trajectory and second round permanent effects in terms of expectation setting are likely to be much more contained. This, and RBI's aggressive accumulation of forex over the past year and a half, both provide some cushion to the central bank in charting a more 'localised' path to normalisation of policy. It is also for this reason that we will not attempt to force-fit the bearish flattening of the curve in some of the advanced markets to India. The base case remains that in India's context the absorption of gross duration supply is likely a greater dynamic force than the monetary policy normalisation ahead.

Hedges aren't cheap

As noted above, interest rate swap yields have moved up sharply over the last month and a half. At current levels, the swap curve is now pricing in approximately 150 bps rise in the effective overnight rate (EOR) over the next 1 year. Looked at another way, it is implying some hike in EOR (whether through reverse repo rate hike initially or repo rate later) in every policy meeting for the next year. If true this will take the EOR to something like 5 per cent in a year. Note that as of date currently even the most hawkish member of the monetary policy committee (Prof. Varma) is arguing for EOR at 4 per cent but hasn't articulated yet a path beyond that pending greater traction to the recovery. Furthermore, the swap curve is fairly steep beyond 1 year as well thereby implying a relatively much higher effective 1 year forwards even beyond this reasonably aggressive normalization pricing for the next 1 year. This means that using swaps now to hedge oneself against the inevitable rate hikes will only offer real protection if the quantum of such hikes turns out to be even more aggressive than what has been described above.

A final observation before we turn away from floaters: we would advise against force-fitting spreads available here to international equivalents. This stretches the assumption of 'ceteris paribus' or 'all other things being equal' to breaking point. Further, such force fitting can yield a variety of remarkable conclusions many of which may turn out to be quite far-fetched. Purely as an illustration, even after the recent flattening the spread between 5 year and 10 year US bond yields is approximately 30 per cent of the yield on the 5 year. Can one extrapolate this to India and then say that 10 year yield should be 170 bps over that on the 5 year? Probably not, and this is certainly NOT the view here even as we continue to be overweight the 5 year for reasons explained previously.

Conclusion

The recent few weeks have been extremely tough for global rates, especially in some key developed markets. India has had its rub-off as well, as should be expected since it's hard to think about our markets in isolation. That said, the differentiator in our view is our more nuanced fiscal response and the laser-focus from RBI in accumulating a forex defense. While even this doesn't insulate us, it does provide certain more degrees of freedom to monetary policy. After the recent sharp rise in yields, the interest rate swap market is no longer a cheap or effective way to hedge against the normalisation already underway. For a variety of reasons mentioned above, neither probably are long tenor floating rate instruments. At any rate liquidity in all sorts of floaters is fickle at best and hence these instruments can't be a very large exposure set for open ended funds.

(Suyash Choudhary, Head, Fixed Income, IDFC AMC. The views expressed are personal)

international

US FDA DELAYS APPROVAL FOR MODERNA VAX FOR TEENS

US drugmaker Moderna has confirmed that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has delayed granting the emergency use authorisation (EUA) to its Covid vaccine for teenagers aged 12 to 17, over the risk of myocarditis -- inflammation of the heart muscle.



Washington | Agencies

The FDA needs more time to complete its assessment and the review may not be completed until January 2022, the drugmaker said in a statement late on Sunday.

The "FDA has notified the Company that it will require additional time to complete its assessment of Moderna's Emergency Use Authorisation request for the use of the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine

(mRNA-1273) at the 100 Aug dose level in adolescents 12 to 17 years of age", the statement said.

On Friday evening, the FDA informed Moderna that "the agency requires additional time to evaluate recent international analyses of the risk of myocarditis after vaccination",

it added. Moderna said that the company is fully committed to working closely with the FDA, and will also conduct its own "careful review of new external analyses".

Moderna also said it will delay filing a request for emergency use authorisation for a smaller dose of the

vaccine for younger kids aged six to 11 while the FDA completes its review. Earlier in May, the drugmaker said that its Covid vaccine was 100 per cent effective in a study of 12-to-17-year-olds. The company had then applied to expand the emergency use of its vaccine for adolescents in June.

An increased risk of myocarditis has been described for Covid-19 vaccines, including the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine, particularly in young men and following the second dose. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have stated that myocarditis following vaccination with mRNA vaccines has been rare and generally mild.

It is estimated that over 1.5 million adolescents have received the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine.

The observed rate of myocarditis reports in those less than 18 years of age in Moderna's global safety database does not suggest an increased risk of myocarditis in this population.

Iran doubts alleged US determination to revive nuke deal: FM

Tehran | Agencies

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has cast doubts on US President Joe Biden's alleged determination to revive the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal.

"Biden postures as anti-Trump, but when he wants to talk about Iran, he is still carrying the same sanctions record with him, and so far he has not taken any practical steps to lift the sanctions," Xinhua news agency quoted Amir Abdollahian as saying in an interview.

On Saturday evening, Biden, along with the leaders of Germany, France and the UK, issued a joint statement after a meeting at the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome, pointing to the American President's "clearly demonstrated commitment to return the U. to full compliance" with the nuclear agreement, formally known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The statement also affirmed Biden's commitment "to stay in full compliance, so long as Iran

does the same", and called upon Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to "seize this opportunity and return to a good faith effort to conclude our negotiations as a matter of urgency". "The problem is that we hear this will and intention from the Americans in their messages, but we do not see it in their behaviour," said Amir Abdollahian.

Biden, the Iranian Minister said, could immediately issue an executive order to take the US back to the point where his predecessor Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018.

Amir Abdollahian also criticised Europeans for exerting pressure on Iran and demanding its return to the negotiating table while staying "inactive" and not pressuring the US to comply with its commitments under the deal. In the interview, the Iranian top diplomatic chief reiterated ties with Iran's neighbours and Asian countries including China and Russia, as the priorities of the current Iranian government's foreign policy. "We have

explicitly stated that we will not tie the destiny of the people and the country to JCPOA or to any country in an absolute manner," the Minister noted. Since the US abandoned the JCPOA, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has consistently urged government officials not to tie the solution of Iran's economic difficulties to Washington's will to lift the sanctions as stipulated by the deal. Since May 2019, Iran has gradually stopped performing restrictions on its nuclear program, arguing that its reactions are allowed in the JCPOA in case of the counterparts' non-compliance and it would return to full compliance when sanctions are lifted. After Biden took office in late January, Iran and the JCPOA Joint Commission held six rounds of talks in Austria's capital Vienna to revive the agreement between April and June, but the process was interrupted by the Iranian presidential election in June and subsequent transition of government.

S Korea seeks to revise steel tariff agreement with US

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea will push for swift consultations with the US on steel tariffs amid concerns over negative impacts of a recent transatlantic trade deal on its exports of steel products, officials said here on Monday.

Last week, Washington announced its decision to roll back a 25 per cent tariff on steel imports from the European Union (EU) and 10 per cent on aluminium, which were imposed by former President Donald Trump in 2018 under Section 232 of the US Trade Expansion Act, reports Yonhap News Agency.

The deal instead calls for the implementation of a tar-



iff-rate quota system that allows the EU to export metal products to the US market without paying import taxes up to a certain volume.

"The potential increase in the volume of EU steel imports would inevitably have adverse impacts on our exports," said Joo Young-joon, director general for industry policy at Seoul's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.

US SC to hear cases against controversial Texas abortion law

The US Supreme Court will on Monday hear two challenges to the highly controversial Texas state law banning near-total abortions.

Washington | Agencies

The high court has taken the cases up with unusual speed, but a ruling could take weeks or months, Xinhua news agency quoted an NBC News report as saying.

One of the challenges comes from the Department of Justice, while the other is from Whole Woman's Health, said the report.

Taking effect from September as reportedly the most restrictive one in the country, the Texas law prohibits abortions once cardiac activity is

detected in an embryo, which can happen as early as about six weeks before many women are aware they are pregnant.

The fetal heartbeat law makes no exceptions for pregnancies resulting from incest or rape.

Furthermore, it allows most US citizens, no matter where they live, to file lawsuits against abortion providers who they think infringed on the policy. President Joe Biden earlier this year called the Texas law "extreme", saying it "blatantly violates the constitutional right established under Roe v. Wade," the

Supreme Court's landmark decision adopted in 1973 legalising abortion in the country. The Biden administration argues that the private enforcement regime is a transparent attempt to shield what they see as a blatantly unconstitutional ban and that if the scheme were allowed to stand, it could allow states to undermine other constitutional rights in similar ways. The high court is also reportedly to hear in December another case over a Mississippi abortion restriction that is directly challenging the landmark 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade.

Seoul to discuss resuming border tours with UN

Seoul | Agencies

The South Korean Unification Minister said on Monday that it will begin discussions with the US-led UN Command (UNC) to resume tours to the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom as Seoul began its "living with Covid-19" scheme meant to phase out restrictions amid a rising vaccination rate.

Tours to Panmunjom, or the Joint Security Area (JSA), were suspended in July after health authorities imposed the toughest virus curbs in the greater Seoul area, home to half of the country's 52 million population, reports Yonhap News Agency.

"We are beginning discussions with the UNC and other related organisations

on the resumption of tours to Panmunjom," Ministry spokesperson Lee Jong-joo told reporters.

The UNC said it has also resumed armistice education seminars for units stationed at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas. "After a Covid social distancing pause, armistice education is back in full swing," the UNC wrote on Facebook.

"They are back on the road this week, supporting clear, consistent and transparent adherence to the terms of the armistice."

The move is in line with South Korea's implementation of its first step to get back to normal life Monday on the back of a rising vaccination rate at over 75 per cent.



FADNAVIS SEEMS 'MASTERMIND' OF DRUGS TRADE IN MAHARASHTRA: NAWAB MALIK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a mega-blast, Nationalist Congress Party Minister Nawab Malik on Monday pointed a finger at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis saying that 'he appears to be the mastermind' of the illegal drugs trade in Maharashtra.



Addressing the media where he released photos of Fadnavis and his banker-artist wife Amruta Fadnavis with an alleged drug dealer Jaydeep Rana, Malik demanded to know his connections with the couple.

rubbished the allegations saying that 'people living in glass houses should not throw stones' and warned that "after Diwali, I will make a bomb blast", while Amruta Fadnavis said in a suggestive tweet 'vinash kale buddhi viprit'.

"Gunde used to operate from the CM's bungalow, visit the NCB offices and had free access to all other government offices... What were Fadnavis' connections with Gunde...? He acted as an 'emissary' of Fadnavis, but apparently had a hand in many other things, transfers, posting, etc.," Malik asked.

"Jaydeep Rana is currently in jail for a drug trafficking case... He has close relations with the ex-chief minister Fadnavis and his wife Amruta Fadnavis. Jaydeep Rana was the finance head of the company producing the 'Mumbai River Anthem (2018)' sung by Amruta Fadnavis. The illicit drugs business in the state expanded during Fadnavis' five-year tenure. We demand a CBI or judicial probe into this," Malik said. Hitting back, Fadnavis

To both, Malik tweeted with a dare: "I am ready...", while ruling ally Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut rushed to his support, demanding the BJP must respond to Malik's latest expose on Fadnavis. Elaborating, Malik said that it was Fadnavis who had brought the current Narcotics Control Bureau officer Sameer Wankhede and raised questions about one Neeraj Gunde who was very powerful during the former CM's tenure.

Admitting that he had good relations with Gunde, Fadnavis shot back saying that even the Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray enjoyed excellent relations with that person and asked Malik to take note. Fadnavis said that after Diwali, he would make a 'big blast' on Malik's alleged links with the underworld and submit all evidence to NCP President Sharad Pawar too.

Cornered, Anil Deshmukh finally goes to ED office for probe

In a surprise development, former Maharashtra home minister on Monday morning went to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) office without fanfare for the multi-agencies probe into the allegations of extortion and corruption hurled against him by former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

I respect the courts... I have voluntarily decided to come to the ED for the probe. But I want to ask where is Param Bir Singh who levelled the false allegations against me," said Deshmukh in a recorded statement before he went to the central agency accompanied by his lawyer.

He said that whenever he received the ED summons -- at least 5 -- in the past, he had promptly responded pointing out that his case was sub-judice before the concerned courts.

Even for the 2 CBI notices, he has immediately replied citing the same reasons, and said even now his matter is pending for the Supreme Court.

"Despite all this, the ED-CBI have raided all my homes (Mumbai-Nagpur), my family members, my associates...

Canards were also being spread that I am absconding for the ED, but I have come here today on my own," Deshmukh said, in an indirect swipe at the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party.

He pointed out how Singh, the man who hurled the fake charges at him, is 'untraceable' and has

reportedly sneaked out of the country according to some reports in the media.

A senior Nationalist Congress Party leader, Deshmukh, 72, came under a cloud last April after Singh's letter to the Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray alleging that he (Deshmukh) had set a Rs 100-crore collection target for the former dismissed cop, Sachin Vaze.

Deshmukh had moved the Bombay High Court but got no reliefs, while his case is pending before the Supreme Court, even as the agencies have summoned his wife Aarti and their son Hrishikesh for probes, while the ED has attached portions of his properties worth Rs 4.20 crore.

Earlier, the ED arrested Deshmukh's former close aides Sanjeev Palande and Kundan Shinde, followed by the CBI's nabbing of Jagtap amid speculation that the ex-minister could face arrest.

The BJP state President Chandrakant Patil welcomed the move saying that "actually, Deshmukh had no options left" but to appear before the ED as he realised that the long arms of the law will ultimately catch up with him.

CBI arrests middleman in Anil Deshmukh corruption case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested Thane resident Santosh Jagtap in a corruption case that the agency is investigating against former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh.

The CBI produced Jagtap before a court on Sunday and the court remanded him into CBI custody till November 4.

Jagtap was stated to be a middleman in the transfer and posting of police officers during the tenure of Deshmukh as home minister. He had been avoiding CBI summons for quite some time now and has now been arrested from his home at Thane.

The CBI is investigating the corruption case against Deshmukh wherein former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh has alleged that the NCP leader had asked now-dismissed police officer Sachin Waze to illegally collect Rs 100 crore from bar owners in the city every month for him.

In this case, the CBI is also investigating former State Intelligence Department (SID) chief Rashmi Shukla's report where it was alleged that some "influential people" were promising desired posting-transfer to police officers.

The SID had also recorded the phone conversations of the influential persons.

Earlier, in a separate case, the CBI had arrested Deshmukh's lawyer Anand Daga and CBI



sub-inspector Abhishek Tiwari, who was associated with the probe at the initial stage, for attempting to influence the ongoing corruption investigation. It was alleged that Tiwari had passed the PRelated documents and information to Daga for a bribe.

Recently, a purported CBI report which gave Deshmukh a clean chit during the initial stage of preliminary enquiry (PE) where he was accused of corruption, was circulated in the media. The CBI registered a separate case related to the leakage of the report against its officials and Daga, for attempting to subvert the ongoing investigation against Deshmukh.

The CBI officials had then told TOI that the FIR registered against Deshmukh was based on the final findings of PE, which mentioned that a cognizable case has been made out and that the agency had subsequently registered a corruption case against Deshmukh.

During the investigation of leakage of the purported PE report, CBI found its officer's (Tiwari) involvement in it. It is alleged that Anand Daga bribed Tiwari by giving him an iPhone 12 Pro worth Rs 1 lakh besides money on different occasions for passing case-related sensitive documents and information.

CBI had said that Tiwari shared copies of the memorandum

of proceedings, sealing-unsealing memorandum, statement, seizure memos and other crucial documents with Daga through WhatsApp on many occasions.

CBI suspects that Daga had befriended Tiwari for the sensitive documents on the direction of the Deshmukh family and is inquiring their role in the case.

Sameer Wankhede presents caste documents before NCSC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid the allegations of forged caste documents, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede on Monday presented his caste certificates to the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) here in Delhi.

He arrived from Mumbai this morning and submitted his caste certificate and other related documents to the Commission and made a statement.

The SC Commission Member Subhas Ramnath said that Wankhede presented his all documents before the full bench of the Commission and made his stand clear on the entire issue. "After hearing Samir Wankhede, the Commission will scrutinise all his documents and will take view on his statement before pronouncing its order", Ramnath said. Maharashtra Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik on October 25 had accused Sameer Wankhede of using forged documents to get into the government job and demanded that action be taken against him.

Continuing his tirade against him, Malik even shared his date of birth certificate on social media which categorised him as a Muslim and claimed that he allegedly corrected his father's name to become an India



Revenue Service officer which was unfair to a genuine Dalit candidate appearing for the Union Public Service Examination.

On Sunday, the NCSC Vice Chairman Arun Haldar met Wankhede's family members in Mumbai and said that an officer of all India service cannot give a forged certificate to procure a government job. He also said that he saw his birth certificate which appeared to him as genuine. Haldar also said that he was aware of how a section of leaders have been trying to defame Wankhede. He added that NCSC is here to safeguard the interest of a Scheduled Caste family. Wankhede's wife and father on Sunday also met Union Minister of State for Social, Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale and sought support on this issue. Athawale assured them on behalf of his party RPI, and said that he would ask Nawab Malik to stop conspiring against Wankhede.

Maharashtra govt seeks explanation from PCMC on corruption allegations in smart city works

Team Absolute | Pune

The urban development department of the Maharashtra government has taken a serious view of the allegations of corruption in the smart city works in Pimpri-Chinchwad. It has sought full details of the works being implemented and explanations regarding the allegations levelled by BJP corporators and Shiv Sena leaders.

Revealing that the UDD had asked for details, municipal commissioner Rajesh Patil on Monday said: "After the state government had sought detailed information about the smart city works and related things, they have been provided the complete

details. The information was sent to the government about four days ago." The civic chief said: "In a democracy, everyone has the right to make point or make their allegations. There are two sides to a coin. We need to look at both the sides. We are investigating the allegations. If anyone is found wrong or guilty, we will take action in the matter." BJP corporators Seema Savale and Asha Shendge had first raised the issue of corruption in the smart city works. Savale said, "I had been demanding a hearing from the civic administration for a year. However, only recently they gave me a hearing wherein it was pointed out how the smart city works were being implemented

without following the norms. One of the allegations I made related to lack of technical sanction for a Rs 250-crore project allotted to a private party." After Savale, Shiv Sena leaders like Sulbha Ubale too alleged a Rs 500-crore scam in smart city works. Last month, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut had asked BJP 'crusader' Kirit Somaiya to take up the allegations of multi-crore scam with ED and CBI. Meanwhile, Patil said from November 1 to November 30, they will conduct a drive to register voters who have turned 18. "Those youngsters who are 18 or older on January 1, 2022 will be able to register themselves as voters from November 1 to November 31," he said.

Nawab Malik making baseless claims against Sameer Wankhede: Maharashtra BJP Chief

Patil claimed that Malik is making 'baseless allegations' against Wankhede, because, "They don't have anything to say on issues related to the people of Maharashtra"

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Bharatiya Janata Party president Chandrakant Patil on Monday slammed Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Nawab Malik for allegations against Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Director Sameer Wankhede, at a time when party leader and former home minister of state Anil Deshmukh, accused in a money

laundering case, is "absconding".

"Instead of caring about Anil Deshmukh, they care about Wankhede. Their former home minister is absconding, they should find him. They should at least care about him being their family member," Patil told the media. "Maha Vikas Aghadi gives statements that divert the main issues of the people of the state," he added.

Patil further claimed that Malik is making "baseless allegations" against Wankhede, because, "They don't have anything to say on issues related to the people of Maharashtra."



winter session of the state legislature.

Malik has raised a slew of allegations against Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede and had accused him of playing into the hands of the BJP. He had also called the raid conducted by the NCB on a cruise liner in Mumbai, in which drugs were

allegedly recovered, earlier this month as fake. "Malik can say whatever he wants to. Who has stopped you? He should stop giving threats," Patil told reporters.

Earlier on Sunday, Malik reiterated his allegations against Narcotics Control Bureau's Zonal Director and said that he firmly stands by his statements and his fight was against fraud and not religion or caste.

He also accused Wankhede of taking away the opportunity of the SC and added that the 'fight' is against the 'fraud' and not his religion or caste. ED is investigating the money laundering case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Deshmukh. It registered a case against Deshmukh and others based on a corruption case filed against him by the CBI.

FILM FRATERNITY EXPRESSES JOY AS MAHA CINEMAS PREPARE FOR DIWALI RELEASES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Film theatres opened in Maharashtra a few weeks back and they left the cine-lovers smiling ear-to-ear. Within 24 hours of cinemas reopening, a barrage of release date announcements found their way on mainstream and social media. Hollywood releases helped the trade stay afloat in troubled waters.

Several Bollywood, TV and web actors flocked to the screens to witness the magic of silver screen again and expressed their excitement. Here's what they said:

Aamir Khan shared, "It is a matter of great happiness that the cinemas have finally opened in Maharashtra. All of us were waiting eagerly for this. There are a lot of big films lined up for release. Wishing everybody great luck."

TV actor Ritvik Dhanjani said, "What a beautiful feeling. I am completely overwhelmed. I still can't process the fact that our cinemas have finally opened. We are back to normal. We can come back to the theatres and watch a movie. It's an overwhelming feeling. I am so happy."

Preeti Jhangiani said, "There are amazing safety measures everywhere in the theatres. I am sure everyone will feel safe coming back to watch movies. It is a fantastic experience."

"Satyameva Jayate 2" director Milap Zaveri mentioned, "It is so good to be back to the movies. It is absolutely great. I was missing the smell of popcorn and the audi seat. I would request everybody to come to the theatres to watch the



movies. It is absolutely safe. Theatres are following all the SOPs. Everything is wonderful."

Daisy Bopanna said, "So suddenly the screen feels like nostalgia. It's like something of the past. Complete nostalgia where we used to come to theatres to watch the movie. It's a lovely feeling actually." Shreyas Puranik shared, "I am so happy. To be out of our OTT platforms and home theatres. Finally good to be back."

Iqbal Khan said, "I am really happy because everything else in Mumbai was functioning except the theatres. I was really missing the magic of going and watching a movie on the big screen. It's a different experience."

Harshali Zine shared, "I am watching a film in the theatres after more than 2 years. It is great. It's like a whole new world. It is a great experience." Abhilash Kumar mentioned, "I had a crazy experience. We have all been waiting for the past 2 years for the theatres to open. I had an amazing time watching the movie. It is so much fun."

Aahana Kumra spoke about finally leaving the laptop screens and watching movies where they belong - on the silver screen, "I am very excited. This is my profession. It's my job. I am so excited to be back. It is nice to watch a movie in a theatre, in a Dolby. Not watching it on a laptop sitting at home. It's exciting. It has its own charm. Welcome back to the cinema."

Ankur Rathee spoke about missing the screens, "It's a wonderful feeling. I am visiting a theatre after such a long time. It's been 2.5 years. I loved it."



Kal Penn is gay, engaged to partner of 11 years

Los Angeles | Agencies

Indian origin Hollywood actor Kal Penn, who is known for his role in the 'Harold & Kumar' comedy series, has come out as gay, sharing that he is engaged to his partner Josh of 11 years. Penn gave his story during an interview on this week's CBS Sunday Morning while promoting his new tell-all memoir 'You Can't Be Serious', touching on his introduction to acting, his time working with the Obama administration and his relationship with his partner, Josh, reports variety.com.

"Josh and I've been together for 11 years," Penn said, discussing how he presented his sexuality in his memoir. He added: "We had our 11th anniversary in October. So, writing about it... it's very matter-of-fact in our lives, and when you're the son of Indian immigrants who says that you want to be an actor, the chaos that creates in your family and your community, will trump anything else, always."



After moving to Los Angeles to work as an actor, Penn broke out with the 2004 comedy 'Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle' alongside his co-star John Cho. The film spawned two sequels and led Penn to other projects, including the 2006 drama 'Namesake' and the series 'House'.

Penn also took a hiatus from acting to campaign for President Barack Obama. He went on to work within the administration in the office of public engagement, working to connect Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Penn met his fiancée during his time working in Washington, D.C.

"I discovered my own sexuality relatively

late in life compared to many other people," Penn later told People magazine.

"There's no timeline on this stuff. People figure their shit out at different times in their lives, so I'm glad I did when I did."

"I've always been very public (about my relationship) with everybody I've personally interacted with," Penn continued.

"I'm really excited to share our relationship with readers. But Josh, my partner, my parents, and my brother, four people who I'm closest to in the family, are fairly quiet. They don't love attention and shy away from the limelight."

Kevin Feige wants fans to lower expectations for 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Marvel's President Kevin Feige has urged fans not to get overexcited about 'Spider-Man: No Way Home', amid rumours that actors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield are set to return.

There has been a lot of speculation about the upcoming movie, with rumours suggesting that Garfield and Maguire are both set to reprise their roles as the legendary

hero, reports femalefirst.co.uk. Feige told Empire magazine: "Rumours are fun, because many of them are true, and many of them are not true. The danger is when you get into the expectations game of wanting people to be excited about the movie they get, and not disappointed about a movie they don't get." The movie will see Tom Holland return as Peter Parker/Spider-Man but Andrew, who played the character in two films, says he won't be appearing in the movie, which is slated for release in December. The 38-year-

old actor said: "I understand why people are freaking out about the concept of that because I'm a fan as well. You can't help but imagine scenes and moments of 'Oh, my God, how f***ing cool would it be if they did that?'" But it's important for me to say on the record that this is not something I'm aware I am involved in. But I know I'm not going to be able to say anything that will convince anyone that I don't know what's happening. No matter what I say, I'm... It's either going to be really disappointing for people or it's going to be really exciting."

Los Angeles | Agencies

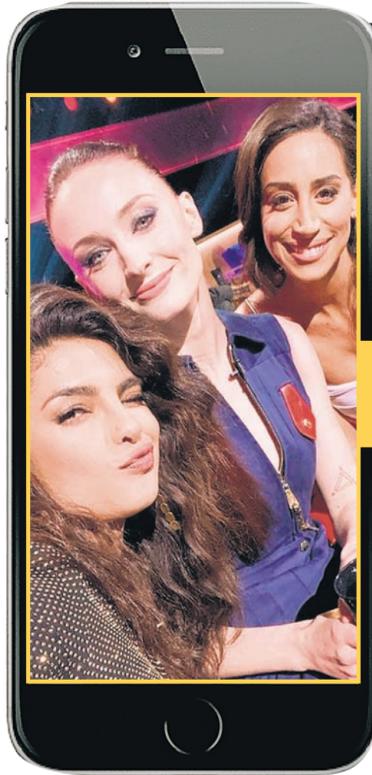
ADARSH GOURAV STARTS SHOOTING FOR SCOTT Z. BURNS' 'EXTRAPOLATION'



Ever since he featured in Ramin Bahrani directorial 'The White Tiger', Adarsh Gourav has been on a roll. Recently, he hit the headlines after the news of him signing Scott Z. Burns film 'Extrapolations' came out. The film boasts of a powerful star cast of Meryl Streep, Sienna Miller and Kit Harrington. For him, it's a dream come true being in the company of such mighty actors. Speaking about his experience of working on the film, Adarsh said: "We've been shooting in New York, both indoors and outdoors. I am in awe of my co-stars and learning every day. I have to pinch myself sometimes to believe I made it to this project. All I can say is that I am extremely fortunate to have landed the part and I am giving it my all. It's not everyday that a project as massive as this comes your way. Now that it has, I am sparing no opportunity to prove my mettle. I want to be as good as I can be; the best version of myself in this role."

Adarsh has been working round the clock since the announcement of 'Extrapolations'.

The film seems to be testing his strengths as an actor and at the same time, providing him the best work experience that any actor could ask for. The actor recently flew down to New York and has now begun shooting for the highly anticipated series themed on climate change. 'Extrapolations' directed by Scott Z. Burns is a climate change anthology drama series which explores the stories of how the changes to the planet will impact the essence of human existence; love, family, work both on a personal level and at a community level.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Priyanka Chopra Jonas shared a picture posing with her sisters-in-law Danielle Jonas and Sophie Turner as they had a reunion of sorts while attending the Jonas Brothers Family Roast which will soon arrive on streaming platform Netflix.

Priyanka shared a picture from the show on Instagram which had her among the audience, along with her sisters-in-law Danielle and Sophie, and father-in-law Paul Kevin Jonas, Sr.

The Indian actress is seen taking a selfie while posing with Danielle and Sophie, their father-in-law is seen seated at a distance and focused on what's happening on stage. She captioned it: "About last night... with these beauties. Also don't miss senior in the corner #jonasbrothersfamilyroast"

FAMILY Roast

@netflixisajoke #Roasted coming to Netflix on November 23!" She also shared a candid picture with Nick Jonas on her Instagram Stories and called it "My happy place".



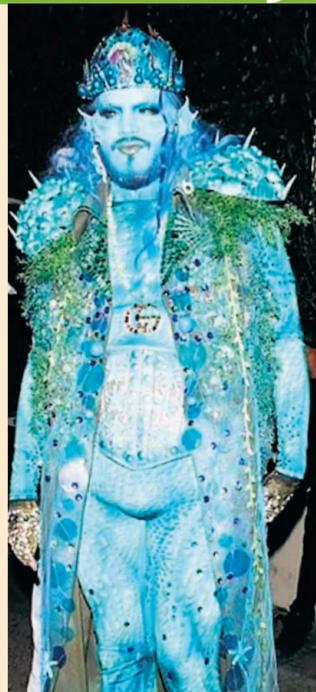
The Halloween Party

Los Angeles | Agencies

Megan Thee Stallion ensured all eyes were on her as she hosted a Halloween party in West Hollywood on Sunday. The rapper, 26, showcased her incredible figure as she donned a skintight bodysuit covered in an emerald bejeweled embellishment. The Savage hitmaker also sported a pair of giant green fairy wings while she added height to her frame with a pair of heels. Posing for the camera, Megan also donned a floral headpiece and prosthetic ears to complete her costume.

Adam Lambert was among those in attendance and turned heads in a bright blue top and matching trousers with a flowing cape, reports dailymail.co.in.

The singer also wore heavy blue face paint and a pair of prosthetic ears, completing his look with a pair of boots. Meanwhile, Tessa Thompson looked incredible in a bright fuchsia top and a frilled skirt which she paired with a colourful blazer.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Heidi Klum



T20 World Cup

FROM HERE ON, INDIA'S PATH BECOMES MORE TREACHEROUS AND LONG-WINDING

Kohli's side will now, most likely, need to win their three remaining fixtures -- vs Afghanistan, Scotland and Namibia -- while also hoping that other results and the net run rate equation goes their way.

▶ INDIA'S PATHETIC NET RUN RATE (NRR) OF -1.609 MEANS THEY WILL EITHER HAVE TO FINISH POINTS CLEAR OF THEIR RIVALS FOR QUALIFICATION OR HOPE FOR BIG MARGINS OF VICTORY IN THE BACK-END OF THE TOURNAMENT TO TURN THAT NRR ON ITS HEAD.

▶ THE DIFFICULTY FOR INDIA IS THAT AFGHANISTAN, WHO CURRENTLY HAVE FOUR POINTS, HAMMERED SCOTLAND BY 130 RUNS, AND IT WILL TAKE A MASSIVE CHARGE FROM KOHLI'S BOYS TO OVERHAUL THEIR +3.097 NRR -- CURRENTLY THE SECOND-BEST AT THE TOURNAMENT BEHIND ENGLAND IN GROUP 1.

▶ A DEFEAT TO AFGHANISTAN, WHO THRIVE ON SPIN, IN ABU DHABI ON NOVEMBER 3 AND INDIA'S CHANCES OF MAKING IT TO THE LAST-FOUR WILL EVAPORATE. RAVI SHASTRI'S SQUAD WILL NOT ONLY BE TARGETING A WIN, BUT ALSO A BIG ONE IN ORDER TO REDRESS SOME OF THE NRR BALANCE IN THE GROUP. INDIA WILL PROBABLY THEN HOPE FOR A NARROW AFGHANISTAN WIN OVER NEW ZEALAND TO TAKE THE QUALIFICATION DOWN TO NET RUN RATE.



Tokyo | Agencies

India's second consecutive defeat in the ICC T20 World Cup 'Super 12' game has not only rattled the Virat Kohli-led side, but also shocked the billion-plus die-hard fans back home, who were expecting a bumper perform-

ance from the 'Men in Blue' after the "thorough homework" done by the players in the Indian Premier League (IPL), which concluded just two days before the global extravaganza began. For India, it is nothing less than humiliation that the two defeats -- a 10-wicket hammering at the hands of Pakistan and an eight-wicket thrashing from the Kane Williamson-led New Zealand - have pushed them even below countries like Afghanistan and Namibia on the Group 2 points table. At fifth position -- behind Pakistan (6 points from three matches), Afghanistan (4 points from 3 games), New Zealand (2 points from 2 games) and Namibia (2 points from 2 games) -- indicates the Virat Kohli-led India have hit the self-destruction button, and the 2007 T20 World champions are now at the mercy of other teams to make the grade. Skipper Kohli, who will be stepping down as India's T20 skipper after the World Cup, vented out his frustration in the post-match press conference following the crushing loss to New Zealand, saying, "I don't think we were brave

enough with bat or ball." The best chance for India to make it out of the group is for one of the Group 2 qualifiers, Namibia and Scotland, to pull off an upset against New Zealand. Both teams showed their class when making it through Round 1, but have yet to trouble the Test-playing nations during the Super 12 stage.

Buttler's unbeaten ton sets up England's 26-run win over Sri Lanka



Sharjah | Agencies

A crucial unbeaten century from Jos Buttler set up England's 26-run win over Sri Lanka in a Group 1 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium here on Monday. With this win, England made it four out of four victories in the tournament and increased their chances of topping Group 1 as well as reaching the semi-finals.

Buttler's unbeaten knock of 101 off 67 balls, laced with six fours and as many sixes, took England to 163/4 in 20

overs. In reply, Sri Lanka overcame an early wobble and looked set to chase the target. But England's persistence with the ball, despite dew coming into play, meant that Sri Lanka were all out for 137 in 19 overs.

Sri Lanka got off to a poor start as they lost Pathum Nissanka on the third ball of the innings to a run-out. Charith Asalanka took a brace of boundaries against Chris Woakes and Moeen Ali in successive overs. But his joyride was cut short when he chipped an Adil Rashid googly to mid-off in the fourth over. Rashid came

back in his next over to take out Kusal Perera, who mis-cued a googly to extra cover.

Earlier, Buttler and Morgan shared a crucial 112-run stand to rescue England from 35/3 in 5.2 overs. England lost Jason Roy in the second over, going for a slog-sweep but saw his off-stump rattled by Hasaranga. Dushmantha Chameera got one to nip back in and knock off Dawid Malan's stumps. In the final over of power-play, Hasaranga bagged his second wicket, trapping an advancing Jonny Bairstow plumb lbw in front of the stumps.

Brief scores

England 163/4 in 20 overs (Jos Buttler 101 not out, Eoin Morgan 40, Wanindu Hasaranga 3/21, Dushmantha Chameera 1/43) beat Sri Lanka 137 all out (Wanindu Hasaranga 34, Bhanuka Rajapaksa 26, Moeen Ali 2/15, Adil Rashid 2/19) by 26 runs

Jr Hockey WC

Sharing same campus with seniors a boon: Vivek Sagar Prasad

Bengaluru | Agencies

Sharing the same campus as the senior hockey team in Bengaluru has been the biggest boon, says midfielder Vivek Sagar Prasad as the Indian colts prepare to defend the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup title when the tournament begins in Bhubaneswar on November 24.

Guided by coach Harendra Singh, the Indian colts won the 2016 Junior World Cup at Lucknow defeating Belgium, and several players graduated to the senior level, helping the county end its 41-year goal drought by winning bronze at the Tokyo Olympics.

Both the men's senior and junior squads are based at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) Centre here and Prasad, who is eligible to participate in the Junior World Cup, said on Monday that getting insights from seniors on playing under pressure had helped the colts in their preparations. "Our preparations are going really well and every player is giving his 100 per cent on the field during practice. Sharing the same campus as the senior team has been the biggest



boon because we have been able to get a lot of match practice against them. We also spend a lot of time talking to the seniors about playing under pressure and then experiences they share is valuable," said Prasad, who is part of the 'probables' group for the Junior World Cup. India are grouped in pool B along with Canada, France and Poland. The other teams in the fray include Belgium, Malaysia, South Africa and Chile in pool A, Netherlands, Spain, Korea and United States grouped in pool C, while Germany, Argentina, Pakistan and Egypt are in Pool D.

RECORD NO.1 FINISH AT STAKE AS DJOKOVIC BEGINS PARIS MASTERS CAMPAIGN

Paris: Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic would be aiming to clinch his seventh year-end No. 1 finish in the ATP Rankings -- which would break his tie with American great Pete Sampras for the most year-end No. 1 finishes in history -- when he makes a long-awaited return to the Rolex Paris Masters beginning later on Monday.

The five-time Paris Open champion will be playing in his first competition since losing the US Open final to Russian Daniil Medvedev, who denied the world No. 1 the opportunity to clinch his 21st major title and break the tie with Spain's Rafael Nadal and Swiss master Roger Federer, who also have 20 major titles apiece. "The year-end No. 1 is on the line between Medvedev and myself, and I'm in a pretty good position," Djokovic was quoted as saying by atptour.com on Sunday evening. "That's obviously the goal for the end of the season other than trying to do well in the Davis Cup with the national team. So, hopefully I can have a strong finish of the season and clinch that year-end No. 1."



Men's World Boxing

Akash, Rohit bow out, Sanjeet, Nishant one win away from confirming medals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian boxers Rohit Mor and Akash Sangwan ended their campaigns at the 2021 AIBA Men's Boxing Championships after suffering defeats in the pre-quarterfinals stage bouts in Belgrade, Serbia, on Monday.

Playing in the 67kg category, Akash started the bout with aggressive intent against Kevin Brown as both the boxers traded heavy blows. However, the Cuban boxer showed his technical superiority against the Indian, who was making a maiden appearance at the Championships and secured a win by unanimous decision to set up a quarter-final clash with Georgian boxer Lasha Guruli. Meanwhile, in the first match of the day for India, it was heartbreak for another debutant, Rohit Mor, as his impressive run in the tournament ended in the 57kg pre-quarterfinals after he went down fighting against Kazakhstan's Serik Temirzhanov by a 1-4 verdict.

Earlier during matches played late in the night on Sunday, Sanjeet and



Nishant Dev joined Akash Kumar (54kg) and Narender (+92) in the Last-8 stage with come-from-behind victories. Having lost the opening round, the boxer from Rohtak, Sanjeet recovered well in time against the Georgian opponent Giorgi Tchigladze not only to win the next round but also the 92kg Last-16 contest 4-1 comfortably in the end.

Similarly, playing in the 71kg pre-quarterfinals bout, debutant Nishant struggled in the early part of the game.

However, the reigning national champion from Karnataka, turned the tables quite handsomely in the later stage of the match with some continuous sharp and precise body blows against the Mexican Alvarez Verde to tilt the result of the closely-fought match 3-2 in his favour. Just a win away from confirming medals for the country, Sanjeet will now take on Italian boxer Aziz Mouhiidine while Nishant will square off against Russia's Vadim Muevay in their respective quarter-final matches on Tuesday.

While Akash, Narender, Sanjeet, and Nishant have already progressed to the quarter-finals stage, three more Indian boxers will play their pre-quarterfinals later on Monday night.

Deepak will face a strong challenge from the Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist Saken Bibossinov of Kazakhstan in the 51kg Last-16 match. Sumit (75kg) will square off against Cuban opponent Yoenlis Hernandez while the five-time Asian Championships medalist Shiva Thapa will fight against France's Lounes Hamraoui in the 63.5 kg category.

KAPIL DEV TAKES KOHLI TO TASK FOR 'WEAK STATEMENT' AFTER NZ DEFEAT

New Delhi: The 1983 World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev has called Virat Kohli's words after India's eight-wicket loss to New Zealand in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup as 'a very weak statement'.

Speaking to the host broadcaster during the post-match presentation ceremony, Kohli had said, "To be very honest and brutal



upfront, I don't think we were brave enough with bat or ball." This statement hasn't gone down well with former India skipper Kapil Dev. "Obviously, for a big player like him, it is a very weak statement. We all know and we believe that he has the hunger and desire to win games for the team. If that is the kind of body language the team has and if that is the kind of thought process the captain has, it is really tough to lift the team's mood in the dressing room. I felt a little strange hearing those words. He isn't that kind of a player," Kapil Dev said on ABP News.

"He is a fighter. I think he got lost in the moment or something. A captain should not say words like 'we were not brave enough. You are playing for your country and he has the passion. But when you say such words, fingers will definitely be pointed,'" added Dev.

Dev called out head coach Ravi Shastri and mentor MS Dhoni to lift the Indian team's morale after two losses in the ongoing mega event, meaning that India is on the brink of missing the semi-finals. "I would urge my friend Shastri and Dhoni to lift the team in this scenario. It is Dhoni's job to talk to the players and give them confidence."

'Intent was to fire some shots at the 'superstars' of cricket'

New Zealand team head coach Gary Stead has said his players knew they had to "lift their intensity" to counter an Indian team "full of superstars", and he was happy that the Black Caps "fired some shots at them as well" in their demolition of the Virat Kohli-led side here on Sunday

Dubai | Agencies

Trent Boult (3/20) and Ish Sodhi (2/17) led a clinical show with the ball to set up New Zealand's eight-wicket thrashing of India in an important Group 2 match of the ICC T20 World Cup at the Dubai International Stadium.

After restricting India to a paltry 110/7 in 20 overs, New Zealand made light work of the chase, reaching home with 33 balls to spare as India's bowlers struggled to make an impact.

"When you play a big team as star-studded as India are, then you actually have got to make sure you fire some shots at them as well. If you



can put them under pressure, then hopefully it puts you on the upper-hand of the game for periods of time. The way our bowlers bowled in that first innings was absolutely superb.

"They didn't let India off at all... I think there were 71 balls bowled without a boundary hit from the sixth over, pretty amazing on a ground with a good surface," Stead was quoted as saying by stuff.co.nz.

The Black Caps, after an unimpressive start where they lost to Pakistan in the opening 'Super 12' game, are on course to secure a place in the semifinals, as they now play Scotland, Namibia and Afghanistan.

Champions League: Vital games for Spanish trio on Tuesday

Madrid | Agencies

Three Spanish clubs are in Champions League action on Tuesday in matches that are vital to them making it through to the group stage of the competition.

FC Barcelona travel to Ukraine to face Dynamo Kiev with Sergi Barjuan in temporary charge following their disappointing 1-1 draw at home to Alaves on Saturday.

Barca have just three points from their opening three group games, which came from a narrow 1-0 win at home to Dynamo Kiev a fortnight ago, and with a trip to Munich and a home match against Benfica still to play, they need all three points to keep a realistic hope of reaching the last 16 alive. Kun Aguero will miss the trip as he remains in hospital undergoing tests to detect a possible irregular heartbeat, which saw him forced out of Saturday's game after he suffered a dizzy spell in the first half. Gerard Pique will also miss out after pulling a calf muscle in the same game



and he joins Pedri, Ronald Araujo, Sergi Roberto and Martin Braithwaite on Barca's injury list.

The club hopes that midfielder Frenkie de Jong and striker Ansu Fati will be able to travel after both missed out at the weekend, but whether they will be able to start is still unclear.

Reaching the last 16 is worth nine million euros for Barca's troubled economy and also important for the club's morale and status in the game. Sevilla will take a big step towards the last 16 if they can win their home game against Lille.



AYUSHMANN TO BE A GYNECOLOGIST IN 'DOCTOR G'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ayushmann Khurrana, who has a knack for picking offbeat scripts, is back with yet another unusual story in the form of 'Doctor G'. This time the actor will portray the role of a gynaecologist for the first time in the film which is touted to be a campus comedy drama. The film, which is produced by Junglee Pictures, marks the third collaboration between the actor and the production house after hugely successful films like 'Bareilly Ki Barfi' and 'Badhaai Ho'.

'Doctor G' also stars Rakul Preet Singh and Shefali Shah and is the directorial debut of Anubhuti Kashyap, the sister of critically acclaimed filmmaker Anurag Kashyap. Anubhuti spoke about wrapping up the movie recently, as she said, "With the shoot of the movie wrapped up, we are now gearing up to get the movie ready for the theatres." "I am really happy to have got the opportunity to work with Ayushmann, Rakul, Shefali, Junglee and the entire team of 'Doctor G' who stood by me and that reflects on screen. It has been an enriching experience. I am really excited to bring the movie to audiences," the director added. The film draws its strength from its script, and talking about the same, Amrita Pandey of Junglee Pictures, says, "The writers of the film - Sumit, Saurabh and Vishal along with Anubhuti have created a fabulous script of 'Doctor G' which Anubhuti has taken to the next level. We can't wait to bring it to the theatres on June 17 next year." Co-written by Sumit Saxena, Vishal Wagh, Saurabh Bharat and Anubhuti, 'Doctor G' is scheduled to release on June 17, 2022.



BIG B SENDS GOOD WISHES TO AAHANA KUMRA FOR 'CALL MY AGENT: BOLLYWOOD'

All good wishes ... love

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The latest web series 'Call My Agent: Bollywood' has been winning hearts as it is being lauded by critics and audiences alike. Aahana Kumra who stars in the series was in for a pleasant surprise as megastar Amitabh Bachchan sent her good wishes for the show.

The veteran actor took to Twitter as he wrote, "T 4082 - Wishing Aahana Kumra, with whom I had the pleasure of working, all good wishes ... love." Aahana and Big B have worked together in Aahana's television debut 'Yudh' and this appreciation from her former

co-actor has surely left the actress surprised. Commenting on the same, Aahana said, "I am over the moon for the fact that he tweeted about me and about the show. It's very kind of him, one can really learn a lesson of humility from him, he is such a legend. It makes me feel that no matter wherever you are or whoever you are, always support your colleagues and people whom you admire."

'Call My Agent: Bollywood' which is streaming currently on Netflix, tells the story of four casting agents from Mumbai, who go from pillar to post to save their sinking casting agency. The series directed by Shaad Ali, boasts of an illustrious star cast that includes names like Rajat Kapoor, Soni Razdan, Jackie Shroff, Ayush Mehra, Suchitra Pillai, Rohan Joshi and Nandita Das.

I WENT INTO A SHELL: AKASA

Singer and songwriter Akasa Singh has been evicted from 'Bigg Boss 15' house. Host Salman Khan announced her eviction in the 'Weekend Ka Vaar' episode on Sunday.

Ila Sankriyayan | New Delhi

Akasa reacted by saying it is unfortunate that just when she had started playing the game with her "heart and emotions", her elimination happened. But, she pointed out, she was not fitting into the game because of her nature and upbringing.

"Within a week I realised that the way I am, my nature and upbringing are quite different for a show such as this," Akasa said. "I don't know how to play dirty games and yell at others when not required. I believe if I would have played my game using my brain more than my heart and

emotions, maybe I would have continued. I was lacking in playing tricks or lying to others."

The singer added: "Actually, I was not comfortable inside the house. I went into a shell. I was just wondering what kind of people are here and was trying to adjust between them. I am very soft-hearted, rankly speaking, it was so difficult

for me to nominate anyone in the house as I have established relations with everyone."



Rana Daggubati to be the face of WWE campaign in Tamil, Telugu

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Telugu star Rana Daggubati, who attained national fame after he played the villain in 'Baahubali', is the face of an upcoming WWE campaign in Tamil, Telugu, and English. WWE, or World Wrestling Entertainment, headed by bodybuilder-wrestler-showman-TV mogul Vince McMahon, is the world's No. 1 purveyor of professional wrestling on television. It has been the nursery of international celebrity wrestlers such as Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson and John Cena. At a shoot recently at the Railway Sports Complex, Secunderabad, Daggubati posed for the upcoming WWE campaign, which will be aired on Sony Ten 4. The actor, incidentally, was the face of the Sony Ten 4 channels when they were launched. The channel airs sports programmes, including pro wrestling and mixed martial arts (MMA), in Tamil and Telugu. On the sets of the campaign shoot, Daggubati was spotted donning a WWE championship title and interacting with a group of children. He also posed on a Harley Davidson and performed stunts with ropes. Pictures from the shoot have now gone viral.

Commenting on the campaign, the actor said, "I can say that it will strike a chord with our native viewers." A representative from Sony Sports added: "WWE is one of the most viewed properties on the sports channels in India and has a strong following in Tamil- and Telugu-speaking markets. Rana's love of sports and WWE is well-documented in the public domain. So, Rana Daggubati is the ideal choice to front the campaign."



Samantha in talks for a Bollywood movie

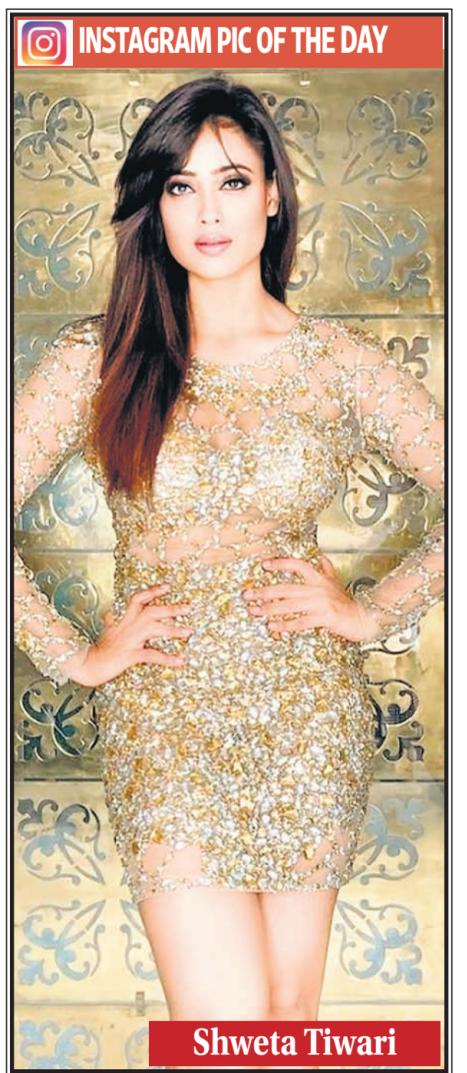
Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Samantha Ruth Prabhu has a handful of offers in her kitty right now. With her mythological epic drama 'Shaakuntalam' in the post-production phase, Samantha has two bilingual movies in the pipeline. Fresh reports from the industry suggest that Samantha is all set to make her Bollywood debut as well. The same sources had reported that Samantha is being approached for an interesting role for a movie that is to be made under actress Taapsee Pannu's production. Taapsee Pannu's Outsiders Films is to produce a female-centric thriller, for which the casting team has suggested Samantha Ruth Prabhu as the lead. However, there is no official confirmation on this, though Samantha appears ready to take up new challenges. Samantha made her mark on the pan-India audience with Prime Video's web series 'The Family Man 2'. Also there were rumours of Samantha moving to Mumbai, as part of her work which she later denied. 'Oh Baby' actress Samantha, on the other hand, is on a break, taking trips and enjoying her vacation with friends.

Rajinikanth returns home after surgical procedure

Team Absolute | Chennai

Actor Rajinikanth, who was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award this past week, has returned home from Kauvery Hospital where he underwent a surgical procedure. After undergoing a carotid artery revascularisation on October 28, the actor was back home late on Sunday night after being discharged from the hospital, in time for the Deepavali release of his next film, 'Annaatthe'. The immensely popular actor, whose health condition has been fragile in recent months, was admitted to Kauvery Hospital on October 28 after he complained of giddiness. His admission to the hospital triggered concern among fans and members of the film fraternity. A bulletin released by the hospital allayed their fears. "Mr Rajinikanth was admitted to Kauvery Hospital, Chennai, following an episode of giddiness. He was thoroughly evaluated by an expert panel of doctors and advised to undergo carotid artery revascularisation. The procedure was performed successfully and he is recovering well." Rajinikanth will now be able to savour the release of 'Annaatthe', directed by Siva and produced by Kalanithi Maran of Sun Pictures, on November 4. And as well all his new releases, it promises to be a big fan event.



Shweta Tiwari