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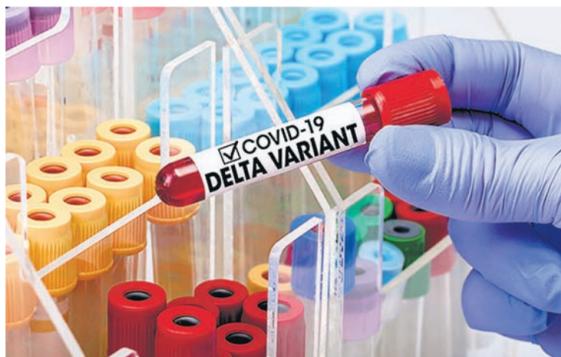
'MONOCLONAL THERAPY CAN 100% TACKLE SEVERITY OF DELTA VARIANT'

THE REMEDY

For the first time in the world, the study, published in the Journal of Internal Medicine, analysed the efficacy of the drug cocktail on the Delta Covid variant. Previous studies were focussed on the cocktail therapy's effect on the original Wuhan strain, and a placebo was used as control.

Rachel V. Thomas | New Delhi

Delta Covid infection, which can progress to ICU admissions and death, can be stopped in its tracks by monoclonal antibody therapy, claims a new study. Developed by Swiss Drug major Roche, Casirivimab-Imdevimab injection is a cocktail of two monoclonal antibodies and was designed specifically to block infectivity of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. The team from AIG Hospitals assigned 285 patients to a treatment of monoclonal antibody and standard of care treatment (remediviser/anticoagulants and necessary SOS steroid). More than 98 per cent samples tested were identified as the Delta variant. The results showed that the neutralising activity of the monoclonal therapy was similar in both the original Wuhan and the Delta strain. About 75 per cent of patients who got the monoclonal therapy became RT-PCR negative by the seventh day and 78 per cent of patients got relief from their clinical symptoms like fever, cough, etc by



the seventh day. None of the study participants developed severe disease or died. There was also no increase in inflammatory markers, which causes severe disease, in these patients. The treatment was also effective against post-Covid symptoms, Reddy said. The cocktail therapy shot to fame after it was used to treat then US President Donald Trump last October. It was approved by the Central Drugs Standards

Control Organisation (CDSCO) in May for use in India. However, it did not receive much uptake among Covid patients. High cost has been the primary reason. The price for each patient dose (a combined dose of 1200 mg (600 mg of Casirivimab and 600 mg of Imdevimab)) in India is Rs 59,750. The therapy should be used only among "those above 65 years, with a Body Mass Index higher than 35, diabetics, chronic kidney

“ Monoclonal antibody therapy is 100 per cent able to halt the progress of the Delta Covid variant in a patient and reduce the need for ICU admissions and death. Among those treated with the cocktail drug therapy, the virus 'disappeared' in 78 per cent of cases in a week's time, while by the end of the second week, 100 per cent cases were totally free of symptoms. On the other hand, people who received the standard care of treatment 20 per cent progressed to more severe disease, or ICU.”

Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman, AIG Hospitals, Hyderabad

disease patients, immunosuppressed individuals. The study also included researchers from the Asian Healthcare Foundation, CCMB Hyderabad and Institute of Life Sciences.

BY POLL RESULTS

BJP LOSES HIMACHAL, SHINES IN MP, NE, CONG GAINS IN RAJ, WB GOES TO TMC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The results of the bypolls to three Lok Sabha seats and 29 Assembly constituencies have been encouraging for the Congress in the states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka where the party is now better placed than the BJP. In the three Lok Sabha seats, the result shows that the BJP has won in Khandwa (Madhya Pradesh), Shiv Sena in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Congress in Mandi (Himachal Pradesh). Congress candidate Pratibha Singh has won the Mandi Lok Sabha seat, the home district of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur, by defeating BJP's green horn Brigadier Khushal Thakur (retired), a decorated officer who played a crucial role in the 1999 Kargil war. Singh won by a slender margin of 8,766 votes. In Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Shiv Sena candidate and the widow of late Mohan Delkar, Kalavati Delkar won by more than 50,000 votes. The Congress has however, fared well where it was in direct contest with the BJP. In Bihar too, Congress has not been the first choice despite the party contesting alone. The main contest was between the RJD and the JDU. The Congress won all three Assembly constituencies -- Arki, Fatehpur and Jubbal-Kotkhai -- of Himachal Pradesh. The Congress has won both the seats --

State	Party	Seats
Assam	BJP	3
Bihar	JDU	2
Haryana	INLD	1
HP	Congress	3
Karnataka	BJP	1
MP	BJP	2
Maharashtra	Congress	1
Meghalaya	NPP	2
Mizoram	MNF	1
Nagaland	NDPP	1
Rajasthan	Congress	2
Telangana	BJP	1
West Bengal	TMC	4

Wallabhnagar and Dhariyawad in Rajasthan. For the BJP, the Himachal Pradesh results come as a warning signal before the state elections that are a year away. The loss will rankle as this is the home state of BJP chief Nadda and there is apparent anti-incumbency against CM Jai Ram Thakur. In Madhya Pradesh the BJP has won two out of three Assembly constituencies and lone Khandwa Lok Sabha seat. The Congress has won one seat - Raigon under Satna district. BJP's Sulochana Rawat has won Jobat, while BJP's Shishupal Yadav won Prithvipur seat. The Congress' Kalpana Verma has captured Raigon seat after three decades. Himanta Biswa Sarma and Ashok Gehlot seem to have proved to their respective parties that they were the correct choices as CMs. While the BJP alliance swept all five bypoll seats in Assam, the Congress won both by-election constituencies in. The continuous demolition of the BJP continues in West Bengal since the assembly election loss earlier this year. The opposition party lost all the four bypoll seats and, in fact, lost its deposits in three, securing just 14.5% votes in all while the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) secured nearly 75% votes.

CBI books 6 in submarines leak case, files 2 charge sheets

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed two separate charge sheets in an alleged leak of sensitive information related to the kilo class submarine. The agency has filed charge sheets against six persons, including two serving naval officers besides a Hyderabad-based private company. The agency has questioned dozens of former Naval officers in the case, which came to light on September 3. All are charged under the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Indian Penal Code, said a senior CBI officer. The accused had been passing on confidential commercial information on the Medium Refit Life Certification or MRLC programme of India's Kilo Class submarines to "unauthorised people for illegal gratification", as per the probe agency. The charge sheets were filed on Tuesday within 60 days of the registration of the case on September 2 in



order to prevent the accused from getting bail from the competent court here. The charge sheets were filed before a special CBI court at Rouse Avenue. In the first charge sheet, the agency has named six accused persons, including the two serving Navy commodores and the Hyderabad-based private firm Allen Reinforced Plastics Private Ltd (ARPL), sources said. The first charge sheet has been filed against serving Navy commander Ajit Kumar Pandey, retired commander S.J. Singh, retired commodore Randeep Singh, T.P. Shastri, Executive Director of ARPL and directors of the accused firm, N.V. Rao

and K. Chandrashekar besides the company ARPL. The second charge sheet has been filed against two accused persons -- S.J. Singh and Randeep Singh, they said. Earlier, the CBI had seized Rs 2.4 crore in cash from the premises of Randeep Singh during searches conducted at the premises of the accused persons. In relation to this, the CBI had carried out raids at 19 locations in Mumbai, Delhi, Noida, and Hyderabad including naval establishments last month. The CBI had arrested serving Indian Navy personnel from Mumbai and two former Navy officers from Delhi.

CAPTAIN RESIGNS FROM CONGRESS, FORMS NEW PARTY

Chandigarh: Former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh on Tuesday resigned from the Congress and announced the name of his party -- Punjab Lok Congress -- just months before the Assembly polls. The party will be formally launched later and the Election Commission has no objection to its name, he said. The move by the former CM came days after he dismissed reports of back-end talks with the Congress, saying the time for rapprochement is over. In his seven-page resignation letter, Amarinder Singh also slammed the Gandhis for a "conspiracy" to oust him from the state government. In the letter to Congress president Sonia Gandhi, he listed out his achievements as chief minister. He also lashed out at Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu and senior party leader Harish Rawat. On the Congress Legislative Party meeting which was called before his resignation, he said a "midnight conspiracy" was carried out against his at the behest of Sonia and her children.



25 DEAD IN KABUL EXPLOSIONS, GUNFIRE AT MILITARY HOSPITAL

Team Absolute | New Delhi

At least 25 people were killed and more than 50 wounded when two explosions followed by gunfire hit Afghanistan's biggest military hospital in the capital Kabul, Al Jazeera reported. The sound of gunfire was also heard near the Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan military hospital in the Afghan capital, according to witnesses and a government spokesperson. Bilal Karimi, deputy spokesman of the Islamic Emirate, told reporters that at least two blasts took place at the entrance of the 400-bed hospital in Kabul's 10th district. Witnesses told Al Jazeera it was a car bomb. Photographs shared by residents showed a plume of smoke after the



in the Wazir Akbar Khan area in central Kabul. Meanwhile, at least 13 people were injured in a blast near the Chief Chowk in Balochistan's Kharan on Tuesday afternoon, Samaa TV reported. The injured people have been moved to the hospital. According to the police, the bomb was installed on a motorcycle. Around five to four kg of explosives were used in the attack, the report said.

Auto fuel price rise continues unabated



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Fuel prices increased again on Tuesday for the seventh consecutive day as global oil prices failed to relent and continued to remain firm. However, unlike in the past, oil marketing companies (OMC) only raised the pump price of petrol on Tuesday while keeping diesel rates unchanged. Accordingly, the pump price of petrol in Delhi increased by 35 paise per litre to jump to Rs 110.04 a litre, while diesel prices remained at Monday's level of Rs 98.42 a litre, according to a price notification of state-owned

fuel retailers. In the financial capital of Mumbai, petrol prices have now increased to Rs 115.84 per litre while diesel remains at Rs 106.63 a litre, the highest among all metros. Across the country as well, petrol prices increased between 35-40 paise per litre but their retail rates varied depending on the level of local taxes on petroleum products. The fuel prices have now increased for seventh consecutive days by 35 paise per litre. Before this after holding for couple of days, fuel prices again had risen on previous five days by about 35 paise per litre.

"One Sun One World One Grid"

India, UK launch biggest-ever coalition for clean energy

RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR THE GREEN GRIDS INITIATIVE IS BEING PROVIDED BY THE CLIMATE COMPATIBLE GROWTH CONSORTIUM OF UNIVERSITIES, WHICH INCLUDES CAMBRIDGE, IMPERIAL COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON.

GREEN GRIDS INITIATIVE WORKING GROUPS MADE UP OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR AFRICA AND FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. THEIR MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES MOST MAJOR MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS SUCH AS THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (AFDB), THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND THE WORLD BANK.

THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND, ESTABLISHED TO CHANNEL PART OF THE \$100 BILLION A YEAR PLEDGED BY RICH COUNTRIES IN THE CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS, IS LEADING A FINANCE WORKING GROUP.

Glasgow | Agencies

A new high-level coalition for clean energy was announced on Tuesday by India and the UK at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, involving major governments, international organisations, legislators, business leaders, researchers, and citizen groups. It includes a group of governments called the Green Grids Initiative -- One Sun One World One Grid. The group was announced at COP26 by summit host Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his Indian counterpart

Narendra Modi. In the presence of other heads of government, including US President Joe Biden, the two Prime Ministers presented a One Sun Declaration, endorsed by more than 80 countries, setting out the group's aims. A Ministerial Steering Group will lead a process to accelerate the construction of large solar power stations and wind farms in the best locations, linked together by continental-scale grids crossing national borders. The Steering Group includes France, India, the UK and the US, and will also have representatives from Africa, the Gulf, Latin America, and Southeast

Asia. In a simultaneous online event convened by an international network of legislators called the Climate Parliament, members of a broader Green Grids Initiative partnership were introduced. Working alongside the governments are members of parliament and Congress, renewable energy companies, university researchers and international development agencies. The International Energy Agency and the International Renewable Energy Agency are actively involved, as are the ASEAN Energy Centre in Southeast Asia and the SAARC Energy Centre in South Asia.

WITH ANOTHER CASE, ZIKA TALLY TOUCHES 11 IN KANPUR

Kanpur: Kanpur has reported one more case of Zika virus, taking the tally to 11. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Kanpur, Dr Nepal Singh, said that pathology samples of a 42-year-old woman from Shiv Katra, sent to the KGMU lab in Lucknow and National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, tested positive for the virus on Monday. So far, 11 people, including three IAF staff from in Chakeri area, have tested positive for the infection. In a statement, district magistrate Visakh G Iyer said that there is no need to panic. "Zika virus does not spread by contact or aerosols instead it is spread by the Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, which also causes dengue and chikungunya. It can easily be curtailed by strict surveillance and awareness," he said. Meanwhile, a household survey was conducted by 65 surveillance teams of health, civic, para-medical personnel and staff of local administration in the affected areas, including IAF station on Monday. The teams collected samples from across 12 localities spread in a radius of 3 km in Chakeri area. The teams also examined people having fever-like symptoms.





'DHANTERAS' BOOST JEWELLERS' BUSINESS, PENT-UP DEMAND ACCELERATES OFF-TAKE

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

Pent-up demand, along with reasonable prices and healthy monsoons, boosted gold sales on the auspicious occasion of Dhanteras.

The upcoming wedding season also provided a boost to the precious metal's sales. The festival marks the first day of Diwali celebrations. On this day, Goddess of wealth, Goddess Lakshmi, is worshipped, and it is important to purchase items of value like ornaments, gemstones, and any household appliance, made of metal, including automobiles.

All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council Chairman Ashish Pethe said: "This year, gold sales are expected 15-20 per cent above pre-pandemic levels (2019)."

The India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA) said that sale of gold on Dhanteras across the country this year was about 50 tonnes, valued at over Rs 20,000 crore.

IBJA's data showed that the average price of gold of 24-carat purity (999 purity) on Tuesday was over Rs 49,000 per 10 grams (with GST)



which was lower than last year's price of around Rs 55,000 per 10 grams (with GST).

"There has been a tremendous demand for gold this Dhanteras, as buyers have regained their confidence in gold. It seems that buyers have increased the share of gold in their investment portfolios," IBJA's national Secretary Surendra Mehta told reporter. "Furthermore, the mandatory hallmarking as well as digital gold for gifting purposes have also boosted sales. We also saw a younger customer base this year." As per IBJA, in Dhanteras 2021,

gold sales are expected to be around Rs 20,000 crore, while it was Rs 12,000 crore in 2019. "Gold has always been integral to festivals and celebrations in India, particularly so during Dhanteras and Diwali. We expect this Dhanteras and Diwali to be one of the best in recent years even when benchmarked to pre-Covid seasons," World Gold Council's Regional CEO, India, Somasundaram P.R., said.

"Millions attribute great fortune to any investment in gold during Dhanteras. Anecdotal feedback from the jewellery retailers reflect

this sentiment strongly this season." Jewellers across the country echoed similar sentiments.

Mumbai-based Anmol Jewellers' founder Ishu Datwani said: "The build-up has been pretty good today since morning - and we have been seeing a steady stream of clients. The good thing is that all the walk-ins are genuine buyers and not window shoppers." "This is a new shift in the trend that we have seen in the last two years that only consumers with buying intentions are walking into the store and window shoppers have drastically reduced. I am pretty confident we will end with a minimum of 15-20 per cent increase over last year's figures before Covid."

Gujarat and Mumbai-based Pooja Diamonds Director Shrey Mehta said: "Since the last 2 months, we are seeing pre-bookings and an increase in footfall. Today, a lot of people are here to collect deliveries and also make the customary purchase of Dhanteras and are gearing up for the wedding season."

"We have seen a growth in sales by 30 per cent compared to pre-Covid Dhanteras of 2019 which is a very positive sign."

Parl panel to study farmers' income, oil seeds and pulses availability

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Doubling of farmers' income by 2022, functioning of the agricultural credit system in the country, production and availability of oil seeds and pulses and appraisal of National Livestock Mission are some of the subjects that have been selected by the Lok Sabha's Department Related Standing Committee on Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ministry.

Apart from the above subjects, it will examine and report during the term 2021-22 on production and availability of certified seeds in the country, implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), functioning of agricultural credit system, production and availability of oil seeds and pulses in the country, National Bamboo Mission, National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology, Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture, Performance Review of Coconut



Development Board and Organic Farming, a government communique said.

The other subjects include performance review of ICAR-Central Coastal Agricultural Research Institute, Goa, contribution of the ICAR in agricultural research for tribal and hilly regions, R&D in farm mechanisation for small and marginal farmers in the country and R&D in post-harvest management.

Status and promotion of the poultry sector in the country, the role of National Dairy Development Board for protection and development of indigenous cattle breeds, the National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development, the role of National Fisheries

Development Board (NFDB) in training and extension facilities to fishermen under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, and development of Deep Sea Fishing along with promotion and development of Sea Weed Cultivation are some other subjects. There are three areas under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries too. The reports of the Standing Committees are supposed to have persuasive value and are treated as considered advice given by them. Playing a vital role in the parliamentary system, these committees are a vibrant link between the parliament, the executive and the general public, according to Rajya Sabha officials.

Shivpal ready to merge party in SP 'if' his workers get respect

LUCKNOW | Agencies

Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party Lohia (PSPL) President Shivpal Singh Yadav has said that if all workers of his party get a dignified welcome in Samajwadi Party (SP) he is ready to merge his party into the latter.

Shivpal Singh Yadav told reporters in Aligarh on Monday night that he wanted not only himself, but also his workers and supporters to be treated with dignity and respect if the SP wants to take him in.

He said that when he was in SP, the party used to work on the ground while in the current scenario leaders working in an office.

SP President Akhilesh Yadav has also hinted about a coalition with his estranged uncle Shivpal Singh Yadav.

Akhilesh Yadav said that he had no issues with Shivpal Singh Yadav and he will get a respectable place in the party. Slamming the BJP government, Shivpal Singh Yadav said that common people were struggling for basic



amenities and inflation had made their lives distressed.

"Development cannot be assured just by changing the names of the project but the BJP is only doing that. The BJP has ditched the public and their slogan of 'Sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas' was baseless," he said. He said that India ranked lower than Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan in the hunger index which speaks volumes for the state of affairs.

IT UNEARTHS RS 300 CR IN RAIDS FROM PREMISES OF CATTLE FEED COMPANY

Chennai: The Income Tax department has seized unaccounted money worth Rs 300 crore on raids from the premises of reputed animal feed manufacturer, SKM company.

A statement from the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on Tuesday said that the raids were conducted on the premises of the company since October 27.

The group is mainly engaged in the manufacture of animal feed, poultry farming, edible oil, and the export of egg products.

The raids, according to the statement, started from October 27 and covered 40 premises of the industrial group situated in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka.

The CBDT said that during the raids several incriminating documents including electronic data were seized. The seized data revealed that the group was involved in suppressing the details of its actual income by inflating expenses as also booking bogus purchases.

Under invoicing of sales and non-inclusion of revenue through the sale of scrap and by-products sale, were also found during the raids, the statement said.

The statement also said that the group had purchased several immovable properties and invested in such projects using the unaccounted money.

Search led to the seizure of unaccounted cash for Rs 3.3 crore from the premises, the statement from the CBDT said.

Victory of Congress workers, keep fighting hate: Rahul Gandhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi has credited the bypoll results to the party workers. He said this win is the victory of ground level workers.

In a tweet on Tuesday said, "Every victory for the Congress is a victory of our party workers. Keep fighting hate. No fear!"

The Congress has swept polls in Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan while it won one seat in MP, Maharashtra and Karnataka each. It has also won a Lok Sabha seat as its candidate Pratibha Singh won the Mandi Lok Sabha seat, a prestige battle for Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur as it falls in his home district, by defeating BJP's



greenhorn Brigadier Khushal Thakur (retired), a decorated officer who played a crucial role in the 1999 Kargil war, by a slender margin of 8,766 votes. The Congress won all three Assembly constituencies -- Arki, Fatehpur and Jubbalkotkhai -- of Himachal Pradesh in bypolls.

The Congress has won both the seats -- Vallabh Nagar and Dhariyawad -- in Rajasthan Congress leader Sachin Pilot said, "What is more important, is for people to see who is most viable option that they need to support against BJP, and I think Congress is fast emerging as that option."

The Congress has however, fared well where it was in direct contest with the BJP. In Bihar, Congress has not been the first choice despite the party contesting all alone. The main contest was between the RJD and the JDU.

The party won the lone seat in Maharashtra and wrested one seat from BJP in Karnataka while it got one seat in MP.

Court reserves order on Sharjeel Imam's bail plea

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi court on Tuesday reserved its order on the bail application of JNU scholar and activist Sharjeel Imam, in connection with a 2019 case related to his alleged inflammatory speeches during the protests against the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat reserved the order after hearing both sides in the case. The court is likely to pronounce the order on the bail plea on November 15. His counsel Tanveer Ahmed Mir argued that being critical of the government cannot be the cause of sedi-



tion. While opposing Mir, Special Public Prosecutor Amit Prasad argued that the fundamental right to protest cannot go beyond an extent that causes problems to the public at large.

As per the case, Sharjeel made the alleged inflammatory speeches at Jamia Millia Islamia on December 13, 2019, and at Aligarh Muslim University on December 16, 2019.

Released biennial report of development works done by Borivali MLA Sunil Rane

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The annual report of Borivali MLA Sunil Rane various development works presented to the public at Witty International School Campus. The event will be graced by former Finance minister and MLA Sudhir Mungantiwar, Mumbai BJP President - MLA Mangal Prabhat Lodha and MP North Mumbai Gopal Shetty.

The 2019 Assembly elections, the party leadership of the Bharatiya Janata Party nominated Sunil Rane from the Borivali Assembly constituency in Mumbai and the people of Borivali trusted him and elected him as MLA with a large majority. After that, Sunil Rane visited the entire constituency and met all the people and started the service work for the overall development of



Borivali. Sunil Rane said that the support given to him by all the office bearers and activists of the Bharatiya Janata Party was invaluable in his journey and that continuous efforts

would be made to earn the trust of the people through the development work. The development work done by Sunil Rane mainly includes construc-

tion of security wall, development and renovation of constituency grounds, CCTV cameras and solar lights installation at various places, distribution of educational materials to 10th standard students, distribution of bicycles and laptops to poor girls under Beti Bachao Beti Padhav Abhiyan, construction of library with modern facilities, identity card for senior citizens, beautification of different areas and squares, asphaltting of bridges, roads and work in progress, provision of ambulances for the citizens of Gorai and Manori villages and construction of permanent houses for tribals, Continuous demands and follow up for funds should be made available to replace the old pipeline at Charkop and improve the sewage system, and there should be a super specialty hospital at Borivali.

Gold smuggling accused Swapna Suresh gets bail

KOCHI | Agencies

The Kerala High Court on Tuesday granted bail to prime accused Swapna Suresh in the Kerala gold smuggling case, after almost 16 months.

The bail came in the case registered against her by the National Investigation Agency and since she had secured bail in other cases, she can now walk free.

Meanwhile, since she has to execute few bonds and sureties in this case and a few other cases, it's unlikely that she will be able to come out of the jail, later in the day.

Her counsel pointed out that the court has given her a clean chit in the terror angle



in the NIA case.

The smuggling case came to light on July 5, 2020, when the Customs arrested Saritha, a former employee of the UAE Consulate here, for allegedly smuggling gold in a diplomatic baggage destined for the Consulate.

Swapna Suresh, who previously worked in the UAE Consulate, and her associate Sandip Nair, were arrested in the case by the NIA from Bengaluru a few days later.

When strict restrictions were imposed on travel last year to check the spread of the coronavirus, both Swapna Suresh and Nair managed to drive from here to Bengaluru from where they were arrested by an NIA team a few days later.

Manufacture alternative fuels to counter rising prices: Gadkari

Panaji | Agencies

The only way to counter rising fuel prices was to end the country's dependency on imported fuel and to manufacture alternative fuels in India, Union Minister for Road Transport and National Highways Nitin Gadkari said on Tuesday.

"The only solution is stop depending on imported fuel and manufacture alternative fuel in our country," he told a press conference in Panaji.

"We import 80 per cent fuel. I am introducing flex engines. Flex engine bikes and scooters. That means, you can use 100 per cent petrol or 100 per cent ethanol. Ethanol is Rs 65 per litre," he said.

Gadkari said this in response to a question about how the rising fuel prices could be combated. The Minister also said that



flex engines, which can adapt to both petrol and alternative fuels like ethanol, would be made mandatory in India in six months.

launching vehicles with Euro 6 emission norms. We will make flex engines mandatory in six months. Use ethanol instead of petrol, it is cheaper," he said.



BJP SWEEPS MP BY-POLLS WITH 3-1 WIN

The Congress managed to breach BJP stronghold, Raigaon, it couldn't manage to keep its own bastions, Jobat and Prithvipur, safe.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The ruling BJP in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday registered an emphatic win in the by-polls by securing victory in three of the four seats. The results brought much-needed relief to the BJP that was desperately needed to assuage the disappointing loss in the Damoh assembly by-poll held earlier this year.

The BJP secured victories in Khandwa Lok Sabha seat, and in the assembly seats of Jobat and Prithvipur, while the Congress secured win in Satna district's Raigaon.

The results also proved that the state, that sells the costliest petrol, diesel in the country, had no impact of the spiraling fuel prices on the public even though Congress raised this issue during their campaigning.

At the Khandwa LS seat, BJP's Gyaneshwar Patil defeated Congress Rajnarayan Singh in a one-sided contest, with over 80,000 votes. The result was, however, expected as Khandwa had been a saffron bastion for years, while the Congress suffered a rift over ticket distribution for the seat.

Former Union minister Arun Yadav had denied contesting the poll, but he remained an integral part of the campaigning throughout.

In Prithvipur, Congress' Nitendra Singh Rathore went down to BJP's



Shishupal Yadav who had contested the seat on a Samajwadi Party ticket in 2018. The contest was neck-and-neck after the counting began, with both parties accusing each other of tampering with the poll process. Yadav won by a margin of 15,886 votes. It seems Rathore, who lost his MLA father Brijendra Singh Rathore, failed to garner the sympathy votes.

At Jobat, Congress turncoat Sulochana Rawat who had joined the BJP, turned the tables and won on the BJP ticket by a margin of 6,080 votes, defeating Mahesh Patel of the Congress. Rawat had left the Congress sensing she wouldn't be offered a ticket. The Congress could only win from Raigaon where its candidate Kalpana Verma won by a margin of over 12,000 votes.

The BJP lost this seat due to factionalism. Late MLA Jugal Kishore Bahgri's son Pushpraj and his sister-in-law had filed nomination only to withdraw it later after being denied tickets. Sources claimed that BJP 'rebels' never really

worked in favour of the official candidate, Pratima Bagri. Raigaon had been a BJP BJP since around 35 years.

While the Congress managed to breach BJP stronghold, Raigaon, it couldn't manage to keep its own bastions, Jobat and Prithvipur, safe.

BJP state president head VD Sharma and CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan reached the party headquarters around noon and celebrated the by-poll victory with sweets and crackers.

Meanwhile, accepting the defeat, former CM Kamal Nath tweeted: "We accept the mandate with respect and will ponder over them." He also alleged that the BJP won by power of money, muscle and misuse of government machinery. "We will continue to fight for the rights of the public," added Nath. Calling the results encouraging, CM Chouhan said that the BJP victory in the Congress bastions of Jobat and Prithvipur are heartening and historical. "I am happy we managed to win the faith of tribal brothers-sisters in Jobat," he added.

Cabinet approves Covid-19 treatment and management plan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Cabinet meeting was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan through video conferencing. The Cabinet has approved the new scheme number 7659 treatment and management of Covid-19 for the implementation of activities related to Covid-19. The plan includes health infrastructure up-gradation, human resource management, purchase of medicines and other equipment, free treatment of Covid patients, testing and sampling arrangements, Covid appropriate behaviour-awareness and publicity, Covid care centre operation, waste management of hospitals, home isolation monitoring and medical kit distribution etc.

At present, Rs 75 crore is available from re-appropriation for the implementation of the scheme. There is a total proposal of Rs 480 crore.

To provide medical facilities, helpline, FIR facility, counselling facilities etc. at one place to the women victims of violence in the municipality Neemuch the Cabinet decided to allot 300 square metre land near the Farm no. 12, Neemuch City Road, Atal Rain Basera, owned by the Municipality Neemuch, to district programme officer, Department of Women and Child Development, Neemuch for the construction of One Stop Centre (Sakhi) building without charging premium and under conditions to take annual lease rent of Re 1 on the condition of changing the use of the land from residential to "public and semi public."

In order to control Covid-19, in the month of April-May 2021, as the livelihood of street vendors in rural areas was adversely affected due to the corona curfew and various other restrictions in different districts, the Cabinet gave ex-post facto approval to provide a grant of one thousand rupees to each street vendor in the bank accounts by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department under the Chief Minister



Rural Street Vendor Loan Scheme. In the demand number-58 from the Revenue Department, post-facto approval was given to provide allocation of Rs 61 crore 60 thousand from the relief scheme in view of Covid-19.

According to the brief of the Tribal Affairs Department, the Cabinet decided to permit the use of the amount of Rs 38 crore provided by the Central Government as approved by the project appraisal committee in the form of reimbursement against the amount released to the Agriculture Department for the approved schemes under the Organic Farming Support Programme (Reimbursement) new scheme

The Cabinet has approved a total of 868 posts of all categories for strengthening the Directorate of Geology and Mining (MP) in the Department of Mineral Resources for the exploration of new minerals, prevention of illegal mining, transportation and storage and promotion of information technology.

According to the decisions taken by the Council of Ministers, in various meetings of the Executive Committee constituted under the Disaster Management Act to provide better med-

ical facilities and free treatment facilities to the citizens of the state due to the increase in the infection of Covid-19 in the state, the decision to spend an amount of Rs 29 crore 30 lakh from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund was ratified.

The Cabinet took a decision regarding the revised approval of expenditure in excess of the provision in the contract executed with CII (National Partner) and to make CII the National Partner again for the next two years.

The Council of Ministers approved the approval received in coordination with regard to the extension of the country liquor supply system proposed by the Commercial Tax Department till October 31, 2021 in the state till November 5, 2021. Approval was given to extend this arrangement till 31 March 2022. The cabinet has given approval amend section 4 (a) of the Madhya Pradesh Kashtha Chiran (Regulation) Act 1984 and to authorize the forest department to take all necessary action to get the Madhya Pradesh Wood Chiran (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2021 passed in the Vidhan Sabha session.

Celebrate Diwali by sharing happiness in the lives of others: Governor



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that Deepawali is such a festival which has great importance from both spiritual and practical point of view. It is a festival of sharing happiness. Celebrate it by spreading the light of happiness in the lives of others.

Governor was addressing the Diwali welcome ceremony at Sandipani Auditorium of Raj Bhavan today.

Patel said that festivals have special significance in Indian culture. Festivals and celebrations are organised according to the seasons

in the country. Festivals give an opportunity to celebrate happiness with family in today's busy life. It is also an opportunity to pass on our traditions and cultural heritage to the future generations. He said that it is the responsibility of the parents to inculcate the values in the children. That is why it is necessary that their speech and behaviour should impart good values to the children.

Patel appreciated the cultural performances of the children of Raj Bhavan. Referring to the beautiful rangolis made by the children and their themes, he said that the messages of cleanliness, water, environment preservation and Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao are very deep and important in the rangolis. He said that the amount of water in the land is limited, if it is not conserved, then the future generations will face the threat to life. Therefore, it is very important that water is not misused in our daily activities. Patel inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp. The Principal Secretary to the Governor welcomed him on behalf of the employees by presenting a bunch of flowers. Patel extended Diwali greetings to the employees of Raj Bhavan. Attractive cultural performances were given in the programme by children and artists of

CM reviews preparations for Tribal Conference

- Prime Minister's participation in conference proposed
- CM takes stock of newly constructed Habibganj railway station.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's participation in the Tribal Conference to be held in Bhopal on November 15 on Birsa Munda Jayanti is proposed. As per the instructions of Chief Minister Chouhan, this day will be celebrated as Tribal Pride Day. Chouhan reviewed the ongoing preparations for the Tribal Conference to be organized at Jamboree Maidan on the proposed arrival of PM Modi in Bhopal. Chouhan also witnessed the preparations for the newly constructed Habibganj Railway Station. It may be noted that the inauguration of the



newly constructed Habibganj railway station by PM Modi is also proposed.

Chouhan directed that the Tribal Conference to be held at Jamboree ground should be centered on tribal culture. The traditions, culture, life values of all the tribes residing in the state should be displayed in an elegant manner. Along with this, an

exhibition focusing on tribal heroes should also be organized. Chief Minister was apprised that the products of tribal self-help groups would be displayed at the venue of the meeting and dances would also be presented including dance forms of all the tribes of the state. Chouhan directed that special care should be

taken of people coming to the conference from other places so that they do not face any problem during transportation. Chouhan inspected the command and control room at the newly constructed Habibganj railway station, metro connectivity for the passengers alighting at the railway station, rest rooms and public facilities being provided at the station. Chouhan directed that the features of the newly constructed Habibganj Railway Station should be presented in front of Modi through a short film. DRM Saurabh Bandopadhyay informed Chouhan about the arrangements. On this occasion Medical Education Minister Vishwas Sarang, Principal Secretary Culture and Public Relations Shekhar Shukla, Principal Secretary Tribal Affairs Pallavi Jain Govil, Commissioner Bhopal Division Gulshan Bamra, Commissioner Public Relations Sudam Khade, Collector Bhopal Avinash Lavania and Police officers were present.

CM CHOUHAN PLANTS KADAMBA SAPLING



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a Kadamba sapling in Smart City Park today. Famous playback singer Mohit Chauhan was also present on this occasion. It is noteworthy that Chouhan plants saplings every day in fulfillment of his resolve. Chief Minister Chouhan said that planting saplings with Mohit Chauhan is a moment of happiness. Chouhan said that environment is the most discussed and an issue of maximum concern among G-20 countries, everyone's worry is about saving the Earth. Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set some goals. It is also a matter of pride that India is taking the lead in this matter. Chouhan said that the most effective means of environmental protection is planting saplings. That's why I plant a sapling every day. Chouhan appealed to every citizen to plant saplings on happy occasions like birthdays of children, wedding anniversaries or in memory of relatives. Chief Minister also appealed to the people of the state to save electricity. Chouhan said that electricity is made from coal, due to which the environment deteriorates a lot. While wasting power, there is a thinking that how does it affect us it is the electricity of the government. Chouhan said that we have to develop this thinking that this is our electricity. If electricity is wasted, it burns our own money. To save the environment and to stop wastage of electricity, we should work to save electricity. Chief Minister said that self-reliant Madhya Pradesh will be made only if we follow the civic duties. On this occasion, playback singer Mohit Chauhan said that the example of Chief Minister Chouhan's initiative to plant saplings every day is not found anywhere in the country and abroad. This unique work is a strong example of individual effort for environmental protection for all of us.

There should be no delay in allotment of land to industries: CM

- Chief Minister Chouhan reviews Start Your Business in 30 Days
- The scheme includes 45 services of 9 departments

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that whatever process has been decided regarding starting the industry in 30 days, its implementation should be ensured in time-limit. There should not be any delay in the process of land allotment to industries. Cases should not remain pending at the Municipality, Nagar Panchayat level. Only those tasks which can be done in 30 days should be included in Start Your Business in 30 Days. Chouhan also



directed to conduct third party assessment of the activities of the departments. Chief Minister was reviewing the decisions taken regarding the facility of starting industries in the state in

30 days under self-reliant Madhya Pradesh at the Mantralaya. MSME Minister Omprakash Saklecha, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Principal Secretary Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Sanjay Shukla and other officers were present in the meeting.

In the programme "Start Your Business in 30 Days" 45 services of 9 departments have been identified. These include four of the Energy Department, nine of the Labour Department, four of the Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department (Controller of Weights and Measures), one of the Commercial Tax Department, one of the Revenue Department and 14 services of the Department of Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion. In addition, one of the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, five of the Urban Development and Housing Department and 6 services of the Environment Department i.e. Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board have been included.

Boom of Swadeshi products of MP in Delhi

- Madhya Pradesh Kala Utsav begins in countrys capital Delhi on the theme of Atma-nirbhar MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The products made by the weavers and artisans of the state will be easily available in Delhi, the capital of the country. To make Madhya Pradesh self-reliant, the Madhya Pradesh Art Utsav started on November 1 on the 66th foundation day of the state at Madhya Pradesh Bhavan, Chanakyaपुरी, Delhi. Madhya Pradesh Khadi and Village Industries Board Managing Director Anubha Srivastava inaugurated the festival by



lighting a lamp. In the art festival organised from November 1 to November 11, the residents of Delhi will be able to buy indigenous products made from clay of Madhya Pradesh. This is a special gift on the occasion of Deepawali festival, where we work to appreciate the soil of our village, home, their struggle and become a participant in the happiness of Deepotsav. The festival is being

organised under the aegis of Madhya Pradesh Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation, Madhya Pradesh Khadi and Village Industries Board and Madhya Pradesh Matikala Board. Handlooms, khadi, clay and other household items from Mrignayani, Kabira and Vindhya Valley are also available in the festival.

A golden opportunity is available to buy Khadi textiles and village industries material under the theme of "Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh" in the festival. These include Khadi garments like shirts, kurtas, jackets, pyjamas, silk sarees, suits and blankets, shawls, carpets and bed sheets available in attractive designs. There is also a quality variety of spices, papad, shampoo, soap, oil, honey, mat and other household products.

500 rural youth beneficiaries will be given training

Innovative initiative to connect communities dependent on forests with self-employment

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An innovative initiative has been taken by the Forest Department to connect rural youth beneficiaries with self-employment in selected landscapes in "Green India" in the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence for the skill upgradation and economic development of the communities dependent on the forests in the state. 14 training workshops will be organised in different areas of the state. So far, training has been started in four forest divisions Hoshangabad, West Betul, Dakshin Sagar and Sehore under the mission. 500 rural youth will be

trained by giving training in various linked courses light motor vehicle driving, two-wheeler mechanic, sewing training, computer operator, assistant electrician, motor winding, un-armed security guard, solar panel installation and repair animal health worker etc in training workshops in National Skill Qualification Frame Work (NSQF). Vocational training, affiliated to various National Skill Development Corporations, is being provided by the provider in coordination with the MP State Skill Development and Employment Generation Board (MPPSDEGB).



EDITOR'S SPECS

Glasgow: A ray of hope!

Following a series of reports and studies warning that urgent action is needed to keep the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global average temperature increases to 1.5C within reach, the Un Climate Change Conference (COP26) opened with the key aims of raising ambition on all fronts and finalising the agreement's implementation guidelines. Greater ambition is required to achieve progress on all elements of the climate change agenda, including reducing emissions, moving adaptation to the centre of the agenda, addressing loss and damage from extreme climatic events and increasing the provision of support to developing countries. A central issue is the provision of support to developing countries, especially in relation to the goal of mobilising \$100 billion annually by 2020. Financial support is crucial for all elements of the climate change regime, including mitigation, but also in terms of adaptation, capacity-building, technology transfer and several other elements. Many parties, especially developing countries, feel that in order to advance towards full implementation of the Paris Agreement, previous commitments should first be honoured. Finalising the Paris Agreement's implementation guidelines will enable the full implementation of all provisions, which will unleash more ambitious climate actions by all its parties. Specifically, the outstanding guidelines relate to the details around the global goal on adaptation, how to report climate action and support transparently, and the use of market-based mechanisms and non-market approaches. Having been postponed by a year owing to the Covid-19 pandemic and having to address items from COP25 held in 2019, COP26 has a huge agenda beyond the key aims. The World Leaders Summit provides all heads of state or government with the opportunity to set the stage for COP26.

LONG TERM STRATEGIC INTEREST DEMANDS US TO REVISIT

Maj Gen S.B. Asthana

When former US President Donald Trump signed the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) in August 2017, a US Federal Law to impose sanctions on Iran, North Korea and Russia, he believed the legislation was "seriously flawed", notwithstanding the overwhelming majority with which it was passed by the House (419-3). At that time American's anger over Russia on Ukraine issue and allegations of meddling in US elections was such that no-one realised that it could create foreign policy dilemmas later. Recently two key Senators have urged President Joe Biden to waive possible sanctions against India for purchase of Russian S-400 to conserve important strategic partnership in the interest of national security of US.

What Problems CAATSA poses on US Foreign Policy Choices?

Under the Trump administration, then-Defence Secretary Jim Mattis and then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had argued "We believe that the application of CAATSA sanctions could have a deleterious effect on a strategic partnership with India, while at the same time, not achieve the intended purpose of deterring Russian arms sales. Washington needs to be realistic that sticking to CAATSA in interdependent world is counterproductive and diversion from main focus of countering main threat from China. One of the aim of CAATSA was economic strangulation of targeted countries mainly Russia. The sanctions have pushed the targeted countries closer to China, to an extent that Russia has reluctantly become a junior partner to China due to financial compulsion to mitigate sanctions from the west. Russia is going ahead with China despite the fact that Chinese Belt and Road Initiative is side-lining Russian dream of Eurasia and many other friction points amongst the two.

It is worth considering for United States that in its long term interest, weakening Sino-Russian nexus may be a necessity and CAATSA is doing just the opposite. Russia continues to be the second largest arms supplier in the world. The idea of economic isolation of Russia is also irksome to US allies like Germany and other European countries are highly dependent on Russian gas. EU is keen to trade with China & Russia. In the interdependent world, wherein the US itself is dependent on Chinese supply chain on numerous commodities, expecting others not to do business with targeted countries is unrealistic.

CAATSA is constraining foreign policy of US into dilemmas of waivers to save strategic partnerships, as one such dilemma will soon appear when India starts receiving S-400 systems, risking a dent in its strategic partnership, Indo-Pacific strategy and the newly formed Quad. It also has potential to strain its relationship with some NATO allies like Germany and France wanting to engage with Russia and China. Post CAATSA, China which hardly had any genuine friend earlier, seems to have an anti-US Axis in terms of China-Russia-Pakistan-Iran-



Turkey and Taliban in waiting. Sanctions against China and Turkey for procurement of S-400 haven't shown any worthwhile impact, as the US' supply chain dependency on China, despite minor decoupling is substantial and Turkey continues to be unpunished NATO member.

Indian Compulsions

The threat of CAATSA is hurting its strategic partners like India. Indian military hardware is heavily dependent on Russian technology, maintenance, procurement of hardware and spares. For many decades Russians have been collaborating with India in its indigenous manufacturing programs and were amenable to transfer of technology, which India was finding difficult to procure from US. It includes some major systems like nuclear-powered submarines, warships and nuclear reactors. Lately due to the geo-political, strategic and economic considerations, India is trying to be self-reliant, as well as diversifying procurement from various countries to include US, France, Israel and few more. In last decade the defence procurement from Russia has gradually reduced from over 65 per cent approximately to nearly 53 per cent and correspondingly it has increased in favour of the US, Israel and France. There is a noticeable upward trend in purchase of US military hardware, as the year 2020 alone saw a purchase \$3.4 billion worth of US military equipment, indicating enough accommodation by India. In a buyers' market US has competitors to include Russia, Israel and France, and every country will make sovereign choice to pick the best deal including India. The US undoubtedly is an important global strategic partner of India in the current geo-strategic equation with congruence of interests in most global issues. India continues to do its best to respond to sensitivities and concerns of the US, at times risking some of its old relationships like Iran. To accommodate US interest India reduced import of oil from Iran facing a cost disadvantage, as Iran oil was being imported in Rupee terms, in crude form and attuned to existing refineries in India. India also suffered by almost losing out stakes in Chahbahar Port to China, which was too willing to embrace

Iran with \$400 billion deal. India doesn't seem to be repeating the same mistake with Russians, who haven't done anything bilaterally which demands a divorce in mutual relationship.

The Case of S-400 Air Defence Equipment

India signed a \$5.4 billion deal with Russia in 2018 to buy the S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile system and made a down payment and plans to complete the purchase by 2025. S-400 was chosen because it was most suitable to Indian requirement at that point of time. It's a done deal and India is unlikely to pull back, irrespective of the pressure from the US. During recent Indo-US Summit, S-400 was not even on the agenda, as India has nothing to discuss, having locked the deal three years back. The US apprehension in context of use of Russian systems in close integration with US systems and the associated chances of operation information / technology leaks are unfounded, because India is already operating the equipment of West and Russia simultaneously, without such complaint. Additional checks, balances and interoperability issues can easily be worked out as both countries have already signed basic foundational agreements. At this point its impossible for India to run into risk of halting Russian procurement and supply chain of spares for existing inventory. The technological leakage argument is more valid for Pakistan and Afghanistan, which have been armed with enough modern hardware by the US, some of which is readily available to China for reverse engineering.

US Needs to Revisit CAATSA

US needs to come out of superpower syndrome of leaving no strategic choice with strategic partners, but to defy, to pursue its own interest through laws like CAATSA. The US could not moderate behaviour of any country under sanctions through CAATSA proving the point of Tillerson and Mattis of not achieving the intended purpose. If CAATSA can be a cause of cracks in Quad, diversion of focus from the US' main adversary, then its better to revisit it, because some global challenges have become so enormous that they require chorus of all democracies and response of America alone may not be adequate. US will do well by not pushing Russia further closer to China but it should strategically work for opposite outcome, which is possible because an expansionist, aggressive unconstrained China is a threat to Russia too. The advice of John Cornyn, R-Texas, and Mark Warner, D-Va to President Joe Biden to call for a waiver on national security grounds makes lot of sense in strategic cost benefit analysis.

(Maj Gen S.B. Asthana is a veteran infantry general and strategic analyst. The views expressed are personal and of the author, who retains the copyright. He can be reached at shashiasthana29@gmail.com and @asthana_shashi on Twitter)

international

S KOREAN MINISTER, WHO CHIEF AGREE TO COOPERATE FOR N.KOREA HUMANITARIAN France, UK to hold talks on fishing row on Thursday

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea's Unification Minister Lee In-young held a series of meetings with heads of international organisations in Geneva this week to discuss North Korea issues, his office said on Tuesday, amid brisk talks between Seoul and Washington on providing humanitarian assistance to Pyongyang.

Lee met World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Monday and agreed to strengthen cooperation on North Korea's public health issues, according to the Unification Ministry.

"(The two sides) exchanged opinions on North Korea's COVID-19 situation and ways to cooperate in its public health and medical sectors," the Ministry said in a statement.

The meeting took place after the minister accompanied President Moon Jae-in on his latest Vatican visit, reports Yonhap News Agency.

On the same day, Lee also met the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



(IFRC) Secretary General Jagan Chapagain and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Vice President Gilles Carbonnier

and agreed to continue close communications to push for the reunions of families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War and on

other humanitarian issues involving North Korea.

Lee was set to wrap up his Europe visit and return home Wednesday.

The series of meetings came as senior officials from South Korea and the US gathered in Washington on Monday to discuss ways to restart dialogue with North Korea.

Seoul's Foreign Ministry said the two sides had working-level talks to implement various trust-building measures to bring Pyongyang back to the negotiating table.

The Ministry did not provide further details, but Seoul and Washington are known to be at the last stage of coordinating humanitarian assistance to North Korea, such as quarantine supplies.

The North has remained unresponsive to US overtures for talks after their Hanoi summit in February 2019 collapsed without a deal.

On Tuesday, the Korea NGO Council for Cooperation with North Korea sent a letter to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, calling for coronavirus vaccine assistance to North Korea.

Paris | Agencies

France and the UK will hold an in-depth meeting here on Thursday to discuss their dispute over post-Brexit fishing rights, the French newspaper Le Figaro reported on Tuesday.

French presidential office Elysee announced on Monday evening that no retaliatory sanctions against the UK will come into force before Thursday when renewed talks will be held in Paris, Xinhua news agency quoted the newspaper as saying.

The UK's Brexit Minister David Frost was quoted by the newspaper as saying that he accepted the meeting proposal made by French Secretary of State for European Affairs Clement Beaufort. "I look forward to having discussions with him in Paris on Thursday," he said on his social media account. Speaking to journalists in Glasgow on Monday,



French President Emmanuel Macron said that discussions concerning the dispute over fishing will continue between France, the UK and the European Commission.

He ruled out the application of retaliatory sanctions, because "it is not while we are negotiating that we will impose sanctions".

Macron added that he trusted UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson would take France's proposal seriously and the discussions would

lead to a result. Last week, the French Ministry of the Sea announced that from Tuesday, British fishing vessels will be banned from docking in six designated ports in Hauts-de-France, Normandy and Brittany.

France will also strengthen sanitary, customs and safety controls of British ships.

Furthermore, France will enhance control over all lorries from and to the UK.

AUSTRALIAN CENTRAL BANK SIGNALS EARLY ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Canberra: The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) announced on Tuesday that it would remove its 2024 target to increase interest rates, signalling an early economic recovery. "The decision to discontinue the yield target reflects the improvement in the economy and the earlier-than-expected progress towards the inflation target," said RBA Governor Philip Lowe. The bank has cut interest rates to "rock-bottom levels" and engaged in quantitative easing to help Australia's economy weather the economic impact of the pandemic, reports Xinhua news agency.

However, last week inflation rates in Australia rose to an almost seven-year-high of 5 per cent, which has meant higher prices on particular goods. Lowe chalked the increase to higher petrol prices and disruptions in global supply chains. A further, but only gradual, pick-up in underlying inflation is expected," he said. Lowe hinted that, as wage growth picks up, interest rates could be raised as early as late 2023. He said the central bank's board would be "patient" while waiting for the gradual increase of wages growth.

In regards to Australia's soaring property prices, which have surged over 20 per cent nationally in the last year, Lowe emphasised the importance of banks ensuring homebuyers were granted serviceable loans.



Rebel forces kill over 100 residents in Ethiopian state

Addis Ababa | Agencies

The Ethiopian federal government has claimed that more than 100 residents were killed by rebel forces in a key town in Amhara regional state.

"The terrorist group, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), has summarily executed more than 100 youth residents of Kombolcha in areas it has infiltrated," the Ethiopian Government Communications Service said, as it called on the international community not to turn a blind eye to such atrocities. In a statement, government spokesperson Legesse Tulu said that the atrocities perpetrated by forces loyal to the TPLF over the night particularly targeted youth in Kombolcha.

Kombolcha is a key industrial town in the Amhara



region, bordering the conflict-hit Tigray.

The Ethiopian House of People's Representatives, the lower house of Parliament, had previously designated the TPLF as a terrorist organisation. The government had previously expressed its concern over lack of response from the international community in condemning the perpetuated atrocities of the TPLF. Since November 4,

2020, the Ethiopian government has been undertaking military operations against the TPLF. The government had previously assigned an interim administration in Tigray after the ouster of the TPLF, which used to rule the region. However, the government in late June announced a unilateral ceasefire in the country's conflict-affected northernmost Tigray regional state. Forces loyal to the TPLF

soon took control of much of the area in the region, including the regional capital.

The conflict has since then expanded to the Amhara and Afar regions, neighbouring Tigray. Amid intensifying conflict over northern parts of the East African country, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed had on Sunday called on all able Ethiopians to participate in the ongoing fighting against the rebel group.

LIBYA'S PRESIDENCY COUNCIL CALLS FOR NATIONAL CONSENSUS ON ELECTION LAWS

Tripoli: Abdullah Hussein Al-Lafi, Vice President of the Libyan Presidency Council, has stressed the importance to reach a consensus on election laws between different parties of the country.

During a press conference in the capital Tripoli, Al-Lafi voiced his support for the general elections next month and talked of an initiative he proposed recently to "address the political deadlock" as the elections approach, reports Xinhua news agency. He has presented the initiative to bring together the House of Representatives (Parliament) and the High Council of State (HCS) to reach consensus on laws concerning the presidential and parliamentary elections, over which both sides disagree. A consensus between the political parties is the "best way to ensure the success of the elections", he said. "There must be sufficient guarantees for the success of the elections process. Here we are talking about the important elections laws, meaning a stable environment for the success of the elections," Al-Lafi said.

"After they (the elections) end, the results must be accepted (by all the Libyan parties)," he added. Libya is scheduled to hold general elections on December 24, as part of a roadmap adopted by the UN-sponsored Libyan Political Dialogue Forum in order to achieve stability in the country. Last month, the HCS rejected the parliament election law approved by Parliament, criticizing the approval as a violation of the existing political agreement between the two sides.



EX-MAHA HOME MINISTER ANIL DESHMUKH GETS 4 DAYS' ED CUSTODY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A holiday Special Court on Tuesday remanded former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh to the custody of Enforcement Directorate till November 6 in a money-laundering case, 16 hours after he was arrested at 1.00 a.m. on Tuesday morning. Special Judge PB Jadhav rejected the plea by ED's counsel, Additional Solicitor-General Anil Singh seeking 14 days' custody, which the defence lawyers, Senior Advocate Vikram Chaudhri and advocate Aniket Nikam strongly protested.



Chaudhri said that before the Supreme Court and Bombay High Court, the ED had said that Deshmukh was only a suspect and not an accused in the case and termed the arrest 'illegal'.

That was the reason Deshmukh voluntarily went to the ED office on November 1 and after 13 hours of questioning he was placed under arrest, he said.

The defence sought to know what fresh evidence the ED had gathered in the past four days since Friday (Oct 29) leading to the arrest especially since he had always cooperat-

ed with the agency whenever summoned.

The Bombay High Court on Friday declined Deshmukh's plea to quash the ED summons against him, and he said that his matter was still pending before the Supreme Court. Following an application by Deshmukh, the Special Judge Jadhav allowed home-food and medicines, and presence of a lawyer during the ED interrogation, given his advanced age of 72 and several

health issues like a dislocated arm and heart problems, besides being a Covid-recovered patient, said Nikam.

The ED filed its case based on the CBI's FIR against Deshmukh after former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh had alleged that the minister had tasked sacked cop Sachin Vaze and others to collect Rs 100 crore from Mumbai hoteliers every month. In a video-statement prior to

appearing before the ED, Deshmukh had demanded to know "where is Singh who had levelled the false allegations" and now disappeared, amid reports he may have sneaked out of India.

Following Singh's letter in March, the ED and CBI had carried out multiple raids on Deshmukh and family, and the ED sought his 14 days custody citing 'non-cooperation'.

Deshmukh refuted the ED charges saying that whenever he was summoned, he had replied to them, provided documents, etc and said that he would appear after the outcome of his various court appeals.

"On account of a witch-hunt campaign launched at the instance of certain vested inimical interests, some blatantly false allegations have been levelled by those persons who have absolutely no credibility, honour or pride," said Deshmukh.

He added that "these unscrupulous persons are themselves kneedeep involved in several rackets of extortion and even murder. The principal person who held the high office of Mumbai CoP is now a wanted absconding criminal."

Malik digs out chats of drug peddler-Wankhede's sister, lavish hotel parties

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Taking forward the battle with Narcotics Control Bureau's Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede, Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on Tuesday shared purported WhatsApp chats between a drug peddler and the officer's sister, Yasmeen Wankhede.

Malik also questioned the lavish parties with crores of rupees thrown at a five-star hotel with each table costing Rs 15 lakh during the tenure of Chief Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader Devendra Fadnavis.

"Screenshot of the WhatsApp chat between Yasmeen Dawood Wankhede (sister of NCB officer Sameer Dawood Wankhede) and a drug peddler," Malik's tweets said this afternoon, continuing his snoop on the NCB sleuth.

Wankhede countered this by claiming that a drug peddler had approached his sister who is a lawyer but she declined as she didn't handle narcotics cases. He claimed that the peddler, Salman even tried to trap him and his family and lodged a fake police complaint earlier this year, but nothing came out of it.

Malik also slammed Wankhede for his lavish lifestyle of wearing expensive watches worth Rs 25 lakh or above, shoes, shirts worth Rs 70,000, or T-shirts of Rs 30,000 and asked how the officer claiming to be honest and upright could afford such extravagance.

He accused Wankhede of running "a private army" comprising people like Kiran Gosavi, Manish Bhanushali (both having BJP links), Fletcher Patel, Adil Usmani, Sam



D'Souza, through which he extorted crores of rupees by framing people in fake cases.

He said last year Wankhede had summoned top stars like Deepika Padukone, Shradha Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and others for questioning after which there was no development for 14 months.

"If there's no case or charge sheet, then close it... Cases are deliberately kept open for extortion purposes," Malik alleged.

Responding to Malik's charges, Yasmeen Wankhede pointed out that their mother's wealth was bequeathed to her brother since he was a teenager and dismissed the allegations of an extravagant lifestyle suggested by the NCP minister. Malik questioned the BJP's Fadnavis on the details of the lavish parties thrown at a luxury hotel where drug deals were cracked and asked why he did not probe them when he was the CM. Haling Fadnavis to prove his charges that he had links with the mafia, the NCP leader said: "I have spent 62 years of my life in Mumbai. No 'Mai ka Lal' has the guts to point fingers and say that I have any underworld connections. I dare them to prove it. Why wait till Diwali is over?"

Rs1,000 Crore-Worth Assets Allegedly Linked To Maharashtra Minister Seized

Raids Linked To Ajit Pawar: Five properties, including Nirmal Tower at Nariman Point in Mumbai, have been seized, sources said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Assets worth over Rs 1,000 crore allegedly linked to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and his family members have been seized by the Income Tax Department.

Five properties, including Nirmal Tower at Mumbai's iconic Nariman Point, have been seized, sources said. A sugar factory and a resort have also been seized.

Ajit Pawar and (his) family are the "beneficiaries of the above Benami properties,"

sources in the Income Tax Department said, adding the Anti-Benami Act has been invoked as they referred to the allegations that the properties were bought illegally.

Last month, tax searches were conducted at the houses and firms owned by Pawar's sisters.

Responding to the searches and raids, Pawar had insisted that "all the entities" linked to him have regularly paid taxes. "We pay taxes every year. Since I am the Finance Minister, I am aware of the fiscal discipline. All entities linked to me have paid taxes," the 62-year-old NCP leader had told reporters last month.

Alleging misuse of probe agencies, he had commented: "I am upset because (premises of) my sisters, who got married 35 to 40 years ago, have been raided. If they

were raided as Ajit Pawar's relatives, then people must think about it...the way the agencies are being (mis)used," he said.

Former Union Minister Sharad Pawar had also hit out at the BJP over the searches linked to his nephew, calling it a "misuse of power." Referring to the tax officials, the 80-year-old NCP chief last month said: "We are not afraid of such guests. You can recall how I was sent a notice by the Enforcement Directorate before the state elections (in 2019)... even though I had never taken a loan from the bank and I had nothing to do with it. They gave me a notice and Maharashtra taught them a lesson." "The same thing is happening with Ajit Pawar and others now. People are witnessing the misuse of power," he added.

Shiv Sena bags first LS seat outside Maharashtra

Giant leap towards Delhi via Dadra & Nagar Haveli: Raut

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena has won from Dadra and Nagar Haveli Lok Sabha seat and this is the party's first Lok Sabha seat outside Maharashtra.

Uddhav Thackeray's party has fielded Kalaben Delkar, the wife of former independent MP late Mohan Delkar, from Dadra and Nagar Haveli Lok Sabha seat.

The counting of votes commenced at 8.30 am in the Karad area of Silvassa city in Dadra and Nagar Haveli, which is part of the Union Territory of the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

Reacting to this, Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut called it the first step outside Maharashtra and a giant leap towards Delhi via Dadra Nagar Haveli.

Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi in a tweet said that nearly 60 per cent polled votes of Dadra & Nagar Haveli have gone to the party. The first step outside Maharashtra



registered with a massive win, a giant leap for a changing political scenario, said the Rajya Sabha MP. "Congratulations to Smt. Kalaben

Mohan Delkar. Keep the @ShivSena flag flying high. People of Dadra & Nagar Haveli have ensured justice is served. Jai Bhawani, Jai Shivaji," she

said in a tweet. Kalaben had joined Shiv Sena along with her son Abhinav and hundreds of supporters last month after her husband committed suicide in February this year. Mohan Delkar had represented the BJP before contesting the 2019 elections as an Independent and winning the seat, indicating his massive popularity among the masses there. Mohan Delkar, the seven-time MP from the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, arrived in Mumbai by road in February and his body was found hanging in the hotel room by his driver. His son Abhinav Delkar alleged that constant harassment meted out to his father and his supporters from the local administration forced him to take his own life.

The by-poll to the Dadra Nagar Haveli Lok Sabha constituency (reserved for ST) saw an enthusiastic response with a 75.91 per cent turnout on Saturday.

Sameer Wankhede quizzed by NCB vigilance team for over four hours

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Narcotics Control Bureau's (NCB) Mumbai Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede on Monday recorded his statement before the vigilance team for the second time and was quizzed for over four hours, sources in the bureau said.

This was his second appearance before the NCB vigilance team.

On October 27, he faced the vigilance probe team for over five hours in connection with alleged corruption charges levelled against him in the cruise drug case in which film star Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan was arrested on October 2.

Sources in NCB also said that the vigilance team is yet to get in touch with Prabhakar Sail, who alleged that an extortion bid of Rs 25 crore was made by some agency officials, including Wankhede, to set free Aryan Khan.

The sources also said that if needed, Wankhede can be called in for questioning again.

Taking strong note of the corruption charges levelled against Wankhede, the NCB had set up a



five-member probe team under Deputy Director General, Northern Region, Gyaneshwar Singh which visited the NCB zonal office in Mumbai on October 27 and took the statement of Wankhede.

The 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 statement.

The sources also said that the vigilance team will also look into the close proximity of independent witness Kiran Gosavi with Aryan Khan too. 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.

A vigilance team was asked to probe Wankhede after Sail's allegation that he was made to sign blank papers at the NCB office in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, amid the allegations of forged caste documents, Wankhede on Monday presented his caste certificates before the National Commission for Scheduled Caste Commission here in Delhi. He arrived from Mumbai this morning and presented his caste certificate and other related documents before the Commission and made a statement before the Commission too. Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on October 25, had accused Wankhede of using forged documents to get a government job and demanded action should be taken against him.

MVA slams Anil Deshmukh arrest

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Nearly 12 hours after arresting Nationalist Congress Party leader and former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Tuesday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) produced him before a Special Court even as the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi slammed the agency, while the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) warned of "more" action.

Deshmukh, 72, who had been incommunicado for nearly two months, 'voluntarily' appeared along with his lawyer, before the ED offices on Monday morning, and after a 13-hour grilling, was placed under arrest at around 1 a.m. on Tuesday, shocking state political circles. The MVA allies Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress have castigated the ED and termed it as a "politically motivated move" aimed to destabilise the three-party government.

They also questioned the Centre on the whereabouts of the 'missing' former Mumbai Commissioner of Police Param Bir Singh who hurled the allegations against Deshmukh in a letter to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in March.

"The arrest does not fit within the legal framework, Deshmukh is already fighting a legal battle the outcome of which is awaited. The arrest is unfortunate," said the Sena's Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut.

"This action is clearly with political intentions to malign the MVA government Central agencies like ED, IT, NCB, CBI are misused to target the government and a repeat of West Bengal is being attempted here. But we are not scared," said NCP National Spokesperson and Minister Nawab Malik. He questioned if even Singh, like many others in the past, was given a "safe passage", whether he

took the air route, or sea route or the land route to Nepal from Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh or Bihar as all the three states are BJP-ruled.

Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant termed it as "a travesty of justice as the complainant who levelled the allegations without giving any evidence is himself absconding or allowed to flee the country".

"The Preliminary Enquiry of the CBI gave a clean chit to Deshmukh. His real crime was as home minister, he took certain steps which the BJP government at the Centre led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not like, including the Mohan Delkar suicide case or the Arnab Goswami matter," Sawant said. However, the BJP leaders have welcomed the action against Deshmukh and warned that the next target would be Sena Minister Anil Parab, with many more to follow soon.

Pune, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Solapur on Yellow Watch Maharashtra to Witness Scattered Rains and Thunderstorms This Week

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Parts of Maharashtra may be in for some unseasonal rainfall activity, as wet conditions have been forecast across the state this week.

According to The Weather Channel's met team, the cyclonic circulation located in the Arabian Sea is expected to become more notable by mid-week. It will develop as it moves northwards during the second half of the week, creating wet conditions across India's western coast.

Moreover, the easterly winds may also increase on the east side of the cyclonic circulation, resulting in increased winds across Maharashtra during the second half of the week. Under the influence of these meteorological factors, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted scattered rainfall with isolated thunderstorms and lightning over Maharashtra's south Konkan and south Madhya Maharashtra subdivisions from Tuesday to Friday, November 2-5; and over Marathwada from Wednesday to Friday, November 3-5.

Isolated heavy showers may also lash Konkan & Goa on Thursday and Friday, November 4-5. In view of these pre-



dictions, the IMD has issued a yellow watch ('be aware' of the local weather situation) over the aforementioned subdivisions for the entirety of this week.

Within these subdivisions, the IMD's regional met centre in Mumbai has issued a yellow watch over the districts of Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Kolhapur, Satara, Sangli and Solapur from Tuesday to Friday; and across Pune, Nander, Latur and Osmanabad from Wednesday to Friday. As for Mumbai, the state capital will be partly to mostly cloudy until Friday, but may experience scattered thunderstorms from Saturday to next Monday, November 6-8, as per The Weather Channel's 10-day forecast. The likelihood of weekend precipitation over the City of Dreams will hover between 39-48%.

Meanwhile, during the past 24 hours, some parts of Coastal Maharashtra witnessed isolated thunderstorms, according to the IMD observations. As for the October rainfall, the state collectively recorded 82.7 mm precipitation between October 1-31-about 16% higher than its average for the month (71.1 mm).

This wetter-than-normal October had arrived at the back of a wetter-than-average monsoon season, during which Maharashtra had registered 1194.3 mm rainfall-19% higher than the seasonal average (1004.2 mm) for the period between June 1 and September 30.

Wankhede wore Rs 70,000 shirt: Malik

Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik claimed the officer wore a trouser worth a lakh, a shirt costing over Rs 70,000 and watches worth Rs 25-50 lakh

an honest and an upright officer.

The NCP spokesperson also hit out at former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, rubbing the claim that he has links with the underworld. "If that was the case, why was no probe initiated against me when you [Fadnavis] were the CM," he added. Malik questioned Fadnavis for not acting against him despite being the Chief Minister of the State for five years. After Malik sought to link Fadnavis and his banker-singer wife Amruta with an alleged drug peddler, the BJP leader on Monday said he would expose his underworld links after Diwali.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Intensifying his attack on Sameer Wankhede, Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on November 2 accused Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Zonal Director of extorting crores and using uber expensive clothes beyond the reach of



Paris Hilton channels her inner 'sexy Cinderella'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Socialite-entrepreneur Paris Hilton gave a spin of 'sexy' to the Disney princess Cinderella for Halloween. Paris shared a string of pictures on social media dressed up as the princess but with a twist. Instead of wearing a floor sweeping ice blue gown, she chose a thigh length ensemble paired with gloves and a tiara. Another spin added to the attire was that all her friends were dressed up as actors of the globally popular Korean show 'Squid Game.'

"#SexyCinderella plays #SquidGames #Halloween," she wrote as the caption.

Paris and her beau Carter Reum are all set to get married.

The two got engaged in February this year after confirming their romance back in April 2020, and enjoyed a lavish joint bachelor and bachelorette party in Las Vegas earlier this month.

Her wedding registry totals a staggering \$60,000, as she and Reum have added items including a \$1,000 crystal caviar server with a spoon, and a \$4,885 Baccarat vase.



Chris Pratt to voice 'Garfield' in upcoming animated film

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Chris Pratt has been set to voice the famous feline Garfield in a new animated feature film.

Alcon Entertainment is producing the movie, with Sony Pictures on board to release Garfield's latest adventure in theatres globally (excluding China). A release date will be announced at another time, reports variety.com.

Though plot details haven't been confirmed, the movie draws inspiration from the long-running comic strip created by cartoonist Jim Davis.

The exploits of the cynical and lazy orange cat Garfield, his owner Jim Arbuckle and fellow pet Odie have appeared in more than 2,580 newspapers and journals since the comic strip first debuted in June 1978.

Garfield currently holds the record for being the most widely syndicated comic strip in the world.

The still-untitled project will be written by David Reynolds and directed by Mark Dindal.

The upcoming film is hardly Garfield's first bout with Hollywood.

Bill Murray voiced the eponymous cat in 2004's 'Garfield: The Movie' and its 2006 sequel 'Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties'.

Garfield has also been the subject of several direct-to-video films, including 'Garfield Gets Real', 'Garfield's Fun Fest' and 'Garfield's Pet Force'.

Pratt is no stranger to voice work, having recently led Disney and Pixar's animated adventure 'Onward' and the Warner Bros. toy-based 'Lego Movie' franchise.

Idris Elba quits beer to stay slim

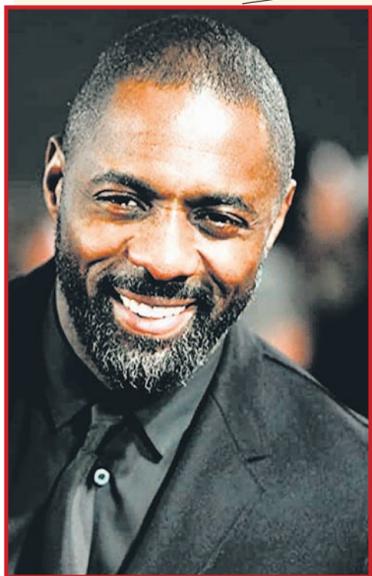
Los Angeles | Agencies

British star Idris Elba has changed his drinking habits as he's got older because beer is "not so kind on the belly" anymore. He said: "Back in the day I was very into beer drinking but as I've got older it's not so kind on the belly. Having visited awesome places in Japan and from speaking to people who know more than me, I've got very into whisky, particularly Japanese whisky. "If it's the start of a night and we are looking to party and I'm not particularly tired, I'll kick off with vodka and move on to tequila and tonic. I like to keep it pretty simple."

The 'Mountain Between Us' actor has opened his own bar, Porte Noire in London's King's Cross, and used his "warm relationship" with other drinking venues as a source of inspiration, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

He told Big Hospitality: "I've been going to bars all my life and I have a very warm relationship with them - probably more so than I'm allowed to admit. I've lived in many, many places and I've met lots of good people as well as advanced my careers in bars."

"I've worked in them, drunk in them and they're a place I feel comfortable in. I wanted to create something that feels luxe and special, but also relatable, warm, and welcoming."



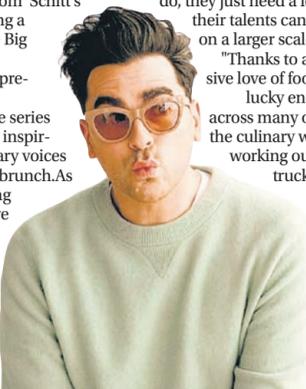
DAN LEVY TO HOST COOKING COMPETITION 'THE BIG BRUNCH'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Dan Levy, who shot to fame playing David Rose in the sitcom 'Schitt's Creek', will be seen hosting a cooking competition titled 'The Big Brunch'.

It has been targeted for 2022 premiere, reports variety.com.

Levy created and will host the series that centres around celebrating inspiring but still undiscovered culinary voices from all across the US, but also brunch. As the title promises, the competing chefs will have to find innovative and personal ways to redefine what it means to dine between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. The series will spotlight the chefs' stories and business dreams while also giving them a chance to compete for a "life-altering prize".



Levy said in a statement: "Everybody has a friend, a family member, or a co-worker that is extraordinary at what they do, they just need a leg up so that their talents can be appreciated on a larger scale."

"Thanks to an almost obsessive love of food, I've been lucky enough to come across many of those people in the culinary world, friends working out of cafes or food trucks, revolutionising the menus at local diners, those special humans who create communities around their cooking, hoping to take their skills to the next level."



HANNAH WADDINGHAM, TONY HALE JOIN 'HOCUS POCUS 2' CAST

Los Angeles | Agencies

Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy are returning for the long-awaited sequel to the 1993 fantasy film and Disney+ celebrated Halloween by revealing a host of names who will be joining them in the movie.

The streaming service tweeted: "The black flame candle is alight to the Sanderson sisters' delight. Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker, & Kathy Najimy shall soon return. Joined by new faces which you soon will learn. See more of the spellbinding cast in the next tweet. Enjoy this #Hallowstream treat."

Their next tweet revealed the 'Ted Lasso' actress Hannah Waddingham and 'Arrested Development' star Tony Hale are on board for the project, as well as Whitney Peak, Lilia Buckingham, Belissa Escobedo, Sam Richardson - who was reported to have signed up last month - Juju Brener, Froy Gutierrez, Taylor Henderson and Nina Kitchen.

They also confirmed original 'Hocus Pocus' actor Doug Jones will be involved in the sequel, reports femalefirst.co.uk. The original movie told the story of three witches being resurrected in Salem, Massachusetts, and the upcoming sequel will reportedly see three young women bring the Sanderson sisters back to life. The original film was initially viewed as a box-office flop, but has since become a cult classic. And in recent years, fans have urged the cast to reunite for a sequel. Bette Midler admitted earlier this year that she was really excited to star in the 'Hocus Pocus' sequel. However, the Hollywood star, who turns 76 on December 1, also quipped about the challenge of shooting the film at her age.

Adele's '30' tracklist promises an emotional ride

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Adele has released the tracklist for her upcoming album '30', and fans are in for an emotional ride. The tracklist was shared by Target's exclusive deluxe CD listing, reports variety.com. After first announcing the record, Adele posted a message to her website which described her state of mind while penning the new material. "When I was writing it, it was my friend who came over with a bottle of wine and a takeaway to cheer me up," she wrote.

"My wise friend who always gives the best advice. Not to forget the one who's wild and says 'It's your Saturn return babes, f*** it, you only live once'. The friend who'd stay up all night and just hold my hand while I'd sob relentlessly not knowing why. The get up and go friend who would pick me up and take me somewhere I said I didn't want to go but just wanted to get me out the house for some vitamin D."

"That friend who snuck in and left a magazine with a face mask and some bath salts to make me feel loved while inadvertently reminding me not only what month it actually was but that I should probably exercise some self-care," she added. "And then that friend who no matter what, checked in on me even though I'd stopped checking in with them because I'd become so consumed by my own grief. I've painstakingly rebuilt my house and my heart since then and this album narrates it."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kim Kardashian



T20 World Cup

STRUGGLING INDIA AIM TO BOUNCE BACK, FACE CONFIDENT AFGHANISTAN

After losing two consecutive matches, Indian cricket team will look to register their first win and bring their struggling campaign back on track when they face a confident Afghanistan in a super 12 clash of the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium, here on Wednesday.

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

The Virat Kohli-led India have suffered crushing defeats against Pakistan and New Zealand in their last two matches while Afghanistan won their two games against Scotland and Namibia but they lost to Pakistan.

In their last against Kiwis, India shuffled the batting order as Ishan Kishan, who replaced the injured Suryakumar Yadav, opened the batting alongside KL Rahul. However, the move to push Ishan at the top and demote regular opener Rohit Sharma at No 3 didn't produce great results for India.

Many former cricketers and experts have criticised the team management for demoting Rohit and it remains to be seen whether the star opener will bat at his regular position in the upcoming match or not.

Team can also look towards the inclusion of ace off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin in the team in place of Varun Chakravarthy, who has failed to deliver under pressure.

On the other hand, Afghanistan has played impressive attacking cricket so far in the tournament and they are high on confidence. The likes of Mohammed Nabi and Rashid Khan will look to use their all T20 experience to challenge an under-confident Indian side.



After losing two consecutive games, India's fate is not in their own hands and another defeat will con-

firm their early exit from the T20 World Cup. They will have to win their remaining matches by big mar-

gins to ensure their net run rate can be improved and they stand a chance at qualifying.

Squads

India: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma (vc), KL Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Mohammed Shami, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Rahul Chahar, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravichandran Ashwin

Afghanistan: Mohammed Nabi (captain), Hazratullah Zazai, Ahmed Shahzad, Gulbadin Naib, Naveen ul Haq, Rashid Khan, Hamid Hasan, Rahmatullah Gurbaz, Najibullah Zadran, Karim Janat, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Fareed Ahmed, Usman Ghani.

Team India divided into two groups: Shoab Akhtar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Pakistan speedster Shoab Akhtar expressed his shock over Team India's poor performance in the ongoing T20 World Cup and said that there appears to be "divisions" within the side.

Akhtar's remarks came after Virat Kohli and his brigade lost their second Group 2 match against New Zealand on Sunday by eight wickets. Speaking in a video on his YouTube channel, Akhtar said that there may be two camps within the Indian team, one of which may be against the Indian skipper. "Why I can see that there are two camps within the team? One is with the Kohli and one against Kohli. It's crystal clear. The team is looking divided. I don't know why this is happening. Maybe it's because of his last T20 World Cup as a skipper.



Maybe he made wrong decisions, which is true. But he's a great cricketer, and we have to respect him," Akhtar said.

The former pacer further slammed Team India for their attitude against Kiwis.

"Yes, criticism is important because they played bad cricket against New Zealand and had the wrong attitude. Yesterday, after they lost the toss, everyone's heads were down. "They had no idea whatsoever. India, you only lost the toss by that time, not the whole match. They were just present there, and had no gameplan whatsoever." Akhtar said off.

T20 World Cup: Pakistan outclass Namibia by 45 runs, reach semis

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

Superb fifties by openers Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan and another clinical performance by their bowlers helped Pakistan outclass Namibia by 45 runs in a Group 2 match in the Super 12 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup here on Tuesday.

Babar (70) and Rizwan (79 not out) started slowly but exploded into action later in the innings as they raised another hundred-run partnership to help Pakistan post a challenging 189/2 in 20 overs.

Defending the total, Pakistan's bowlers did not give Namibia batsmen many chances and restricted them to 144/5 in their 20 overs for a comprehensive victory. This was Pakistan's



fourth victory in four matches, which clinched them a spot in the semi-finals. Namibia lost their

second match in three and remained fourth in the table with two points.

Brief scores

Pakistan 189/2 in 20 overs (Babar 70, Rizwan 79 not out, Mohammed Hafeez 32 not out; David Wiese 1/30) beat Namibia 144/5 in 20 overs (Craig Williams 40, David Wiese 43 not out; Hasan Ali 1-22, Imad Wasim 1/13) by 45 runs.

NOW, BIKINI IS NOT COMPULSORY FOR FEMALE BEACH HANDBALL PLAYERS

Basel (Switzerland): The International Handball Federation has updated its rules so that women will no longer be required to play in bikini bottoms, responding to months of pressure from female players and coaches who described the uniform requirements as sexist.

According to the new rules, which were published Oct. 3 and will go into effect on Jan. 1, "Female athletes must wear short tight pants with a close fit." The previous rules for beach handball required women to wear bikini bottoms "with a close fit and cut on an upward angle toward the top of the leg." The sides of the bikini bottoms could not be more than four inches.

The I.H.F., the sport's governing body, did not provide a reason for the change. In July, Norway's women's handball team was fined 1,500 euros (about \$1,740) for competing in a championship game in shorts instead of bikini bottoms, a penalty that drew widespread criticism. Even the singer Pink weighed in, saying that she was proud of the team for protesting the rules and offering to pay the fine.

South Africa thrash Bangladesh by six wickets



Abu Dhabi | Agencies

A sensational bowling performance by Anrich Nortje (3/8) and Kagiso Rabada (3/20) followed by vital knocks of Temba Bavuma (31) and Rassie van der Dussen (22) led South Africa to a 6-wicket win over Bangladesh in a Super 12 match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium, here on Tuesday.

With this win, South Africa consolidated their place in the top two from Group 1 of the tournament. They now have six points and will face England in their last Super 12 game to confirm their place in the semifinal.

South Africa bowlers made the most of conditions that aided pace and bounce

and bowled Bangladesh out for just 84/10 in 18.2 overs. Apart from Nortje and Rabada, Tabraiz Shamsi (2/21) also picked two crucial wickets for South Africa while Mehedi Hasan (27) was the highest scorer for Bangladesh.

Chasing a small target, South Africa too didn't get a good start as they lost three wickets inside the Powerplay.

At 33/3 in the Powerplay, South Africa were under more pressure but bound-

aries kept coming with relative frequency and the asking rate was never an issue.

Bavuma and Rassie van der Dussen batted sensibly and added a 47-run partnership for the fourth wicket to knock off the remaining runs. Dussen, however, fell trying to wrap up the innings early for a net-run-rate boost, before David Miller (5) hit the winning boundary. With this loss, Bangladesh, who still have no points, are mathematically ruled out of progressing to the next

Brief scores

Bangladesh: 84 all out in 18.2 overs (Mehedi Hasan 27; Anrich Nortje 3/8, Kagiso Rabada 3/20) lost to South Africa: 86/4 in 13.3 overs (Temba Bavuma 31, Rassie van der Dussen 22; Taskin Ahmed 2/18, Adil Rashid 2/19) by 26 runs

Men's World Boxing Championships

Akash secures first medal for India



Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's Akash Kumar (54kg) stunned Rio Olympic silver medalist Yoel Finol of Venezuela 5-0 in the quarter-finals to secure at least a bronze medal for the nation at the Men's world Boxing Championships in Belgrade, Serbia on Tuesday.

Akash will now face Makhmud Sabyrkhan of Kazakhstan in the semi-final on Thursday. Earlier, Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) drew on his vast experience and demonstrated his wide range of skills to reach the quarter-finals.

Singh Bronze (Milan, 2009), Vikas Krishan Bronze (Baku, 2011), Shiva Thapa Bronze (Doha 2015), Gaurav Bidhuri Bronze (Hamburg, 2017), Amit Panghal Silver and Manish Kaushik Bronze (Yekaterinburg, 2019).

Akash will now face Makhmud Sabyrkhan of Kazakhstan in the semi-final on Thursday. Earlier, Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) drew on his vast experience and demonstrated his wide range of skills to reach the quarter-finals.

BIG JOLT FOR BARCA AS SERGIO AGUERO OUT FOR THREE MONTHS



Madrid: FC Barcelona have confirmed that striker Sergio Aguero will be out of action for at least three months as they try to determine the cause of the irregular heartbeat which saw him forced out of the 1-1 draw at home to Alaves on October 30. Aguero suffered a dizzy spell during the game and had to lie on the pitch holding his chest as medical staff gave him treatment before leaving the pitch. The striker was taken to hospital, where he spent two nights. "The first team player Sergio Aguero has been subjected to a diagnostic and therapeutic process by Dr. Josep Brugada. He is unavailable for selection and during the next three months the effectiveness of treatment will be evaluated in order to determine his recovery process," reported the FC Barcelona website on Monday evening.

National Sports Awards

Neeraj Chopra, 11 others get Khel Ratna

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Tokyo Olympic gold medalist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, silver medal-winning wrestler Ravi Kumar Dahiya, boxer Lovlina Borgohain, and Paralympic Games medallists Avani Lekhara, Pramod Bhagat, Krishna Nagar, Sumit Antil, and Manish Narwal were among a dozen awarded the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award by the government on Tuesday.

Hockey team captain Manpreet Singh and goalkeeper PR Sreejesh along with cricketer Mithali Raj and national football team skipper Sunil Chhetri were the others named for the Khel Ratna award.

Besides the 12 Khel Ratna award winners, the jumbo list of national sports awards winners includes 39 athletes including history-making fencer Bhavani Devi, woman hockey player Vandana Kataria, 16 male hockey players who were part of the team that won a historic bronze medal after a gap of four decades at the Tokyo Olympics, and Paralympic medallist Bhavani Patel - were given the Arjuna Award. The Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award is the highest sports honour awarded by the government and is given for outstanding performances in the field of sports while the Arjuna



Award is to recognise consistent performances and qualities like leadership and discipline. Both awards consider performances over a period of four years and include a trophy, a citation, and a cash award.

Normally, the awards are given on August 29 on the occasion of the National Sports Day but this year were deferred because of the Tokyo Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games.

In the normal course, the performance at Tokyo would have been considered for this year if the Olympics were held in 2020 and not get postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

With the country's sports persons coming up with their best performance ever at both the Olympics and Paralympics, the Sports Ministry tried to accommodate as many medallists as possible, thus the jumbo list.

Yuvraj Singh hints at return to pitch in February

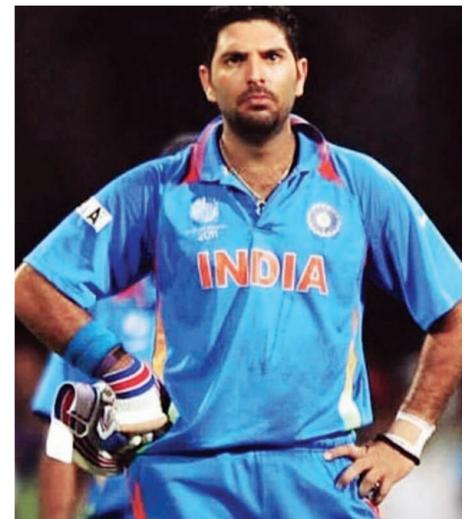
Team Absolute | New Delhi

Legendary cricketer Yuvraj Singh has left the cricket world stunned with the announcement of his comeback 'on the pitch' in February next year.

Yuvraj took to Instagram on Monday night to reveal he will be returning to the pitch on public demand, which left fans speculating whether the two-time World Cup winner is resuming his professional career two years after announcing retirement.

The 39-year-old shared a clip of his final century in India colours when he blasted 150 against England in Cuttack and wrote, "God decides your destiny!! On public demand I'll be back on the pitch hopefully in February! Ain't nothing like this feeling! Thank you for your love and wishes, mean a lot to me! Keep supporting India, it's our team and a true fan will show his or her support in tough times."

While it remains unclear whether Yuvraj will be returning to play for India or in T20 leagues, the fans will be still excited that they get to



see the star batsman one more time on the cricket pitch.

The left-handed batsman was regarded as one of the top exponents in white-ball cricket. He competed in T20 leagues across the world after getting permission from the Indian cricket board.

He had announced his retirement from all forms of cricket in 2019 after playing 40 Tests, 304 ODIs and 58 T20Is. He played a key role in India's triumph at the 2007 T20 World Cup and the 2011 ODI World Cup, where he was also awarded the 'Man of the Tournament' award.



'BIGG BOSS 15'

Karan, Tejaswi, Vishal keen on nominating Miesha

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Bigg Boss 15' housemates Tejaswi Prakash, Karan Kundrra, Vishal Kotian and Jay Bhanushali are secure in the eviction round. Now the contestants have to select housemates who should be

nominated for eviction.

Karan, Tejaswi and Vishal have made up their minds to target Miesha. While Tejaswi feels she is hardly involved in the show, Vishal believes that she can switch on anyone at any moment. Karan has least faith in her. But Jay has a different way of thinking. He keeps defending her.

Now there is a fight between Tejaswi, Jay, Karan and Vishal. As Jay is not keen on nominating Miesha, all three continue to argue with him.

In addition to this a serious fight took place between Umar and Simba. Everyone tried to calm them down but things turned out to be worse. 'Bigg Boss 15' airs on Colors.



ANUPRIA GOENKA TO HAVE A WORKING DIWALI THIS YEAR

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Anupria Goenka has been on an upward curve with her OTT releases. The actress, who has featured in web shows like 'Sacred Games', 'Asur', 'Ashram' and 'Criminal Justice' has several projects in the pipeline and she is quite busy with her shooting schedule in order to accommodate the timelines of all her projects.

Owing to her work commitments, she will have a working Diwali this year.

Anupria, who is currently in Dehradun for the shoot of her untitled project, said, "I am really looking forward to working on this project. It is one of the most exciting scripts that I have come across. It is the first time in my life that I will be spending Diwali away from my family, and it is a daunting task. I will miss them terribly, and so will they."

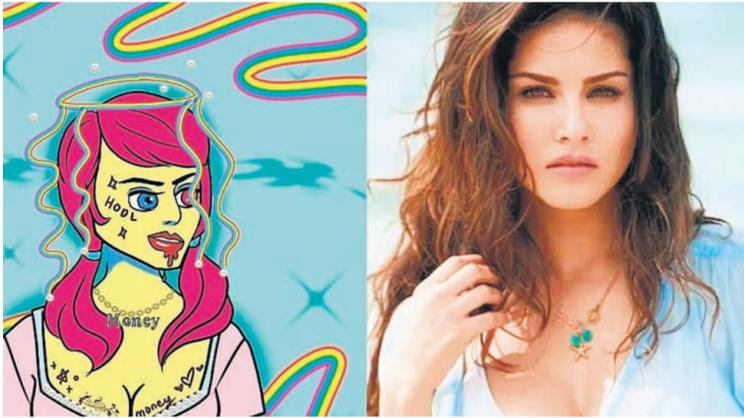
"But having said that, I am excited to celebrate the festival with my team. We have spent a lot of time together while we were

preparing for the film. It will be a special occasion because I will have a

chance of doing what I love the

most on Diwali," she added.

While the production remains tightlipped about the details around the project, the news about Anupria being a part of the project has already caught fans' attention. In addition, the actress also has the new season of 'Asur' in her kitty.



Sunny Leone becomes the first Indian actress to mint NFT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Sunny Leone ventured into the NFT (non-fungible token) space after she made an announcement to enter the marketplace following in the footsteps of megastars Amitabh Bachchan and Rajinikanth.

And now, racing ahead, Sunny has gone on to mint her NFTs. Minting is a process through which digital art becomes a part of the Ethereum blockchain - a public ledger that is unchangeable and tamper-proof.

International celebrities such as Ellen DeGeneres, Paris Hilton, and Lindsay Lohan have previously ventured into NFT as crypto currency has become a global rage and Sunny's minting has surely taken the Indian crypto enthusiasts by storm. The actress announced her first collectible on Twitter as she tweeted, "MEET the MISFIT! This is misfitz HONEY! She loves the color pink...boys with tattoos...and then eats them for lunch. What the world has been waiting for!!! #SUNNYLEONENFT collectibles. Check them all out on <http://Sunnyleonenft.com> (sic)."

The actress took the lead among Indian actors to secure their digital assets when she broke the news about her association with NFT, two months back. This made her the first Indian actress to roll out her own NFTs.

Talking about the collectible, an excited Sunny says, "This was a private sale and it sold out immediately. I am beyond excited about the hype behind my collection and the support from the community. In many ways, I am myself a misfit so there wasn't anything that's more appropriate than this collection."



Song for 'Liger'

Ananya Panday and Vijay Devrakonda wrapped song shoot for Liger and here's what the actor is upto next

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Ananya Panday has had a year full of set hopping. Be it films shoots, brand commitments or any other work Ananya has had a super busy year and she recently got done with yet another commitment of her upcoming Pan-India film, Liger. Source close to the project shared, "Ananya Panday along with Vijay Devrakonda finished a song shoot for Liger recently. The song will be of huge Grandeur. After wrapping the shoot schedule for Liger. There will multiple dance rehearsals which the actors in order to put the best foot forward for the song choreography."

The source further shares, "Ananya after Diwali will be dubbing for Shakun's Batra's untitled film. A couple of months ago, the lead cast had wrapped the shoot for the film and now dubbing along with patch work is left which the actor will get into immediately after celebrating the festivities of Diwali."

With her film Liger, Ananya Panday is set to be India's youngest Pan-India star. Alongwith that the actress will also make her regional debut with the film. She will also pair up with actor Vijay Deverakonda for the first time, make it a long list of firsts for the young actress.

Ananya Panday is set to be part of some really interesting projects. Her strong lineup includes Kho Gaye Hum Kahan, Shakun Batra's untitled next and Pan-India film Liger.

Rajinikanth's 'Annaatthe' to release in over 1,100 theatres worldwide

Chennai | Agencies

Megastar Rajinikanth's 'Annaatthe', which has triggered huge expectations among fans and the public, will have as big a release abroad as it has in India.

The film, which is scheduled to hit screens for Deepavali, will release in over 1,100 overseas theatres.

Sun Pictures, which has produced the film, claimed that this was the biggest overseas release for a Tamil film.

The production house, in a tweet, said 'Annaatthe' would be screened in as many as 677 theatres in the United States alone.

In the UAE, which has a considerable number of Indians, the film will release in 117 screens.

In Malaysia, the film would be screened in 110 theatres, while in neighbouring Singapore, it would be screened in 23 theatres. The film will be screened in 86 screens in the island nation of Sri Lanka.

The family entertainer, which has been direct-



ed by Siva, will release in 17 theatres in Canada and 35 theatres in the United Kingdom. It will release in 43 theatres in Europe and in 85 theatres in Australia and New Zealand.

With just a day to go for the film's release, the excitement seems to be rising by the minute.

The film, which, apart from Rajinikanth, also features Nayanthara, Khushbu, Meena, Keerthy Suresh and Jagapathi Babu among others, has music by Imman and cinematography by Vetri.



VISHAL DADLANI, SHANKAR MAHADEVAN SING PRAISES OF 'SA RE GA MA PA' CONTESTANT

Team Absolute | Mumbai

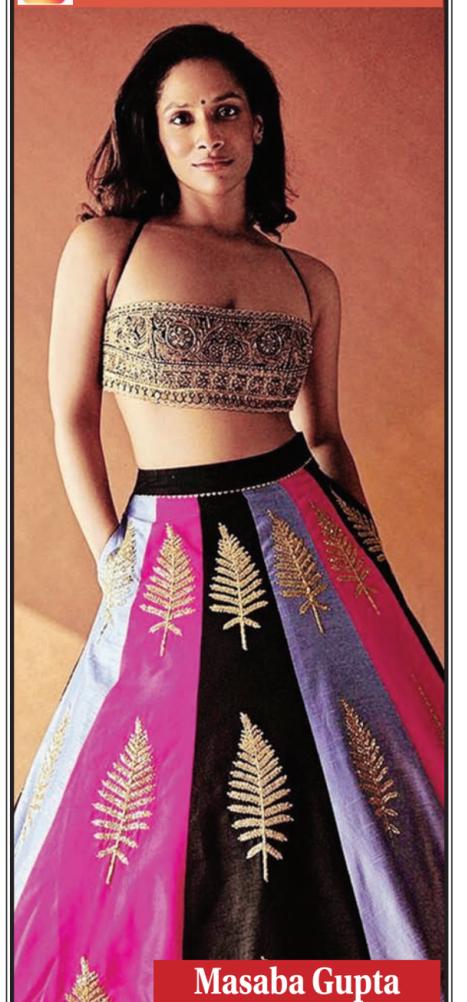
Music composers

Vishal Dadlani and Shankar Mahadevan are all praise for contestant Raju Sardar Nadaf in 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa'. He sang a Marathi track 'Haravali Pakhare' that was composed by Vishal and Shekhar. Next to this he sang another track 'Malhari' in which

Vishal also shared the stage with him. 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' is judged by Shankar Mahadevan, Vishal Dadlani and Himesh Reshammiya. It is hosted by Aditya Narayan. After his performance, Vishal recalls the moments behind his first Marathi film and the song that was sung by Raju: "This song (Haravali Pakhare) is from Vishal and Shekhar's first Marathi film, 'Balak Palak'. Shekhar had sung this song and in fact, Zee had awarded Shekhar as the best playback singer for lending his voice to this beautiful piece. I am very thankful to Raju for singing this song on a national platform." Adding further, Vishal said: "There's something about the soil of Maharashtra, it gives out selflessly to whoever steps in. I think your voice carries the essence of it, and that's magical. I came on stage to sing alongside you (for Malhari) but when I heard the sargam and lekhari in your performance, I was thinking that I wish I had done something similar with the original song. You really rocked it brother."

Shankar Mahadevan also went on to admire Raju for his voice and the way he sung this song.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Masaba Gupta