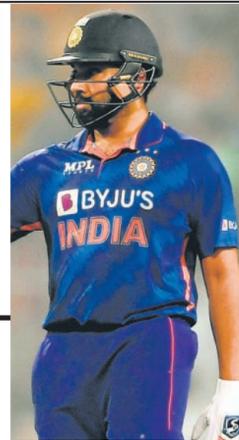


absolute india

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM BHOPAL, MUMBAI AND NEW DELHI



NATION > 02

Hum Saath Saath Hain...



HOLLYWOOD > 06

Britney's fiance thanks her for putting his career 'on the map'...



SPORTS > 07

India thrash New Zealand by 73 runs, complete 3-0 clean sweep...

Oppn to corner govt on China, inflation, Pegasus in Parliament



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The opposition parties are set to corner the government in the upcoming winter session of parliament on issues of inflation, Chinese incursion, Pegasus spyware and farm laws. The session begins from November 29. Leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge has made it clear that the party will raise the issue of inflation. "It has been 7 months since inflation is in double digits. The Government has failed to bring the prices of essential commodities down making the struggle of common man even worse during the pandemic," Kharge said. Armed with success on the repeal of farm laws, the opposition will also try to corner the government on the passage of the bills in the house. It has been alleged that the government is bulldozing the procedure. "Government must realise that enacting important laws in a hurry bypassing parliamentary scrutiny and excluding stakeholders from consultations, results in confrontation and conflict. It must give up the undemocratic

practice and refer all important bills to parliamentary standing or select committees for building consensus," said Anand Sharma after government announced repeal of farm laws. The Congress is also going to raise the issue of Chinese incursion and Pegasus spyware in the house. Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi had said that the party will raise the Pegasus snooping issue in Parliament and will ask who "authorised" Pegasus to spy. The Supreme Court has already set up a committee to be supervised by a retired top court judge Justice R.V. Raveendran, who will be assisted by Alok Joshi, former IPS officer and Dr Sundeeep Oberoi. The Centre had argued that disclosing the details on the use of Pegasus spyware involves national security issues, as it refused to divulge any details. Rahul Gandhi has also said that the party will also raise the issue of inflation and said that in GDP (Gas, Diesel and Petrol), the government is earning huge amount of money and it's a direct attack on the consumer as it affects directly and indirectly as it also increases inflation.

SKM TO WRITE OPEN LETTER TO MODI DEMANDING REMUNERATIVE MSP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Sunday decided to send an open letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, raising the pending demands of the farmers' movement, including central legislation to guarantee a remunerative minimum support price (MSP), while also deciding to continue their previously announced programmes. Starting with a rally in Lucknow as per the plan on Monday, the SKM said, the next meeting will take place on November 27 to review developments, if any, and the 'Sansad Chalo' march on November 29. At its first meeting at the Kisan Andolan headquarters on Singhu border after the announcement made by the Prime Minister on Friday of his government's decision to repeal the three contentious farm laws, the SKM warmly congratulated "all the farmers and workers of India for their historic victory after an unprecedented one year long struggle". The consortium of farmers' organisations and other

NGOs, also decided to continue with all the announced programmes as per plan. That includes the 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' in Lucknow on Monday; 'Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Diwas' on Sir Chhotu Ram's birth anniversary on November 24; a meeting on November 27 to review developments, if any; and 'Dilli Border Morche pe Chalo' on November 26, a statement from the SKM said, adding, "We appeal to all citizens part of the movement to take part in all the events and hold state level farmer-worker protests in states far away from Delhi." The SKM also said it will go ahead with its 'Sansad Chalo' march on November 29. "While Narendra Modi or his government does not acknowledge the heavy and avoidable sacrifices made by around 700 brave farmers of the Kisan Andolan, the Telangana government has now stepped forward to provide support to the kin of the martyrs," the SKM statement after the marathon meeting attended by 40-odd representatives of all the member organisations, said.



While announcing a support of Rs 3 lakh each per martyr family, Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu has also demanded that the Centre pays Rs 25 lakh for each farmer family and also withdraw all cases unconditionally. "SKM will provide the list of martyrs to the Telangana government for this ex-gratia support to be extended to the martyrs' families," it said. In the national convention of a Punjab-based Women's Collective yesterday, with the event focusing on 'Farmers' Struggle and Earth

Democracy', the speakers highlighted the historic contribution of women farmers to the ongoing struggle, and paid their tributes to the women martyrs of the movement, the SKM statement said. The meeting of the representatives of almost all the member organisations of the SKM consortium was attended by leaders including Balveer Rajewal, Gurunam Singh Chadhuni, Manjit Rai Darshan Pal and Yogendra Yadav while prominent leader, Rakesh Tikait, leader of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU), was away in Lucknow.

SCHOOLS SHUT IN DELHI OVER AIR POLLUTION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

All schools in the national capital will remain closed until further orders in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas, owing to the rising levels of air pollution in the city. As per a directive by the Education Department, all the government, government aided, unaided recognized, NDMC, MCDs and Delhi Cantonment Board Schools will remain closed. However, online teaching learning activities and the examinations for board classes would be conducted as per earlier guidelines. The residents of the national capital continue to breath polluted air as air quality in the city was



recorded under 'very poor' category on Sunday morning. The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) said the Air Quality Index (AQI) in the national capital was 324 for PM10 and 200 for PM2.5. As PM10 went over

300, the department has issued a health advisory asking people with heart or lung diseases, older adults, and children to reduce prolonged or heavy exertion. The PM2.5 level was found to be under the 'very poor' category. According to the SAFAR forecast, the pollution levels are expected to deteriorate further in the next 24 hours with PM10 likely to be at 356 and PM2.5 at 220. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', then 401 and between 500 is considered 'severe'. Earlier on November 13, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced to shut down physical classes in schools for a week.

Cong questions PM's silence on Chinese intrusion in Arunachal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Sunday questioned the government over silence on Chinese incursion at Arunachal Border. The party also slammed Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for his comment on border row as Congress alleged that Chinese intrusion is absolutely unimaginable physically. Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi, addressing a press conference on Sunday, questioned the silence of the Prime Minister and said, "Chinese have intruded across the Indian border in the area, which we claim as ours, by building a second village of 60 clusters, or 60 habitats." Singhvi said, "I have shown you two maps, which are crucial, I am not repeating them. One is the before and after picture. The before satellite picture of 2019 of the same spot shows barren, vacant land, you have just seen on the screen. The September, 2021's photo shows a cluster of about 60 odd houses or structures, what can be seen clearer, nobody has spoken on that, nobody has told you, why it is wrong?" He said the intrusion near Shi Yomi



district of Arunachal Pradesh is 6 to 7 km within the Indian area, which India claims its own. The Congress spokesperson also attacked General Bipin Rawat, the Chief of Defence Staff, for saying that all is well and everything is happening on the Chinese side of the border. "Is it not a travesty, he doesn't answer any particular question and Arindam Bagchi, the MEA spokesperson on the same day in his official version, suggested - this is all wrong, we don't accept Chinese claims, we assert our own territory and condemn Chinese claims." Singhvi said, "on an

issue like this, can we have this double voiced, hypocritical, unimaginable, inexcusable diversions between two ministries as important and high as Foreign Affairs and Defence Ministry and these satellite imagery are by world renowned companies, they are 'Maxar' and 'Planet labs'." He said this spot, which has been shown in one of the photographs is about 33 km direct south of where Chinese President 'Xi' landed. "We don't understand, this definition of national security, where you berate, browbeat, intimidate whole country on national security issues and keep silent on this kind of thing. One of the most eloquent speakers, our Prime Minister, always practices eloquent silence, but, this time more so on national security. He has never said a word on this, neither on the January, 2019 intrusion, nor on the September-October, 2021 intrusion, which is current. It is therefore a sad and distressing story of deception, prevarication on national security. It is a sad case of deliberate distortion, digression and diversion on an issue affecting India's integrity and sovereignty," he said.

Andhra floods damage road, rail routes; several trains cancelled

Amaravati | Agencies

Several trains were cancelled or diverted while hundreds of vehicles were stranded on Sunday as the main road and rail routes in Andhra Pradesh remained cut off due to floods. Railway authorities announced cancellation of 42 trains on the Chennai-Vijayawada grand trunk route. While several other trains were partially cancelled or diverted. The movement of trains came to a standstill as the railway tracks were submerged in Nellore district, one of the four districts hit by floods. According to the South Central Railway (SCR), the trains were cancelled due to heavy inflow of water between Nellore - Padugupadu section of Vijayawada Division and Razampet-Nandalur of Guntakal Division. The cancelled trains include Visakhapatnam-Kadapa, Tirupati-Hazrat Nizamuddin, Chennai



Central-CST Mumbai, Tirupati-Nizamabad, Chittoor-Kacheguda, Chennai Central-LTT Mumbai, Tirupati-Kolhapur, Gudur-Secunderabad, Vijayawada-Chennai Central, Kakinada Town-Tirupati, Adilabad-HS Nanded, Lingampalli-Tirupati, Hyderabad-Tambaram, Hyderabad-Chennai Central, Secunderabad-Gudur, Secunderabad-Tirupati and Tirupati-Adilabad. The floods due to overflowing Somasila reservoir damaged the Chennai-

Kolkata National Highway-16 in Nellore district. The highway had to be closed down for traffic following a heavy breach of road at Padugupadu and also near Nellore town. The traffic between Nellore and Vijayawada has been suspended, leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded for five kilometers on either side. Officials said traffic on one side was restored in the afternoon. Vehicles from Tirupati to Srikalahasti were diverted at Tottembedu, leading to huge traffic jam on the national

highway. Police were advising motorists to divert their vehicles through Kadapa, Pamuru and Darsi. With bus services suspended, hundreds of passengers were stuck in the Nellore bus station. Hundreds of train and bus passengers were also stranded in the flood-hit Chittoor, Kadapa and Anantapur districts. Meanwhile, there was no respite for people in temple town of Tirupati as several residential areas remained inundated. Heavy rains and floods have so far claimed 24 lives in the four districts while 17 people went missing. Kadapa district has accounted for 13 deaths while seven deaths were reported from Anantapur and four from Chittoor. According to officials, nearly 24 lakh people were affected by the floods. A total of 1,316 villages were hit by the heavy rains. The rains and floods damaged 1,549 houses. The authorities evacuated nearly 21,000 people and set up 243 relief camps.

BOOSTER DOSE: WHAT TOP HEALTH EXPERTS HAVE TO SAY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The discussion about booster dose has gained momentum among top health experts as they recommend it to people with comorbidities and healthcare workers. Some also argue that the priority should be to inoculate the entire population with both doses of vaccines first. The US government on Friday opened up Covid booster shots to all adults in an effort to curb rising infections. However, Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya said that a decision on booster dose would be taken based on the expert recommendation only, adding that, the priority is to complete the adult

vaccination programme with both doses at the earliest. Talking to IANS, Dr Samiran Panda, Head, Epidemiology and Infectious diseases division at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said that Covid booster dose may be introduced based on the scientific evidence, but this time our focus should be oriented on total vaccination with both doses across the nation. Padma Shri Dr Ashok Seth, Chairman Pan Fortis Medical Council, told IANS, "We should not follow the US in administering the booster dose. Instead, we need to focus on second dose of vaccination which have been left behind. Once we will start administering booster dose, our mass vaccination pro-



gram may be hampered which we can't bear". Citing the reasons for booster dose in the US, he said that the Delta variant is causing infections in European countries and that is also a reason for booster dose there. However, India has passed that phase now. "Healthcare workers were the first to be vaccinated. But no

case has yet come after around 9 to 10 months which can advocate the need for the booster doses in India", opined Dr Seth. However, the Indian Medical Association has called for the third booster dose for the healthcare workers across the nation. The IMA said that after the union government's clarification

pertaining to the fact that a policy document on booster dose is underway, the IMA has also consolidated its stand on the booster dose for healthcare workers and other high-risk citizens across the country. Dr JA Jayalal, National President, IMA, said, "The booster dose for healthcare workers was initially desirable and we were not demanding it. But now we demand that healthcare workers should be given a booster dose as ample vaccine stock is available". Dr Ashutosh Shukla, Senior Director, Internal Medicine & Medical Advisor, Max Hospital, told IANS that the priority for India should be to ensure both doses of vaccination for the entire country this time. As the breakthrough

infection rate is much lower, the third shot should be given only to the vulnerable and those with immune suppress state. He said, "We have to wait for more research data on this as to when to administer the booster dose. The efficacy for the current vaccine falls between 70 and 80 per cent after 6 months of administration. So, whether the third shot should be given after 6 or 9 months or even after a year will be determined by the further research which is yet to come". However, a source in the health ministry said that a policy document on the booster dose is underway and the decision would be taken after an in-depth evaluation of the data.

PUBLIC NOT READY TO BELIEVE IN PM: RAHUL GANDHI

New Delhi: After farmers decided to continue their stir till the farm laws are repealed legally, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said that public is not ready to believe the Prime Minister. In a tweet he said, "People who have suffered false rhetoric are not ready to believe the words of the Prime Minister! Farmers' Satyagraha continues." Farmer leaders are firm on the earlier declared agenda that their widespread protest will continue till there is legal backing for minimum support price (MSP) and the three contentious farm laws are repealed in a constitutional manner in the Parliament. The other demands of the farmers include paying tributes to the martyr farmers in the Parliament when the winter session starts on November 29, withdrawal of FIRs against farmers and compensation to the families of the martyr farmers. Various farmers' organisations have been protesting for over a year demanding repeal of the three farm laws and many of the farmers have been camping at various entry points of the national capital since November 26, 2020. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday announced to repeal the three laws passed by the Parliament last year and said the constitutional process to get rid of the laws would be taken up in the winter session of the Parliament that begins on November 29. He also appealed to the agitating farmers to end the protests and return to their field and home.



2023 polls will be contested under collective leadership: Pilot

Team Absolute | Jaipur

Former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot on Sunday that the 2023 elections in Rajasthan will be contested under a collective leadership, adding that he is aiming to form a Congress government in the state again.

He made the remarks to the media here and when asked if next elections will be held under his leadership, he said: "We all fought the elections together in 2018. The score of our 21 seats in 2013 elections went up to 100 in the 2018 elections. We have been contesting elections under a collective leadership and shall continue to do so under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi."

Pilot also denied that there was any faction in the party and said that the entire leadership took the decision of cabinet reshuffle.

"My aim is to form a Congress government in Rajasthan again. The people of Dalit society have been given a place in the cabinet. Earlier the representation was less and now it has been increased."

"What Priyanka ji did in Uttar Pradesh for women, its effect can also be seen in Rajasthan. The women's representation has been increased three times," he added.

Pilot said that he had announced in Delhi to take up any responsibility being given to him by party High Command.

"Who will get which department will be decided by the High Command and Ajay Maken."

"In the next elections, we will give maximum tickets to women. I worked hard in the 2018 elections and will work harder in the 2023 elections and will connect to the people to strengthen the party," he added.



NO POSITIVE IMPACT IN WESTERN UP: STATE BJP LEADERS ON FARM LAW REPEAL

Team Absolute | New Delhi

While the Centre's announcement to repeal the three farm laws is being seen as a political decision with an eye on the forthcoming Assembly elections, many in the BJP believe that it is not going to benefit too much in the poll-bound states especially in Uttar Pradesh as the government reacted late in deciding the fate of the laws.

In his address to the nation on Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the decision to repeal the three farm laws and the constitutional process to repeal would be completed during the Parliament Session that would start at the end of this month.

BJP leaders in Uttar Pradesh feel that the decision was late and will have no positive impact on the party's electoral prospects in the western part of the state.

The saffron camp in Uttar Pradesh believes that if the same



decision would have been taken four or five months earlier, the political situation would have been different.

"This decision can be taken any time since the farmer's protest started a year ago. This delayed

decision is not going to help us in Western Uttar Pradesh and it has already caused lots of political damage," a senior Uttar Pradesh BJP leader said.

A section in the state BJP mentioned that if the decision would

have been taken before then Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant Chaudhary would have not joined hands with the Samajwadi Party (SP).

"RLD-SP alliance will pose a challenge to us in Western Uttar Pradesh and it could have been avoided if the decision to repeal laws was taken earlier. In that case, RLD may have joined hands with us," a party leader said.

Another leader from the state pointed out that the decision sent two messages among masses: firstly the BJP is "losing ground" and secondly it "dented the strong image" of the Prime Minister.

"People are saying that after realising about losing ground, the Centre has decided to withdraw the laws. It has also dented the 'Kadak' (strong) image of the Prime Minister, which will also go against us in elections as people know that he (Modi) never bowed down to any pressure. But, now the image has changed," he said.

Demand to repeal CAA gains ground in UP

Archana Sharma | Lucknow

Several Muslim organisations and members of the civil society have now urged the government to repeal the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the withdrawal of the farm laws.

BSP MP from Amroha, Kunwar Danish Ali, has called for the repeal of the CAA "without further delay."

"Repealing 3 Farm Laws is a welcome move. I congratulate farmers for their will power to fight, sacrifice and defeat the mighty state power and their crony capitalist friends. Prime Minister Modi must also reconsider and repeal CAA 'without further delay,'" he tweeted.

Jamiat president Maulana Arshad Madani welcomed the announcement of withdrawal of the three farm laws and lauded the farmers for their "success". Madani claimed that the agitation against the CAA encouraged farmers to protest the farm laws. He demanded that just like the agri



laws, the CAA should be withdrawn. He said that the decision to withdraw the farm laws has shown that democracy and the power of the people is paramount. "Every effort was made to subdue the farmers' movement just as it was

done with all other agitations in the country," Madani alleged. Darul Uloom Deoband spokesman, Maulana Sufiyan Nijami, said that just like the farm laws, the government should take back the CAA for harmony and peace in society.

SR Darapuri, a social activist, also said that time has come for the CAA to be repealed, adding that the people's sentiments should be respected.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, another activist who participated in the anti-CAA protests said that "like-minded people" were mulling restarting their agitation that had been called off during the pandemic.

"The farmers have shown the way and if sustained protests by them can force repealing of farm laws, why can't we do the same?" she queried.

The CAA was notified on December 12, 2019, and came into force with effect from January 10, 2020.

After the CAA was passed by Parliament, widespread protests were witnessed in different parts of the country.

The CAA is aimed at granting Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities like Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan but Muslims do not find a mention.

NCB should be made accountable: Congress after HC judgment in Aryan Khan case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A day after Bombay High Court ruled that there was "no prima facie evidence" against Aryan Khan and co-accused Munmun Dhamecha and Arbaaz Merchant for charges pertaining to "conspiracy" and "common intent" in the case lodged after the cruise ship raids, Congress leaders said that there should be provision for penalising agencies and officers.

Senior Congress spokesperson and noted lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi said, "The Bombay High Court's observations clear and judicious. Aryan Khan was needlessly kept in jail for 25 days at the whims and fancies of the NCB in gross abuse of law. The law should now take its course against the delinquent officers."

Congress spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill said, "High Court observations of no evidence or conspiracy in Aryan Khan case yet again highlight the need to fix accountability in form of penal consequences on agencies and the prosecution for wrongful arrests, unwarranted detention and wrongful indictment."

He said the agencies cannot use law book as a flexi tool. Delivering the detailed 14-page order, Justice Nitin Sambre of Bombay High Court said that considering the material brought on record by the NCB, the court has not found that prima facie, there was no positive evidence against the

accused trio. It may be recalled that Khan, Dhamecha and Merchant were granted conditional bail by the High Court on October 28 vide a speaking order and the detailed order was made available only now.

Justice Sambre further said that the NCB claim on the common intention to commit an offence under the NDPS Act, (accused) found to be in possession of commercial quantity of drugs and hatching conspiracy is "liable to be rejected."

The court said that merely because the accused trio was travelling on the cruise cannot be grounds to invoke the offence under Section 29 (criminal conspiracy) against them.

"This court is required to be sensitive to the fact that there has to be presence of basic material in the form of evidence so as to substantiate the case of conspiracy against the applicants (accused)," Justice Sambre noted.

He further said that no drugs were found on Khan, while the quantity recovered from Dhamecha and Merchant was 'small' under the NDPS Act.

Under such circumstances, in order to invoke the offence of conspiracy against the accused, there has to be positive evidence about an agreement to do an unlawful act, or to do lawful act by unlawful means, and such agreement must precede with meeting of minds, but there is no such material in this case, said the court.



Laws will return after polls: RLD warns farmers

Team Absolute | Muzaffarnagar

The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) has warned farmers that "once the BJP wins the upcoming elections, the laws will be back to haunt us".

"They have decided to repeal the laws, but if they win the elections, the BJP will bring back these laws," said RLD President Jayant Chaudhary, while addressing a gathering in Baghra village here on Saturday.

"The way the Prime Minister said that he could not make farmers understand the laws, is alarming. Besides, a Bihar government Minister also stated that the farming laws would be imposed again. I am not saying this but the BJP leaders and their allies are saying this."

The RLD chief congratulated the farmers over the 'historic win' and said that the agitation proved that every citizen has become an 'andolanjeevi'.



Chaudhary also reminded the government of the sacrifices made by the farmers during the agitation and touched upon the Lakhimpur

Kheri violence deaths as well.

"As many as 700 farmers died during the agitation, their families need respect. The minister, whose son is responsible for the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, is still holding his post. This needs to be answered," he said.

Attacking Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the RLD chief said that he did not know how to formulate and implement policies. "How such a person can be made Chief Minister? In 2017, the state had a debt of Rs 4 lakh crores, which has now increased to Rs 6 lakh crores. The situation is such that the government is unable to pay even salaries to its employees, but Yogi Adityanath continues with his propaganda 24x7."

Chaudhary reiterated his promise of one crore government jobs to the people of the state.

"If we are voted to power, one crore government job will be given to the youths. If we fail to do so, I will step down from my position," he added.

Hum Saath Saath Hain

New Delhi | Lucknow

A picture, it is said, speaks more than a thousand words and this one definitely does.

The picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath walking side by side, with the Prime Minister's arms behind the Chief Minister, speaks volumes about the relationship the two leaders share.

Yogi Adityanath, who shared the photograph from his Twitter handle, wrote: "Hum nikal pade hain pran karke, apna tan-man arpan karke, zid hai ek surya ugana hai, amber se ooncha jana hai, ek



away in his convoy.

Opposition leaders had tweeted the photograph, taken during the inauguration of Purvanchal Expressway, terming it as an insult to the Chief Minister.

Rajnath slams 'irresponsible nations' for misrepresenting laws

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday attacked China's expansionist policy in Indo-Pacific region without taking its name, saying some "irresponsible nations" for their partisan interests give inappropriate interpretations to international laws.

Speaking during formal induction of Indigenously developed Ship Visakhapatnam into Indian Navy in Mumbai, Singh said, "Some irresponsible nations, for the sake of their narrow partisan interests, keep on giving new and inappropriate interpretations to these international laws from hegemonic tendencies."

"The arbitrary interpretations create obstacles in the path of a rule-based maritime order. We envision a rule-based Indo-Pacific, with freedom of navigation, free trade and universal values, in which the interests of all the participating countries are protected," he said. Singh reiterated that India, as a responsible maritime stakeholder, is a support-

er of consensus-based principles and a peaceful, open, rule-based and stable maritime order.

"In the 'United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea' (UNCLOS) of 1982, territorial waters of nations, exclusive economic zones and the principle of 'Good order at sea' have been propounded.

The defence minister emphasised on the need to keep the Indo-Pacific region open, safe and secure, terming it as the primary objective of the Indian Navy.

He asserted that India's interests are directly linked with the Indian Ocean and the region is crucial for the world economy.

"Challenges such as piracy, terrorism, illegal smuggling of arms and narcotics, human trafficking, illegal fishing and damage to the environment are equally responsible for affecting the maritime domain. Therefore, the role of the Indian Navy becomes very important in the entire Indo-Pacific region," he added. Singh presided over formal induction of the naval ship, first of the four



Visakhapatnam class destroyers, indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organisation Directorate of Naval Design and constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai. Named after the historic city of Andhra Pradesh on the east coast, Visakhapatnam, the 'City of Destiny', the ship has a total complement of about

315 personnel. During his address, Singh termed INS Visakhapatnam as a symbol of the growing maritime prowess of the country and a major milestone in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India, Make for the World'. He added that the ship is a reminder of ancient and medieval India's maritime

power, shipbuilding skills and glorious history.

Singh exuded confidence that the state-of-the-art ship, equipped with latest systems and weapons, will strengthen the maritime security and protect the interests of the nation.

He defined the ship as one of the most technologically advanced guided missile destroyers in the world which will cater to the present and future requirements of the Armed Forces and the nation as a whole. He appreciated the self-reliance efforts of the Indian Navy, terming navy's order of 39 of the 41 ships and submarines from Indian shipyards as a testament to their commitment towards achieving 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

He described the development of Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 'INS Vikrant' as an important milestone in their path to achieve 'Atmanirbharta'.

"The carrier will increase our reach from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean. Its commissioning will be a golden moment in the history of the Indian Defence. It will be the best occa-

sion to celebrate the 75th anniversary of India's independence and the 50th anniversary of India's victory in 1971 war," he said.

Singh praised the Indian Navy's consistent efforts to participate in various outreach programmes of the industries and increase indigenous items under 'Float', 'Move' and 'Fight' categories. Stressing on the need to maintain the momentum, he expressed confidence that "the steps taken by the government will continue to provide boost to the self-reliance efforts and we will soon build ships not just for India, but for the entire world".

He assured of government's continuous support to achieve this vision.

Saying that global security reasons, border disputes and maritime dominance have forced countries to move towards strengthening their military power, Rajnath Singh exhorted the public and private sector to take advantage of government's policies, work together and make India an indigenous shipbuilding hub.



BJP, CONGRESS FIGHT FOR CRUCIAL TRIBAL VOTES IN MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The BJP and the Congress are set to woo the tribal community in Madhya Pradesh ahead of the upcoming panchayat, urban body and 2023 Assembly elections.

Madhya Pradesh has a sizeable (around 21 per cent) tribal population. Therefore, the two parties are eyeing the tribal vote bank to win the elections.

Of the 84 Assembly constituencies where tribals are in abundance, the BJP won 34 of them in the 2018 Assembly elections, while in 2013, it won 59 constituencies. In this way, the party lost 25 seats in 2018.

In 2013, out of total 47 Assembly constituencies in the state, reserved for the tribals, the BJP won 31 seats, while the Congress won 15 seats. Whereas in the 2018 elections, the BJP won only 16 seats and the Congress won 30 seats.

Therefore, the BJP is now trying to plug the gap which

cost it the first rank in the 2018 polls by bringing back into its fold the tribals from the state.

On November 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a speech in Madhya Pradesh, as the BJP celebrated Tribal Pride Day on the birth anniversary of Birsu Munda, a tribal leader.

A grand closing ceremony is also scheduled to be held in Mandla on November 22 to mark the end of Tribal Pride Week. Similarly, on the sacrifice day of Tanya Bhil on December 4, a programme will be held in Patalpani of Indore.

Meanwhile, the Congress which is also trying to maintain its support, has organised a meeting of tribal legislators and leaders in Bhopal on November 24.

The increasing efforts and intensified campaigns by both the parties to secure their tribal vote bank proves that the community has the power to swing the elections in the state.



Intention of the government is to make Vidisha an education hub: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that it is our endeavour that Vidisha along with being an ideal district should also make its mark as an education hub. He said that he would visit the districts continuously to speed up the development and construction works in the state. Chouhan on Sunday took stock of the works of Science Block rooms and girls hostel under construction at a cost of about eight and a half crore rupees in Government Girls College in Vidisha.

Chouhan directed the officials of construction agencies to complete all the construction works by March 2022. He said that the works have been delayed due to Corona. But the pace of work in Vidisha is satisfactory. Chouhan said that there is already an engineering col-



lege in Vidisha, apart from the medical college, new institutes are being built continuously in other courses. He said that if Vidisha is recog-

nised as an education hub, the government will extend all help in this direction. Chouhan directed to make material lab at the

construction site to make the quality of construction works excellent. He directed the collector to continuously monitor the construction work to ensure quality. BDA CEO Budhesh Vaidya briefed the Chief Minister about the construction works.

Chouhan also planted a Rudraksha sapling in the garden premises of the Shaskiya Kanya Agrani Mahavidyalaya. MLA Umakant Sharma, Leena Jain, Rajshree Singh and District Panchayat President Toran Singh Dangi along with the officials were present.

Chouhan along with his wife Sadhna Singh Chouhan offered prayers at Badh Wale Ganesh Mandir situated on the banks of river Betwa. Chief Minister Chouhan also performed Bhoomi-Poojan for the expansion works of the temple. He directed that due to the under construction bridge near the temple, there should not be any kind of obstruction in the movement of devotees coming to the temple.

Poachers Electrocute Tigress To Death

Team Absolute | Sidhi

The burnt skin, hairs and collar ID (tracking system) of the tigress, identified as T-30, were found near Banjari village (outside the reserve area) in the Sarai western range of forest in the Singrauli district on Saturday, said YP Singh, Director, Sanjay Tiger Reserve

A radio-collared adult tigress from the Sanjay Tiger Reserve was allegedly killed by poachers through electrocution in Madhya Pradesh's Singrauli district, an official said on Sunday.

The burnt skin, hairs and collar ID (tracking system) of the tigress, identified as T-30, were found near Banjari village (outside the reserve area) in the Sarai western range of forest in the Singrauli district on Saturday, said YP Singh, Director, Sanjay Tiger Reserve.

The rest of the carcass is also being retrieved.

The tracking signal showed T-30's previous location in the Mohan range (Kusmi)

in the Sidhi district and later at Banjari village in the Singrauli district till 6.30 pm on November 5 before the contact was lost around 11.30 pm that day, he said, adding a forest team had been trying to trace this tigress since then.

"During the search, which was carried out with the help of sniffer dogs, the remains of the tigress, including the burnt skin, hairs and collar ID, were found in a pit along with two blood-stained jute bags near Banjari village on Saturday," Singh said.

He said electricity wires were found laid from transformers located about two km away from the spot. "A search is on with the help of police to trace and nab poachers involved in the incident," he added.

LABOURER'S HAND CHOPPED OFF IN MP AFTER HE ASKED FOR PENDING WAGES

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A 45-year-old labourer's hand was chopped off allegedly by his employer when he asked for his pending wages in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh.

As per the police, Ashok Saket who had been working as a construction worker for Ganesh Mishra in Dolmau village of Rewa district demanded his payment which was due for last few months. Saket visited Mishra's house and asked him to clear his payment.

Mishra refused to give his payme3nt saying he has already cleared it. "Refusing to clear payment of labourer resulted into heated argument between Mishra and Saket. In the mean time, Mishra went inside and came out with a sword and attacked Saket. Mishra tried to hit Saket on his neck, but he defended with his hand. Due to this, one of his hand

was chopped off," Shiv Kumar Verma, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) of Rewa told IANS. After the incident, Mishra ran away to escape from the police. Mishra's family members changed Saket's clothes (stained with blood). "They (Mishra's family) tried to hide severed hand and blood stained clothes. As Saket's condition deteriorated, some villagers rushed him to a government hospital and informed the police," Verma added.

Subsequently, the district police reached the spot and search operation was launched on Saturday night. "Mishra was arrested around 50 km away from the spot. We also got severed hand and handed over to the doctors treating Saket in the hospital," he added. Saket's condition is critical and is admitted in the ICU ward, said a senior doctor in Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital (SGMH) in Rewa.

CM PLANTS GULMOHAR AND HALDU PLANTS IN SMART UDYAN

Bhopal. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accompanied by environment lovers of the city today planted Gulmohar and Haldu saplings in Smart Udyan. Kalpana Jha, Amarjeet Jha and Shalini Vishwakarma of Swachhata team 'Kabad Se Jugaad' presented saplings to the Chief Minister.

One sapling was presented in a small bottle in the form of Mickey Mouse and the

other in an attractive pot made out of old tyres. Chouhan praised this creativity of the artists. The team informed that the 'Kabad Se Jugaad' was formed in Bhopal in the year 2015 with women as participants. Smt. Kalpana Jha is also the cleanliness brand ambassador of Municipal Corporation. The scrap materials are used to make artifacts along with plants in 15 parks in city and are

displayed and distributed. The Gulmohar planted today is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Huge bunches of flowers blooming in between the leaves of the tree, make it seem very attractive. In summer, instead of leaves, Gulmohar trees are laden with flowers. It is also rich in medicinal properties.

The name of the tree by which the city of

Haldwani came into existence, is known as Haldu. Turmeric trees were in abundance in this area. It is believed that because of these trees, the city got its name Haldwani. Turmeric tree is extremely useful for biodiversity. This tree gives many times more pure air than ordinary trees. Birds also settle in such trees. Its leaves are used for fodder and dry twigs are used for burning.

जनजातीय गौरव दिवस

समापन समारोह

22 नवम्बर, रामनगर, मंडला

18 सितम्बर, 2021 को राजा शंकर शाह व रघुनाथ शाह के बलिदान दिवस से प्रारंभ हुये "जनजातीय गौरव अभियान" के तहत भोपाल में 15 नवम्बर, 2021 को मनाये गये देश के पहले "जनजातीय गौरव दिवस" के सप्ताह का समापन और उनकी जन्मस्थली पर

प्रतिमा के भूमिपूजन और मोतीमहल, रामनगर में विभिन्न जनकल्याणकारी योजनाओं का शुभारंभ

मुख्य अतिथि
श्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान
 मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश
 गरिमाययी उपस्थिति
श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते, राज्यमंत्री
 इस्पात एवं ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार
कुंवर विजय शाह, मंत्री
 वन विभाग
श्री बिसाहलाल सिंह, मंत्री
 स्वास्थ्य, नागरिक आपूर्ति एवं उपभोक्ता संरक्षण विभाग
सुश्री मीना सिंह मांडवे, मंत्री
 जनजातीय कार्य एवं अनुसूचित जाति कल्याण विभाग
श्रीमती सम्पतिा उडके, सांसद राज्यसभा
श्रीमती हिमाद्री सिंह, सांसद, राहडोल
श्री ओमप्रकाश धुर्वे, पूर्व मंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश शासन

विभिन्न विकास कार्य

- 18 सितम्बर, 2021 को घोषित वनाधिकार व वन प्रबंधन अधिकार के अंतर्गत 11 हजार हेक्टेयर के सामुदायिक पट्टों का वितरण।
- 148 बैगा परिवारों के छह गांवों को सम्मिलित कर रहवासी अधिकार (Habitat Right) का पट्टा भी प्रदान किया जायेगा।
- 'बांस से आजीविका विकास' के अंतर्गत 7500 उच्च उत्पादकता वाले पेड़ जनजातियों को होंगे वितरित। बांस उत्पाद निर्माण प्रशिक्षण की शुरुआत।
- 698 करोड़ रुपये के कार्यों का भूमिपूजन
- राशन आपके ग्राम योजना के 11 वाहन हितग्राहियों को सौंपे जायेंगे।
- 26 करोड़ रुपये के कार्यों का लोकार्पण।
- महिला स्व-सहायता समूहों को 10 करोड़ रुपये तक का ऋण वितरण।
- प्रसिद्ध चोगान देवी मंदिर के निकट श्रद्धालुओं हेतु सामुदायिक भवन का भूमिपूजन।
- B.A.I.G.A. "बेगा" बेसिक अमेनिटी इनक्लूजन बाय गवर्नमेंट एजेंसी के द्वारा 'योजनायें आपके द्वार अभियान' की शुरुआत। इसका उद्देश्य P.V.T.G. अति पिछड़ी जनजातियों के समग्र उत्थान हेतु योजनाओं/मूलभूत सुविधाओं को उन तक पहुंचाना है।

जनजातीय उत्थान के लिए समर्पित मध्यप्रदेश सरकार

जनजातीय कार्य विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश शासन

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आयोजन : जनजातीय कार्य विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश शासन



EDITOR'S SPECS

Will BJP be benefited by rollback of farm laws in UP?

By announcing the roll back of the three farm laws and apologising for his inability to convince farmers on the issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has managed to effectively check the reverses that the BJP was likely to face in the upcoming Assembly elections. The BJP is elated that this major issue that has changed political alignments in western Uttar Pradesh, in particular, has been neutralised by the Prime Minister. Legislators bore the brunt of farmers' anger in the region since the past several months when their agitation was underway. "We knew that the issue will dominate the campaign and we will face reverses in western Uttar Pradesh where the farmers' agitation had a major impact. The Prime Minister's decision to roll back the farm laws will help us to a great extent but we now face the problem of justifying our earlier support to the contentious laws in the past months," said a BJP leader. The state unit of the BJP is confident that the rollback decision will help it greatly in regaining lost ground in western Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh BJP president says, "We are working overtime to regain lost ground after the Prime Minister's announcement. We are also confident that farmers will now listen to what we have to say." According to sources, the BJP is even toying with the idea of replacing those legislators who had gone overboard in criticizing the farmers during their agitation. However, one issue that continues to work against the ruling party is the Lakhimpur Kheri incident. A party functionary admitted that the opposition will now harp on the October 3 incident because they have lost the farm laws' issue after the Prime Minister's announcement. Besides, the mood of the farmers is still a cause of concern for the BJP.

BAKHT BULAND SHAH, FOUNDER OF NAGPUR WHO ESTABLISHED AND EXPANDED THE CITY

Era of the ruler, his successor Chand Sultan and other descendants of this dynasty who lorded over the region is an important chapter in the history of Central India. The royal graveyard is not easily accessible and needs authorities' attention.

Shams Ur Rehman Alavi

More than three hundred years ago, Bakht Buland Shah, the ruler of the Deogarh dynasty had founded Nagpur. By joining twelve different hamlets, he created and built a city. Today, it is the biggest city in entire central India and one of the fastest growing cities in the country. But the credit of laying foundation of the city, beautifying and expanding it, goes to Bakht Buland Shah who had joined Sitabardi, Gadge, Bhankheda, Raipur, Rajapur, Sakkardara, Phutala, Haripur and several other hamlets to form the city. The mohallas were marked, roads were laid and structures were built. The fort was constructed in Nagpur, a mosque was also built that exists even today, and it was during his reign that the population of the town grew. Under his successors, the city witnessed even more fast growth. The dynasty that earlier ruled from Deogarh which is now located in Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh, had later made Nagpur, its seat of governance in the region.

Historical texts say that Jatba was the Gond chieftain who ruled from Deogarh (Devgad) in Emperor Akbar's era. After him, his son Koka Shah sat on the throne and he was succeeded by Bakht Buland Shah. When there was a dispute over succession, Bakht Buland Shah sought Aurangzeb's assistance and his effort paid off. His claim and authority was

accepted, and he became the ruler. Bakht Buland Shah had also spent years in the royal court at Delhi.

Shah was a Gond, who had embraced Islam. He had five sons-- Chand Sultan, Mohammad Shah, Ali Shah, Yusuf Shah, Wali Shah. It was Chand Sultan who succeeded his father. During his reign the fort was strengthened and the five major gates were constructed. Also, the Juma Talab was built along with the Juma Masjid. Besides, wells were dug and gardens came up. Unfortunately, the dynasty and its role in laying the foundation of Nagpur, gets a passing mention in texts these days. After Chand Sultan, his son Burhan Shah succeeded. Earlier, the area under Bakht Buland Shah's control included the parts of Chhindwara, Balaghat and Betul in MP, apart from Nagpur, Seoni and Bhandara in Maharashtra. However, his son Chand Sultan sensed that Mughal power was weakening and hence captured more areas and extended the territory. He captured Paunar.

But after Chand Sultan's death in 1735, trouble started. Wali Shah rebelled and removed the 'obstacle'-putting to death Bahadur Shah, who was expected to succeed. The two brothers of Bahadur Shah, Akbar and Buran were young. So their mother appealed to Raghoji Bhonsale. Soon, Raghoji arrived, defeated Wali Shah, and restored Burhan Shah to the throne. In

return, she divided the kingdom in three parts, gave one part to Raghoji. As a result, Raghoji's power rose over the years.

A few years later when Akbar Shah rebelled against Burhan Shah, again Raghoji's intervention was sought. Burhan Shah now gave Akbar Shah's jagir to Raghoji. A part of revenue was to be given to Raghoji and when Burhan Shah's diwan tried to increase his sway, Raghoji had him arrested and took Burhan Shah in his protection, giving the latter a pension of Rs 3 lakh per annum. However, even after he took over, the relationship remained of mutual respect. Raghoji would bring to notice important affairs to Burhan Shah's knowledge, discussed it and a tradition continued that successors of Raghoji would get blessings from the Shah dynasty's contemporary nominal ruler of the era. In fact, the tradition continued till the middle of the 20th century, when one of the descendants--Azam Shah was alive. Author Sharfuddin Sahil, who has written multiple texts on the history and heritage of the region, mentions that Burhan Shah saw reign of four Bhonsla rulers--Raghoji, Janoji, Modhaji and Raghoji II, all of whom respected him and called him at Raja Sahab. After Burhan Shah's death in 1896, he was buried in the royal graveyard of the Gond Muslim dynasty at Sakkardara in Nagpur. He had six sons viz. Bahram Shah, Suleman Shah, Firoz Shah, Sikandar Shah, Azam Shah and Anwar Shah.



Bahram Shah succeeded his father.

Sir Richard Jenkins says that much of the credit for development of agriculture, industry and commerce in Gondwana and Nagpur goes to Bakht Buland Shah who brought industrious settlers into his domain by offering them liberal land grants. "As ruler, his biggest achievement is the foundation of Nagpur. He ensured that the city was built, divided in localities, roads constructed and a wall around it raised to protect it. Later, in 1706, he shifted capital from Devgad to Nagpur", mentions the gazetteer. After Burhan Shah, the Bhonsla dynasty reigned until the British completely took over. Sadly, the dynasty that played such an important role, doesn't get due attention when history of the region is mentioned.---

The fort at Deogarh lies in ruins and the graveyard at Sakkardara too remains unattended-- unmarked

graves and the property eyed by land sharks. This Gond Muslim Shahi Qabristan was once spread over a large area and is now restricted to just over 2 acres. The reason is encroachment and lack of proper maintenance.

The Kings, their descendants and family members were buried here. In fact, thieves earlier targeted the place as they felt that the ornaments may be buried with the bodies in the graves. The State government has designated it as Waqf land, however, there has been less focus on safeguarding and protecting the place. In all, around 81 graves are located here but most of them can't be identified easily. Apart from Bakht Buland Shah, the graves of Chand Sultan, Burhan Shah, Bahram Shah, Rahman Shah, Suleman Shah, Azam Shah and their kin are located in this premises.

international

2 Patanjali TV channels stir controversy in Nepal

Kathmandu | Agencies

Two television channels owned by yoga guru Ramdev in Nepal have stirred controversy after they were being operated without registration.

During a function on Friday, Sher Bahadur Deuba launched the two channels -- Aastha Nepal TV and Patanjali Nepal TV -- in the presence of Ramdev, Acharaya Balkrishna and other top leaders of major political parties.

"Foreign investment in the media sector is prohibited as per the Nepali law. We have not received any application to register these two television channels," Gogon Bahadur Hamal, Director General, Department of Information and Broadcasting, said.

"We have formed an investigation team to study the registration of the television channels. If they have started broadcasting without prior approval, we will take action."



It is said that multi-national company Patanjali has invested in the two channels where Ramdev and Acharaya Balkrishna are the main promoters.

As per the Nepali law, foreign investment is not allowed in media and film sectors.

But if any foreign television channel

needs to operate from Nepal, one should have fulfilled all required legal and other procedures. During the function, Prime Minister Deuba had assured that he will provide land for Patanjali for medical purpose. The two channels were part of Patanjali group's latest venture. Founded by Acharya Balakrishna in 2006, Patanjali went on from starting as an Ayurveda medicine manufacturing company to other fields including clothing (Patanjali Paridhan), dairy (Patanjali Daary), food items and more.

This is not the first time that a Patanjali product was landed in controversy in Nepal. Earlier in June, the Himalayan nation had banned the Coronil kit.

The Ministry of Health and Population and Department of Health, Nepal had put a ban until the coronil kit was registered with the department according to the rules of the Government of Nepal.

2 Philippine police officers killed, 4 wounded in clash with rebels

Manila | Agencies

Two police officers have been killed and four others wounded in a clash with the rebels in the central Philippines, the Philippine National Police (PNP) said Sunday.

The PNP said the police officers were hit by an improvised explosive device during a fire-fight on Saturday with an undetermined number of New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Gamay, a town in Northern Samar province, Xinhua news agency reported.

The PNP said the officers were members of its elite unit the Special Action Force (SAF) created as a highly specialised strike force to fight insurgents, terrorists, and organised crime groups.

There were no reported casualties on the rebel side.

The NPA rebels have been fighting the government since 1969. They concentrate their attacks on rural areas and small-scale skirmishes with the military.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte restarted talks to end the decades-old insurgency after he came to power in 2016, but the negotiations have faltered.

The NPA strength is currently estimated at 3,000, significantly lower than its peak in the 1980s.



Iraq says deadline of US military exit not extended

Baghdad | Agencies

Iraq has denied reports that the US had extended the period of its military presence in Iraq beyond December 31.

Tahseen al-Khafaji, spokesman of the Iraqi Joint Operations Command, told local media that the reports about extending the deadline of US troops' withdrawal from Iraq are "inaccurate and incorrect", and the scheduled exit of American combat troops on December 31 is not changed, reports Xinhua news agency.

Al-Khafaji explained that the cooperation between Iraq and the US after the departure of the combat troops would be in the areas of training, armament, and

intelligence information against the Islamic State terrorist group. The spokesman's comment came after media reports said the US combat



forces will not leave Iraq and Syria despite arguments that Washington should disengage from the Middle East following its quick Afghanistan withdrawal. In July, the US and Iraq held a session of strategic dialogue, during which the two countries agreed to withdraw all American combat troops from Iraq by the December 31 deadline.

IS-claimed blasts raise concerns in Afghanistan

Kabul | Agencies

Concerns among residents of Kabul have increased the the Afghan capital witnessed a series of bomb blasts conducted by the Islamic State (IS) terror group, with the two latest explosions in Dashti Barchi killing one person and wounding six others last week. Spokesman for the Interior Ministry Qari Sayed Khosti confirmed the blasts on Twitter, saying one people was killed and six others were injured, and all the victims were civilians, reports Xinhua news agency. Without providing more details, the spokesman said an investigation had been initiated into the attacks. In the meantime, locals said the first blast ripped through a mini-bus in the afternoon of November 17, claiming four lives and wounding two others. Thirty minutes later, another blast rocked the neighbourhood Dehbori area, causing panic among locals. The IS has reportedly claimed responsibility for



the terrorist attacks. On November 13, a similar blast targeted a mini-bus in the same locality, the Dashti Barchi area in Police District 13. Three persons were killed and a few others injured. The hardliner IS group had also claimed the explosion. After the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August and the formation of a caretaker administration, the security situation has been comparatively improved, a development that has been largely welcomed by Afghans. However, the recent terror attacks for which the IS outfit has

claimed responsibility have caused concerns among the war-weary Afghans. The IS group, which has challenged the Taliban-led Islamic Emirate, has also claimed responsibility for a series of terrorist attacks, including the brazen assault on the Kabul military hospital in early November that left over a dozen killed or injured. It also claimed responsibility for deadly attacks on Shia mosques in Kunduz and Kandahar provinces in October that led to the deaths of hundreds of people, ownplaying the IS threat, spokesman of the Taliban-led government Zabihullah Mujahid said that the security forces would continue to target and destroy IS hi. In the latest operation-Shamali locality of Kabul on Wednesday night, killing a militant and arresting few others", Taliban official Inamullah Samangani said Thursday. "Even a weak enemy could prove to be catastrophe if overlooked," a Kabul resident told Xinhua on Saturday.

MALAYSIA'S LEADING COALITION WINS KEY STATE ELECTION

Kuala Lumpur | Agencies

Malaysia's Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition led by the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) scored a key election victory on Saturday, winning over control of the Malacca state.

The coalition took 21 of 28 state assembly seats, granting it a two-thirds majority in the state assembly, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the results announced by the election commission. The state election was triggered after several state assemblymen from the ruling coalition withdrew support for the state's chief minister, leading to the dissolution of the state assembly on October 5. BN,

which had governed Malaysia since the country's independence in 1957, lost the state and also lost control of the government for the first time after been defeated by the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition in the national and state polls in 2018. Following the collapse of the PH coalition led by former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad in 2020, BN made a comeback after partnering with a number of defectors from PH under a government led by former prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin. Ubyiddin, who heads the Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), had in turn resigned on Aug. 16 before being succeeded by UMNO vice president Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who was sworn



in on August 21.

Tensions between PPBM and BN had seen the federal political allies compete against each other at the state level along with the main opposition coalition PH, leading to multi-cornered fights seen as a test of whether UMNO-led BN could go alone in the coming national polls which must be held on or before July 2023.

GUNMAN SHOT DEAD AFTER KILLING 1, INJURING 4 IN JERUSALEM

Jerusalem: One person died and four others were wounded in a shooting in East Jerusalem on Sunday morning, with the gunman also shot dead, local police said. The incident took place outside the al-Aqsa mosque compound in East Jerusalem's Old City, Xinhua news agency reported. The injured, two civilians and two police officers, were hospitalised. Israel's Magen David Adom emergency health service said in a statement that one civilian was in a critical condition and the other was in a moderate-to-serious condition. The two officers sustained minor injuries, the police said.



BJP central leadership makes Vinod Tawde national general secretary in apparent message to Fadnavis

The developments assume significance in the context of Maharashtra as Tawde was perceived to be the main rival of Opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis and was allegedly side-lined within the party between 2014 and 2019.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra BJP leader Vinod Tawde has been made the national general secretary of the party. The decision was announced by BJP president J P Nadda on Sunday. Notably, general secretaries report directly to the party president. The developments assume significance in the context of Maharashtra as Tawde was perceived to be the main rival of Opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis and was allegedly side-lined within the party between 2014 and 2019. A section within the BJP said, "The elevation of Tawde somewhere conveys a bold message to Fadnavis, who has till now enjoyed a free hand in Maharashtra."

Tawde was the sitting MLA from Borivali constituency. Before the denial of ticket, he was first divested of the important portfolio of medical education and then school education by then chief minister Devendra Fadnavis. A senior BJP functionary said requesting anonymity, "In politics, nothing is permanent. Nobody can take the central leadership for granted." A seasoned politician belonging to the Maratha community and groomed by the late Gopinath Munde and Pramod Mahajan, Tawde exercised caution while commenting on the new role. Expressing gratitude to the party and leaders for reposing faith in him, he said, "I will do my best in every given assignment." A close aide of Tawde, however, admitted, "The new appointment is a huge reward and it comes with greater responsibility." Party insiders said, "It is a big development as

the central leadership has rewarded Tawde with a major national role. It is also a comment on matters concerning the state. He enjoys a good rapport with leaders cutting across party lines like the NCP, Congress and the Shiv Sena. Tawde (58) started his political career as a student leader of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad. In 1999, he became the youngest leader to assume the charge of the party's Mumbai president. He has also served as the state BJP general secretary from 1995 to 1999 and 2002 to 2011. Tawde made a mark in the party for his organisational skills but he was not a mass leader. He contested in the assembly polls for the first time in 2014 and won from the Borivali seat. Tawde is also a three-time member of the state



legislative council and was the opposition leader in the council between 2011 and 2014. As a cabinet minister in the BJP-Shiv Sena government, he courted controversy over his educational certificate. Tawde did his engineering from the Dnyaneshwar Vidyapeeth in Pune and the institute did not have AICTE nod, which made the Congress and the NCP question his engineering degree. Tawde, however, has always maintained that he did nothing wrong and has rightfully earned his degree.

Pictures recall horror of 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In less than a week, the nation will observe the 13th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, which paralysed the nation's commercial capital for three days in 2008. These pictures recall the horror of the attacks that claimed more than 160 lives. They take us through the multiple locations of the attacks -- Taj Mahal Palace & Hotel, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), Trident Nariman Point, Leopold Cafe, Nariman House (better known as the Jewish Chabad House) and Cama Hospital. Explosions also rocked the Mazagon docks and took place in a taxi at Vile Parle. The three days were marked

by the bravery of NSG commandos, who rescued 300 people from the Taj, 250 from the Trident and 60 people (members of 12 different families) from Nariman House. Also showing exemplary courage were men of the Mumbai Police, such as Assistant Sub-Inspector Tukaram Omble, who captured a terrorist alive with his bare hands. The nation also mourned the martyrdom of Joint Commissioner of Police Hemant Karkare, Chief of Mumbai's Anti-Terrorism Squad, Additional Commissioner of Police Ashok Kamte, Senior Inspector Vijay Salaskar, Senior Inspector Shashank Shinde and the NSG commandos, Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan and Hawaldar Gajender Singh Bisht. Three railway officials were martyred at the CST.

Maharashtra to withdraw farm laws in winter session

The Maharashtra government is expected to withdraw the farm laws that were tabled in the monsoon session in the ensuing winter session

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government will repeal the farm laws that were tabled in the monsoon session to negate the three controversial laws, which were rolled back by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday. The state government is expected to withdraw them in the ensuing winter session. Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat said that since the original laws have been repealed, there is no need to pass the bills. "The decision will be taken in a meeting of group of ministers, headed by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar,

he stated. Meanwhile, farmer unions are also of the opinion that the bills introduced should be withdrawn. "The bills are just milder versions of the central laws and we had objected to them. It allowed the price below MSP with mutual consent and non-lifting of the produce was not part of the harassment definition. We objected to the power the government had in terms of essential commodities. They should now be immediately withdrawn," said Ajit Nawale, general secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Kisan Sabha. Maharashtra Agriculture Minister Dadaji Bhuse said that the decision would be taken by the ministerial committee. "We may say that the bills have no relevance now. Maharashtra government had in the past taken decisions and amended laws related to the marketing of agricultural produce," he added.

The Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government-led Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray introduced three bills to counter the controversial central laws amid the farmers' protest. The bills had the provisions for higher MSP for produce in farming agreement with traders, timely payment of dues, three-year jail term and Rs 5 lakh fine or both for harassment of farmers. It has the provision to give power to the state to regulate and prohibit production, supply, distribution and impose stock limits of essential commodities. After the laws- Essential Commodities (Amendment), Farmers (Empowerment and Protection), Guarantee Price; Agriculture Related Agreements (Maharashtra Amendment) and Amendments to Central Government Farmer Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation)- were tabled in both the houses.

Maharashtra Signs 25 MoUs To Bolster EV, Textiles And Data Center Sectors

Under Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, now in its 7th edition in Dubai, the government of Maharashtra is participating between 19th November 2021 and 2nd December 2021

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Kick-starting the Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 initiative to draw investments to the State of Maharashtra, 25 MoUs worth Rs 15,260 crores (\$2 billion) have been signed in the presence of Minister of Industries, Subhash Desai. Under Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, now in its 7th edition and its 1st international edition in World Expo in Dubai, the gov-

ernment of Maharashtra is participating between 19th November 2021 and 2nd December 2021. The delegation is led by Subhash Desai who is joined by a senior delegation including Additional Chief Secretary (Industries)- Baldev Singh, IAS, Directorate of Industries, Harshadeep Kamble, IAS, Chief Executive Officer Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation- P. Anbalagan, IAS and Joint Chief Executive Officer Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation- Amgothu Sri Ranga. Maharashtra has always been a global investment hub and is home to some of the largest and most successful business houses in the country. The state has been at the forefront of FDI inflows in India, attracting the largest share of



approximately One-Third of India's cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows during April 2000 - 2020. The state's journey has included an increase in FDI inflow from INR 2,543 Crores in 2004-05 to INR 79,216 Crores in 2019-20. The consolidated efforts of the Industries department, their robust policies and visionary leadership of the state government has boosted industrial growth and boosted investor confi-

dence, positioning the state to be one of the most favored investment destinations of the country, thereby flourishing the industrial sector of the state. The MoUs signed, which have the potential to generate employment for 10,851 people, are in key thrust sectors which are auto & auto components, logistics, EV, textiles, data center, pharma, bio-fuels and energy. It is interesting to note that all the interested FDI investors are of the sectors where Maharashtra has dedicated promotion policies. This signifies the importance of the state government's pro-activeness in policy development and good governance. Moreover, at least several companies from 6 countries such as Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Korea, Germany and Italy will be investing in Maharashtra.

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN

Navi Mumbai slips a rank but cleanest in Maharashtra

Meanwhile, consistently for the second year, Thane city achieved the 14th position nationally and the third position in Maharashtra in Swachh Survekshan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Navi Mumbai, which stood third in last year's Swachh Survekshan survey, has slipped to fourth place this year. However, it con-

tinues to top in Maharashtra as the cleanest city and has also topped in the country in the 'Cleanest Big City' category of 10-40 lakh population. This news has come as a disappointment for Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC), as they targeted the top rank amongst the 4,320 participating cities. NMMC commissioner, Abhijit Bangar, said, "The Navi Mumbai residents deserve this. Residents have actively partici-

pated in all the civic endeavours that included beautification, novel wall paintings and awareness messages in public areas." Commenting on the ranking, Bhupendra Shah, chairman Trustee Board, Builders Association of Navi Mumbai, said, "What really matters is that the city has topped in the country in the specified population category. This means that necessary action has been taken for this population. We

will go beyond the other cities in the next few years as the fundamentals in Navi Mumbai are very strong." BN Kumar, director, NatConnect Foundation, however, is unhappy with the slip. "The cleanliness in the city was and is limited only to highways and main roads such as Palm Beach Road. The lanes, bylanes have miles to go. The idea of dustbin free city was badly executed. People continue to dump garbage in the erstwhile

bin areas. Segregation of waste has also not picked up." Consistently for the second year, Thane city achieved the 14th position nationally and the third position in Maharashtra in the survey in the cities with more than 10 lakh population category. TMC initiated various campaigns on waste collection and transportation process, regular cleanliness, public awareness and capacity building to hold its position.

Over 2.5 lakh applications registered for Maharashtra state service exam: MPSC

Maharashtra state service preliminary exam will be held on January 2, 2022.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

For the upcoming Maharashtra state service preliminary exam, a total of 2,51,589 applications have been registered, the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) said on Sunday. The exam will be held on January 2, 2022. The exam will be held in phases-preliminary exam, main written exam and interview-- to fill a total of 290 posts in various departments and organisations in the state like deputy district magistrate Group A, deputy superintendent of police or assistant commissioner of police - Group A, assistant state tax commissioner, block development officer or equivalent posts, assistant director, Maharashtra Finance & Accounting Services, industry deputy director technical and several other posts.



The exam will be held at 37 centres across the state. At least 15,000 posts in various state government departments have been vacant since 2018. For the last several months aspirants have been demanding this examination be held and vacant posts be filled. Students have been preparing for the MPSC exams for the last two years.

RAJNATH SLAMS 'IRRESPONSIBLE NATIONS' FOR MISREPRESENTING LAWS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday attacked China's expansionist policy in Indo-Pacific region without taking its name, saying some "irresponsible nations" for their partisan interests give inappropriate interpretations to international laws. Speaking during formal induction of Indigenously developed Ship Visakhapatnam into Indian Navy in Mumbai, Singh said, "Some irresponsible nations, for the sake of their narrow partisan interests, keep on giving new and inappropriate interpretations to these international laws from hegemonic tendencies." "The arbitrary interpretations create obstacles in the path of a rule-based maritime order. We envision a rule-based Indo-Pacific, with freedom of navigation, free trade and universal values, in which the interests of all the participating countries are protected," he said. Singh reiterated that India, as a responsible maritime stakeholder, is

a supporter of consensus-based principles and a peaceful, open, rule-based and stable maritime order. "In the 'United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea' (UNCLOS) of 1982, territorial waters of nations, exclusive economic zones and the principle of 'Good order at sea' have been propounded. The defence minister emphasised on the need to keep the Indo-Pacific region open, safe and secure, terming it as the primary objective of the Indian Navy. He asserted that India's interests are directly linked with the Indian Ocean and the region is crucial for the world economy. "Challenges such as piracy, terrorism, illegal smuggling of arms and narcotics, human trafficking, illegal fishing and damage to the environment are equally responsible for affecting the maritime domain. Therefore, the role of the Indian Navy becomes very important in the entire Indo-Pacific region," he added. Singh presided over formal induction of the naval ship, first of the four



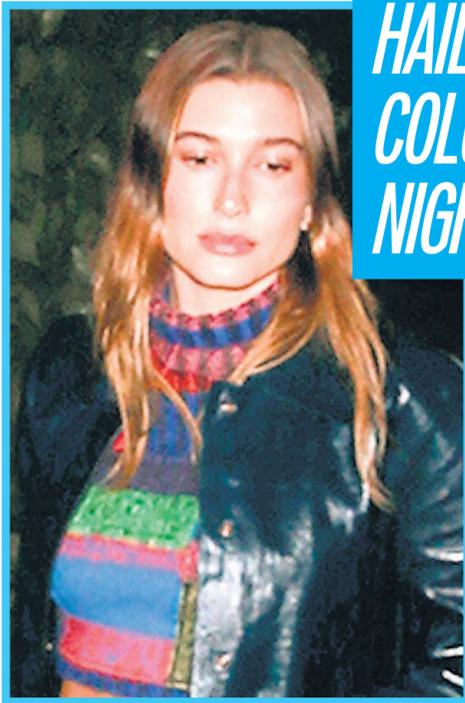
Visakhapatnam class destroyers, indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organisation Directorate of Naval Design and constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai. Named after the historic city of Andhra Pradesh on the east coast, Visakhapatnam, the 'City of Destiny',

the ship has a total complement of about 315 personnel. During his address, Singh termed INS Visakhapatnam as a symbol of the growing maritime prowess of the country and a major milestone in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India, Make for the World'.

He added that the ship is a reminder of ancient and medieval India's maritime power, shipbuilding skills and glorious history. Singh exuded confidence that the state-of-the-art ship, equipped with latest systems and weapons, will strengthen the maritime security and protect the interests of the nation. He defined the ship as one of the most technologically advanced guided missile destroyers in the world which will cater to the present and future requirements of the Armed Forces and the nation as a whole. He appreciated the self-reliance efforts of the Indian Navy, terming navy's order of 39 of the 41 ships and submarines from Indian shipyards as a testament to their commitment towards achieving 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. He described the development of Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 'INS Vikrant' as an important milestone in their path to achieve 'Atmanirbharta'. "The carrier will increase our reach from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean. Its commission-

ing will be a golden moment in the history of the Indian Defence. It will be the best occasion to celebrate the 75th anniversary of India's independence and the 50th anniversary of India's victory in 1971 war," he said. Singh praised the Indian Navy's consistent efforts to participate in various outreach programmes of the industries and increase indigenised items under 'Float', 'Move' and 'Fight' categories. Stressing on the need to maintain the momentum, he expressed confidence that "the steps taken by the government will continue to provide boost to the self-reliance efforts and we will soon build ships not just for India, but for the entire world". He assured of government's continuous support to achieve this vision. Saying that global security reasons, border disputes and maritime dominance have forced countries to move towards strengthening their military power, Rajnath Singh exhorted the public and private sector to take advantage of government's policies, work together and make India an indigenous shipbuilding hub.





HAILEY BALDWIN WEARS COLORFUL CROP TOP ON DATE NIGHT WITH JUSTIN BIEBER

New York | Agencies

Justin Bieber and Hailey Baldwin headed to restaurant Craig's in West Hollywood for a night on the town! Hailey Baldwin, 24, rocked colorful crop top top while out with husband Justin Bieber, 27! The chic t-shirt style sweater included magenta, navy, green and sky blue, which she paired with a mid-rise suede pant and a long varsity style leather jacket on Friday, Nov 19. Justin matched her vibe with an oversized leather jacket over his own look, which included a white t-shirt, a gray-blue pant, and bright blue baseball cap. He finished his look with a pair of blush pink lace-up sneakers, keeping his look casual for a night at West Hollywood hotspot Craig's (Justin

and Hailey are regulars, alongside close friend Kendall Jenner and her family). As they were leaving the restaurant, which serves gourmet comfort fare and an immensely popular vegan ice cream blend, Justin took the lead as they got into their electric Tesla. It's unclear if the couple stepped out for a special occasion, however, Hailey's 25th birthday falls in just two days on Monday, Nov. 22.



BRITNEY'S FIANCE THANKS HER FOR PUTTING HIS CAREER 'ON THE MAP'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Breaking his silence now that Britney Spears' conservatorship is over, the pop singer's fiance Sam Asghari said he was absolutely sure that she would win her legal battle. "I am so happy for her and I've been a backbone for her as much as I could, but this is all on her," Asghari told 'Variety'. "She's been a rock. She inspires

me. She loves her fans. So you know, all the fans and her effort, kind of make this become, you know, possible. So I'm happy for her." He said he "absolutely" believed that Spears would win the legal battle. "It's amazing for me to feel the love for her and for her to see how many people love her because of the love that she gave other people," he said. "They're just giving it back to her."

In addition to helping plan their wedding, Asghari is busy pursuing his acting career. He recently appeared on 'Black Monday' after popping up on 'Hacks' as a "sexy Santa". He also has a part in 'Hot Seat', an upcoming thriller starring Mel Gibson and Shannen Doherty.

"I'm just living my life and having a great moment," Asghari said in his conversation with 'Variety'. "And I just want to thank (Spears) so much for putting me on the map as far as, you know, everything else that's going on in my career."

CARDI B STUNS IN BLACK HIGH-SLIT DRESS FORRED CARPET ROLLOUT AHEAD OF AMAS

New York | Agencies

Cardi B looked incredible as she counted down to this weekend's American Music Awards! The host helped roll out the red carpet in a pair of sky high heels and sexy gown.

Cardi B, 28, just can't wait for the American Music Awards! The "WAP" rapper, who is set to host the show on Sunday, showed up to the Los Angeles venue two days before the to help roll out the red carpet on Friday, Nov. 19. Cardi

all black tie gala vibes in her sexy, high-slit gown and a pair of strappy sandals. The sparkly black ensemble was giving off serious '80s vibes with its bustier style top attached that included a high neck cover. After posing for some arrivals, Cardi and three others used their man power to kick the red carpet forward and begin the unrolling process. We already knew Cardi was a woman of many talents, but perhaps event producer is another title fans can add to her ever-growing resume! Cardi, née Belcalis

Marlenis Almánzar, has been a staple at the American Music Awards in recent years having won five trophies. Her first wins were in 2018 in the Favorite Artist - Rap/Hip Hop category, as well as nods for Favorite Song - Rap/Hip Hop with "Bodak Yellow" and Favorite Song - Soul/R&B thanks to her Bruno Mars collab "Finesse." She once again won Favorite Artist - Rap/Hip Hop in 2019, and also took home a trophy for "WAP" with Megan Thee Stallion in 2020 under the Favorite Song - Rap/Hip-Hop category.

ETERNALS' SALMA HAYEK GETS A STAR ON HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME, DEDICATES IT TO FANS

Los Angeles | Agencies

Salma Hayek was recently honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The actor recalled her struggle in the US and dedicated the milestone to her fans. Years of hard work and struggle seems to have finally paid off to Hollywood star Salma Hayek as the actor was recently honoured with a star on The Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Eternals actor's name was firmly carved in Hollywood history during a live-streamed nighttime event on Friday, November 19. The actor dedicated her honour to her fans while giving away a speech. Salma Hayek was joined by Eternals director Chloe Zhao and her Grown Ups co-star Adam Sandler at the event. Sandler and Zhao were joined by Mayor Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles in providing heartfelt greetings to



Hayek. They praised both her on and off-screen achievements. Salma Hayek entered the stage and said the event was 'healing' for her. Followed by that, the actor narrated a few incidences from the early 1990s, after migrating to the United States from Mexico. The actor recalled how she and her friends were assaulted even two years after migrating to the US.

Salma Hayek revealed she and some of her friends were once assaulted by a man with a knife. As they ran away and hid in a store, nobody came out to help them. She had to grab a stick for protection before being forced to wrestle a man. Hayek further recalled several incidents of racism, that she encountered in the US, including being asked to "go back to your country," and also being kicked in her seat in a movie theatre.

Salma Hayek hails from Coahuila de Zaragoza, Mexico. She began her acting career with Mexican telenovelas.



Lady Gaga Posts Message Of Support For Britney Spears After Christina Aguilera Drama

Los Angeles | Agencies



Shortly after Britney Spears thanked Lady Gaga for speaking out against her conservatorship, Gaga shared a sweet message for her fellow pop star.

Lady Gaga, 35, has nothing but love for Britney Spears, 39. "Love you @britneyspears Live your best life," the House of Gucci star wrote via Instagram on Friday, Nov. 19, shortly after Brit thanked her for her support throughout her conservatorship battle.

"I prayed for the legal system to treat you like a person. You've now changed the course for women in this industry forever. You stood up for yourself and were so brave. Thank you," Gaga signed off, writing the text over a selfie as she sat in bed. The post came just minutes after Britney posted a video of Gaga defending and speaking out on Britney's behalf at her recent movie premiere in Italy.

"Thank you @ladygaga for genuinely taking your time to say something so kind," Britney began. "You made me cry!!!!...I love you!!!!" she also said. Britney has been vocal about her legal situation in recent weeks, taking to social media to celebrate the end of her 13 year long conservatorship that controlled both her estate and person. As of Nov. 12, the mom-of-two is free to regain control of her life.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Hailee Steinfeld

'Ghostbusters: Afterlife' Tops Friday

New York | Agencies

The Sony event pic is projected to open to a better-than-expected \$40 million-plus at the domestic box office. The weekend's other new offerings include 'King Richard.'

Ghostbusters: Afterlife started with a strong \$16.5 million from 4,315 theaters at the Friday box office, putting the Sony event pic on course to open to a better-than-expected \$40 million or more in North America.

The movie - which is launching in advance of the lucrative Thanksgiving corridor - is succeeding in attracting families, a win for the box office recovery and the franchise's resurrection.

Ghostbusters: Afterlife is directed by Jason Reitman and is a sequel to the iconic 1984 film Ghostbusters, directed by his dad, Ivan Reitman.

The story follows what happens when a single mom and her two kids arrive in a small town and begin to discover their connection to the original ghostbusters and the secret legacy their grandfather left behind. The film earned an A-CinemaScore, ahead of the B+ that Paul Feig's female-skewing Ghostbusters.

Ghostbusters: Afterlife stars Carrie Coon, Finn Wolfhard, McKenna Grace, Annie Potts and Paul Rudd, in addition to some high-profile cameos.

The weekend's other new offer-



ings include the acclaimed biopic King Richard, starring Will Smith as Richard Williams, the father of tennis icons Serena and Venus

Williams. King Richard grossed \$1.9 million Friday from 3,302 locations for a subdued domestic debut in the

\$5.5 million to \$6 million range (Warner Bros. had hoped for \$7 million to \$10 million). Adult dramas are a challenged genre at the box office these days; King Richard is also available via HBO Max.

Directed by Reinaldo Marcus Green from a script by Zach Baylin, King Richard also stars Aunjanue Ellis, Saniyya Sidney, Demi Singleton, Tony Goldwyn and Jon Bernthal.

The movie is expected to be a strong awards contender and is likewise being embraced by audiences, who gave it an A CinemaScore. It is playing to an ethnically diverse audience, with Black viewers making up more than 40 percent of ticket buyers on Friday.



3RD T20I:

India thrash New Zealand by 73 runs, complete 3-0 clean sweep

Kolkata | Agencies

India produced a clinical all-round performance to thrash New Zealand by 73 runs in the third and final T20I and complete a 3-0 clean sweep in the three-match series at the iconic Eden Gardens, here on Sunday.

A fantastic fifty by captain Rohit Sharma (56 off 31 balls) and some late charge by the lower-order powered India to a competitive 184/7 in 20

overs. Apart from Rohit, Ishan Kishan (29), Venkatesh Iyer (20) and Shreyas Iyer (25) also got good starts but they failed to capitalise. Mitchell Santner (3/27) was the highest wicket-taker for the Kiwis.

In reply, Martin Gupthill's fifty (51 off 36 balls) went in vain as New Zealand



were bowled out for 111 in 17.2 overs, losing by 73 runs.

Tim Seifert (17) and Lockie Ferguson (14) also chipped in with the bat for the Kiwis but it wasn't enough to save them from a huge loss. Axar Patel (3/9) was the most successful bowler for India.

Briefscores

India 184/7 in 20 Overs (Rohit Sharma 56, Ishan Kishan 29; Mitchell Santner 3-27) beat New Zealand 111 all out in 17.2 overs (Martin Gupthill 51, Tim Seifert 17, Axar Patel (3-9) by 73 runs.



Indian contingent bag 47 medals at Uganda Para-Badminton

Team Absolute | Kampala

The Indian contingent bagged a rich haul of 47 medals at the Uganda Para-Badminton International event here on Sunday.

This medal tally includes 16 gold, 14 silver, and 17 bronze medals. According to information received here, Palak Kohli, Abu Hubaida, and Ammu Mohan clinched two gold and one silver each. Manasi Joshi won a gold medal in the women's singles SL3 event.

The gold winners are Manoj Sarkar, Sukant Kadam,

Hardik Makkar, Abu Hubaida, Dhinakaran, Palak Kohli, Manasi Joshi, Jyoti, Ammu Mohan, Arwaz Ansari, and Deep Ranjan, Chirag Baretha and Raj Kumar, and Mandeep Kaur, Manasi Joshi, and Ruthick, Abu Hubaida, Ammu Mohan, Sivarajan.

Meanwhile, Tokyo Paralympics gold winner Pramod Bhagat finished with a silver medal in the men's singles SL3 event. He also bagged silver in the men's doubles SL3-SL4 event alongside Manoj Sarkar.

Bhagat then clinched his silver with Palak Kohli in the mixed doubles SL3-SU5 event.



Sharath, Manika to lead Indian challenge at World TT Championships

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Nine players including Achanta Sharath Kamal, G Sathiyan, and Manika Batra comprise the Indian contingent at the 2021 ITTF World Table Tennis Championships Finals to be held in Houston, USA, from Tuesday (November 23).

Sharath, Sathiyan, and Manika have recently done well in the last few months competing in the World Table Tennis (WTT) Contender series, especially in the team competition, winning medals in doubles and mixed doubles.

The other players that are part of the Indian contingent for the tournament that will end on November 29 include Anthony Amalraj, Archana Girish Kamath, Ayhika Mukherjee, Harmeet Desai, Madhurika Patkar, and Sutirtha Mukherjee.

Sharath, who recently moved up two places to 30 in the men's singles rankings is the highest-ranked Indian in ITTF list, and Manika have won the

mixed doubles title, just like Manika and Sathiyan in the WTT Contender event in Hungary in September while Manika and Archana won the women's doubles title in the WTT Contender event in Slovenia. Sathiyan is ranked 37th in the world, and is the second best Indian in the fray.

The contingent comprises four of the top Indian players in men's singles excluding Manav Thakkar. Indians will be expecting to put up their best in the men's, women's, and mixed doubles. Manika will be India's top hope in women's singles.

India has won two medals in the World Table Tennis Championships both bronze in 1926 editions with bronze SRG Suppiah finishing third in the men's singles and the men's team comprising Athar Ali Fyzee, Hassan Ali Fyzee, A.M Peermohamed, BG Singh, and Suppiah finishing third. Houston will not be hosting the team competitions as they have been separated from the individual competitions since 2001.

Two-Test series between Sri Lanka and West Indies set to begin

Galle | Agencies

Nov 21 (IANS) Following their ignominious exit in the ICC T20 World Cup in the UAE recently, the West Indies Test side will aim to salvage some pride when they take on Sri Lanka in a two-match series beginning at the Galle International Stadium on Sunday.

On the other hand, Sri Lanka will have a host of experienced personnel return to their ranks in the series. Dimuth Karunaratne, Suranga Lakmal and Angelo Mathews are a few among those along with the likes of Dinesh Chandimal who was a part of their T20 World Cup campaign. Impressive performers from the tournament like Charith Asalanka, Pathum Nissanka and Dushmantha Chameera are also part of the squad.

With this being head coach Mickey Arthur's final series in charge, the Lankans will hope to send him off on a high.

off earlier this year in a two-match Test series back in the West Indies. Both the matches were held in Antigua between March and April. In two highly-competitive encounters, there was nothing to separate the two sides with both the matches ending in a draw.

There were impressive performers from both sides with Lahiru Thirimanne ending as the highest run-scorer with 240 runs at an average of 60. Suranga Lakmal was the leading wicket-taker with 11 scalps at an average of 21.45. With both teams having quality in equal measures, the series in Sri Lanka promises to be an enticing encounter.

Outgoing Sri Lankan coach Mickey Arthur said, "Karunaratne's last knock in Test cricket was a double hundred. Angelo is one of the great players in the game. Suranga Lakmal is so crucial for us with the new ball and he is a wonderful player. It's great to have them back and their experience is going to be vital."



West Indies are a team who have consistently improved over the past few years despite now having many glamorous names in their ranks. With both matches being played in Galle, spin will play a crucial role in the series and it will be interesting to see the combination which the visitors go with into the opening Test. But Kraigg Brathwaite will be confident in his sides ability to mount a stern test against the hosts, who will start the series as favourites in their own backyard. The two sides recently faced

West Indies batter Jermaine Blackwood said, "We came here to win. Our guys are hungry and you can see that in their eyes. We are a decent team and we are ready to break the shackles and win games this time around. Sri Lanka have quality spinners but we are ready for the challenge. If you see the series in Bangladesh when we won, it was played on similar conditions and we tackled their spinners well. Most of the guys who played in that series are here and we know what to expect."

ATP Finals: Zverev stuns Djokovic to set up title clash with Medvedev

Turin | Agencies

Germany's Alexander Zverev came up some of the best tennis of the season in front of a cheering crowd as he defeated world No.1 Novak Djokovic of Serbia in three sets to set up a title clash with Russian Daniil Medvedev at the Nitto ATP Finals in a late Saturday night match here.

Producing high-quality tennis, the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games gold medalist edged Djokovic 7-6(4), 4-6, 6-3 in the year-end elite tournament to raise hopes that he could finally break the jinx of not

winning a major when the Australian Open commences in January next year.

The German, who beat Djokovic in the 2018 season finale championship match in London, played bravely and hit with depth in the crucial moments against the Serbian, who was crowned the world No.1 for a record seventh year recently. Zverev saved a set point in the first set and closed the net effectively throughout to advance after two hours and 29 minutes in an thrilling match.

The 24-year-old hit 35 winners at the Pala Alpitour and reduced his ATP head-to-head deficit with

Djokovic to 4-7.

"Every time we play it takes hours," Zverev said in his on-court interview. "I have not spent more time on court with anybody other than him (Djokovic) this year. I am happy with the win and happy to be in the final here and to give myself the best chance for the final," Zverev told atptour.com.

With this victory, Zverev avenged his US Open semifinal loss to Djokovic. It is the second time the 18-time tour-level titlist has beaten the top seed this year, after upsetting him en route to clinching the Tokyo Olympic singles gold.

Zverev, who went 2-1 in Red Group

action at the Nitto ATP Finals to qualify for the last-four, will face Medvedev in the final later on Sunday after the Russian cruised past Casper Ruud 6-4, 6-2. Medvedev leads Zverev 6-5 in their ATP head-to-head, having defeated the 24-year-old in a third-set tie-break in the round-robin stage earlier this week.

Zverev will now try to do what he did in 2018 when he won the title by reversing a round-robin loss to the player he's meeting in the championship match.

"I lost 8/6 in the third in the group stage, so I am just looking forward to the match as I think it will

be a great one," Zverev said. "There is only the best here, so it takes a lot to win this tournament."

"I am looking forward to having another chance and we are in the final and I am happy to be in the final. He is one of the best players in the world right now, so it is going to be a difficult match no matter what."

The world No. 3 has now earned 58 tour-level wins this season. The German triumphed at ATP Masters 1000 events in Madrid and Cincinnati, while he also lifted trophies in Acapulco and Vienna.

Hockey Men's Junior WC: Odisha Sports Minister reviews preparedness

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

Nov 21 (IANS) With just two days left for the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's Junior World Cup, Odisha Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera on Sunday visited the Kalinga Stadium here and reviewed the progress of work.

He discussed with the officials about Covid management, security, infrastructure, broadcasting and hospitality while visiting various points and corners in the

Kalinga Stadium.

Expressing his satisfaction on the preparedness of the event, Behera said: "All mandatory arrangements and protocols are in place. I am satisfied with the timely execution of work. Our efforts are towards a safe and successful conduct of the event and I am confident, once again, along with



Hockey India, Odisha will prove to be a great host."

The infrastructure at Kalinga Hockey Stadium is an iconic and coveted stadium and all the teams have expressed their excitement to play here, he said.

"I am glad to know that the players have settled in well, turf and all allied facilities of

the stadium are match ready and the visiting teams have commenced their training and practice matches. It is good to see this atmosphere here," the Minister added.

The FIH Odisha Hockey Men's Junior World Cup will start on November 24 and continue till December 5. Almost all of the participating teams have arrived in the host city, Bhubaneswar, and are training rigorously at the Kalinga Stadium for winning the Champions title.

Indonesia Masters: Kento Momota clinches men's singles title

Bali | Agencies

World No. 1 Japan's Kento Momota clinched the Indonesia Masters badminton tournament men's singles title after beating Denmark's Anders Antonsen in the final, here on Sunday.

The 27-year old dismissed Antonsen with his typical high-octane game and registered a convincing 21-17, 21-11 victory in a 49-minute encounter.

It's a significant win for Momota as it secured him his first World Tour title since a near-fatal car crash in January 2020.

In the women's singles final, Japan's Akane Yamaguchi, who had beaten India's PV Sindhu in the semi-final, was defeated by An Se-Young. The South Korean shutler, seeded four, won 21-17, 21-19 in a thrilling contest.



In the men's doubles, Hoki Takuro and Kobayashi Yugo beat home favourites Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo in a thrilling three-setter, 21-11, 17-21, 21-19. It was the Japanese duo's first-ever win over Gideon and Sukamuljo and they collected their BWF World Tour Super 750 title trophy in as many months.

Japan's great day continued in the women's doubles as Matsuyama Nami and Shida Chiharu outclassed South Korea's Jeong Na-eun and Korea Kim Hye-jeong 21-9, 21-11. The mixed doubles final was the only final without Japanese representation after Watanabe/Higashino bowed out in the semi-finals to Hong Kong's Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet. But the Tang and Tse were outclassed by Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai in the final, the Thai pairing winning 21-11, 21-12.



Akash Choudhary: Ever since I was a kid, my dream was to be famous

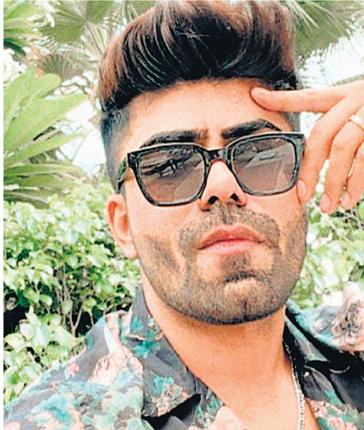
Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Splitsvilla' fame Akash Choudhary is seen essaying the character of 'Viraj Singhania' in the show 'Bhagya Lakshmi'.

He is over the moon for getting an opportunity to showcase his acting talent in a daily soap after being part of a reality show.

Akash talks about being part of the show and how for him it is like a dream come true.

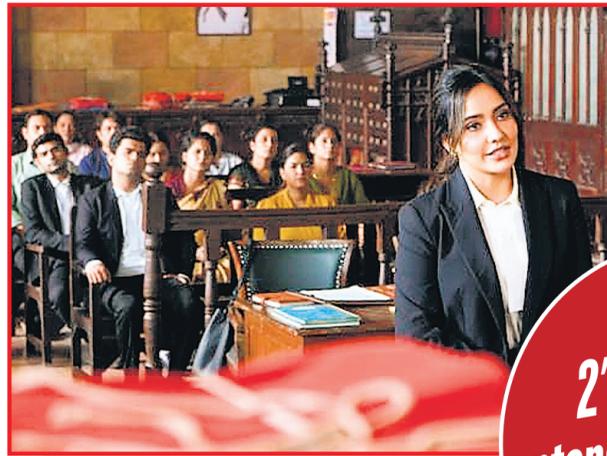
He says: "Ever since I was a kid, my dream was to be famous. I always loved the attention, loved being at the centre of the stage and getting all the limelight at events and parties. But while I wanted to be a public figure, I never thought I would become an actor. In fact, I was working as a publicist for a lifestyle brand



for a couple of years when my clients approached me to shoot for them."

"That is how my journey of becoming an actor started. At the same time, I shifted to Bombay and decided to take up acting. While I've done a couple of ads and a non-fiction show, 'Bhagya Lakshmi' is my first ever fiction show. Getting a chance to be a part of this show is really surreal and I can't wait to entertain the audience."

He further adds: "I must add that my mom is very happy as she is a die-hard fan of Ekta maam, and she always wanted me to do a Balaji show. I am really glad that my dream is coming true, and I shall surely give my best for this show."



Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the second season of courtroom drama 'Illegal' is releasing on November 25, actors Neha Sharma, Piyush Mishra and Akshay Oberoi share how their characters take a cue from the first season.

Neha who is playing

'Illegal 2' actors on intensifying struggle of lead characters

Niharika and dealing with a battle with her mentor Janardhan Jaitley, said, "Portraying Niharika Singh on screen has been a challenging and enjoyable journey for me. She is unafraid to voice her opinions against wrongdoing and ready to take on even the most powerful forces in her fight against injustice. 'Illegal 2' sees her juggle between personal and professional conflicts while striving to bring out the truth." Piyush who is playing Janardhan said, "The sheer love and appreciation of the first season of 'Illegal' inspired us to take the storyline forward and present a fiercer showdown between Niharika Singh and Janardhan Jaitley. The plot for Season 2 is centered around a battle to outsmart the other with circumstances essayed around law, power and justice." "The intrusive showdown between Neha and Piyush's characters in season two of 'Illegal' makes it a must-watch. My character Akshay Jaitley will face a moral dilemma as new situations arise which will see him questioning himself about the real definition of the term 'Illegal'," shared Akshay. Helmed by Ashwini Chaudhry and produced by Juggernaut Productions, 'Illegal' Season 2 will be streaming on Voot Select.



AHAN SHETTY AND TARA SUTARIA REACHED GM MODULER STORE TO PROMOTE THEIR FILM TADAP

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Tadap duo Ahan Shetty and Tara Sutaria reached GM Modular Store to promote their film. Kumarpal Banda, Director, GM and Vicky Nagpal, Director Marketing and Branding, GM Mumbai were also present on the same occasion.

Debutant Ahan Shetty, son of Bollywood's action star Suniel Shetty, is going to debut in the film 'Tadap'. The

film is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala and directed by Milan Luthria. Suniel Shetty and Akshay Kumar acted in Sajid Nadiadwala's superhit film 'Waqt Hamara Hai', who produced many successful films. And now Sajid is launching Suniel's son. Director Milan Luthria has made blockbuster films like 'Kachche Dhaage' and 'Once Upon Time in Mumbai' which starred superstar Ajay Devgan.

Like other starson, Ahan Shetty is

also making his debut with Tadap. He is very excited about his romantic image in this film and is also hopeful for success. Based on the poster and song promo, his look in the film also looks attractive. The song of this film has got more than 28 million views. Cinema audience are also eagerly waiting to see Ahan's acting talent. People have loved his performance in the promo and the reaction is unbelievable as they saying they have got their mass hero.

ASHMIT PATEL, ARUSHI HANDA ON THEIR CHARACTERS IN SHORT FILM 'GAME OF TRUTH'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former 'Big Boss' contestant and actor Ashmit Patel, who was last seen in movies such as 'Jai Ho' and 'Murder', and Arushi Handa of 'MTV Splitsvilla 11' fame have come together for the short film 'Game of Truth'. Talking about the short film, Ashmit shares: "Game of Truth" is a romantic suspense thriller. My role is of a guy who is well to do and is like a playboy. He is in his early thirties and is enjoying his life. This is my second short film and the responses have been amazing. It's a story that takes place in one night and audiences should expect crisp thrills with a twist as it has an edgy thriller element. It has a very interesting twist at the end like every short film. "Written by Vivek Khatri, 'Game of Truth' is a short romantic film of 25 minutes.

Arushi added about how excited she was for her first acting role. Sharing the details of her character, the actress says: "It feels really good because it's my first acting project. I'm playing a bold character who stands for herself. It's a plot with a twist that will keep the audience surprised. It was really amazing working with Ashmit. He was giving me tips and helping me out when I was getting nervous". 'Game of Truth' is streaming on WOW Originals.



NANDAMURI BALAKRISHNA'S 'AKHANDA' ALL SET FOR HUGE RELEASE

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Popular Telugu actor Nandamuri Balakrishna's 'Akhanda' is prepping for a huge release. The makers, who have scheduled the release of 'Akhanda' for December 2, have initiated all the pre-release formalities. Helmed by Boyapati Srinu, the movie 'Akhanda' underwent censorship formalities. The Censor Board has certified 'Akhanda' with U/A. With this certification, the makers are all set for the release of 'Akhanda' as per the scheduled date. 'Akhanda' stars Balakrishna in

the role of 'Aghora', who fights evil. It is expected that Balakrishna's acting and performances in high-octane sequences are to make his fans go gaga. Actress Pragya Jaiswal is to play a cop in the movie.

As 'Akhanda' marks the third-time collaboration for Balakrishna and Boyapati Srinu, the expectations are rife. S.S. Thaman has composed the music for this commercial drama.

Miryala Ravinder Reddy is producing 'Akhanda' under the banner of Dwaraka Creations. Kotagiri Venkateshwar Rao is the editor.



HIMANSHU MALHOTRA'S CHARACTER IN 'CHIKOO KI MUMMY DURR KEI' HAS MANY SHADES

Mumbai: Actor Himanshu Malhotra is happy to play 'Milind Joshi' in 'Chikoo Ki Mummy Durr Kei' as it has many shades and layers. "Milind Joshi is a very interesting character and very layered. He is always in a dilemma, so it's very interesting. I am very happy to portray it because there are so many shades and I am able to portray them," he said. 'Chikoo Ki Mummy Durr Kei' features Vaishnavi Prajapati, Paridhi Sharma, Himanshu Malhotra and Monika Khanna in prominent roles. It is a story of 'Payal Joshi' (Vaishnavi Prajapati), who gets kidnapped and separated from her parents 'Nupur Joshi' (Paridhi Sharma) and 'Milind Joshi' (Himanshu Malhotra).

Himanshu feels that a part of him is like 'Milind'. He added more on how he relates with his role: "It is very obvious that whatever we portray, that character is a part of us. Television is a medium where you keep doing things every day so the character becomes you over a period of time because there is not much preparation time, not much time where you can create something different out of who you are."

He also loves the title of the show.

Pratik Gandhi on playing a real-life character in audio show 'Gangistan'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Pratik Gandhi, who is known for playing 'Harshad Mehta' in 'Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story', now plays journalist Aashu Patel in Hindi audio show 'Gangistan'.

The story revolves around Gujarati author and journalist Aashu Patel and his investigation and research work about the Mumbai underworld.

Talking about 'Gangistan', Pratik says that this is his first audio show and he has known Aashu Patel for many years, so bringing the character on-screen was not that tricky.

"Playing the role of Aashu was slightly easy for me because I have known Aashu Patel for many years. Immersing myself in complex emotions and intriguing situations was a treat. I was able to naturally relate with the protagonist's ambition and thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of having to use only my voice to perform the role."

The story of 'Gangistan' spans across different eras like the 1960s, 1980s and the present. It brings out some interesting facts and stories about Mumbai's gangs, their operations and impact on people. The 48-episode series features Pratik Gandhi, Saiyami Kher and Dayashankar Pandey in lead roles.

Pratik adds: "Gangistan' lets you create your own visual interpretation which I think is the power of audio. What's cool is that while record-

ing it with the team, we did not just stand in front of the mic and speak. We recreated situations from the script, for example a hospital scene with Saiyami lying down in the studio and me sitting next to her or some of the encounter scenes where the actors ran across the studio."

'Gangistan' is directed by Siddhanta Pinto, the story by Aashu Patel, writer and creative producer Heer Khant.

For journalist Aashu Patel, this has been a nostalgic affair. He adds: "Audio has an appeal similar to that of the power of the pen, in the sense that it's left to the audience's imagination to picture the story. Writing 'Gangistan' with Heer Khant brought back so many memories from my journalism days. It is truly a grand story, over a grand timeline of several decades, straddling both fiction and non-fiction. This has never been done before in the audio space."

Director Siddhanta Pinto says that the project took a year to complete: "Finally, after being in the Indian audio industry since 2001, I feel we are scratching the surface of the true power of audio. This project took over a year, and every minute has brought joy."

The Hindi audio thriller 'Gangistan' can be listened to on Spotify.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Asheema Vardaan