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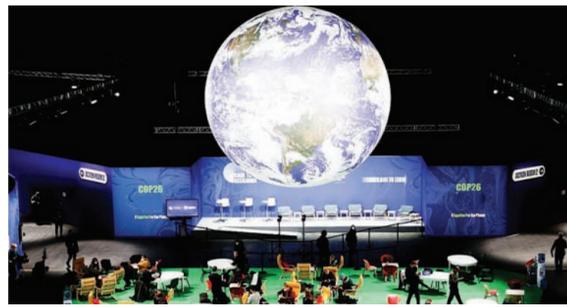
COP26: CLIMATE TALKS SEE BOLD COMMITMENTS, PROTESTS AS FIRST WEEK WRAPS UP

► The most important highlights from the first week at COP26 were global methane pledge, global forest pledge, carbon pricing, etc.

► Climate negotiators told correspondent on Sunday the commitments and initiatives seen in the first week of COP26, if fully delivered, would amount to 40 per cent of the emissions cuts needed by 2030 to keep 1.5C alive.

► The International Energy Agency (IEA) believes the commitments made in the first week could put world on track for 1.8C warming, which means they were short-term actions and credible policies still lacking.

► According to the UN, there was no clear indication of where talks will lead or how ambitious countries will be in tackling the climate emergency.



Presidency. Throughout the hectic week the weather was an odd combination of dark clouds, pouring rain and blue skies that switched over short periods of time, and ended up with a few rainbows -- an appropriate greeting from Mother Nature, marking its own special day at COP26.

Indigenous leaders, as nature keepers, raised their voices inside and outside the COP26 venue, while delegations made a few new commitments to invest in nature-based solutions and greener farming practices.

COP26, with a gathering of around 200 governments, is being held in

degrees Celsius, there is a strong call for countries to update nation climate plans more regularly, even annually. Many countries are pushing for eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and phasing out coal-fired power plants.

Negotiations are proceeding on boosting measures for climate adaptation and resilience as well as "loss and damage" compensation for those harmed by climate change. Also under negotiation are contentious provisions on finance, trade and transparency. In the past week, the COP26 Presidency announced that 45 governments, led by the UK, will ramp up efforts to protect nature and shift to more sustainable farming. Over \$4 billion in new public sector investment was pledged for agricultural innovation, including climate-resilient crops and regenerative solutions to improve soil health. This would help make such techniques affordable for hundreds of millions of farmers. Canada announced C\$1 billion in international support for nature-based solutions, a fifth of its climate finance. It supports an international target to protect 30 per cent of lands and oceans by 2030, and earlier announced it would back a fund for coral reefs.

Work as bridge of faith for common man: PM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday asked BJP workers to reach out to the people and work as a "bridge of faith" for the common man.

At his address at the concluding session of day-long BJP national executive meet at NDMC Convention Centre here, he also highlighted that today the place that the BJP is at is due to the fact that it has always been connected with the common man since its starting days, and has moved ahead with hard work and dedication of workers, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav said.

"Prime Minister said that BJP workers have to become a bridge of faith for the common man. BJP is not a family-based party.

"The Prime Minister also called service to people is the highest form of worship and advised workers to be with the people and stay in touch with common man," he added. Sources said that Modi advised BJP leaders to focus on the issues the party has raised for the people during and before and after elections and to continue doing so. "We must continue to address the issues concerning people," he said, as per



the sources.

Referring to "selfless service" of BJP workers during the pandemic, Modi said that a "new culture of service has been demonstrated by the 'karyakartas' during the pandemic under party chief J.P. Nadda".

Before the Prime Minister's address, state presidents of five poll-bound states presented a report about their preparedness, and the Punjab chief said that they were gearing up to contest all 117 seats. Chief Ministers of poll-bound Uttar

VISHAL GULATI | Glasgow

Armed with raincoats, umbrellas and colourful banners, thousands of protesters took over the streets of this Scottish city on the official culmination of the first week of the two-week-long 26th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) under the UK

The youth press for action

Presenting a position paper endorsed by 40,000 people, youth representatives urged world leaders to consider young people's demands in climate talks. The paper calls for ensuring the representation of underrepresented groups, recognizing the role of cities in achieving a just transition, and respecting, protecting, fulfilling and promote all human rights in climate action. World leaders have left Glasgow. Attention at COP26 turned to the specifics of moving the climate action agenda, with a focus on how to finance the transition to a greener future. The issue of finance is all encompassing. There is much concern over the failure of developed countries to meet their promise to provide \$100 billion a year to help developing countries finance climate mitigation and adaptation. At the same time, there is a broader effort to mobilize vast amounts of private investment globally behind low-carbon and eventually no-carbon growth.

108 killed, 92 injured in fuel tanker explosion in Sierra Leone

Freetown: At least 108 people were killed and 92 others injured in a fuel tanker explosion here, Sierra Leone's National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has confirmed. According to a statement by NDMA on Saturday, a loaded fuel tanker and a truck carrying granite stones collided on a highway late Friday while the fuel tanker was about to enter a nearby filling station to discharge its fuel. Footages and eye-witnesses revealed that while the collision took place, both drivers came out of their vehicles and warned community residents to stay off the scene while trying to address a leakage emanating from the collision, said the statement. In the interim, some community members rushed to the scene and took advantage of the leakage to scoop fuel and store it in nearby makeshift structures.

Inmates of UP jail on rampage, hold officials captive

FARRUKHABAD | Agencies

The inmates of the Fatehgarh central jail in Uttar Pradesh's Farrukhabad district have taken control of the correctional facility after rioting on Sunday morning. They are holding several jail officials captive while attempts are being made to pacify them, reports said.

A prisoner was allegedly killed and about 30 policemen injured in a clash at a district jail in Uttar Pradesh's Farrukhabad on Sunday after the death of another man due to dengue.

According to sources, the inmates went on rampage after an undertrial Sandip Kumar died while he was under treatment. The prisoners alleged that Kumar was given delayed and wrong treatment,



which led to his demise.

The prisoners went berserk on Sunday morning as they pelted stones, set a part of the prison on fire and attacked the jail officials. Two deputy jailors Akhilesh Kumar and Shailesh Kumar were held captive. The jail authorities have not commented on the matter so far. The jail security guard and police fired tear gas to

Petrol, diesel price rise on pause after duty cuts

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After big cuts in petrol and diesel prices following the Centre and states reducing taxes, fuel prices have remained unchanged providing further relief to consumers.

Accordingly, petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged for the third consecutive day on Sunday under the daily price revision mechanism followed by oil marketing companies.

So, the pump price of petrol in Delhi, which fell to Rs 103.97 a litre at 6 a.m. on Thursday from previous days level of Rs 110.04 a litre, remains at the same level on Sunday. The diesel prices also remained unchanged in the capital at Rs 86.67 a litre. In the financial capital Mumbai, petrol continues to be priced at Rs 109.98 a



litre and diesel Rs 94.14 a litre. Prices also remained static on Sunday in Kolkata where the price of petrol reduced by Rs 5.82 to Rs 104.67 per litre and that of diesel by Rs 11.77 to Rs 89.79 per litre on the previous day.

Petrol price in Chennai also remains at Rs 101.40 per litre and diesel Rs 91.43 per litre. Across the country as well price of the fuel largely remained unchanged on Sunday barring a few states where VAT reduction would translate into lower prices from Sunday.

AY.4.2 variant not of concern in India at this time, says INSACOG

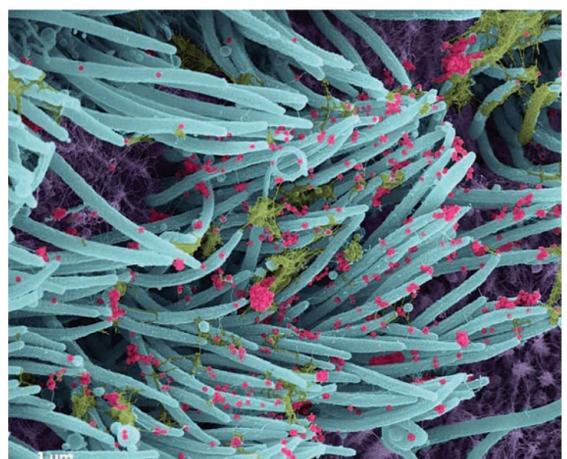
► THERE IS CURRENTLY NO BIOLOGICAL BASIS FOR INCREASED TRANSMISSIBILITY OF AY.4.2, AS JUDGED EPIDEMIOLOGICALLY, AND ASSAYS ARE IN PROGRESS.

► THE VACCINE EFFECTIVENESS DOES NOT SEEM TO BE DIFFERENT FOR AY.4.2 WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER DELTA VARIANTS, IT ADDED.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Covid-19's AY.4.2 variant is less than 0.1 per cent of all variants of concern and variant of interest (VOC/VOI), and thus, too low to be of concern at this time, the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has said.

The INSACOG weekly bulletin



said that with the low frequency of the new AY.4.2 variant, it is not the matter of concern at this time. "There is no change to the global

scenario. Delta, including B.1.617.2 (AY) and AY.x sublineages, continues to be the main VOC globally," it said, adding that they are also the main VOC in India, where no variant has been noted.

The weekly bulletin said that AY.4.2 frequency in Indian data varies based on the definition used (PHE vs PANGO). Other than lineage-based tracking, Delta variants with immune escape mutations are also being tracked by INSACOG, some of which are also being seen by UKHSA, it added.

The total number of samples processed so far is 93,782, while 93,782 samples have been sequenced and 91,729 samples have been analysed by INSACOG.

INSACOG is a consortium of 28 national laboratories to monitor the genomic variations in SARS-CoV-2, the Covid-19 causing virus. The pan-India network functions under the Union Health Ministry.

Air quality continues to be 'severe' in Delhi-NCR

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The pollution level in the national capital region remained in the "severe" category on Sunday with no impact of the strong winds to counter increased share of stubble-burning in neighbouring states.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had said the air quality may improve due to the strong winds.

The contribution of biomass burning in PM2.5 concentration was predicted to be approximately 30 per cent on Sunday as winds were favourable for transportation of pollutants, SAFAR said. The data showed that there was



an increase in crop residue burning fire points in Punjab (3,942), Haryana (219) and eight districts of Uttar Pradesh (208). With continuing daytime winds 8 to 10 kmph from west to northwest over Delhi, visibility further improved to 1,200 to 2,200 metres at the airport, the IMD said adding that wind speed in the evening weakened to calm from light.

In Delhi, the average air quality is likely to improve progressively but remain in "very poor" category, with PM2.5 to be the predominant pollutant. At 7 p.m., the AQI at Anand Vihar was 424, Ashok Vihar at 445, Chandni Chowk at 424, Dwarka at 418, Mandir Marg at 424, IGI Airport at 379, Lodhi Road at 399, and north campus at 438, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). An AQI between zero to 50 is considered "good", 51 to 100 "satisfactory", 101 to 200 "moderate", 201 to 300 "poor", 301 to 400 "very poor", and 401 to 500 "severe".

Policeman killed by militants in Srinagar

Srinagar: A policeman was killed by militants in J&K's Srinagar district on Sunday, police said. Police sources said militants fired at constable Tauseef Ahmad in S.D. Colony of Batmaloo area in Srinagar district. "He was shifted to hospital in a critical condition and doctors declared him dead on arrival," a source said. The area has been cordoned off for searches, sources said.



STANDARD OF GOVT SCHOOLS NOT AT PAR WITH PRIVATE SCHOOLS: SC JUDGE

Agartala | Agencies

Supreme Court judge, Justice Uday Umesh Lalit on Sunday said that the standard of education imparted in government schools is not keeping at par with that at private schools, even though India has best professional educational institutions in the public sector. Expressing his concern at this disparity and stressing on quality of education, he said: "I do not think that the government is not capable of imparting quality education in the government schools."

"Best professional institutions like AIIMS, IIT, NIT, National Law School, Indian Institute of Management and also institutions on architecture are in the public sector in India. All these public sector professional institutions are the frontrunners in the country."

Addressing an interactive programme on children's rights in Agartala, Justice Lalit said that every child must feel that he or she is getting education at par with the education given in the other parts of the



country.

Citing the case of Bihar, after the enactment of the Right to Education Act, the enrolment of girls in elementary and secondary education rose to 50 per cent from the 36 per cent and now boys and girls are neck and neck in education in the state. "Due to the spread of education in Bihar, the marriageable age of girls has risen. The total fertility rate in Bihar was 4.2 per woman and now it is 3.2 against the national average of 2.3 per woman."

"Spread of education is reflected in the girls' lives. No person should be deprived of education. Darkness of education must be eradicated, quality of education must be provided to every child as they are the future of the nation," the Supreme Court judge said.

He said that besides protecting the rights of a child's education, other aspects like health and well-being also must be secured.

"There should not be any child trafficking and no child abuse in

any manner. An atmosphere must be developed so that the girls can raise their issues, build their own potentiality. Create an atmosphere, allow the children to grow to obtain fullest potentiality and do not marry the children at an early age," Justice Lalit emphasised. He said that scholarships, schemes and other benefits must be given to those children who lost their both parents during the Covid-19 pandemic and these benefits must reach to the needy children. "We (the court) would see whether the benefits are reaching to those children are not. The National Legal Services Authority has been doing enormous works for the benefit of the deprived sections," said Justice Lalit, who is an Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority.

Supreme Court judge Justice Hrishikesh Roy, who also spoke, highlighting some instances of Assam and Mizoram where the legal service authorities are doing their best in providing legal and other assistance to the deprived and the needy people.

'Dark future': Cong blames Modi govt for 9.5 lakh suicides

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Sunday blamed the Narendra Modi-led Central government for the death of 9.5 lakh people in 7 years who allegedly committed suicide, saying it came to power with the promise of 'Acche Din' but did nothing to achieve this.

The party cited recent the National Crime Record Bureau report on "Suicides & Accidental Deaths in India", which says 9,58,275 Indians ended their lives by committing suicide between 2014-2020.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala, in a statement, said: "The report, with its figures regarding suicide, underlines the unprecedented tragedy that is ruining India. Hapless citizens, being ground under extreme apathy and insensitivity of the government, are losing the last hope and taking their own lives. Be it 'annadata' (farmers), toiling labourers, daily wagers, housewives or



unemployed educated youth, it is a saga of unending hopelessness all across.

Opportunities for the aspiring have been converted into cesspools of suicidal depression." The Congress also alleged that in an attempt to mask its "anti-people" policies, the government is "nakedly resorting to perpetuating divisiveness, negativity, hopelessness amongst the people". It said that there was an increase of 55 per cent in the number of students committing suicide, 58 per cent

among the unemployed and a whopping 139.37 per cent rise increase amongst farmers, labourers and daily wagers. Overall the number of suicides across categories increased by 16.24 per cent.

Surjewala alleged that farmers being forced into committing suicide and in the past 7 years due to the "crony capitalist friendly and anti-farmer" policies of the Modi government, 78,303 farmers committed suicide of which 35,122 were farm labourers.

From 'Bua-Babua', UP poll narrative shifts to 'Baba-Babua'

LUCKNOW | Agencies

From the famous 'Bua-Babua' narrative that dominated the Uttar Pradesh politics in 2019 when the BSP and SP forged an alliance, the focus is now shifting to 'Baba-Babua' -- Baba being Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Babua remains Samajwadi chief Akhilesh Yadav.

Akhilesh Yadav had referred to Yogi Adityanath as 'Baba' at an event and the Chief Minister retaliated by taking a jibe at the SP chief and saying: "Babua, ye Twitter hi vote bhi de dega (This twitter will give you votes)." The Chief Minister was in Akhilesh Yadav's home district Etawah on Saturday to inaugurate and lay foundations for projects worth about Rs 475 crore.



The projects he inaugurated included the Central jail in Etawah.

Hours before, Akhilesh Yadav, referring to Yogi Adityanath, had said: "Baba Mukhya Mantri should not contest an Assembly seat, he is already on his way out."

In retaliation, Yogi Adityanath said: "I had come here (Etawah) twice during corona. But people of other parties were in home isolation even when you were in a crisis. They should

remain confined to their homes even during polls. They need to be given replies to by people in this manner only. Tell them, 'Babua, ye Twitter hi vote bhi de dega'." He asked BJP supporters to ensure the leaders who sat at home during Covid should be made to remain there' in the elections." They were busy on Twitter. So, tell them, Babua, Twitter will vote for you," the Chief Minister added.

TMC, BJP ROW OVER PETROL-DIESEL PRICES

Kolkata: A

war of words ensued between the ruling Trinamool Congress and the BJP over West Bengal's decision not to slash Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel even after 19 NDA ruled states decided to accept the Centre's proposal to cut the state tax revenue on fuel.

Last week, the Centre announced to decrease excise duty on petrol and diesel lowering the petrol prices by Rs 5 and diesel price by Rs 10. The centre also urged the states to reduce VAT (a revenue enjoyed by the state) on fuel so as to give further relief to the people. In line with the Centre's announcement, 22 NDA ruled states have reduced VAT but 14 states including Punjab, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, West Bengal decided not to slash prices triggering political controversy. According to experts the selling price of oil is dependent on the base price plus excise duty, transportation cost and VAT imposed by the states. Presently the West Bengal government charges VTA of 25 per cent for petrol and 17 per cent for diesel.



BJP leader among 3 held for consuming liquor in Bihar

Patna | Agencies

While the Bihar government is facing criticism over the implementation of liquor prohibition law, three persons, including a BJP district level leader, were arrested for consuming liquor in Jamui.

The arrests were made on Saturday night.

Following the over 50 deaths in four districts after consuming spurious liquor, police of all the districts are on high alert now. "We got a tip-off that three persons were consuming liquor at Gola village under Chakai police station. Accordingly, the raid was conducted by a dedicated team and we arrested three persons



including Bhagwan Pandey, district convener of BJP IT cell Jamui," said R.K. Tiwari, SHO of Chakai police station. "We have taken them into the police station. They were found positive in a breath analysis test. We have recovered a bottle of liquor as well as some packets of chips," he said. "The alleged persons are booked under

the Liquor Prohibition Act. Further investigation is on to find out the source where they obtained the liquor bottle," he said. In the last 10 days, more than 50 persons have died due to poisonous liquor in Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Bettiah and Samastipur while over three dozen people have lost their eyesight permanently.

Man files complaint against wife for celebrating Pak win

Rampur | Agencies

A man has lodged a complaint against his wife and in-laws for allegedly celebrating Pakistan's victory over India in the T20 World Cup match held on October 24.

Ankit Mittal, Superintendent of Police, police said, "An FIR has been registered after a case of making fun of the Indian cricket team came to our notice on the basis of a complaint made by a man."

The complainant Ishan Miya, resident of Azim Nagar of Rampur has alleged that his wife Rabia Shamsi and her family burst crackers and put up WhatsApp status celebrating Pakistan's victory in



the T20 World Cup match.

The FIR has been filed in the Ganj Police Station of Rampur district under Section 153-A of Indian Penal Code and Section 67 of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

"The husband and wife started living separately soon after the marriage. The wife lives with her family and has filed a dowry case against the husband," the police stated.

The SP said that the matter was under investigation.

PUNJAB CUTS PETROL PRICE BY RS 10, DIESEL BY RS 5

Chandigarh: After neighbouring Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, the Punjab government has now announced to slash the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 10 and Rs 5 per litre, respectively, effective from Sunday midnight. Talking to mediapersons here after a Cabinet meeting, Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi said that with this decision, Punjab now has the lowest petrol rate in the region (except in Chandigarh), while diesel price in the state is also much lower than Haryana and Rajasthan. With this decision, the rate of VAT on petrol has been reduced from 27.27 per cent (24.79 per cent plus 10 per cent surcharge) to 15.15 per cent, and on diesel from 17.57 per cent (15.9 per cent plus 10 per cent surcharge) to 10.91 per cent.

Two minor sisters raped in UP village

Mainpuri | Agencies

Two minor Dalit sisters were raped, allegedly by two men belonging to a neighbouring village in Mainpuri district.

One of the accused was arrested on Saturday after the incident took place late on Friday night.

Police said that the rape survivors -- a 17-year-old girl and her 16-year-old cousin, had gone to a field to relieve themselves on Friday night, when the two men, Gaurav Shakya, 21, and Saurabh Shakya, 20, allegedly grabbed them and dragged them inside the field.

The elder one was allegedly raped by Saurabh, and Gaurav allegedly attempted rape with the other younger girl.

While one of the accused managed to flee the spot, after the victims cried for help, the other one was grabbed by local residents and later handed over



to the police. The girls have been sent for medical

examination and efforts are on to arrest the other accused.

BHU researchers claim key finding in Zika virus treatment

Varanasi | Agencies

Researchers at the molecular biology unit of the Institute of Medical Sciences in Banaras Hindu University (IMS-BHU) have reported an important finding on Zika virus pathogenesis, which they claim, will be helpful in understanding the molecular pathogenesis of the virus and in therapeutic development.

The study has been published in an international peer-reviewed journal 'Molecular Neurobiology'.

Prof Sunit K. Singh, head of the Molecular Biology Unit and a well-known molecular virologist, said that most people with Zika virus infection do not develop symptoms.

"The incubation period of ZIKV infection lasts for 2-7 days. In 2015, the major ZIKV outbreak was reported in Brazil, North America, Pacific and South-east Asia, infecting 1.5 million people and with more than 3,500 microcephaly cases reported in infants. In India, 157 ZIKV positive cases were reported in 2018," he explained.

Currently, there are no definite antivirals against ZIKV and only symptomatic treatment regime is followed. Zika virus infection is also a trigger of Guillain-Barre syndrome, neuropathy and myelitis, particularly in adults and older children. The Zika virus vaccine is at various stages of development at present.

Zika virus can be transmitted from mother to foetus during pregnancy, which may lead to microcephaly (smaller than normal head size) and other congenital malformations



in the infant, collectively referred to as congenital Zika syndrome, whereas in adults, the symptoms are mild-fever,

headache, conjunctivitis, joint-pain, and body rash.

Microcephaly leads to abnormal brain development. The outcomes of microcephaly may differ according to the extent of the brain damage.

According to him, the brain is surrounded by a barrier known as blood-brain-barrier (BBB), which separates the brain from the peripheral blood circulation of the body. The BBB is formed by brain endothelial cells and these cells are held together by protein named tight-junction proteins (TJs) and adherent junction proteins (AJs).

If the TJs and AJs proteins expression decreases, the BBB is compromised and allows the movement of immune cells into the brain which causes neuronal damage.

The ZIKV infected cells secrete a viral protein, NS1, which has been directly correlated with the disease severity in patients. His study reported that Zika virus NS1 protein treatment compromises the BBB integrity and this may lead to microcephaly and other brain related disorders in infants.

The research group reported that Zika virus NS1 protein increases the expression of microRNA-101_3p in human brain microvascular endothelial cells, which in turn suppresses the expression of tight-junction proteins and adherent junction proteins and that leads to the compromise in the integrity of BBB. "This finding will be very helpful in understanding the molecular pathogenesis of Zika virus and in the therapeutic development. A diagnosis of Zika virus infection can be done by laboratory tests of blood, urine and semen," said Singh.



PM MODI TO ADDRESS 1ST 'ADIVASI GAURAV DIVAS' ON NOV 15

Team Absolute | Bhopal
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to address a convention on first-ever 'Adivasi Gaurav Divas' (Tribal Pride Day) in Bhopal on November 15, during which he is expected to announce 15 developmental schemes for the tribal community.



Celebrating the birth anniversary of tribal leader Birsa Munda undoubtedly has political meaning, especially in Madhya Pradesh where 47 out of 230 Assembly seats are reserved for the Tribal community, say political analysts.

Preparations are in full swing for the celebration and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has called a meeting on Monday evening to review the arrangements.

With this mega event, the BJP will try to strengthen its reach in the tribal community. Talking to IANS, prominent tribal leader in the state Bisahul Singh said: "Adivasi Gaurav Divas will be celebrated in India for the first time after Independence. Every year on the birthday of Birsa Munda, several programmes were organised, but those were mainly Adivasi Sammelans. We are happy

that it is beginning from Madhya Pradesh." Bisahul, who is Food and Civil Supplies Minister in the Shivraj Singh cabinet, said the state government has made some changes in the forest scheme wherein people of tribal community will be given priority.

"Under the new scheme which is to be announced during the event, the community will be given priority for protection of forest land, selling of woods, among others. Apart from it, all sand mining areas located in tribal majority areas will be given to Adivasi people to run their business," Bisahul added.

He further stated that 47 Assembly seats reserved for ST directly or indirectly affects around 100 more con-

stituencies in the state.

Replying to how 'Adivasi Gaurav Divas' is going to help the BJP in the next Assembly elections in 2023, Bisahul said, "I have been in politics from 1980 and therefore I can say that the party winning maximum ST seats forms the government. In the last elections (2018), Congress had won 31 Tribal dominated seats and the BJP was limited to 15-16 seats, that was the reason Congress could form the government."

Meanwhile, Bisahul, who has been associated with the Congress for years and joined the BJP with Jyotiraditya Scindia, said that tribal people were close supporters of the Congress, but they did not get anything in return in the last 70 years.

MP will achieve the target of complete vaccination in December

BOTH DOSES OF VACCINE ARE NECESSARY FOR COMPLETE PROTECTION FROM COVID: CM

- Students cooperation will be remembered
- Everyone should cooperate keeping in mind the four dates of the mega campaign

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has provided the citizens of the country with the safety shield for protection from Covid through indigenous vaccine. Madhya Pradesh has tried to fulfil the Prime Minister's resolve by being the leader in vaccination in the country. The target is to apply the second dose of the vaccine to all the eligible people of the state by the month of December to protect them from Covid-19. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said in the appeal that all the citizens of the state have to extend their cooperation in this work. Madhya Pradesh will achieve the target of administering both doses of corona vaccine to all citizens by the end of December.

Chouhan has said that in order to achieve 100 percent target of



administering the second dose of vaccine, in addition to 10th, 17th and 24th of November, a vaccination mega campaign will be run on 4th December in the state. Remember all these dates. The matter of vaccination should be included in our meetings-gatherings, conversations etc. This will create a conducive environment for all individuals to get both doses

of the vaccine. Chief Minister said that all sections have to participate in making this mega campaign a success. Chouhan said that it is necessary to get both the doses of the vaccine for complete protection from Covid-19. Chief Minister Chouhan has appealed to the people of the state by tweeting that just as you have shown awareness in getting the first dose, in the

same way, come forward for the second dose and contribute in making the state 100 percent vaccinated and corona free. The awareness of the citizens of the state in the vaccination campaigns so far is commendable and exemplary for other states.

Chouhan has said that due to the special campaigns of corona vaccination conducted this year in Madhya Pradesh, more than 7 crore citizens have got the vaccine. The work of vaccination will be completed only when every person himself inspires his friends, acquaintances and relatives for vaccination along with getting both doses himself. Our student brothers have also come forward for Madhya Pradesh to remain at top in vaccination. They are urging the general public to get both doses of the vaccine by going door-to-door. This cooperation given by the student class will be remembered.

Chouhan has expressed hope that on 10th, 17th and 24th November and 4th December, an atmosphere of enthusiasm will be created in the vaccination campaign like earlier campaigns and we will achieve the set target.

MP launches weekly Covid-19 vaccination drive from Nov 10 in push towards 100% coverage

The second dose of the vaccine would be administered to one crore eligible beneficiaries in the state in order to achieve 100% vaccination coverage by the year end, a top health official said.



Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government would organise a special coronavirus (Covid-19) vaccination drive every Wednesday from November 10, in a step towards achieving 100% coverage of all eligible population by the end of this year. The announcement came as a top health official expressed concerns about the slowing pace of vaccinations in the state.

"In MP, around 5.49 crore people are eligible for Covid-19 vaccination, including 10% who are migrants (moving out of the state). Some 5 crore people have got the first dose and 2.13 crore have

received the second one as well," news agency PTI quoted Madhya Pradesh immunisation officer Santosh Shukla as saying. "So currently, 91.8% have got the first dose and 39% have got the second dose in the state," he added.

Further, the official also wondered if the number of people in the state visiting the vaccination centres has reduced since last month due to the festive season. The special vaccination drive named 'COVID Vaccination Maha Abhiyan' every Wednesday has been planned by the government from November 10 to catch up on the target, he added. Shukla also said that the sec-

ond dose of the vaccine would be administered to one crore eligible beneficiaries in the state in order to achieve 100% vaccination coverage by the year end deadline the state has set for itself.

Meanwhile, three districts have administered the first dose to 100% eligible population. "We have administered 7.13 crore jabs so far. Bhopal, Indore and Agar Malwa districts have completed 100% first dose target," he said.

Also, 26 other districts in the state have covered 90% of their population with the first dose. "Twenty-six other districts (MP has 52 districts) have covered 90 per cent of first dose beneficiaries. Narsingh Gunda, a tribal village in Jhabua district, has been fully vaccinated," he added.

On Saturday, the state saw seven new Covid-19 cases as the total caseload reached 792,901 while the death toll remained unchanged at 10,524 as no new deaths were reported. As of 7am on Sunday, 71,511,470 doses of the vaccine have been administered in the state, the Union health ministry's data showed.

CM PLANTED GULAR SAPLING



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday planted a Gular sapling in Smart Garden at Shyamla Hills, Bhopal. Gular is called Udumbar in Sanskrit. Its fruits are like figs. According to Ayurveda, Gular bark and raw fruits are useful in stopping bleeding, urinary diseases, diabetes and removing the body heat. It also heals old wounds.

Mishra targets Gandhis after Priyanka's Bhai Dooj pic

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra, who has been in news for the last couple of weeks due to his controversial statements, on Sunday trained his guns on the Gandhi family after Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra shared a picture on "Bhai Dooj."

"The Gandhis have never cared about Hindu sentiments or their festivals. It would have been better if they shared a photo showing brother-sister celebrating 'Bhai Dooj'. But Rahul claims to be a 'janeudhari' (wearer of sacred thread) only during the elections," Mishra told media persons here. "No one has ever seen a single photo of the Gandhi family praying to Goddess Lakshmi on Diwali."

Mishra's comments came after Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tweeted an old picture of her with brother and former party chief Rahul Gandhi on the occasion of 'Bhai Dooj.'



A couple of weeks ago, Mishra had attacked Bollywood director Prakash Jha's upcoming web-series 'Ashram 3'. Later, a group of Bajrang Dal activists had vandalised its sets in Bhopal and beaten up its crew members, saying that the web-series is tarnishing the image of Hindus' Ashram system.

Last Sunday, Mishra had threatened fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee to take down a mangalsutra advertisement within 24 hours or to face consequences.

FOUNDATION DAY OF BHARAT SCOUTS AND GUIDES CELEBRATED AT RAJ BHAVAN

Bhopal: The foundation day of Bharat Scouts and Guides was celebrated today at Raj Bhavan by presenting scarf and badge to Governor Mangubhai Patel. Governor Shri Patel also presented an assistance amount to them. State Secretary of Bharat Scouts and Madhya Pradesh Ashok Janwade and other officials were present.



CM CONGRATULATES SHIVANI FOR WINNING SILVER IN INTERNATIONAL WRESTLING

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has congratulated the daughter of Madhya Pradesh Shivani Pawar on winning silver medal in the international women's wrestling championship. Chouhan has said that Sushri Shivani, a resident of village Umreth in Chhindwara district of the state, has won the prestigious competition in 50 kg category in the championship held from November 1 to 7 in the Republic of Serbia. Shivani has made the name of Madhya Pradesh and India proud. In this championship, 30 players from India participated and Shivani was the only player from Madhya Pradesh. The Dangan girl of Madhya Pradesh, who made a respectable place in the Under 23 Championship, is receiving training in Delhi. Prior to this, she had won a gold medal in the National Senior Wrestling event held in Amethi in month of September.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO PHYSICIST VENKATARAMAN



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Chandrashekar Venkataraman on his anniversary. Chouhan paid floral tribute by garlanding his picture in the auditorium at his residence. Indian physicist Chandrashekar Venkataraman was born on November 7, 1888 in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. In 1930, he was awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in Physics for his outstanding work on the scattering of light. This invention is known as the Raman Effect after his name. In 1954, he was honoured with the title of Bharat Ratna by the Government of India. In 1957, he was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize. Chandrashekar Venkataraman discovered the Raman Effect on February 28, 1928, in memory of which this day is celebrated every year in India as 'National Science Day'. He passed away on November 21, 1970 in Bengaluru.

MP govt. to decorate Ujjain city for Maha Shivratri festival next year

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was in Ujjain as a part of the BJP's nationwide celebrations coinciding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Kedarnath visit.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has announced that Ujjain city, which houses the famous Mahakaleshwar temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, will be decorated on the occasion of Maha Shivratri festival next year.

Maha Shivratri will be celebrated on March 1 next year. "Ujjain is an amazing city. The city of



Mahakal will be decorated before next Maha Shivratri and everyone will celebrate the festival with joy," Chouhan said on Friday while honouring Hindu saints and seers in Ujjain, a government statement quoted him as saying.

He was in Ujjain on Friday as a part of the BJP's nationwide celebrations coinciding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Kedarnath visit.

While watching on television the PM

offering prayers at Kedarnath, Chouhan paid obeisance to the deity at the Mahakaleshwar temple.

Later, Chouhan inspected the ongoing development works in and around Mahakaleshwar temple.

Projects worth Rs 730 crore are being implemented at the Mahakaleshwar temple, out of which works worth ₹368 crore are currently underway, Chouhan said, adding, "The officials are directed to complete the ongoing works before the next Maha Shivratri festival."

The Chief Minister said that stories, traditions and beliefs related to Indian culture and Mahakaleshwar would be inscribed in the entire temple complex.

He said that 108 pillars are being built on the path leading from Triveni Museum to Mahakaleshwar temple and stories related to religious traditions and history will be inscribed on each pillar.

Man booked for giving triple talaq to wife over phone for dowry

Team Absolute | Indore

Police have registered a case in Indore against a man and his family members after he allegedly gave triple talaq to his wife over phone for not fulfilling their dowry demand, an official said on Sunday.

The FIR was registered based on the complaint by the man's 32-year-old wife, he said.

"In her complaint filed on Saturday night, the woman alleged that her husband, Aas Mohammed Khan, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Hapur, gave triple talaq to her over phone on September 21," MIG Police Station in-charge Ajay Verma said.

The woman alleged that

her in-laws were demanding Rs 5 lakh dowry and harassed her for that. But as her family members, who reside in Indore, failed to fulfil the demand, her husband gave her triple talaq, he added.

According to Verma, the woman's family had purchased a flat for her husband, where the couple lived together earlier.

Following the woman's complaint, a case was registered against the man under provisions of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, which bans the practice of instant triple talaq, he said. Further investigation is underway and no arrest has been made so far in this connection, he added.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO REVOLUTIONARY BIPIN CHANDRA PAL



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Bipin Chandra Pal on his anniversary. Chouhan paid floral tribute by garlanding his picture in the auditorium at his residence. Bipin Chandra Pal was born on November 7, 1858 in Habibganj district of undivided India, now in Bangladesh. Pal was one of the trio of Lal-Bal-Pal who played a major role in shaping the outline of the Indian independence movement. Pal was also a nationalist leader, teacher, journalist, writer and speaker. He is considered the father of revolutionary ideas in India. Pal was instrumental in creating awareness for boycott of goods produced in Britain, abstaining from clothes made in Manchester mills and strikes in industrial and commercial establishments.

Two tiger cubs spotted in Nauradehi wildlife sanctuary

"A feline named Radha has given birth to two cubs. We have spotted the two new guests in our sanctuary", Divisional Forest Officer Sudhansu Yadav said.

Team Absolute | Sagor

Tigress 'Radha' has given birth to two cubs, taking the number of striped animals in Madhya Pradesh's largest Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary to seven, an official said on Sunday.

Radha in the first litter had given birth to three cubs in 2020.

"A feline named Radha has given birth to two cubs. We have spotted the two new guests in our sanctuary", Divisional Forest Officer Sudhansu Yadav said.

He said Radha from the Kanha



Mahamayi, I have come among you. Datia is the holy land of deities. Indore's poetess Dr. Bhuvan Mohini, while offering worship to Maa Pitambar-Dhumavati Shakti Bhavani, presented her melodic songs on the inauguration of Datia Mahotsav. Poet Pawan Tiwari also presented tuneful bhajans in the festival. Home Minister Mishra presented letters of citation to eminent Kumar Vishwas, poetess Bhuvan Mohini, poet Pawan Tiwari at the launch of Datia Mahotsav.

Tiger Reserve and tiger Kanha from the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve - both tiger habitats (reserves) located in east Madhya Pradesh - were relocated to Nauradehi in 2018.

Nauradehi is the biggest wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh which is spread over an area of 1,197 sq km in Sagor, Damoh and Narsinghpur districts.

Yadav said the sanctuary has plans to build a tiger track in the park for tourists who want to have a glimpse of the majestic beasts.

MP is home to six tiger reserves- Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Satpura, Pench, Panna and Sanjay-Dubri, officials said. MP had the highest number of 56 big cats according to the last tiger census. The All India Tiger Estimation Report 2018 had found the presence of 2,967 striped animals in the country.



EDITOR'S SPECS

BJP depends on Hindutva for UP polls

The BJP is likely to make the construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya and 'Jai Shri Ram' the major issues in the next year's Assembly polls in five states, especially in Uttar Pradesh, where it is strengthening its connect with cadre vote bank and is targeting the main opposition -- Samajwadi Party (SP) and its chief Akhilesh Yadav. A veteran BJP national leader said: "For us, Lord Shri Ram and the construction of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya was never an election agenda, but an issue that once isolated us in Indian politics. It is necessary to tell the public about the achievements related to it." Another Uttar Pradesh minister said: "We must tell people that the Supreme Court's historic decision came during the tenure of PM Narendra Modi and the construction of the Ram temple during the tenure of CM Yogi Adityanath. We also celebrated a record breaking 'Deepotsav' this year. Along with this, it is also necessary to educate people about what happened in 1990 and what can happen if these people come to power again." The BJP's political resolutions reflect its core agenda of promoting Hindutva from the speeches of Prime Minister and Chief Minister. Yogi Adityanath, while speaking at various programmes of Deepotsav, organized in Ayodhya, on November 3, claimed that no one can stop the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and it will be ready for devotees by 2023. Yogi also assured the people that apart from the Ram Temple, other temples of the state and the devotees of Lord Ram and Krishna, will also be taken care of by his government. Realising that SP is the main contender in the Uttar Pradesh polls, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to highlight its achievements at the Centre and state before the public and is sticking to its core agenda of Hindutva to beat its opponents.

Waning immunity of those vaccinated trigger for rising Covid cases in US, Europe

Sanjeev Sharma

The rising Covid numbers in the Northern Hemisphere are due to winter seasonality, waning immunity for those vaccinated, decreased mask use and increased mobility levels.

At the global level, clearly the declines that the world was seeing which began in late August-early September for infections and then by mid-September for cases and deaths have essentially stopped, and we're starting to see at the global level flattening and actual reversals, according to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME).

IHME is an independent global health research centre at the University of Washington.

"Covid is not over as some people seem to think it is, and in fact we expect that we're entering a phase where we will have to pay more attention to Covid, certainly over the Northern Hemisphere winter," it said.

IHME in a forecast on the Covid pandemic said there is increasing evidence in the Northern Hemisphere that the expected winter surge has started to unfold. Reductions in cases, estimated infections, and hospitalisations have essentially stopped in the US, and are starting to turn around.



Many countries in Western Europe are even farther ahead of the US in the sense that numbers are going up quite quickly in places like the Netherlands or Denmark as also in Germany and a number of other countries, IHME said.

The general pattern of rising numbers is due to the three things coming together in the Northern Hemisphere: Winter seasonality, waning immunity for those who got vaccinated

more evidence that vaccine-derived immunity for protection against infection does wane quite considerably by six months - so there are many people who were vaccinated early in the Northern Hemisphere who are now likely susceptible to the disease.

The third factor that's fuelling these winter increases is the fact that people are much less cautious than last winter, as mask use is much lower. Currently, it is below 40 per cent in the

US - slightly higher than that in Europe, but much lower than a year ago.

People's mobility levels are just below the pre-Covid baseline as opposed to 20-30 per cent below the pre-Covid baseline.

"Putting these together, we expect that despite progress on vaccination, we will see a winter surge. The question really comes down to how big will that Northern Hemisphere winter surge be. In our current models, it's a relatively modest surge, nowhere near as large as last year but still enough to put great pressure on hospitals when they have the combination of expected flu cases as well as Covid-19 (but much less than last year)," IHME director Christopher J.L. Murray said.

"Elsewhere in the world, we see increasing transmission, although it's not dramatic in many regions. For the first time we're seeing either flattening trends or slight increases in transmission in a number of countries in South America, although they're heading into summer in the southern parts of South America. Also, we're seeing increasing transmission in some parts of Southeast Asia. Clearly, we think those increases are driven mostly by behavioural relaxation, as people are just not as careful anymore and that is likely the main driver," IHME said.

Consumers expect more duty relief on auto fuels

Subhash Narayan

Consumers expect further relief from the surging price of auto fuels as the government has room for additional excise duty cuts on petrol and diesel without impacting its budgeted revenue from the sector. Sources said that the government has enough room to cut excise duty on petrol and diesel with an earlier ICICI Securities report suggesting that excise duty could be cut up to Rs 8.5 per litre without impacting the government's target for revenue from the tax on the two fuels this year. The estimate was based on cuts affected from April 1, 2021.

But with seven months of the year already over, higher levels of cuts could be made as increased collections have already been made in the past seven months of FY22.

Government on Wednesday announced a Rs 5 per litre reduction in excise duty on petrol and Rs 10 cut in duty on diesel that would impact its revenue by around Rs

45,000 crore in the balance period of FY22. So, the average duty cut is around Rs 7.5 per litre (tax collections also depend on the quantum of sale of petrol and diesel).

Without any duty changes, the government was expected to collect over Rs 4.3 lakh crore from auto fuels. Now with duty cuts, this estimate may fall to a round Rs 3.80 lakh crore for FY22. This is still much higher than the budget estimate of Rs 3.2 lakh crore from excise collections by the Centre during the fiscal.

So, experts said that even if another round of similar level of excise duty cut is announced by the Centre, its budgeted revenue would remain on track while the move will provide further relief to consumers who have seen fuel prices rising by over Rs 26 per litre in 2021 alone.

Government sources, however, indicated that further duty cuts at this juncture would not be considered as revenue is required for several additional expenditure schemes

including on Covid relief programmes and paying GST compensation to states. But if the global oil price spikes further, further cuts could be considered, sources said.

Together with states also announcing VAT duty cuts on petrol and diesel, consumers have got bigger relief on auto fuel prices across the country. However, even after the cuts, fuel remains at elevated levels with rates above Rs 100 per litre-mark in several parts of the country. A Rs 5 per litre increase in fuel prices adds 0.5 per cent to inflation. Thus, any increase in petrol and diesel rates had a multiplier effect in raising rates for several other activities depressing the purchasing power of consumers.

"The much awaited duty cuts are welcome, but a lot more needs to be done considering projections that global oil may move up \$100 a barrel soon. There is room for further reduction in oil sector duties," said an oil sector expert from one of the four big audit and

accounting firms.

In FY21, contribution of the petroleum sector to the exchequer remained at over Rs 4 lakh crore. This is because excise duty was raised by Rs 13 and Rs 16 per litre on petrol and diesel between March 2020 and May 2020 and it rose to Rs 31.8 on diesel and Rs 32.9 per litre on petrol. It had come down a bit after duty cuts were announced now.

The increase in excise duty last year was to mop up gains arising from international crude oil prices falling to a two-decade low. In fact, a large portion of additional excise earnings was used for Covid relief measures announced by the government. But the thinking now is that with tax revenues both direct and indirect showing buoyancy with the economy fast on revival mode, some revision in duties can be made in the interest of the common man.

international

IRAQI PM SURVIVES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT BY DRONE BOMB

Baghdad | Agencies

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi was unharmed in an assassination attempt carried out by a drone targeting his official residence on Sunday, the military said.

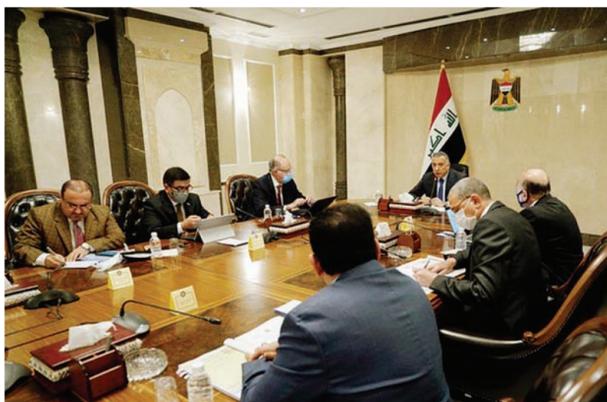
The media office of the Iraqi Joint Operations Command said in a statement that an unknown drone bomb hit al-Kadhimi's residency at dawn in the heavily fortified Green Zone in the centre of the capital, but the Prime Minister escaped the attack unhurt, reports Xinhua news agency.

"The Prime Minister did not suffer any harm and he is in good health," the media office said.

Iraqi security forces are taking all necessary measures toward the assassination attempt, the statement said without giving further details.

In a tweet on his official page, al-Kadhimi said he was "fine" and called for "calm and restraint from everyone for the sake of Iraq".

"The rockets of treason will not shake the steadfastness and determination of our heroic security forces to preserve the security of the people and enforce the law," al-Kadhimi said. The attempted



assassination followed protests against the results of last month's elections.

Friday's protests turned into a clash later with the security forces outside the Green Zone, which houses some of the main government offices and foreign embassies. The clash left two protesters killed and dozens of protesters and security members wounded, according to official figures. In the parliamentary

elections on October 10, the Sadrist Movement, led by prominent Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, took the lead with more than 70 seats, while the al-Fatah (Conquest) Coalition garnered 17 seats compared with 47 in the 2018 elections.

Political parties unsatisfied with the results said the elections were manipulated and that they would not accept the "fabricated results".

19 dead in Mexico road accident



Mexico City: At least 19 people were killed and three injured when multiple vehicle pile-up on a highway near the municipality of Chalco in central Mexico, authorities said.

The accident occurred when a cargo truck suffered from a brake malfunction and crashed into other six vehicles at a toll booth on the highway, according to Mexico's Federal Roads and Bridges and Related Services (Capufe). The truck driver is among the deceased, and the injured were sent to nearby medical clinics, Xinhua news agency quoted Capufe as saying.

Work to remove the vehicles lasted several hours as several vehicles caught fire in the crashes.

US-based Meta Company to sue FB for infringing upon its name

San Francisco | Agencies

In an interesting turn of events, a Chicago-based tech firm called Meta Company is going to court against Facebook, alleging that the social network stole its name and "livelihood" after it rebranded its name to Meta.

In a statement, Meta Company Founder Nate Skulik alleged that when Facebook failed to buy them, it aimed to "bury" the company by force of media.

On October 28, "Facebook decided to commit trademark infringement and call themselves Meta," Skulik claimed in a public letter.

"They couldn't buy us, so they tried to bury us by force of media. We shouldn't be surprised by these actions - from a company that continually says one thing and does another," Skulik added. Meta Company has decided to file the necessary legal actions against Facebook. "This message may be regarded as a public cease and desist," Skulik said.

Meta, the former Facebook company, was yet to react to these allegations. "Facebook and its operating officers are deceitful and acting in bad faith, not only towards us, but to all of humanity." Facing intense scrutiny over users' data privacy, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg last month announced that his company will have a new name, Meta. Somewhat predictably, Zuckerberg down-



played that this rebranding, the first in Facebook's 17 years of existence, is to divert a barrage of bad PR. The name "Facebook" doesn't fully encompass everything the company does now, and is still closely linked to one product, he added. "But over time, I hope we are seen as a metaverse company." Skulik said that for the last three months, Facebook lawyers have been hounding "us to sell our name to them". "We refused their offer on multiple bases. Namely, the low offer wouldn't cover the costs of changing our name, and we insisted on knowing the client and intent, which they did not want to disclose," he noted. At least two law firms were involved: One in the US that requested its trademark and domains and the other in Europe aggressively contacting trying to get "us to sell its domain registrations," he alleged.

Orange alert for snowstorms in China

Beijing | Agencies

China's National Meteorological Centre on Sunday continued with its orange alert for snowstorms in some northern regions. From Sunday morning to Monday morning, snowstorms are likely to hit parts of Inner Mongolia, Hebei, Tianjin, Shandong, Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, reports Xinhua news agency citing the Centre as saying. In some of these regions, blizzards are expected to drop over 40 cm of snow, it said. The centre advised residents to stay indoors and urged local authorities to take precautions with roads, railways, electricity and telecommunications. In Hebei, the provincial meteorological station estimated that from Sunday to Monday, the lowest temperature in most parts will drop by 10 to 14 degrees Celsius, in Zhangjiakou City and Chengde City by 14 to 16 degrees Celsius. In Inner Mongolia, heavy snows up to 22 mm were reported in Bayan Nur, Baotou, Ulanqab and Tongliao City. The Hohhot Baita International Airport has launched an emergency response plan for special weather, and many inbound and outbound flights have been cancelled. Many expressways in Hebei and Shanxi have been temporarily closed. China has a four-tier colour-coded weather warning system, with red representing the most severe, followed by orange, yellow and blue.



N.Korea holds artillery fire competition: State media

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea has conducted an artillery fire competition to boost the country's defence capabilities as set forth by the "militant policy" of the ruling Workers' Party, state media reported on Sunday.

The competition was held Saturday to inspect "how the mechanised troops of the KPA have conducted drills in order to increase their mobile artillery combat capabilities", according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

KPA stands for the Korean People's Army, reports Yonhap News Agency. Pak Jong-chon, a member of the Presidium of the Politburo of the ruling party, guided the competition.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un did not attend the event.

"As soon as the firing orders were given by the commanders of the combined units, gun barrels to annihilate the enemy competitively shelled the target to accurately hit it," the KCNA said.

The unit that won the first place received a "master gunner certificate,



medal and badge", and Pak was "greatly satisfied with the competition results", the report said. It's the usual for the North to unveil an artillery fire competition that was not presided over by leader Kim. The competition took place as

Pyeongyang has called on South Korea and the US to drop "double standards", criticising Seoul and Washington for defining its military activities as "provocations" while justifying their own as deterrence.

GLOBAL COVID-19 CASELOAD TOPS 249.5 MN

Washington: The global coronavirus caseload has topped 249.5 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 5.04 million and vaccinations soared to over 7.22 billion, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

In its latest update on Sunday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload, death toll and the total number of vaccine doses administered stood at 249,502,872, 5,043,945 and 7,226,106,343, respectively.

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 46,461,564 and 754,278, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 34,344,683 cases and Brazil third with 21,874,324 infections. The other worst countries with over 3 million cases are the UK (9,317,072), Russia (8,613,533), Turkey (8,206,345), France (7,301,303), Iran (5,973,457), Argentina (5,295,260), Spain (5,025,639), Colombia (5,010,982), Italy (4,795,465), Germany (4,759,880), Indonesia (4,247,320), Mexico (3,818,216), Ukraine (3,200,411) and Poland (3,076,518), the CSSE figures showed.

Nations with a death toll of over 100,000 are Brazil (609,388), India (460,265), Mexico (289,131), Russia (241,095), Peru (200,350), Indonesia (143,519), the UK (142,174), Italy (132,334), Colombia (127,456), Iran (127,053), France (118,830) and Argentina (116,083).



NCB SIT SUMMONS ARYAN KHAN IN MUMBAI CRUISE DRUGS CASE

A Special Investigation Team of the Narcotics Control Bureau took over six cases, including the Aryan Khan case, from the Mumbai zonal unit.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A Special Investigation Team of the NCB, which reached Mumbai on Saturday, has summoned Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan in connection with the Mumbai cruise drug bust case.

Six cases, including the Cordelia cruise drug seizure case in which Aryan Khan was arrested last month, were transferred from NCB Mumbai zonal unit to the SIT team on Friday.

The SIT team is also expected to record the statement of Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan in connection with a drugs case. Sameer Khan, who is currently out on bail, was arrested by the NCB in January this year.

The SIT team under senior IPS officer Sanjay Kumar



Singh has started recording statements of the people connected with the six cases that it has taken over from the Mumbai NCB. Singh told India Today that Aryan Khan was issued a summons on Saturday and asked to appear before the SIT on Sunday.

"We have started our investigation in the case," said Sanjay Kumar Singh. The senior IPS officer had been present at the NCB office since morning and left

by afternoon. A senior NCB official said that since the SIT team was in Mumbai, the investigation would gather speed in the coming week.

"Not just Aryan Khan but all the people connected directly or indirectly with the six cases will now be called," said an official on condition of anonymity.

The official added that on Sunday (October 7) Arbaaz Merchant and Achet Kumar were called in by the SIT

team. The duo, who are currently out on bail, were summoned to record their statement in connection to the cruise drug bust case.ollywood Superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, too, is currently out on bail in the Mumbai cruise drug bust case. As part of the bail conditions, Aryan Khan has to be present at the NCB office every Friday between 11 am to 2 pm. He cannot leave the country either and has to submit his passport to the authorities.

The NCB had earlier said that the six cases have national and international ramifications and that deeper investigation is needed to find forward and backward linkages.

The SIT team, headed by Sanjay Kumar Singh, will have 14 investigating officers. Various spots connected with the case will be visited by the SIT team.

Aryan Khan trapped, abducted for ransom: Nawab Malik

In his latest allegation against Wankhede, Malik claimed that the NCB official and BJP leader Mohit Kamboj tried to kidnap Aryan and demand ransom.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Making a sensational statement, Nationalist Congress Party Minister Nawab Malik on Sunday claimed that Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan was "trapped, kidnapped for ransom" in the Cordelia Cruise rave party raid by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

Moreover, Shah Rukh Khan has been threatened ever since he started making the expose series on the NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede since October 6, Malik told mediapersons.

"There are four persons Wankhede, his juniors VV Singh and Ashish Ranjan and one of their drivers Mane... They are the quartet in the NCB office... They run the private army to trap high-profile people and then extort them of crores of rupees," Malik said. The other members of the alleged 'private army' are Kiran Gosavi, Mohan Bhanushali, Sam D'souza - whose real name is Sanville Steanley D'Souza, Mohit Kamboj-Bharatiya and Sunil Patil, the NCP National Spokesperson said. Malik also



reiterated that there was a conspiracy hatched by a group of people to lure people like Aryan Khan onboard the ship and subsequently frame them in the drug case.

Responding to the BJP leader Bharatiya's charges of Saturday, Malik said that he had never met Sunil Patil, nor is he linked with the NCP in any manner. According to the NCP leader Aryan Khan was invited to the cruiser party by Pratik Gaba and Amir Furniturewala, both are the friends of Rishab Sachdeva - who is linked with Bharatiya.

"Now it is established that Aryan Khan was kidnapped and a ransom of Rs 25-crore was demanded for his

release, and the final figure was sealed at Rs 18 crore, of which Rs 50-lakh was already takena Mohit Kamboj-Bharatiya is the mastermind," Malik said, referring to the affidavit of one of the witnesses Prabhakar Sail.

He revealed that one Congress Minister Aslam Shaikh and children of other ministers were also invited to join the party.

Malik charged Bharatiya of owning a dozen hotels in Mumbai, an accused in a Rs 1,100-crore financial scam, is close to Wankhede and is a member of his 'private army' that traps prominent personalities to extort big money from their victims. The NCP leader's briefing came a day after Bharatiya alleged that the real brain behind the cruiser raids was Sunil Patil, who is very close to the NCP leaders and ministers and even released a purported picture of him (Sunil Patil) with Kiran Gosavi and a Gujarat cabinet minister Kiritsinh Rana.

Congress Spokesperson Atul Londhe-Patil said it was strange that the allegation is made of Sunil Patil's links with NCP but his photograph posing with a BJP minister was released.

"All this is to divert attention from the massive quantity of several tonnes of drugs which entered Gujarat via Mundra Porta Why nobody is talking about it, where have all the drugs gone... There should be a full investigation into it," demanded Londhe-Patil.

A day after judicial custody, Anil Deshmukh again sent to ED remand

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Sunday set aside a Special PMLA Court order granting 14 days' judicial custody to former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh and remanded him back to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for five days.

The order was given by vacation judge Justice MJ Jamdar in an urgent filed plea by the ED on Sunday, challenging the Special Court Judge P.R. Sitre's ruling on Saturday, declining the agency's plea for extending Deshmukh's custody by nine more days.

Deshmukh's lawyers Senior Advocate Vikram Chaudhri and Aniket Nikam submitted to the court that without getting into the merits or maintainability of the ED application they were volunteering cooperation and not shying away from the investigation, and hence not objecting to the further remand. The ED's lawyers, Additional Solicitor-General Anil Singh and advocate Shreeram Shirsat argued in the Bombay High Court that they were not granted further custody by the Special PMLA Court thus were denied of sufficient and adequate opportunity to probe the case having serious ramifications and when the investigations are at a crucial state.



Seeking nine more days' extended custody, they had pleaded in the Special PMLA Court saying that owing to the (Diwali) public holidays, they were unable to procure certain documents, Deshmukh's replies were evasive, and the ED needed to confront him with the other accused involved in the case. Deshmukh, 72, a senior Nationalist Congress Party leader, was nabbed early on November 2 after he was questioned by the ED for over 13 hours on November 1, and sent to 4 days custody of the agency on alleged charges of extortion and money-laundering.

The case arises out of the allegations levelled by former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh currently 'missing' accusing Deshmukh of allegedly setting a monthly "collection target" of Rs 100 crore from hoteliers to his former aide, now dismissed cop Sachin Vaze, who is in custody.

Shaikh called drug peddler to parties: Kamboj

BJP LEADER MOHIT KAMBOJ, WHO HAD EARLIER ALLEGED NCP LINK IN MUMBAI DRUGS BUST CASE, HAS NOW CLAIMED THAT MAHARASHTRA MINISTER ASLAM SHAIKH USED TO CALL A DRUG PEDDLER TO HIS PARTIES.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

BJP leader Mohit Kamboj alleged that Maharashtra minister Aslam Shaikh used to call "drug peddler" Kashiff Khan, who is the Fashion TV India MD, to his parties. Kashiff Khan's name had cropped up in connection with the Mumbai cruise drug seizure case in which Shah Rukh Khan's

son Aryan Khan was arrested last month.

Earlier today, Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik had questioned why Kashiff Khan wasn't arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

Nawab Malik claimed, "Kashiff Khan forced our minister Aslam Shaikh to come to the party and was also planning to bring children of various ministers of our government to the party. If Aslam Shaikh had gone there, it would have been Uda Maharashtra after Uda Punjab." Following Nawab Malik's press conference on Sunday, Mohit Kamboj said, "Whatever I have been saying for last one month has been accepted by him (Nawab Malik). I have been asking who is the bearded person... Now he himself has named Aslam Shaikh."

The BJP leader alleged that Aslam Shaikh used to call a drug peddler Kashiff to his parties, adding that his "statements have been confirmed by him (Nawab Malik)." Nawab Malik levelled several allegations against the BJP leader on Sunday. He accused

Mohit Kamboj of being the "mastermind" in the Aryan Khan case and of being involved in plot to "kidnap" actor Shah Rukh Khan's son for ransom.

"The alleged cruise rave party was a plot to kidnap Aryan Khan for ransom, of which Mohit Bharatiya was the mastermind," the NCP leader alleged. Nawab Malik also accused Mohit Kamboj of being a member of NCB officer Sameer Wankhede's "private army." Mohit Kamboj dismissed all allegations and denied having met Sameer Wankhede. The BJP leader also denied owning World restaurant and said, "I am a businessman. Rs 5 crore tax is paid by me. I have never hid anything, unlike Malik whose children have 22 properties in their names each." "Malik has assets of Rs 3,000 crore... He has land in Kurla and other projects in Juhu... He became a farmer to buy farmers' land in Maharashtra," Mohit Kamboj countered. Earlier, Mohit Kamboj had alleged that Nawab Malik had spoken to a NCP worker Sunil Patil. Nawab Malik, however, denied the allegation and claimed,

"I have never met Sunil Patil in my life. The photos Kamboj showed also included photos of Patil with Gujarat Minister Rana."

Nawab Malik also said, "Sunil Patil had called me after my first press conference, saying that he wants to share some details. I had asked him to share it with police. He had told me that he was stopped in Gujarat."

Meanwhile, reacting to the above statement, Mohit Kamboj said, "Nawab Malik accepted it (meeting Sunil Patil)... He did not say the whole thing... He used to meet... Ye rishte aaj ke nahi hai, ye purane rishte hain (These relations are not of today, these are old relations)."

The BJP leader, who has filed defamation case against Nawab Malik, claimed that the NCP leader has become "frustrated" as he has "exposed his relation with Sunil Patil." "I have been fighting this battle all alone and not using BJP platform," Mohit Kamboj claimed, adding, "Ye dara hua hai Mia... Sif jhoote aarop laga raha (Nawab Malik is afraid, he is only leveling false accusations)."

In Aryan Khan Case, Malik Accused Of Defamation

Nawab Malik, whose son-in-law was arrested in the drugs case, has levelled a number of allegations against the officer, including that of forging birth certificate to get the job

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Anti-drugs officer Sameer Wankhede's father has filed a defamation case against Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik for 1.25 crore for dragging his family in the drugs-on-cruise case that involves the Shah Rukh Khan's

son Aryan Khan. Nawab Malik, whose son-in-law was earlier arrested in the drugs case by the NCB, has levelled a number of allegations against the officer, including that of forging birth certificate to get the job.

Dnyaneshwar Wankhede, the officer's father, has also requested the Mumbai High Court to ban media from reporting news on his family.

The matter will be heard on Monday.

On Wednesday, Sameer Wankhede's sister Yasmeen hit back at the Nationalist Congress Party leader for sharing her purported WhatsApp chats on social media and accused the minister of taking out his "personal vendetta for his son-in-

law's arrest" by dragging women into the ongoing tussle between him and the probe agency.

The reaction came after Malik's tweet alleging WhatsApp chat between Yasmeen and a drug peddler.

Yasmeen also alleged that Nawab Malik "in his attempt to defame me and my family members" has gone to the extent of "stalking me online and illegally taking my personal photographs" from my social media handles.

"Please don't talk about our ex-husbands, ex-divorcees," she told the minister through media.

Last month, on October 31st, Sameer Wankhede's wife Kranti

Redkar Wankhede had said the "safety of her husband and family is in jeopardy" and asked for security.

"The safety of Sameer Wankhede and her family members is in jeopardy. Three people conducted a rance of the house some days back. These people are very dangerous what they can do, have no clue about that," she added.

Earlier in the drug-on-cruise case, the minister had accused Sameer Wankhede of favouritism. Along with this, alik, who is Maharashtra's minority affairs minister, also made serious allegations like extortion and has also raised questions on Wankhede's birth certificate and marriage.

Palghar fisherman killed in Pak firing off Gujarat coast

Team Absolute | Palghar

A young fisherman from Palghar in Maharashtra was killed and another was injured after Pakistani troops fired at a fishing boat off Okha Coast, Porbandar, Gujarat, officials said on Sunday.

The deceased fisherman has been identified as Shridhar R. Chamare (32), a resident of Vadrai, a coastal village in Palghar district. The incident has sparked anger among the fishing community here.

"Chamare was working on the boat 'Jalpari' owned by Jayanti Bokhama for the past more than three months," Maninder Arekar, Chairman of Vadrai Fishermen's Cooperative Society, said in a statement.

He said that Chamare along other fishermen had gone fishing into the Arabian Sea on Saturday. More details of the tragedy are awaited.

The fishermen have demanded that the governments of Maharashtra and Gujarat should take up the matter with the Indian government to ensure that the body of Chamare is returned to India with full dignity. They also demanded that an international probe should be ordered into the rash action by the Pakistani troops.

The Okha Marine police station has registered a case and is probing the matter.

Slamming the incident, India-Pakistan peace activist Jatin Desai said in Mumbai, "Firing is unacceptable... it violates all international conventions."

"Under no circumstances traditional fishing boats should be fired upon. It's high time that the governments of India and Pakistan work out a permanent resolution to this issue. Ideally, both should agree to have a 'no arrest policy' also."

Karim Khan, Aakansha triumph, make it to Tennis Premier League

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Karim Khan, and Aakansha Nitture emerged champions in the men's and women's section respectively in the Tennis Premier League's Mumbai Talent Day selection trials, played at the MSLTA over the weekend. While Khan opted to join Pune Jaguars, Aakansha chose Mumbai Leon Army and the two will join the professional players in the league, to be played from December 14-18, 2021.

Also making the grade as the second-best were Nittin Kirtane and Laalitya Reddy. Kirtane will join Mumbai Leon Army while Laalitya will turn out for Pune Jaguars. All the four also won a cash prize



of Rs 50,000 each, according to results announced by the organisers here on Saturday.

While Kirtane will join Ramkumar Ramanathan and Niki Poonacha in the Mumbai Leon Army Team, Kari Khan will get an opportunity to play alongside Saketh Myneni. While women's winner Aakansha will join hands with Georgia's Sofia Shapatava in the Mumbai team, Laalitya will

partner with Pune Jaguars' Rutuja Bhosle.

The U-18 contest for girls was won by Ruma Gaikwari, with Bhumika Tripathi finishing No. 2, while Gajanan Mangela triumphed in the 35-plus age group, followed by Ramzan Shaikh. A total of 400 players registered for the Mumbai Talent Day in various categories to vie the different age-group slots on the Mumbai team.

Maharashtra govt to form committee to look into demands of MSRTC staff

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government has informed the Bombay High Court that it will form a special committee headed by the Chief Secretary to address the issues raised by the employees of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), including the demand of treating transport corporation's employees as government employees. The workers of MSRTC have been on strike since midnight of November 3-4.

The statement was made by GS Hegde and PM Bhansali, counsels for the MSRTC, before the vacation bench of Justices SJ

Kathawalla and SP Tavade, which was hearing the transport corporations' plea seeking restraint on the strike called by the workers' unions.

On Saturday, the HC asked the government to clarify the composition of the committee by the next date of hearing on November 8.

The state had proposed the names of secretary to finance and MSRTC secretary to be a part of the committee, which was objected to by the workers' union.

Ashok Shetty and Gunaratan Sadavarte, advocates for the Maharashtra Rajya Kanishth Vetsanshri ST Karmachari Sanghatana, its head Ajaykumar

Gujar and other unions, opposed the names of other members of the proposed committee, saying that a responsible and non-controversial minister should be a part of it.

Emphasising on the need for independent committee members, Sadavarte said they won't withdraw the strike unless employees' views were taken while constituting the committee.

The advocate contended that let one meeting of the new committee take place, wherein the only agenda they are asking for is "giving government employee status to MSRTC employees."

Sadavarte said that nearly 75 per cent of the workers are on

strike and the remaining 25 per cent are also willing to join the agitation.

While keeping the matter for hearing on November 8, the HC said that it was not passing any orders against the unions that continue to be on strike. The HC has asked Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhkoni to appear in the matter.

As per earlier court directions, Gujarat was present in the court. The HC had issued summons against him on November 4 asking him to remain personally present and explain why action should not be initiated against him for wilfully disobeying the court orders.



IDRIS ELBA THINKS 'LUTHER' CAN BE BLOCKBUSTER LIKE 'JAMES BOND'

Los Angeles | Agencies

British star Idris Elba thinks the upcoming Netflix movie "Luther" can reach the levels of a James Bond blockbuster.

The 49-year-old actor is set to reprise the role of DCI John Luther in a Netflix movie based on the hit detective drama, and thinks they can keep fans of the TV show happy while taking the story and characters "into a new sphere".

Elba told Collider: "We have an incredible appetite to satisfy the audience that love Luther in its current form as a TV show, but also bring it into a new sphere with the film version."

He added: "I don't wanna be controversial, but people imagine me as Bond, and that's great, but I can't wait to see them, as Luther, in this movie. Really, our ambition is to take it there."

Before the "Luther" film, Elba featured in Netflix's new all-Black Western "The Harder They Fall", and while he wasn't surprised by the quality of the film, he was delighted with the timing and response to the release, reports femalefirst.co.uk.



He said: "We expected this, you know? I can say this to writer and director Jeymes Samuel and all of us - we didn't expect it to hit in the way it has. It's Black History Month in the UK, and here you have a Western movie with Black characters that people don't even know about and forget about. It hit so hard here."

"We couldn't have expected that but everything that he envisioned, from the first time when he's telling you about a scene, takes his guitar and starts singing the score. We expected it to be what it is," he added.



Kristin Chenoweth happy with Ariana Grande for signing 'Wicked'



Mumbai | Agencies

Ariana Grande has been signed to star in the film adaptation of Broadway musical 'Wicked' along with Cynthia Erivo.

While the announcement has got their fans roused up for the big project, there's one particular name that can't be happier and prouder - theatre legend Kristin Chenoweth, who played Glinda in the original 'Wicked' musical. Recently, Kristin expressed her happiness for Ariana as she took to her Instagram to congratulate the popstar. Kristin shared the screenshot of Ariana's 2011 tweet and a throwback picture of the pair. The veteran star captioned the picture as, "I'm not sure if I've ever been this proud. From the very first day I met you (swipe to see!!), you were destined for this role. Congratulations @arianagrande! The best Glinda you will be with @cynthi-aerivo by your side I love you!! @wickedmovie @wicked_musical #wicked." While Ariana will play Glinda the Good Witch, Cynthia will be portraying the character of Elphaba who later turns into the Wicked Witch of the West, in 'The Wizard of Oz'. The stars had announced their casting in respective Instagram posts on Thursday evening. The film helmed by Jon M. Chu will serve as a prequel to 'The Wizard of Oz'. Initially set for release on December 22, 2021, the film's production had suffered multiple setbacks, the most recent one being the departure of director Stephen Daldry because of scheduling conflicts.



Kieran Culkin talks about 'Roman Roy'

New York | Agencies

Thirty years after his brother Macaulay did it, Primetime Emmy- and two-time Golden Globe-nominated 'Succession' star Kieran 'Roman Roy' Culkin hosted the comedy sketch 'Saturday Night Live' for the first time on November 6, reports 'The Hollywood Reporter'.

Talking about his character in the satirical dark comedy drama 'Succession', which is about a dysfunctional family that owns a global media corporation, Culkin said: "For the past few years I've been working on a show called 'Succession'. I play Roman Roy, he's one of the nicer characters on the

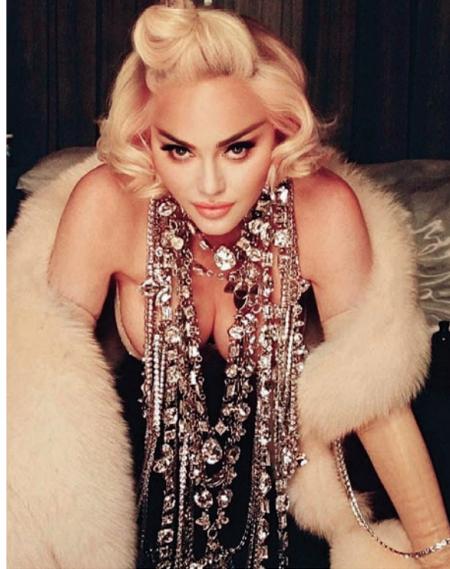
show, which still makes him one of the top ten worst humans on TV." And he added: "Sometimes people will be like, 'you know, that part really suits you', which isn't really a compliment -- it's sort of like going up to someone and saying: You know what role would fit you like a glove? Giuliani." Culkin was referring to the former New York City mayor and Donald Trump confidant Rudy Giuliani. The actor went on to share that he and his wife, former fashion model Jazz Charton, welcomed their second child in August. "I love being a dad, it's great. And [then] I was asked to host 'Saturday Night Live,'" he said, adding that it had always been a dream.

Madonna makes surprise appearance at AmfAR gala

Los Angeles | Agencies

Queen of Pop Madonna made a surprise appearance at the star-studded amfAR Gala Los Angeles to present her longtime friend and collaborator Jeremy Scott with the Award of Courage in recognition of his work with the organization and his commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The eleventh edition of the annual event was held in an elaborately decorated tent at the Pacific Design Center in



West Hollywood on Thursday night after a one-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic, reports variety.com.

The gala, which was sponsored by Cadillac and FIJI Water, raised more than \$1.8 million for HIV/AIDS research.

Shortly after an Ellen Von Unwerth photograph of Madonna was auctioned off for \$70,000, the Queen of Pop herself took the stage and paid tribute to the Moschino creative director with a heartfelt speech, in which she also recalled how she was drawn into the fight against the devastating epidemic.

"In 1991, I stood on the amfAR stage and I was forced to clear up rumours that I had AIDS," Madonna said.

"I recall many journalists sticking microphones in my face, asking me, attacking me even, and saying 'Madonna, Madonna is it true? Are you HIV positive?' And of course my reply was 'no, I just want to help people who are'.

The superstar acknowledged that the battle against HIV/AIDS is ongoing, noting that 1.5 million people had been infected with the disease last year.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Dua Lipa

'Eternals' Lebanese actor Haaz Sleiman slams Arab nations that banned film

Lebanese-born Haaz Sleiman, who plays Ben, the husband of Marvel's first gay superhero Phastos (Brian Tyree Henry), in 'Eternals', said he was close to tears when he learned of Disney's response to the film being banned in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar because of its LGBTQ+ content.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Speaking to 'Variety', the gay actor said: "They (Disney) stood their ground and said, 'Nope, we are not going to compromise the integrity of our film'. It made these Arab countries look so ignorant and pathetic."

Movies containing LGBTQ+ content, according to 'Variety', are often cut to appease international censors around the world, but Disney refused to alter 'Eternals'. "I have no respect for those governments," Sleiman said. "They have displayed to the world that they are not only a disgrace to humanity, but to God. Hopefully this will inspire the Saudi people, the Kuwaiti people and the people in Qatar to fight back."

Sleiman, who was raised in a Muslim family in Lebanon before moving to the U.S. when he was 21, came out as gay in 2017 after first gaining attention playing Tarek, an undocumented Syrian immigrant in 2007's 'The Visitor'.



T20 World Cup

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFY FOR SEMIS; END INDIAN HOPES

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

New Zealand produced a clinical all-round performance to beat Afghanistan by eight wickets in their last Super 12 stage match and qualify for the semi-finals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium, here on Sunday.

With this win, New Zealand not only made it to the semi-finals but also knocked out both Afghanistan and India from the tournament. This is the third time that New Zealand have made it to the semi-finals in T20 World Cups following 2007 and 2016.

Riding on a fighting fifty by Najibullah Zadran (73 off 48), Afghanistan posted a respectable 124/8 in 20 overs.

While Zadran was the lone warrior for Afghanistan, Gulbadin Naib (15) and Mohammad Nabi (14) also chipped in with cameos while Trent Boult 3-17 and Tim Southee 2-24 were the main wicket-takers for the Black Caps.

In reply, all four New Zealand batters - Martin Guptill (28), Daryl Mitchell (17), Kane Williamson (40 not out), Devon Conway (36 not out) made small but vital contributions and helped their side chase the target quite comfortably



in 18.1 overs with eight wickets in hand. Rashid Khan (1/27) and Mujeeb Ur Rahman (1/31) were the wicket-takers for Afghanistan.

Brief scores

Afghanistan 124/8 in 20 overs (Najibullah Zadran 73; Trent Boult 3-17, Tim Southee 2-24) against New Zealand 125/2 in 18.1 overs (Kane Williamson 40 not out, Devon Conway 36 not out; Rashid Khan 1/27)

Pakistan finish Super 12 matches with 72-run win over Scotland

Sharjah | Agencies

Pakistan finished their Super 12 matches in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with a 72-run win over Scotland at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium here on Sunday. After Babar Azam (66 off 47 balls), Shoaib Malik (54 not out off 18 balls) and Mohammad Hafeez (31 off 19 balls) took Pakistan to 189/4, Pakistan restricted Scotland to 117/6 in 20 overs.

George Munsey began by taking two boundaries off Shaheen Shah Afridi's first two overs. Kyle Coetzer had a boundary off Imad Wasim but was bowled by Hasan Ali in a wicket- maiden final over of Power-play. Post Power-play runs began to dry as Pakistan began to exert pressure on Scotland.

Scotland were dealt with a strong blow as Matthew Cross was run-out at the non-striker's end with Wasim getting a hand on the ball on a straight drive from Munsey. In an attempt to break free, Munsey tried to attack Shadab Khan but sliced to short third man in the 11th over. Two balls later, Khan had another wicket as Dylan Budge was bowled by a googly.

Though the result was a foregone conclusion, Scotland tried to delay the inevitable. Michael Leask had a 41-run stand with Richie Berrington for the fifth wicket. The partnership broke when Afridi clean bowled Leask in the 16th



over Berrington, the lone warrior for Scotland, smashed two more boundaries and reached his half-century with a brace off Ali. But it wasn't enough as Pakistan ended their Group 2 campaign with an all-win record.

Brief scores

Pakistan 189/4 in 20 overs (Babar Azam 66, Shoaib Malik 54 not out, Chris Greaves 2-43, Hamza Tahir 1-24) beat Scotland 117/6 (Richie Berrington 54 not out, George Munsey 17, Shadab Khan 2-14, Shaheen Shah Afridi 1-24) by 72 runs

Barca surrender 3-goal lead in Vigo, Real Madrid claim narrow win over Rayo

Madrid | Agencies

Newly-appointed Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez was given an idea of the task that lies ahead of him as Barcelona surrendered a 3-0 lead away to Celta Vigo in a La Liga match.

Barca turned in an excellent first half display on Saturday night in Sergi Barjuan's last game as caretaker coach and led 3-0 thanks to goals from Ansu Fati, Sergio Busquets and Memphis Depay.

However, after Ansu Fati, Eric Garcia and Nico Gonzalez were forced out through injury in the second half, Celta got back into the game thanks to Iago Aspas, who scored the first goal after an error from Ter Stegen.

Nolito headed home Celta's second with just over 15 minutes left to play and with the five minutes of injury time completed, Aspas curled the ball into the corner of the net to leave the Barca players sprawled on the pitch in despair.

First half goals from Toni Kroos and Karim Benzema gave Real Madrid a 2-1 win at home to Real Sociedad, which sent them to the top of the table ahead of Real Sociedad's game later on Sunday. Radamel Falcao came on as a late substitute for Rayo and headed his side back into the game with 15 minutes remain-



ing, but the Colombian had to limp off moments afterwards as Rayo pressed for an equaliser until the end. Raul de Tomas' seventh league goal of the season helped Espanyol to a 2-0 win at home to Granada. Adria Pedrosa put Espanyol ahead in the 30th minute and De Tomas showed the form he is in when he scored his side's second 12 minutes later. Two goals from Joselu, who scored a 76th minute penalty and a last minute header saw Alaves continue their positive run as they came back from a goal down to Levante.

Jorge de Frutos' 13th minute strike looked as if it would give Levante their first win of the season, but Joselu broke their hearts with his side's only two shots on target.

NOVAK IS NO. 1 FOR A RECORD SEVENTH YEAR; TO CLASH WITH MEDVEDEV FOR PARIS TITLE

Paris: Novak Djokovic of Serbia made history by securing the year-end No. 1 ATP ranking for a record seventh time, breaking the tie with American legend Pete Sampras.

Djokovic, who has won three majors this year - Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon, though he missed out on the US Open title after losing to Russian Daniil Medvedev in the final - defeated Poland's Hubert Hurkacz in Saturday's Rolex Paris Masters semifinals to eclipse Sampras's record. Djokovic rallied from a set down, and a shock final-set fadeout, to defeat Hurkacz 3-6, 6-0, 7-6(5) to power into his seventh Paris Masters final. The Serb will meet Medvedev in the final here after the reigning champion powered into his second consecutive Paris Masters final, snapping Germany's Alexander Zverev's eight-match winning streak with a 6-2, 6-2 win. Djokovic broke a tie with Sampras, who completed six straight year-end No. 1 finishes between 1993 and 98. The Serbian has now achieved the feat in seven of the past 11 seasons (also 2011-12, 2014-15, 2018 and 2020).



Saurabh, Abhishek win silver and bronze at elite ISSF President's Cup

Wroclaw (Poland) | Agencies

India's Saurabh Chaudhary won silver and Abhishek Verma bronze in a star-studded men's 10m air pistol final, on Day Three of the ongoing ISSF Presidents Cup Rifle/Pistol here.

The Indian duo was able to get the better of reigning Olympic champion in the event, Javad Foroughi of Iran in the four-man final, but not 2016 Rio Olympic champion Christian Reitz of Germany, who won gold.

Christian dominated the final, finishing with a score of 34 with Saurabh quite some distance behind with 24. Abhishek went out in bronze-medal position after the second series of five shots with a score of 21. Javad was first to be eliminated in fourth place after the first five-shot series. The final consisted of three series of



five-shots each.

Saurabh had also finished second to Christian in the first semifinal 24-25, to make the final. Abhishek had won the second semifinal over Javad 27-24 to make the medal round. The Indians had earlier made the top eight by finishing third and fourth respectively among 12 shooters in the first qualification round, with Saurabh shooting 581 and Abhishek shooting 580. The inaugural

ISSF President's Cup is a rechristened version of the ISSF World Cup Finals, where the year's top 12 athletes according to world ranking are invited to determine the best individual athletes of the year in the respective Olympic events. Individual winners will be awarded 'The Golden Target' along with prize money. Cash awards will also be awarded to all athletes in the individual competitions.

We should have done better, says bowling coach Arun on match vs Pakistan

Dubai | Agencies

India bowling coach Bharat Arun conceded that the team could have done better in their opening match of the ICC T20 World Cup against Pakistan. He added that the bowlers should have defended 152 but were below-par, with Pakistan chasing down the target for the loss of no wicket.

India play their last match of Group 2 against Namibia in Dubai on Monday and are dependent on Afghanistan winning against New Zealand on Sunday to keep



semifinal hopes alive. "I am not trying to give any excuses. This World Cup, the trend has been that the team which wins the toss has a big advantage, especially when you are playing in the Dubai

Stadium. So, the wicket kind of eases out as when you come out to bowl for the second time.

"It's no excuses. We should have done better. We should have batted better. Also, in

the first match, we had a chance to defend our total but we looked a little below par," said Arun in the pre-match press conference on Sunday. Arun mentioned that the Indian team has pinned its hopes on Afghanistan doing well against New Zealand in Abu Dhabi. "We are a very good side. We were the tournament favourites when we did start. But it was most unfortunate that we lost the first two games. That put us in a very precarious situation. We are expecting to qualify. We are backing Afghanistan to do well in this tournament."

Never lost faith in David Warner: Coach Langer

Abu Dhabi | Agencies

Australian cricket coach Justin Langer has said he never doubted veteran opener David Warner's ability to come up with match-winning scores, despite the 35-year-old not having a great outing at the ICC T20 World Cup before his start-to-finish unbeaten 89 helped the team defeat the West Indies here on Saturday.

Chasing 157 set by the West Indies, Warner blasted a 56-ball 89 as Australia reached the target in 16.2 overs, winning the match by eight wickets and securing a semifinal berth behind Group 1 leaders England in the tournament. Warner's inconsistent show with the bat saw him play only a couple of IPL 2021 games in the UAE before he was dropped



from the Playing XI by Sunrisers Hyderabad. In the T20 World Cup, he had 18 against Bangladesh, one against England, 65 against Sri Lanka and 14 against South Africa.

JASON ROY BREAKS DOWN IN TEARS, LIMPS OFF FIELD DURING ENGLAND-SOUTH AFRICA CLASH



Sharjah: England were dealt a major blow as opener Jason Roy suffered a calf injury during the clash against South Africa at the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup on Saturday evening, which the Proteas won by 10 runs. The injury seemed serious as the batsman could barely walk and hobbled off the pitch. The incident took place in the second delivery of the fifth over, when Jos Buttler and Roy took a single as the opener completed the run hopping on one leg and sat down on the ground before breaking down in tears.

Such was the impact of the injury, that the opener was forced to limp off the pitch with the help of teammate Tom Curran and England physio.

"It obviously didn't look great. We'll wait to see what his movement is like before we send him for a scan and go from there. We're all hopeful that he comes through in some manner or there's some remedy to get him through one or two games, but we need to do what's best for Jason and the team," said England captain Morgan at the post-match press conference on Saturday.

T20 World Cup: Automatic Super 12 qualifiers confirmed for 2022 edition

Dubai | Agencies

The automatic qualifiers for the Super 12 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 on Saturday were confirmed, following West Indies' loss to Australia in their final match of this year's edition of the mega event.

From the 12 automatic qualifiers for next year's tournament -- the 12 teams that made the Super 12 this year -- eight will go straight through to the Super 12.

Those eight teams are hosts Australia, England, India, Pakistan, New Zealand, South Africa, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh.

"The automatic qualifiers for the Super 12 stage were determined to be the winner and runner-up of the current T20 World Cup, alongside the next six highest ranking teams on the ICC Men's T20I rankings at the cut-off date of November 15," the ICC said.



"On Saturday, the teams that will fill those spots were confirmed courtesy of West Indies' loss to Australia, which means they will sit 10th by the cut-off date, with Bangladesh climbing to eighth," it added. Going into Saturday's action, the current top six teams on the rankings -- England, Pakistan, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Australia -- had already done enough to ensure they would not slide out of those positions in this tournament.

Afghanistan, the team sitting seventh, cannot drop below the 8th spot irrespective of future results in this tournament following West Indies' loss to Australia. That loss has seen West Indies drop to 10th on the rankings, just behind Sri Lanka, with Bangladesh rising to eighth.

Alongside West Indies, 2021 Super 12 teams Sri Lanka, Namibia, and Scotland will also start next year's tournament in the First Round.



PRIYANKA CHOPRA

attends YouTube star Lilly Singh's Diwali bash



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Priyanka Chopra has been making the most of the Diwali season this year. The actress earlier attended a few pre-Diwali celebrations followed by Diwali puja at her home in Los Angeles, California. And now, the actress has concluded the festive season with YouTube star Lilly Singh's Diwali bash. Priyanka took to her Instagram to share a few pictures of herself from the party. She captioned the picture as, "What makes Lilly SINGH the perfect host and dost? She's a fellow PUNJABI. What an epic end to this year's Diwali celebrations! Thank you @lilly for such an amazing evening!" For the event, the actress chose a retro look. She donned a short top paired with palazzos in floral patterns designed by ace designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee. She rounded up her look with a stole, eyegear, oxidized silver jewellery and open tresses. On the work front, Priyanka has an interesting slate of projects that include American romantic drama titled 'Text for You', Patrick Moran and the Russo brothers' 'Citadel', the film adaptation of 'Cowboy Ninja Viking' where she is set to star opposite Chris Pratt. Apart from this, she will also be seen along with Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt in Farhan Akhtar's 'Jee Le Zaraa'.

Anjali Tatrari on her role in upcoming show 'Tere Bina Jiya Jaye Na'

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Actress Anjali Tatrari who plays the role of 'Krisha Chaturvedi' in the upcoming show 'Tere Bina Jiya Jaye Na' talks about playing a simple girl from Udaipur. The actress shares in detail about her on-screen character 'Krisha' whose life changes after getting married into a royal family. For her, tying the knot with 'Prince Devraj Singh Rathore', played by actor Avinash Rekhi, was like a dream come true. Anjali mentions: "My character is a small-town girl from a middle-class family, but her dreams are really big. She always wanted her prince charming to come on a white horse, sweep her off her feet and ask her to be his princess. How this dream of her gets fulfilled and what happens next forms the crux of the story." The 'Mere Dad Ki Dulhan' actress further talks about playing a clumsy person on-screen and expresses her excitement about playing such a character in the serial. "I must add that 'Krisha' is also very clumsy, she keeps falling down and messing things up, but she is very interesting. I am very excited about 'Tere Bina Jiya Jaye Na' and as an actor, I've always wanted to do good projects that I believe in, and I really resonate with the story and characters. There are some exciting twists and turns, but I can't talk about them right now."



Varun Dhawan wraps up schedule of 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo' with Kiara Advani

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Varun Dhawan, who will be seen opposite Kirana Advani in the comedy drama 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo', has wrapped up the second last schedule of the film along with Kiara. The two have been keeping busy with the shoot of the film, for quite some time, which stars an ensemble cast of Anil Kapoor, Neetu Kapoor, Maniesh Paul and Prajakta Koli. Varun took to his Instagram to share a monochromatic picture of himself with Kiara, as he wrote, "Ek hi balcony

thi Looking forward to the final schedule as we wrap this one! #jugjuggjeeyo Missing the family @anilskapoor @neetu54 @mostlysane @manieshpaul."

Varun's friends and stars like Katrina Kaif, Arjun Kapoor and Anil Kapoor reacted and commented on the post. While Katrina wrote, "The one together. After the balcony solos", Arjun pulled their legs as he commented, "I just want to know what you both were staring at?" Anil Kapoor reciprocated Varun's sentiments as he wrote, "Missing you'll too".

Talking about 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo', the film produced by Dharma Productions is being directed by Raj Mehta, as the principal photography commenced in Chandigarh last year.



Pavan Malhotra: Failure is the right of every artiste

Team Absolute | Mumbai

National Award-winning actor Pavan Malhotra, known for delivering some fine performances in 'Bagh Bahadur', 'Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro', 'Black Friday', to recently released 'Graham' and 'Tabbar', says for him, the only way to grow as an artiste is to experiment constantly and failure is a part of the journey.

The actor adds he does not have fear of failure because it is his right to fail and learn lessons from it.

In conversation with reporter, the actor decodes his motto behind all the choices he made in his acting career so far.

Pavan told reporter: "It is quite easy to simplify everything by saying 'follow your gut' while choosing a script but is it really that simple? I do not think so...but it is all about how you are

approaching your work. I, every day when waking up, even after all these years, feel like a newcomer because I never found my comfort zone as an actor. Rather did not look for my comfort zone, because I always wanted to experiment as a performer. Yes, so far, whatever I have done, mostly I have got appreciation but every experiment is a risk. I know I could fail but the fear of failure never stopped me; failure is a right of every artiste."

He further added, "So, whatever I have achieved is a combination of the right opportunity, my hard work and the blessings of God. No one wants to do bad work but for a profession like acting, luck also matters. That comes from the higher power."

Born in Delhi on July 2, 1958, Pavan always wanted to become an actor and that is why he started his journey with theatre.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Urfi Javed

Why Veer Rajwant Singh agreed for new season of 'The Reunion'?

Veer Rajwant Singh's performance in the Zoom Studios' latest offering 'The Reunion - Chal Chalein Apne Ghar' has been at the centre of the audience's attention ever since the show's first episode streamed.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For him, more than his character, it was the universe of the show that appealed to him the most and influenced his decision to take the part.

Talking to reporter, the actor revealed, "It was not only the character, for me, it was also the story for me."

The show's approach of telling stories from different perspectives is another that drove him. "It was also that, this is not one character's glasses, you know, it's not one person's opinion. The thing (which appealed to me) about this one woman was how she was holding these three men together, and the moment she leaves, it almost looks like that they haven't lost



anyone."

"They were okay (with her departure) or probably have just been with that disease so much that now you see that these guys cannot even express themselves without someone telling them how to express. So I liked that, I thought that we could create something interesting (out of it)", he added.

The actor plays the role of Amol, a son who returns to his family after a long time as the family grapples with a deeply personal loss. Things take a sharp turn for him as the dysfunctionality in the family starts seeping through as the new season progresses. 'The Reunion - Chal Chalein Apne Ghar' is available for streaming on The Zoom Studios'