

absolute india

VOL. 5, ISSUE 12, NEW DELHI | TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2021 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL



NATION

>02

India is rising to become 'Vishwa Guru': RSS chief...



HOLLYWOOD

> 06

Britney calls out Christina for her red-carpet silence on...



SPORTS

> 07

Ronaldo sends good wishes to SolSKjaer...

AT CONVOCATION ADDRESS IN ANDHRA PRADESH'S INSTITUTE, CJI GAVE ADVICE AND SUGGESTION

RULERS SHOULD INTROSPECT EVERYDAY IF DECISIONS TAKEN ARE GOOD

MODERN EDUCATION UTILITARIAN, NOT EQUIPPED TO BUILD STUDENTS' CHARACTER

“ All the rulers in the democratic set-up, before beginning their routine work, should introspect whether they have any bad characteristics. There is need to offer just administration and it should be according to people's needs. ”



“ Unfortunately, the modern education system tends to focus only on the 'utilitarian' function of education. Such a system is not equipped to deal with the 'moral' or 'spiritual' function of education which builds the character of our students and allows them to develop a social consciousness and a sense of responsibility. ”

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Monday said the rulers should introspect everyday whether the decisions taken by them are good and also check if they have any bad characteristics. He emphasized that in a democracy people are ultimate lords and the decisions of the dispensation should benefit them. Justice Ramana said this while delivering the 40th convocation address of the

Andhra Pradesh-based Sri Sathya Sai Institute for Higher Learning. Citing ancient scriptures Mahabharat and Ramayana, Justice Ramana said there are 14 bad qualities of rulers which they should avoid. Justice Ramana added that the people are the ultimate lords in democracy and whatever decision has been taken by the dispensation should benefit them. He further added it was his desire that all the systems should be independent (within the country) and also honest, with an aim to serve the people.

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India NV Ramana on Monday said the modern education system tends to focus only on the 'utilitarian' function of education and it is not equipped to deal with the moral and spiritual function which builds the character of the students. He added that true education is the one which imbibes moral values and virtues of humility, discipline, selflessness, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and mutual respect.

"You will have to deal with people from different walks of life that may occasionally challenge you. But be tolerant. Hold onto certain core values as you walk through this journey of life, and experience all the richness it can offer you", said Justice Ramana. He emphasized that as educated individuals, "you have the responsibility to enrich the society and they must educate all those around, and empower people, communities, and societies".

SC COMMITTEE PANEL ON FARM LAWS TO GO PUBLIC TODAY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court appointed committee on the issue of three contentious farm laws held a meeting on Monday and said they would hold a press conference on Tuesday to announce the fate of the report that they had submitted in March. The Supreme Court had appointed the three-member committee. The Committee had submitted the report in March after a wide multi-stakeholder consultation. However, since then neither did the apex court make use of any of its recommendations nor was the report made public. Ghanawat had, in September, written to the then Chief Justice of India, to release the report so that its recommendations can be used by the government for resolving the agitation of the farmers that had turned widespread with even violence disturbing at some places. The government had held several rounds of talks with the farmers but neither side had budged.

Kisan Maha Panchayat firm on demands, protests to continue

Team Absolute | Lucknow

The Kisan Maha Panchayat in Lucknow on Monday was a firm reiteration of the six-point charter of demands that farmers have submitted to the Prime Minister. The Sanyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella organisation of the farmers' unions, said that their protests would continue till their demands, including guarantee for minimum support price and dismissal of Union Minister Ajay Misra Teni, were met. A large number of farmers at the Maha Panchayat came from Lakhimpur Kheri and the issue of the October 3 incident in which four farmers were allegedly mowed down by an SUV belonging to Union Minister Ajay Misra Teni's son Ashish Misra, figured prominently at the Maha Panchayat. The farmers demanded the dismissal and arrest of the minister who is also an accused in the case. His son Ashish Misra is already in jail. Tikait said that the government was bringing a new policy on dairy development and the



farmers wanted that they should be consulted on the issue. He said that the next meeting of the farmers would be held on Delhi borders on November 26. The farmers, meanwhile, demanded land at Singhu border for a memorial in memory of farmers who had lost their lives during the agitation. Tikait also sought compensation for the families of deceased farmers. The other demands included withdrawal of the Power Regulation Amendment Bill, withdrawal of all cases related to the Delhi border agitation and stubble burning.

“ Our 'andolan' is not going to end till all our demands are met. We will hold similar panchayats across the country and those who think that the issue is over, are sadly mistaken. We want to make the minimum support price (MSP) that is based on the formula of C2+50 per cent (means 50 per cent above the cost of production) as a legal right for all crops and for all farmers. In our letter, we have reminded the Prime Minister that it was a committee under his chair that had in 2011 recommended this to the then Prime Minister and his government later announced it in Parliament too. ”

Rakesh Tikait, Farmer Leader

Balakot airstrike hero Abhinandan Varthaman awarded Vir Chakra

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Balakot airstrike hero, Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman was honoured with Vir Chakra by President Ram Nath Kovind in the national capital on Monday for bringing down a Pakistani F-16 fighter aircraft during aerial combat on February 27, 2019. Varthaman was promoted from Wing Commander to the rank of Group Captain earlier this month. He was honoured with Vir Chakra, India's third-highest war time gallantry medal, by the President in an investiture ceremony. Varthaman was captured by the Pakistani Army on February 27, 2019 after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down in a dogfight with the Pakistani jets. Before his jet was hit, he downed a Pakistani F-16 fighter. The Balakot airstrike was carried out against the terror



camp at Balakot of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in response to the deadly Pulwama attack that claimed the lives of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel. It was the first aerial assault carried out by India in Pakistan after the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

29 students of Telangana residential school test positive for Covid-19

Hyderabad | Agencies

As many as 29 students of a government-run residential school and junior college for girls in Telangana's Khammam district have tested positive for Covid-19, triggering panic among the parents and teachers. The cases were reported during the last two days at the school and junior college in Wyra town, officials said. The school authorities conducted tests for all students after a couple of students showed suspected symptoms. Worried parents rushed to the school and took their wards home. The official said the students who tested positive were taken home by their parents for home quarantine and they were all fine. The parents of students who tested negative also took them home as a precautionary measure.



This is the first time since the reopening of residential schools in the state last month that such a large number of students tested positive. About 550 students are studying in the school and junior college. Some parents said that overcrowding led to the Covid spread. For 450 students studying from class 5 to 10, there are only 16 rooms. Forty students sleep in every room after the classes. The dining hall has a capacity for only 200 students.

VACCINATE CHILDREN IF SUPPLIES ARE SUFFICIENT, SAYS EXPERT

Hyderabad: Children in India should be vaccinated against Covid-19 if the supplies are available after vaccinating eligible adults, says an expert. Though vaccination for children is critical for the country to reach herd immunity to stop the pandemic children should be vaccinated if supplies are sufficient, said Dr. Krishna Reddy Nallamalla, an eminent cardiologist. Global bodies are also urging nations to consider priority setting in the global context and not just in national or subnational context as the world is not safe until enough proportion of the world population has immune protection.

LALU PRASAD ASKS NITISH TO ROLL BACK LIQUOR PROHIBITION LAW IN BIHAR

Patna:

Following a series of raids on hotels and banquet halls to catch the liquor ban violators, RJD president Lalu Prasad on Monday asked chief minister Nitish Kumar to withdraw the liquor prohibition law. "I already told Nitish Kumar that liquor operations cannot stop in Bihar. Hundreds of deaths due to poisonous liquor are examples of it. Hence, it is better for him to roll back the law and avoid the loss of state revenue," Lalu Prasad said. "The state administration has completely failed to stop the operations of the liquor mafias. Nitish Kumar, on the other hand, is sending police into the rooms of women to search for liquor," Lalu Prasad said. "In 2016, Nitish Kumar came to my house and said that he was going to ban liquor in the state. I told him that implementation of banning liquor in the state is not easy. Smuggling of liquor would increase in Bihar as adjoining Nepal, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are non-dry states. Nitish Kumar had ignored my suggestions and implemented the law," Lalu Prasad said.



SC orders creation of seat in IIT-Bombay for Dalit student

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday exercised its power under Article 142 of the Constitution to create a seat for a Dalit student at IIT-Bombay, who passed the exam but could not deposit fee on time due to technical glitches. A bench comprising Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and A.S. Bopanna told the counsel appearing for Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JOSAA) that they should not be 'wooden on the issue and understand the realities of social life -- the practical difficulties on ground'. The bench said: "The student did not have money, then sister had to transfer money and then there were technical issues. The boy cleared the exam. If it was his negligence then we would not have asked you..." The bench further added that the matter should be dealt with a



humanitarian approach and not admitting the student -- is just bureaucracy." JOSAA submitted before the bench that all seats have been filled and no vacant seats are available. The top court exercised its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to direct the JOSAA to earmark a seat for the student. The bench

TRIPURA COURT GRANTS BAIL TO TRINAMOOL YOUTH LEADER

Agartala: Trinamool Congress youth wing chief Saayoni Ghosh, who was arrested by the Tripura police on Sunday on charges of attempt to murder and provocation with intent to cause riot, was granted bail by a court in Tripura on Monday. Granting bail to Ghosh, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate of West Tripura district, Soumya Bikash Das, directed her to cooperate with the police investigation in the case registered against her. The police had urged the court for two-day custody of Ghosh, but their plea was rejected. Defence lawyer Shankar Lodh said that the court did not find appropriate evidence to support the police's claim, nor did it find sufficient reason for Ghosh's arrest. "On the basis of Rs 20,000 bond and a surety, the court granted bail to Ghosh," Lodh told the media in the court complex.

Rahul Gandhi alleges corruption in Jan Dhan accounts

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday, citing a media report attacked the central government over alleged corruption in the transfer of money in Jan Dhan accounts. According to media reports, the State Bank of India had deducted a total amount of Rs 164 crore from Jan Dhan account holders. The report quoted a study by IIT Bombay. The media report said between 2017 and September 2020, the bank had collected a total of Rs 254 crore from Jan Dhan account holders for transactions through UPI and Rupay card. The bank had collected Rs



17.70 from each account holder during this period. On this, Gandhi wrote on Twitter, "Who is responsible to keeping the accounts of these monies?" The Congress leader has been attacking the Modi government for corruption. Ahead of the 2019 General Elections, Congress had alleged corruption in acquiring Rafale Jet from Dassault.

28 LAWYERS SUSPENDED OVER FAKE CLAIM CASES IN UP

New Delhi: The Bar Council of India said on Monday that it has suspended 28 lawyers from Uttar Pradesh, whose names were listed in FIRs or chargesheets for allegedly filing fake compensation claims before the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal under the Workmen Compensation Act. In an official statement, the apex bar body noted that the recent order of the Supreme Court, in which it was observed that consequent to the direction passed by the Allahabad High Court to the SIT in Lucknow for investigation into cases of suspicious claims, 233 such claims of various insurance companies were dismissed or dismissed in default or not pressed, due to which various claim petitions totalling Rs 300,76,40,000 were rejected by the tribunal. The BCI further quoted the apex court statement that "out of 92 criminal cases in various districts registered till date, in which 28 advocates have been named as accused in 55 cases, the investigation has been concluded in 32 cases and the chargesheets have been filed. In the rest of the cases, the probe is stated to be pending."



RETAIL PULSES INFLATION LIKELY TO STAY UNDER 5% IN H2FY22: IND-RA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's retail inflation for pulses is expected to be under 5 per cent during the second half of the current fiscal, India Ratings and Research said on Monday. As per the agency, this estimate is based on the high level of prices during the corresponding period of last fiscal and the measures taken by the Centre to meet the rising demand. India is one of the major consumers, producers and importers of pulses. Besides, the agency cited that the demand-supply mismatch had led to high inflation in pulses in the country. "The Covid-19 pandemic aggravated the demand-supply gap as households increased their consumption of pulses to shift towards healthy eating habits and build immunity. As a result, retail pulses inflation increased to 16.4 per cent in FY21 from 9.9 per cent in FY20," the ratings agency said. Notably, WPI inflation saw a decline during the same period to



11.6 per cent from 15.9 per cent, suggesting a higher mark-up by retailers or hoarding or both. "The retail inflation in pulses remained in double digits in FY21. This was despite a record production of 25.72 million tonnes on the back of higher minimum support prices and higher procurement by central and state agencies which incentivised farmers to grow more pulses," the agency added. To tame pulse inflation, the Centre had announced a string of measures, including a cut in import duties and imposition of stockholding limits for traders. Also, the Centre has extended the imports window for pulses till December 31, 2021, the ratings agency added. In addition, Ind-Ra expects the country's Kharif output for pulses to be around 9 million tonnes, which is lower than the first advance estimates of 9.45 million tonnes due to erratic monsoon this year with record excessive rains in September. The Kharif season accounts for over 40 per cent of India's overall production of pulses.

Sale of illegal items on Amazon continuing; police seized 48 kg marijuana in Visakhapatnam: CAIT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Even after being caught for selling over 20 kg marijuana by the Bhand police in Madhya Pradesh and for the sale of banned chemicals used in making the bomb used in the Pulwama terror attack, Amazon is continuing the illegal trade, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said. According to CAIT, after being tipped off by the Bhand police, the police in Visakhapatnam have recovered 48 kg marijuana from one of Amazon's partners. An FIR was registered in this connection on November 20 under the NDPS Act, 1985, CAIT claimed in a statement. It is learnt that two Amazon delivery boys have also been arrested by the Visakhapatnam police, CAIT said. Further, Madhya Pradesh police have also recovered another lot of 17 kg marijuana from Amazon and its partners for which an FIR has been registered at the Mehgoan police Station under the NDPS Act, 1985 and one person has been

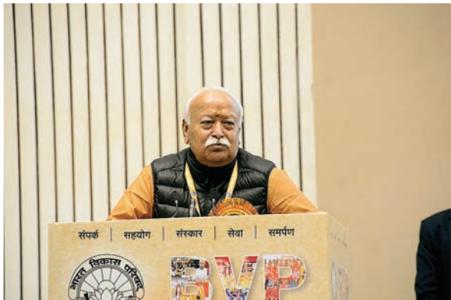
arrested. The CAIT has demanded the Visakhapatnam police to register a case under Section 38 of NDPS Act as was done by the Bhand police. Terming Amazon as a 'Ganja Company', CAIT national President B.C. Bhartia and Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal have demanded that keeping in view the scale of illegality by Amazon, the government should immediately suspend Amazon's operations in India and arrest Amazon officials besides registering a case of treason against the company. Bhartia and Khandelwal urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah for their immediate direct intervention in the matter. CAIT has also urged Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to immediately release the e-commerce rules, e-commerce policy and a new press note replacing press note No. 2 of the FDI policy, so that the conduct of the e-commerce companies in India could be regulated.

Bhartia and Khandelwal have urged the Centre to conduct an intensive and thorough probe into the business model of big e-commerce players, including Amazon, to ensure that no sale of prohibited items or anti-national activities are conducted on e-commerce portals and liability is fixed on marketplace entities involved in the sale of prohibited items directly or indirectly. Bhartia and Khandelwal said that these illegal activities being conducted on Amazon e-commerce platform reflects the hollowness of e-commerce business in India in the absence of any specific rule or law, which is a sorry state of administrative system in India. CAIT said that not only the role of the Centre and state governments is under question, but even the utter silence of all the political parties on this issue is also under scanner. It is highly regretted that no one has taken the issue seriously inspite of the fact that CAIT and other organisations have made some serious complaints, it said.

India is rising to become 'Vishwa Guru': RSS chief

Archana Sharma | New Delhi

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Monday said that India is now rising but not just to become a superpower but to become a Vishwa Guru (World Leader). His statement is being seen as an endorsement of the work of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the BJP has been claiming that India's stature across the world has risen many times since the party came to power. Speaking at a programme organised by the Bharat Vikas Parishad at Vigyan Bhavan, Delhi, Mohan Bhagwat said: "Despite the country being divided into three parts, India remains a force even today." He said, India is now rising but not only to become a



superpower, but to become a 'Vishwa Guru'. We have to become such a 'Vishwa Guru' which is number one in all aspects - economic, strategic, environment, etc. Speaking at the closing ceremony of Dr Suraj Prakash's birth centenary organised at Vigyan Bhavan, the Sangh chief explained the meaning of

development in different ways and said that there is no justification for advancement only in material terms. A country can be called developed only when there is all-round development of the society. He said India has its own definition of development and we have to give this dynamic to the world.

Mamata questions utility of rights body before leaving for Delhi

Team Absolute | Kolkata

Raising questions on the utility and importance of the Human Rights Commission before going to Delhi on Monday evening, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made it obvious that she would raise the recent incidents of violence in Tripura in her meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Speaking to reporters at the airport before leaving for Delhi, Mamata Banerjee said, "Where is the Human Rights Commission in Tripura? Where did the human rights commission go? The whole country has witnessed the assassination of democracy in Tripura. In such a BJP-ruled state, people are suffocating. Why are there no words about the Human Rights Commission

and Article 355 in our case in Tripura. What has happened now?" She went on to say, "How many letters have been sent to the Tripura government from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. They used to send letters to us regularly. In our state there was an election. So many leaders came here regularly. We didn't stop anyone. Why is this happening in Tripura?" The chief minister said that she will meet the Prime Minister on Wednesday and she will raise several issues including the atrocities in Tripura. "I shall speak to him on the extension of jurisdiction by the BSF. They are bulldozing the states in the name of cooperative federalism. This cannot continue. I shall speak to the Prime Minister about it."

Grenade blast near army camp in Pathankot

Team Absolute | Chandigarh

A grenade blast occurred near an Indian Army camp in Punjab's highly sensitive Pathankot town on Monday. No one was injured in the explosion. Police reached the spot and recovered parts of the grenade. Senior Superintendent of Police Surendra Lamba told the media that investigation was underway and CCTV footage from the spot has been

obtained. It is believed that motorcyclists lobbed the grenade in front of the Triveni gate of the army cantonment. Security was tightened, particularly in Punjab's border districts of Pathankot and Gurdaspur, including near the Indian Air Force base in Pathankot, which bore the brunt of terror attack on January 2, 2016, as well as nearby Mamoon Cantonment of the Army. Apart from the Punjab Police, men of the Border Security

Force (BSF) and personnel of different security agencies have been put on alert following the blast. Suspected Pakistani terrorists had on July 27, 2015, attacked Dinanagar town in neighbouring Gurdaspur district, around 225 km from here, killing seven persons, including a Punjab Police officer, three Home Guards and three civilians. The three terrorists were killed after an 11-hour gun battle with the security forces at the Dinanagar police station.



SP asks cadres to revive pledge to uphold party constitution

Team Absolute | Lucknow

The Samajwadi Party has issued a circular to its cadres asking them to revive their pledge to uphold the constitution of the party, based on the democratic, secular and socialist framework of Indian statute, on November 26 which is observed as the 'Samvidhan Divas' (Constitution Day). The party has asked its cadres to focus on Chapter 2 of the SP constitution which deals with 'aims and objectives' of the party and talks of opposing any idea of state based on religious belief. It also lays emphasis on preferential status to women, schedule caste, minorities and backwards. The SP circular comes days after the Allahabad High

Court stated that the Uniform Civil Code was a necessity and called upon the Central government to forthwith initiate the process for its implementation. The HC observations came while hearing a bunch of 17 petitions filed by interfaith couples, who contracted marriage upon conversion, seeking protection of their life, liberty and privacy guaranteed under Article 21. "On the directions of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, party workers, leaders and office-bearers in every district of the state will observe the Constitution Day on November 26 to revive their pledge to uphold section 2 of the party constitution and the spirit of Indian Constitution," said a party functionary.



7 held for organising liquor party in Patna gym

New Delhi | Patna

The police in Patna raided a gym in the Gardaniabagh locality on Monday and arrested seven persons in a drunken state. When the police team reached the gate of the gym at around 6.30 pm, one of the drunken men called his associate and told him to pull out an AK 47 rifle. When the policemen confronted him, he apologised and admitted his guilt. "We conducted the raid based on specific information about gym trainer Deepak Kumar throwing a liquor party inside the gym premises. When the police reached the spot, seven persons were found in the liquor party," said Arun Kumar, SHO, Gardaniabagh. "During probe, it was found that Deepak in the past was involved in home delivery of liquor.



He also sold liquor from the gym," Kumar said. "We have recovered five bottles of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and a can of beer from the spot," he added.

Raj: Advisor to CM launches scathing attack on Sachin Pilot

Team Absolute | Jaipur

It is not well within the Congress-led government in Rajasthan despite Sunday's Cabinet expansion. Now Independent MLA Ramkesh Meena, the newly-appointed advisor to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, has launched a scathing attack on former Deputy CM Sachin Pilot, saying that Congress will suffer in Rajasthan because of Pilot. "The Congress will suffer huge losses if the party imposes Pilot on Rajasthan and contests the 2023 Assembly elections under his leadership. I shall speak openly against the proposal and will also go to the Congress high command to apprise them of the fact that the party will lose its ground in the state if Pilot leads it. I will not support the party in that case," Meena

said. It needs to be mentioned here that Pilot had strongly objected to the induction of Independent and BSP MLAs into the Cabinet, saying that the party workers who worked hard to form the government should be rewarded and not those who contested against Congress candidates in the elections. As a result of Pilot camp's objection to the induction of Independent MLAs into the Cabinet, the MLAs supporting the Gehlot government could not be included in it. However, to make things smooth, three Independent MLAs, including Ramkesh, Sanyam Lodha and Babulal, have been appointed as advisors to Gehlot. The CM now has six advisors. Meena also said that now that the Congress high command has accepted the demand of Pilot by allotting portfolios to

leaders from his camp in the Cabinet, he should leave Rajasthan. Meena said that in the 2018 Assembly elections, the Congress suffered a loss of 50 seats because of Pilot's presence. Had the charge been with Gehlot, Congress could have won 150 seats, he said, adding that if Pilot remains in the state, the party will suffer losses in the 2023 Assembly elections as well. During the political crisis in Rajasthan last year, 13 Independent MLAs stood by Gehlot and saved the government. However, none of them have not found a place in the Cabinet. Gehlot had recently said that the cooperation of these MLAs can never be forgotten. However, now there seems to be disappointment among them, as they have been left out of the state Cabinet.

Incessant rains leave major dams brimming in K'taka, many places in Bengaluru inundated

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

All major dams are nearing full capacity while 54 localities in the city are waterlogged throwing normal life out of gear as heavy rains continued to batter Karnataka on Monday. Several apartments were inundated after Singapura Lake situated in 66 acres breached in the morning. The government has deputed relief teams, including police departments, to take up emergency measures. Yelahanka locality in Bengaluru is the worst affected with 45 places being waterlogged. Many houses and apartments in Mahadevapura, Vidyaranyapuram, Allalasaandra and Rajarajeshwarinagar localities are also submerged. Yelahanka-Chikkaballapur Road, Bengaluru-Doddaballapur roads are also inundated with water causing



severe inconvenience to vehicle riders. All major dams in the state are almost full following heavy rains since November beginning. Major dams-- Krishnarajasagar (KRS), Kabini, Bhadra and Tungbhadra-- were filled to their capacity on Saturday. Three hydel energy reservoirs and other six dams are almost full. Cauvery basin has recorded 95 per cent water storage and Krishna basin has seen 92 per cent of water storage. Measures have been taken to ensure safety of people living in low-lying areas as there will be huge water outflow from dams. Officials said 80,000 cusecs of water is being released from Tungbhadra dam in the state. The lakes in various cities across Karnataka which have not been filled since decades are full and most of them breached. Authorities have initiated safety measures.



CHANGING NEGATIVE IMAGE OF AUDIT MUST: CHIEF MINISTER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that it is necessary to change the negative image of audit. Auditors scrutinize the accounts of the government while being actually alert, cautious and vigilant. Auditors are helpful to the government in preventing unnecessary expenditure. Audit para and their suggestions are the lessons of good governance. Chouhan was addressing the inaugural session of the one-day 'Role of Audit in Reforming Governance' seminar at Minto Hall, Bhopal under Audit Awareness Week.

Chouhan said that governments organize various types of days like Environment Day, Sports Day, Teacher's Day etc. in the country, but it is an irony that we have not specially organized any day focused on audit. It is because of the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he started efforts in this direction to eradicate the negative image of audit institutions. Audit Day was celebrated for the first time in the country on November 16, 2021 under the leadership of PM Modi. The Chief Minister congratulated all the audit institutions and the officers and employees working in them. Chief Minister said that the history of audit in India is more than 160 years old. The CAG institution, in the form of a constitutional body has played a significant role in



making the accounts of the government more and more transparent and accountable. Chouhan said that there was a time when there would be doubts of different kinds in government departments regarding audit. The auditors were known to be people who looked for loopholes in everything, blaming the government, who ask unnecessary questions and intimidators who showed even a small mistake in bad light o scare people. Chief Minister said that there is a need to understand the importance of CAG institution. Keeping CAG's dutifulness and loyalty to the Constitution, there is a need to see it as a friend, complement and ally of the government. Any democracy can function strongly only when its three organs, the legislature, the executive and the judi-

ciary, discharge their respective responsibilities with coordination and balance. The contribution of CAG in this work is noteworthy. Chouhan said that the role of CAG is very important because he always remains alert, cautious and vigilant. Auditors have their own impartial and independent opinion on every issue. They scrutinize the accounts of the government carefully. They play a supporting role like the ENT of Public Accounts, Public Undertakings and Estimates Committee of the House. They ensure adherence to principles of fairness, transparency and economy in the expenditure of government money. Auditors help the government to prevent wasteful expenditure. Chouhan said that auditors are allies of the government. In the

state, the Principal Accountant General is meeting the principal secretaries of all the departments, heads of offices, district collectors, public representatives etc. to determine the subjects and areas in relation to the audit action plan. This is certainly a commendable initiative. Chief Minister informed that the woman sarpanch of Barkhedhi Abdullah village in Bhopal district, Sushri Bhakti Sharma, has got the distinction of becoming a member of the State Audit Advisory Board. Referring to Sant Kabir's couplet "Nindak Niyare Raakhiye - Aangan Kuti Chhabay, Bin Pani Bin Sabuna Nirmal Kare Subhay", the Chief Minister said that auditors cooperate with us by evaluating the works of the government independently and impartially. They also tell us where the work needs improvement. Therefore, we should always keep them close to us as good critics and well-wishers. Chouhan said that after studying the auditor reports, serious action should be taken on the issues raised therein and time bound action should be taken. It is necessary to ensure that the pending audit paragraphs are resolved in time. It should be ensured that whatever records are called for audit are made available without any delay. Chief Minister Shri Chouhan said that the auditors should also try to adapt themselves according to the new techniques and methods of governance.

GOVERNOR AT EPCO'S GENERAL BODY MEETING

Environmental balance is everyone's responsibility: Governor

Environment conservation is an every moment issue

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that environmental protection is an every moment issue. If the climate is polluted, then its effect will be on mankind every moment. We are all seeing and understanding the outbreaks of global warming and climate change. The need is to behave in accordance with environmental balance. He said that every person of the state is responsible for the balance of the environment, today efforts are needed with this spirit. Patel was addressing the 11th General Assembly meeting of Environment Planning and Coordination Organization (EPCO) at Raj Bhavan on Monday. Governor Patel said that the exploitation of nature by mankind in the blind race for progress, has resulted in a serious crisis. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given a target of zero netting of Green House Emissions by the year 2070,

in view of the challenge with a vision. Efforts to increase public awareness towards environmental balance are a must because health is wealth. Referring to the example of a teacher couple from Gujarat getting school children to plant saplings, he said that it is important to have the idea of environmental protection more than of resources. He told that PM Modi had successfully run a massive public awareness programme through Van Mahotsav when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat. He said that people save money for the future of their children, whereas the need of the hour is for environmental protection, because if life itself is at risk, what is the use of money. Patel received information about the activities and programmes of EPCO. He direct-

ed that special emphasis should be laid on the compliance report within the time-limit of the works. Citing his own example, he told the officers to be regularly acquainted with the ground realities of the schemes. He said that monitoring through spot inspection is more effective. He asked to get the saplings planted after growing the plants in the nursery for plantation. Environment Minister Hardeep Singh Dang said that efforts for public awareness towards environment should be focused in rural areas as well. Executive Director Shriman Shukla presented the information related to the structure, nature and operation of the organization. EPCO Director General Anirudh Mukherjee welcomed Governor by presenting him a sapling.



Kamal Nath meets Sonia Gandhi to discuss 'one person one post' in MP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath and state in-charge Mukul Wasnik met Congress President Sonia Gandhi here on Monday to discuss the issue of 'one person one post' in the state. The Ashok Gehlot cabinet in Rajasthan was expanded following the format of 'One person one post' on Sunday, after which three ministers had to resign for holding other posts in the state. On Monday, after the meeting concluded, Kamal Nath came out of Sonia Gandhi's residence and said that the

party's top leadership will decide. He added that the discussion on this has been going on for a long time and changes have been made in Rajasthan on the same pattern. If the Congress President approves it for Madhya Pradesh, the party leaders will implement it soon. He said that he wants to work for the state now and does not want to join central politics at the moment. However, if 'One person one post' is implemented, Kamal Nath might also lose a post. A few days before Parliament's winter session begins, this meeting of Kamal Nath is considered important

as his dialogue with the MPs of the G-23 group has been going on. As the Congress can give important responsibilities to the senior leaders in the electoral states, this meeting with the Congress President was considered essential. He is also trying to unite other opposition parties on behalf of Sonia Gandhi, who has entrusted him with the responsibility. Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee is in Delhi on a four-day visit, during which discussions regarding 'One person one post' are expected to be held.

Leopard mauls 10-year-old to death

"A rescue team was called from the Pench National Park to tranquilise and capture the leopard. Villagers are very angry and wanted to kill the animal," a forest official said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A 10-year-old tribal boy was mauled to death by a leopard in Madhya Pradesh on Monday, police said. A leopard attacked a group of boys playing on the road in Seoni district around 7 am. "Seeing the leopard, the boys tried to flee but one of them was caught by the big cat and dragged into the forest," police said. Later, angered by the incident, villagers reached the spot and tried to capture the leopard but in vain. Meanwhile, forest officials were alerted and a rescue team was called from the Pench

National Park to tranquilise and capture the leopard. Villagers are very angry and wanted to kill the animal," a forest official said. This is the fourth such incident within two months in the district when leopards mauled villagers to death. Earlier on October 19, a 50-year-old woman was killed by a leopard when she was cutting paddy with other women in a field in Ugli village. On October 16, a 16-year-old girl was killed by a leopard in the Kanhiwada forest area. A similar incident had occurred in Mohhaon village when a man was mauled to death by a big cat on September 15.

Man posing for video dies after being hit by train

The man was shooting a video along with his friend for uploading on social media accounts when he was hit by a train in the Sharaddev Baba area at around 5:30pm.

Team Absolute | Hoshangabad

A 22-year-old man died after being hit by a train while posing for a video along a railway track, police in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad district said on Monday (November 22). The incident occurred on the Itarsi-Nagpur rail route on Sunday (November 21) and the deceased has been identified as Sanju Choure (22), a resident of Panjara Kala village, Pathrota police station in charge Nagesh Verma said.

"The man was shooting a video along with his friend for uploading on social media accounts when he was hit by a train in Sharaddev Baba area at around 5:30pm. He was rushed to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival," he informed. A video shot by his friend, which shows Choure near the track even as a goods train can be seen approaching with its driver blowing the horn as well as him getting hit, went viral on social media on Monday.

A "Laughter Protest" Aimed For Road Makeover

Fed up with the condition of a 200-metre-long road in a Bhopal colony, residents got together for a "laughter protest."

Team Absolute | Bhopal

There were giggles, guffaws and chuckles on a dilapidated road in a residential colony in Madhya Pradesh's capital city Bhopal on Sunday. Fed up with the condition of a 200-metre-long road in their area, residents of Arvind Nagar got together for a "laughter protest", hoping that it would draw the attention of the authorities. The protest was held yesterday on November 21.

People who lined up with banners that highlighted their plight raised their hands and roared in laughter. A local resident Uma Shankar Tiwari commenting over holding the unique protest said, "We are staging a 'laughter protest'. We are laughing because the government is unable to repair the road." He added, "A road has not been constructed in last two years although ₹ 3 crore was sanctioned. Some work was done when we protested but it was stopped later."

CM plants Arjun and Gulmohar Saplings in Smart City Park

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Arjun and Gulmohar saplings in Smart City Park along with Jagdish Aswani, Shetty Chandnani and Ravi Narayan Satani of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Borwan Club. Chouhan is planting saplings every day as per his resolve. Chouhan plants saplings with social, voluntary organizations and people working in the field of environment protection every day to encourage the participation of the society in plantation work for environmental protection. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Borwan Club, an organization formed in Sant



Hirdaram Nagar two years ago, works for public awareness for nature, environment, cleanliness and health. Borwan spread over an area of about 180 acres was beau-

tified by the organization by making it garbage and polythene free. Due to this Borwan, has developed into a model forest. More than 7 thousand saplings have been

planted by the organization. Along with this, the benefits of organic farming are being promoted and publicized. The Gulmohar planted today is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Bunches of flowers blooming between the leaves of Gulmohar, make it all the more attractive. In summer, instead of leaves, Gulmohar trees are laden with flowers. It is also rich in medicinal properties. Arjuna tree is a medicinal tree, the use of whose bark and juice is beneficial in diseases like heart and tuberculosis. This evergreen tree is found in the foothills and dry areas of the Himalayas. Arjun trees are also found in abundance in Madhya Pradesh.

Food compost plant and pensioners association office inaugurated in SBI

Team Absolute | Bhopal

SBI Chief General Manager Umesh Kumar Pandey inaugurated the Food Compost Plant and the office of Pensioners Association at the Local Head Office of State Bank of India. Speaking on the occasion, Pandey said that State Bank of India is developing environment-friendly infrastructure in its offices under the Sustainability Initiative. In line with this, a food compost plant has been started in the Local Head Office today, in which organic manure will be made from the food waste

generated from the office canteen, which will be utilized in the gardens of the bank premises. Pandey further said that SBI's staff pensioners are an important part of our family and with the opening of the SBI Pensioners Association office in the bank premises, they will be facilitated in their work. On this occasion, General Manager S Giridhar, Deputy General Manager and Circle Development Officer U Dinesh Shanbhag, General Secretary of SBI Pensioners Association GK Gandhi and other senior officers were present.

FIR lodged for online drug trade as Amazon was not cooperating: MP govt

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra said on Sunday that Amazon officials were not cooperating in the investigation of the case even after giving a warning in the case of selling marijuana online, after which action has been taken to register an FIR. "Online drug trade is a more serious crime than cyber crime and such crime will not be encouraged in the state", he added in a tweet. Mishra said a case has been registered against the executive directors of Amazon in Bhopal under section 38 of the NDPS Act. In Marijuana sale through Amazon e-commerce portal,

the Bhopal Police which is investigating the matter has made Executive Directors of Amazon Seller Services Limited as accused under section 38 of the NDPS Act. The traders across the Country appreciate the firmness of MP Police in this matter and have complimented CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Home Minister Narottam Mishra for the efficiency of the police system, CAIT said in a statement. Earlier, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) had

greatly appreciated the statement of Narottam Mishra for giving a strong and unequivocal warning to Amazon that either to cooperate with the Country that this time this sensational issue will not be diluted since the statement has plugged all the escape routes for Amazon, CAIT said. CAIT had said that the current report of sale of marijuana through the e-portal of Amazon is a big shock and an eye opener that to earn profit these companies can do anything or everything including sale of prohibited goods. "It has been reported that Amazon has been facilitating trade of Marijuana through

its marketplace e-commerce platform which is meant to act only as a bridge between buyer and seller for the sale and purchase of permitted goods/services. However, from the recent findings of Madhya Pradesh Police it is clear that the drug rackets being operated on the marketplace platform are not without the knowledge and active involvement of Amazon, but Amazon has been fully involved by storing such narcotics in their warehouses, provided their delivery channels for safe and secure delivery of the drugs to the customers and also taking major share of the sales proceeds (of the order of 66 per cent) as their profit/sales commission", CAIT said.

action in searching for his chopped hand and handing it to the doctor. "I still don't know if I would be able to work with this hand but, I will thank the police who, searched for my chopped hand," Saket said pointing toward his left hand which was chopped off. Narrating the entire incident, Saket told IANS that, he along with four other labourers had done construction work for five months but they were not paid their dues. "Whenever, I used to visit him to ask for money (Rs 10,000), Ganesh Mishra (employer and the main accused in the case) used to give another date," Saket said. On Saturday, when Saket visited Mishra's house for the payment, they refused to give him money. "I needed money to feed my children, that's why I said I would not

Labourer whose hand was chopped off in MP thanks police for quick action

Team Absolute | Bhopal

leave until I get my money. Ganesh Mishra, went inside his home saying, wait I will give your money right now. Within a moment he came out with a sword. Before I could realise anything, he wielded the sword furiously. He tried to kill me by chopping off my neck, but I tried to save myself with hand. Immediately, after chopping my hand (left hand), Mishra hurled abuses and fled from the spot." The police was informed and the victim was rushed to SGMH for treatment. Police arrested Mishra and others later on Sunday. They have been booked under section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (prevention of atrocities) Act were also imposed against the accused.

leave until I get my money. Ganesh Mishra, went inside his home saying, wait I will give your money right now. Within a moment he came out with a sword. Before I could realise anything, he wielded the sword furiously. He tried to kill me by chopping off my neck, but I tried to save myself with hand. Immediately, after chopping my hand (left hand), Mishra hurled abuses and fled from the spot." The police was informed and the victim was rushed to SGMH for treatment. Police arrested Mishra and others later on Sunday. They have been booked under section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (prevention of atrocities) Act were also imposed against the accused.

leave until I get my money. Ganesh Mishra, went inside his home saying, wait I will give your money right now. Within a moment he came out with a sword. Before I could realise anything, he wielded the sword furiously. He tried to kill me by chopping off my neck, but I tried to save myself with hand. Immediately, after chopping my hand (left hand), Mishra hurled abuses and fled from the spot." The police was informed and the victim was rushed to SGMH for treatment. Police arrested Mishra and others later on Sunday. They have been booked under section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (prevention of atrocities) Act were also imposed against the accused.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Farm laws repeal: New Precedent!

The sudden announcement on Friday by the Prime Minister that the three contentious farm laws would be repealed has set the cat amongst the pigeons with academics and intelligentsia questioning the fate of reforms and the BJP denying there is no such precedent. Questions are also being raised whether or not the decision to repeal the laws that the government advocated vigorously for months on end as a necessary reform would set a precedent for other reforms in the pipeline. Or for that matter, other bills proposed or acts already introduced, such as the Citizens' Amendment Act (CAA). According to farmers and their supporters "The government did it only because it was clear that it is weak in western Uttar Pradesh. There are elections soon in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab and hence this was announced. Reminding that the farmers' agitation is not yet over, they are still agitating for minimum support price (MSP), "Government should seriously think about it. The farming community is in great pain. Almost 80-85 per cent of the farmers are small land holding farmers. If they are not assured MSP, they would resort to distress sale." Congress says that, "Congress spokesperson, Jaiveer Shergill said, "Repealing of farm laws is admission of guilt, misadventure and miscalculation by PM Modi, who being intoxicated with power seems to have underestimated the power of democracy, will power and resolve of the farmers," stating that the repeal of farm laws will not absolve the BJP government of the crime of pushing 700 farmers to death. But BJP denies any such thing saying "It (the announcement to repeal the three farm laws) is a statesman-like announcement made on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purub. Why would it be a precedent? There is no room to look at it from that perspective. That would be a misreading of the PM's statesmanlike approach."

Abrahamia: A new religion on the horizon?

Asad Mirza

News reports about a new religion to be implemented globally, has caused consternation amongst the people and also raised questions about its validity and designs behind it.

Recently in this era of conspiracy theories, in vogue particularly after the onset of the Covid pandemic, I recently received a message on WhatsApp. The message gave a link to a report published by the BBC Hindi with details about a new religion to be introduced soon in the world and which will be called 'Abrahamia'. According to reports the new religion will likely appear in the Middle East.

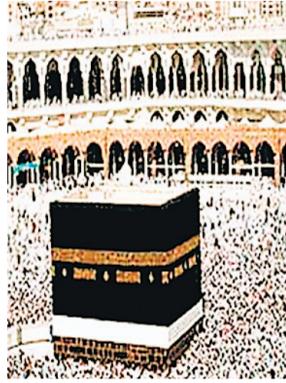
Further research revealed that this not a new phenomenon but a project, and as described by the BBC was set in motion soon after the signing of Abraham Accord between Israel and the UAE, Morocco, Sudan and Bahrain normalising relations with Israel.

This new religion was purportedly denounced by the Grand Imam of Al Azhar Sheikh Ahmed Al Tayyab at the recent 10th anniversary celebrations of the Egypt Family House, an organisation devoted to promote interfaith relations and coexistence. The Grand Imam described the new religion as one, which will not have any soul, sense or guidance. Many people are still wondering that why did the Sheikh raised this issue when most of the people even don't have a clue about it?

WHAT IS ABRAHAMIA?

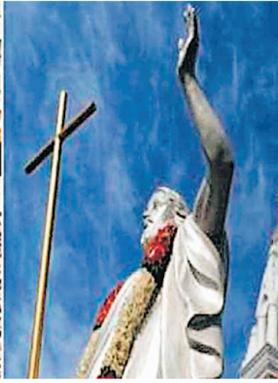
As per unverified reports Abrahamia will combine the core principles of the three-monotheistic religions- Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The name of the alleged religion is taken from Prophet Ibrahim, the father of the prophets' from whose family all other religions of the book have flowed.

Egyptian General Khairat Shukri in an interview with RT Arabic has



warned that the Abrahamia will allegedly unify all the religions in the Middle East and is an evil plan made by the US and Israel.

He further revealed to RT Arabic that the Abrahamia is a new schema that is 'not less dangerous' than Henry Campbell's document of 1907, which resulted in the forming of the Zionist state; saying that the new religion might be a follow up plan to the ancient Campbell's document to force people to acquiesce and normalise relations with Israel, and it purports to solve all 'the Middle Eastern crises'. On social media too, the new religion has been slammed, some described the possible ideas of the Abrahamia as more of an evil plan to benefit Israel and the US as well as to force more Arab countries to normalise relations with the occupying nation. On social media many religious personalities also have voiced their concern and called on people to stick to their faith and not be tricked into such 'fake' propagandas. In addition many people have pointed out the conspiracy theories angle, like establishment of a New World Religious Order- under which there will only be one major religion throughout the world, with major portions borrowed from the Judaism. A person has linked the Abrahamia to an under construction project in Abu Dhabi which will be ready by 2022, claiming it will be the first place for the new worshippers to pray in. While another user



has linked the new religion with devil worshipping claiming that it is already found among the Freemasons' beliefs.

ABRAHAMIC FAMILY HOUSE

This new cultural landmark in the UAE capital, which includes a synagogue, a church and a mosque, and is meant to be a beacon of understanding and peaceful coexistence, inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity will be opened to the public in 2022.

As reported by the Vatican News website, constructed on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi the project is closely followed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam Ahmed Al Tayyab of Al Azhar, who have also endorsed the design.

The names of the three separate iconic houses of worship in the Abraham Family House complex were officially unveiled as "Imam Al Tayyeb Mosque," "St. Francis Church," and "Moses Ben Maimon Synagogue." Besides the three places of worship, the site includes a cultural centre that aims to encourage people to exemplify human fraternity and solidarity within a community that cherishes the values of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence, while the unique character of each faith is preserved.



In a statement, Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of the Department of Culture, Government of Abu Dhabi has described the Abraham Family House epitomising interfaith harmonious coexistence and preserving the unique character of each religion.

ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS

The Abrahamic religions, most prominently Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are those faiths that trace their origins to the Israelite prophet Abraham and are also called religions of the book. In the past both Christianity and Islam have been particularly successful at seeding any new religious movement. In Christianity, Protestantism has been an especially fertile ground for new religious movements (NRMs). J. Gordon Melton's edited Encyclopaedia of Protestantism gives historical and cultural context for Christian-derived NRMs, while displaying the tradition's heterogeneous nature. Although many Christian offshoots (e.g., Mormonism and Christian Science) have achieved a degree of mainstream acceptance, others, like the Unification Church and the Family

International, remain on the cultural fringes.

Islam, like Christianity, is a world religion with a long history, millions of adherents, and many derivative religious sects. The two-volume Encyclopaedia of Islam and the Muslim World, edited by Richard Martin, covers the multifaceted nature of modern Islam, including the convergence of the religion with socialism, NRMs like the mystical Iranian Shaykhiyya, and "anti-cult" movements like the anti-Baha'i Hujjatiah Society. The Encyclopaedia of Islam in the United States, edited by Jocelyne Cesari, focuses on Islam in the US. It details American NRMs like the Nation of Islam, the Naqshbandi Fellowship, and the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order.

Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement, edited by Roel Meijer, describes the Islamic NRMs such as the Salafi and Wahhabi Muslims. Modern Islamic movements also include progressive and moderate NRMs, like the Gulen movement, originating in Turkey in the 1980s. Gulenism is a social/civic movement within mainstream Islam that advocates ideas like the separation of church and state and interfaith dialogue. It is also notable for the high level of organisation and commitment found among its members, which has resulted in the epithet "cult" being used against it.

But the moot question remains that how this new religion will be promoted and new adherents converted, as the NRMs have been unable to assert themselves as an option or alternative to any major religion, and historically each religion has labelled NRMs as deviant sects not as separate religions.

(Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He writes on Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs. Views expressed are personal)

international

US restriction on SK hynix plan in China 'legitimate': Trade chief

Seoul | Agencies

The recent restriction on South Korean chipmaker SK hynix plan by the US to bring advanced equipment to a Chinese factory was made out of "legitimate concerns," and more such moves could be possible, Washington's top trade official has said.

US Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai made the remarks in her recent radio interview with CBS, a Seoul-based broadcaster, which aired on Monday.

"I am aware that the technology in question is highly sensitive, and that there are legitimate concerns about the risks to national security in terms of where this technology ends up," Tai said.

SK hynix had planned to install some of the new extreme ultraviolet lithography (EUV) machines by Dutch firm ASML, to its factory in Wuxi, China, to renovate its factory and to produce memory chips more efficiently, reports Yonhap news agency. But Washington has barred it from shipping the equipment to China amid an intensified Sino-U.S. rivalry, according to officials.

"It is important for us to work with our partners and our allies in particular, on matters of shared economic and national security. And I also want to acknowledge that we consider Korea to be one of our most important national security partners," Tai added.



Asked if any other items could also come under such regulations down the road, Tai said, "Yes when it comes to matters of national security. National security includes military and defense concerns, but it can also be broader."

Earlier in the day, SK hynix CEO Lee Seok-hee said his company will respond to the issue "wisely while cooperating with interested parties."

In September, Washington asked major chipmakers and automakers to share business information, and Samsung Electronics and SK hynix submitted their business information earlier this month.

Japan's rail operator launches 'office cars'

Tokyo | Agencies

Japan's East Japan Railway Co. (JR East) on Monday launched "office cars" on certain Shinkansen bullet trains on lines connecting Tokyo and the country's northern and central parts to meet the growing demand for telework amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Without additional charge, the new service allows passengers to talk on the phone and participate in online meetings from their seats -- activities that are discouraged on the rest of the train, Xinhua news agency reported.

Media were granted access inside a running Hokuriku bullet train on Monday, and a JR East staff demonstrated how she works remotely using noise-cancelling head-

phones.

Passengers will also be able to borrow "smart glasses", which can project the content of their laptop screens in front of their eyes. On bullet trains on the Tohoku line, they also can use free of charge small dividers to put around their seat tables. To avoid congestion, the workspaces will not be available on weekends and some public holidays. JR East hopes the new service will help people to combine working online with travel, while also stimulating demand for business trips, which has decreased due to the pandemic.

Central Japan Railway Co. and West Japan Railway Co. have also been trialling the introduction of onboard workspaces since October on the trains that run through major cities.

S Korea to offer helicopters to UN peacekeeping ops

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea plans to offer helicopters to support UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) in a "substantive" contribution pledge it will make during next month's ministerial PKO meeting in Seoul, Defence Minister Suh Wook said on Monday. Suh made the remarks during a preparatory panel session for the 2021 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial slated for December 7-8, reports Yonhap News Agency. The meeting is expected to bring together some 700 people from more than 150 nations, including Foreign and Defence Ministers, and relevant UN officials and experts.

"South Korea will announce a substantive contribution pledge to provide helicopter assets, which are priority requirements (for UN operations), so as to contribute to the dramatic



improvement of the conditions for the UN PKO Mission," Suh said during the session. South Korea is currently considering providing about 10 choppers that are to be commissioned after decades of service, an informed source told Yonhap News Agency. South Korea joined the UN in 1991, and deployed its first peacekeeping unit to Somalia in 1993. At present, a total of 569 troops are working as part of PKO missions in five nations, including South Sudan and Lebanon

Political declaration signed in Sudan after month-long crisis

Khartoum | Agencies

Nearly a month after a political crisis erupted in Sudan, General Commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan and removed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok have signed a political declaration, which included reappointing Hamdok as Prime Minister. Sudan has been suffering from a political crisis after Al-Burhan declared a state of emergency on October 25 and dissolved the Sovereign Council and cabinet. On November 11, Al-Burhan issued a constitutional decree ordering the formation of a transitional Sovereign Council, and named himself as Chairman of the Council.

Since then, the capital Khartoum and other cities have witnessed mass demonstrations rejecting the measures by the Army Commander, Xinhua news agency reported. The declaration stipulated that the constitutional document would be the main reference for the transitional period. It also ensured

broad political participation, except for the dissolved National Congress Party of ousted President Omar al-Bashir.

The declaration reiterated that the partnership between the civilian and military components is the guarantor of Sudan's stability and security, assigning the Sovereign Council to the task of supervising the transitional period without interfering in the executive work of the government. It also promised to investigate the killing and injuring of civilians and military personnel during the recent demonstrations and to complete the transitional institutions, including the legislative council and the judicial bodies. According to the declaration, the committee for dismantling al-Bashir's government since 1989 will be brought back to work and its performance in the previous period will be reviewed. It also promised to release all political detainees and work to build a unified national army. At the signing ceremony of the declaration aired live by Sudan's official TV, Hamdok said the signing of the declaration opens the



door wide on all issues of the transition. "There are great challenges facing the political reality, but we have the ability to work together," he added. The deal offers the opportunity to maintain the gains achieved in the past two years, and fortifies the civilian democratic transition through expanding the transition base, the Prime Minister said. I-Burhan, for his part, said the declaration "lays the correct foundations for the transitional period in a consensual manner." The Army has no intention to exclude any party in Sudan, he added, vowing to work to complete the course of transition and reach free and fair elections.

A civilian-military transitional authority was established in Sudan following the ouster of the government of al-Bashir on April 11, 2019.

Chile heads to presidential runoff

Santiago | Agencies

The top two candidates from the first round of the presidential election in Chile are set for a runoff as they failed to garner over 50 per cent of the required votes. According to the preliminary results released on Sunday night by the Electoral Service of Chile, Jose Antonio Kast of the Republican Party has received 28.06 per cent of the vote, followed by Gabriel Boric of the Approve Dignity bloc with 25.5 per cent, reports Xinhua news agency. More than 86 percent of the ballots case the election held earlier in the day have been counted. Whoever wins the second round will have a four-year term from 2022 to 2026 to lead a country hit by high inflation, the Covid-19 pandemic, and social unrest. Aside from the two top candidates, Franco Parisi of the People's Party won 13.07 per cent of the vote, and Sebastian Sichel with 12.52 per cent. Voting centres reported high turnout throughout the day, despite high temperatures across most of the country and lengthy waiting time. The Sunday elections will also choose deputies, senators, and regional councillors. Incumbent President Sebastian Pinera had called on citizens to vote "with conviction, knowing that we are living in difficult times, but with unity we will overcome them and move forward".



LIBYAN PM ANNOUNCES PRESIDENCY BID

Tripoli: Libyan Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah has officially announced that he is running for President in the polls next month. Dbeibah made the announcement in a televised speech, saying he has submitted his candidacy application, reports Xinhua news agency. "There will no longer be war, and Libya will be sovereign and united," he noted. Dbeibah was appointed as the Prime Minister of the UN-backed Government of National Unity in February by the world body-sponsored Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF). Libya is slated to hold the general elections on December 24 as part of a roadmap adopted by LPDF. The House of Representatives, Libya's Parliament, approved the presidential election law in September and the parliamentary election law in October. The others in the presidential fray are Aguila Saleh, Speaker of the House of representatives; Khalifa Haftar, who previously led an insurgency from his eastern base against the UN-backed government in Tripoli; and Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of the late ousted Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi.



HC DECLINES TO GAG NAWAB MALIK, SAYS HIS CHARGES NOT 'TOTALLY FALSE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a significant observation, the Bombay High Court said on Monday that the allegations levelled by Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik against Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede and his family cannot be termed as 'totally false', as it declined to pass any restraining order against Malik. "At this prima facie stage, it cannot be said the allegations (levelled by Malik) are totally false," said Justice Madhav Jamdar, while refusing to accept the plea filed by Wankhede's father, Dnyandeve Wankhede, to stop the Nationalist Congress Party leader from posting any defamatory material against the family on social media. "Satyameva Jayate. The fight against wrongdoings will continue," Malik tweeted from Dubai on the initial development in the defamation case of Rs 1.25 crore filed against him by Wankhede Senior. While ruling out a 'blanket injunction' against Malik as sought by the Wankhedes, Justice Jamdar advised

the minister to exercise "reasonable care" to verify the allegations he levels against the NCB officer before going public with them. Noting that the 'right to privacy' must be balanced with 'freedom of speech', and that people have the right to comment on the actions of a person in official capacity, the court observed that serious allegations (of extortion) have been levelled against Wankhede by Prabhakar Sail, an NCB witness, in the recent cruise party raid case. The court orders came on the plea in the defamation suit filed by Wankhede Senior seeking ad-interim relief to prevent Malik, a senior Nationalist Congress Party leader, from putting up any defamatory posts on social media pertaining to the alleged fake documents related to his religion, family, official and related materials. In the past over six weeks, Malik has played havoc with the Wankhedes, posting the officer's birth certificate, school leaving certificate, caste papers, marriage-related documents and photographs, acquiring a liquor licence when he was a

minor, submitting alleged fake documents to get a plum Central government job, etc. Following the series of exposes by the minister, Wankhede Senior had approached the Bombay High Court with the defamation case, placing 28 documents challenging the set of papers submitted by Malik. Malik's legal team comprising senior advocates Atul Damle and Kunal Damle argued that the minister had reasonably verified all the documents he posted on social media. He had even filed a precept requesting to submit additional documents on the court records, which was allowed last week. Wankhede's lawyer Arshad Shaikh contended that Malik's tweets were politically motivated and intended to avenge the arrest of his son-in-law, Sameer Khan, in a drugs case by Wankhede. Khan spent nearly eight months in jail before being released on bail. Malik, who is also the national spokesperson of NCP, has been running a campaign targeting the NCB officer on multiple counts

such as the 'farzi' (fraudulent) raid on the cruise ship, targeting high-profile personalities to derive maximum publicity, allegedly making an extortion demand from Shah Rukh Khan to release his son Aryan Khan, and allegedly submitting fake documents to corner a plum job in the IRS in reserved category. Wankhede's family has, however, rubbished all charges. Not willing to backtrack, Malik on Monday hit out again by posting pictures of Sameer Wankhede - whom he has been calling a 'Muslim' - signing the 'nikaah-nama' (marriage certificate) before a cleric. The cruiser raid party and the alleged extortion charges are being probed separately by the NCB Delhi team and the Mumbai Police. Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil on Monday indicated that given the observations of the Bombay High Court in the bail pleas of Aryan Khan, Munmun Dhamecha and Arbaaz Merchant, the Mumbai Police will independently probe if the raid on the Cordelia cruise ship was 'fake.'

'PICTURE VERY DISTURBING', SC GRANTS PROTECTION FROM ARREST TO EX-MUMBAI CP



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday termed the legal battle between former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh and ex-Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh as "very disturbing", stating that a former commissioner seems to show lack of faith in the police. The top court also granted protection from arrest to Singh in the cases lodged against him in Maharashtra, and directed him to join the investigation. A bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul and comprising Justice M.M. Sundresh said: "We do find the picture very disturbing. An earlier commissioner seems to show lack of faith in the police! We wonder what would happen to the common man and what kind of faith they would have in the police. The matter has become curiouse in the battle between the then home minister and the then police commissioner." The bench added that the only question which has to be examined is whether in view of the CBI looking into the matter, the other aspects

arising are also to be entrusted to the CBI. The bench said the stands of the CBI and the state government are also not known as the writ petition stands decided on a threshold point of sending it to the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT). The bench said: "Prima facie, this may not be the appropriate course of action. The notices issued to the respondents are returnable on December 6. In the meantime, the petitioner shall join the investigation, but shall not be arrested." Senior advocate Puneet Bali, representing Singh, submitted that his client is very much in India, but apprehends action being taken by the Maharashtra government. He also submitted that the prayer in the petition was for directing respondent No. 2 (CBI) to inquire and investigate into the criminal conspiracy charges. Bali submitted that the petition was dismissed at a preliminary stage on the ground that the petitioner must approach the CAT, as the issue raised is of the service of the petitioner with the state government.

Bali said that FIRs against his client have been lodged by bookies, extortionists etc., against whom he had taken action. He submitted that his client was broached by the commissioner, whom he handed over the charge, who advised him not to fight against the system and in effect withdraw the letter sent to the Chief Minister making complaints against Deshmukh, as otherwise the consequences could be varied. Singh had levelled sensational charges of Rs 100 crore extortion against then Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh. Bali urged the top court to allow Singh to appear before any officer of the court of the CBI. On November 18, the Supreme Court had asked Singh's counsel to disclose which part of the world or the country he is in, and without these details, the court would not entertain his plea seeking protection. The top court had directed Singh's counsel to disclose his location on Monday. Singh had moved the top court seeking protection in FIRs registered against him in Maharashtra.

Mumbai police to probe if cruiser raid was 'fake:' Dilip Walse-Patil

Team Absolute | Mumbai:

In a major development, Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil on Monday indicated that in the wake of the recent Bombay High Court observations in the Aryan Khan bail matter, the Mumbai Police would probe if the Narcotics Control Bureau raid on a cruise ship was "fake" or not. In the detailed order on the bail pleas of Khan, Munmun Dhamecha and Arbaaz Merchant, Justice Nitin Sambre had said that there was "prima facie no positive evidence" against them on the NCB's charges pertaining to "conspiracy and common intent" in the case. When questioned, Walse-Patil said that against this backdrop, the city police will investigate if the raid on the Cordelia Cruise ship, led by NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede was 'fake' or otherwise. This will be the second probe into the case by the



Mumbai Police which is already probing the charges of 'extortion' levelled by a NCB witness against Wankhede since October 27. A 4-member team overseen by Additional Commissioner of Police Dilip Sawant is conducting the investigations and has already recorded

the statements of several players in the case including the NCB's witnesses. Besides, the NCB is conducting its own probe into the case that became vitiated after Wankhede faced several allegations, including allowing some outsiders and political activists to handle the detenus during the high-profile raid on October 2. Nationalist Congress Party Minister Nawab Malik has been running a campaign targeting Wankhede on various counts like the 'farzi' (fraudulent) raid on the ship, targeting high-profile personalities to derive maximum publicity, allegedly making an extortion demand from Shah Rukh Khan to release his son Aryan, and allegedly submitting fake documents to corner a plum job in the IRS in a reserved category. The NCB, after the ship raid, arrested a total of 20 persons, a majority of who have secured bail, including Khan, Dhamecha and Merchant, and triggered a major political row.

BJP corporator joins Congress ahead of MLC polls

Girish Vyas of BJP is the sitting MLC from Nagpur constituency whose term would end in January

Team Absolute | Nagpur

BJP corporator from Nagpur in Maharashtra, Ravindra Bhojar, on Monday joined Congress.

Bhojar, a four-time corporator and former RSS volunteer, is likely to be fielded as a Congress candidate in the next month's elections to the Maharashtra Legislative Council (MLC) from Nagpur, sources said. Girish Vyas of BJP is the sitting MLC from Nagpur constituency whose term would end in January. The BJP has declared the candidature of former energy minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule from Nagpur. Congress is yet to announce its MLC candidate from Nagpur. To a query on whether Ravindra Bhojar would be Congress nominee for the MLC polls, senior party leader

and minister Nitin Raut told reporters that candidates are announced by the party high-command on recommendations made by the state Congress chief. The biennial election to the Maharashtra Legislative Council will be held on December 10 from five local authorities' constituencies for six seats due to the retirement of sitting members. The counting of votes will be taken up on December 14. The six seats are falling vacant from Mumbai (2 seats), and one seat each from Kolhapur, Dhule-cum-Nandurbar, Akola-cum-Buldhana-cum Washim, and Nagpur.

Fadnavis dares MVA govt to ban Raza Academy

On a tour to the Vidarbha district, Fadnavis said, "A thorough investigation should be carried out to ascertain who gave permission for the rallies in the city."

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the wake of the Amravati violence, Opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday dared the state's ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government to ban Raza Academy in Maharashtra, adding the state government "should stop mindlessly targeting BJP workers and framing them in false cases." Raza Academy had organised a protest on November 12 against the Tripura violence. The protest led to stone-pelting, prompting the BJP to call a bandh in the city the next day during which

vehicles were burnt and some shops owned by Muslims torched. On a tour to the Vidarbha district, Fadnavis said, "A thorough investigation should be carried out to ascertain who gave permission for the rallies in the city." The Opposition leader expressed disappointment over the "prejudice shown by the government" in the matter. "It is evident that government is turning blind eye to violence, which took place during the rally organised by Muslim groups led by Raza Academy," he added. "If the government has the courage, it should ban Raza Academy," Fadnavis said.



"They should stop mindlessly targeting BJP workers and framing them in false cases. Four police stations are registering cases on BJP workers for one incident which is highly objectionable," he added.

MAHARASHTRA BUS EMPLOYEES STRIKE:

Only 7,000 Of 92,000 Staffers Attend Work

The strike continues despite the MSRTC management issuing notices to 2,632 daily wage staff, terminating the service of 526 employees and suspending another 2,937



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The strike by Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation staffers demanding merger of the undertaking with the state government continued for the 26th day on Monday, with only a paltry 6,943 of 92,266 employees attending work. The 6,943 employees comprised 4775 administrative staffers, 1725 workshop workers and 163 conductors, an official said. The stir started on October 28 but intensified on November 9 when all 250 depots of MSRTC stopped operations. The strike continues despite the MSRTC management issuing notices to 2,632 daily wage staff, terminating the service of 526 employees and suspending another 2,937. A merger of MSRTC with the state government will give staffers better salaries and greater job security, though government representatives have routinely said they can discuss all issues with the striking workers except merger.

Maharashtra govt is only worried about Aryan Khan: BJP MLA

He also alleged that the government hasn't done anything in the last two years when it came to taking the case of Maratha reservation forward, with no commission formed and no survey conducted yet

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Nitesh Rane on Monday alleged that while the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government has been worried about actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan, it doesn't share a similar concern for youngsters of the Maratha community. He alleged that the Maharashtra government hasn't done anything in the last two years when it came to taking the case of Maratha reservation forward, with no commission formed and no survey conducted yet. Rane told reporters in Thane that no meetings are held to discuss issues of the community and the case for reservation, adding that a village sarpanch

would more efficient than chief minister Uddhav Thackeray. He said that while Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLA and minister Nawab Malik targets Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede every day, similar attention is not given to education and job generation for youngsters in the state. Rane said, "Owing to several mistakes of the chief minister, the Maratha community has failed to get reservation... The MVA government has even failed to maintain reservation in education and jobs for youngsters. The government is concerned about a Bollywood actor's son rather than youngsters in the community." Rane demanded that the MVA give proof of what it has done to push for reservations for members of the Maratha community and how many meetings were held to discuss the matter. In response to Rane's remarks, Congress general secretary Sachin Sawant said the BJP itself was responsible for the issue surrounding reservation, adding that it had been trivialised by the Fadnavis administration.

Clean-energy push to halve petrol, diesel demand growth

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Demand growth in petrol and diesel combined will likely decline to 1.5 per cent per annum this decade, compared with 4.9 per cent in the last, because of increasing blending of ethanol with petrol, and rising usage of vehicles powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) and electricity (EVs). The trend will also be persuaded by policy interventions as India targets net zero emissions by 2070, a CRISIL research report said on Monday. Taking a cue, oil refiners would be altering their production mix in favour of alternatives such as petrochemicals, which should also support their profitability, the report said. Director of CRISIL Research, Hetal Gandhi, said: "A more than three-fold increase in the number of CNG stations, advancing of the ethanol blending target, and a significant

decline in EV battery prices are likely to slash demand growth in petrol to 1 per cent this decade from 8.4 per cent in the last." "Demand for diesel will be relatively resilient (2 per cent annual growth compared with 3.9 per cent earlier) because of non-exposure to the two-wheeler segment, where the shift to EVs is sharper, and the presence of a significant proportion of freight vehicles where CNG and EV penetration would be limited." Due to the demand changes, the proportion of diesel and petrol in the consumption of petroleum products is expected to reduce to 44 per cent by 2030 from 50 per cent now. Yet refiners are expected to add 37 million metric tonne per annum of capacity (15 per cent over the existing base) by fiscal 2025, investing over Rs 1.5 lakh crore. Almost all these facilities would be capable of producing both, transportation fuel and petrochemicals.

Also, consumption of petrochemicals is expected to grow at a healthy 8-10 per cent in India. Per-capita consumption of polymers is expected to double to 18-20 kg by fiscal 2030. That, and slowing demand for transportation fuel would result in the share of petrochemicals in petroleum products rising to 17 per cent by fiscal 2030 from 7 per cent in fiscal 2020, the research report said. This healthy demand growth for petrochemicals is expected to partly offset the decline in India's crude oil demand growth to 3.5 per cent this decade from 4.5 per cent in the last. This flexibility of diversification would lend stability to refiner margins. Their profitability, and those of oil marketing companies (OMCs) has been on the mend with margins gradually rebounding to pre-pandemic levels. Says Nitesh Jain, Director, CRISIL Ratings Ltd, "Most refineries in India are configured to produce more of

diesel and petrol (57 per cent) and less of petrochemicals (12-15 per cent). Typically, their production flexibility is limited within light, medium and heavy distillates. But the upcoming, integrated facilities "or crude-to-chemicals complexes" could produce relatively more petrochemicals. Despite the higher capex required for such facilities, interest coverage and gearing are expected at 5 times and below 1.5 times, respectively, over the medium term, because of better optimisation of output to maximise overall profitability. As per the report the lower demand growth for petrol and diesel would not impact the credit profiles of refiners and OMCs that will remain stable over the near-to-medium term, indicates a CRISIL Ratings analysis of public sector refineries and OMCs, which have 65 per cent share of refining capacity and 90 per cent share of oil marketing in India.





SUITS COMPETE WITH AVANT-GARDE LOOKS ON THE AMA RED CARPET

Los Angeles | Agencies

With this year marking the return of the American Music Awards (AMA) to a full in-person event, music's biggest stars stepped out on the red carpet in their fiercest looks at the Microsoft Theater here on Sunday night (U.S. Pacific Time), reports 'Variety'.

The show's host, Cardi B, made a statement with her avant-garde look, wearing a gold mask over her face along with a black dress, sheer veil and earrings in the shape of fingers. Jojo and Kali Uchis hopped on the bustier trend, with both pop stars rocking the look in their respective ensembles.

Another staple of the night was suits, with Tate McRae sporting a double-breasted blazer dress complete with statement sleeves, while 'In the Heights' star Anthony Ramos opted for a grey suede matching set.

Olivia Rodrigo wore a blue sheer gown with a feather hem. Chloe donned a black one-shoulder gown with cutouts and silver accessories. Ethan Torchio, Damiano David, Thomas Raggi and Victoria De Angelis of Måneskin opted for the matching suit-and-bowtie look. Anthony Ramos sported a grey

suede suit with a white undershirt and black shoes. And Billy Porter caught everyone's eye with an umbrella hat and matching teal suit.

It was as much the big night out of the music industry's most accomplished talent as a red-carpet showcase.



BTS superhit 'Butter' picked as Record of the Year in 'Variety' Hitmakers list

Seoul | Agencies

Kpop sensation BTS has been announced the winner of the Record of the Year award from the U.S. media and entertainment industry trade magazine 'Variety' for its global hit song 'Butter'.

The digital single won the Record of the Year category in the 2021 'Hitmakers' list released by 'Variety', reports Yonhap News Agency, quoting Big Hit Music and the website of the magazine. "The song 'Butter' blasted out to the

world in May, becoming a record-smashing single for BTS," 'Variety' said. The song's writers and producers, including the group's frontman RM, "crafted the perfect hit that just won't quit," 'Variety' noted on its website.

'Butter' was the K-pop band's second entry into the 'Variety' list. Last year, it was named Group of the Year, becoming the first Korean act recognised by the annual 'Variety' celebration.

The annual event recognises the writers, producers, publishers, managers and executives who helped make the 25 most consumed songs of the year. Its award ceremony is set for December 4.

'Hellbound' ousts 'Squid Game' from Netflix No. 1 spot

Seoul | Agencies

The South Korean fantasy horror film 'Hellbound' has topped the world's popular TV show rankings on the day after its release. According to data by streaming analytics firm FlixPatrol, the Korean-language Netflix original became the most-watched TV programme on the streaming platform on Saturday (U.S. time), a day after its global premiere, reports Yonhap News Agency. 'Hellbound' ranked No. 1 on the most-watched show list in 24 nations, including South Korea, Belgium and Mexico; it finished third in several countries, including the United States and Canada. It pushed down to second place the global sensation 'Squid Game', also a Korean-language original, which has long maintained the top spot. Written and directed by Yeon Sang-ho of 'Train to Busan' (2016) fame, 'Hellbound' depicts social turmoil and unrest after a series of inexplicable supernatural phenomena. It is based on a webtoon titled 'Hell', written and drawn by Yeon, which has received widespread acclaim since its release in 2019. On the following day (Sunday, U.S. time), however, 'Hellbound' dropped to the second position after 'Arcane', an animated series based on the online battle game 'League of Legends', rose to the top.



BRITNEY CALLS OUT CHRISTINA FOR HER RED-CARPET SILENCE ON CONSERVATORSHIP ROW

Los Angeles: Britney Spears took to her Instagram Stories on Friday evening (U.S. Time) to post a video of fellow '90s pop star, Christina Aguilera, who refused to answer a question about the Princess of Pop during a recent interview, reports 'Variety'.

The video is from the red carpet at Thursday's Latin Grammy Awards, when Aguilera was asked by a reporter if she has been in communication with Spears following the termination of her 13-year conservatorship. Aguilera's publicist is seen interjecting and pulling Aguilera away, saying, "No, we're not doing that tonight. I'm sorry." Aguilera frowns, telling the reporters that she can't answer the question before walking away from the press line and adding, "But I'm happy for her."

Spears posted the video of Aguilera alongside the message: "I love and adore everyone who supported me... but refusing to speak when you know the truth, is equivalent to a lie!!!! 13 years being in a corrupt abusive system yet why is it such a hard topic for people to talk about??? I'm the one who went through it!!!! All the supporters who spoke up and supported me, thank you... yes I do matter!!!!"

Spears and Aguilera rose to fame together as child stars on Disney's 'The Mickey Mouse Club', on which they co-starred from 1993-1994. As teenagers, they both catapulted to international superstardom at the same time, when female pop singers were rising in the age of '90s boy bands, alongside Mandy Moore and Jessica Simpson, notes 'Variety' in its report.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Madonna once again sparked controversy on Sunday with her latest slew of Instagram snaps - leading to a host of accusations from fans.

The Material Girl songstress, 63, took to the photosharing site to post a number of images - including one with photographer Steven Klein holding a knife to her throat and a caption revealing her staff worked for free on her recent project.

A flood of comments came from fans, who blasted the multimillionaire for permitting unpaid labour, while others were left furious at her braided hairstyle - accusing the star of cultural appropriation - and some insisted she was glorifying violence.

In the images, Madonna was seen holding up a copy of the new photographic creation for V Magazine, as Klein holds a knife to her chin, reports dailymail.co.uk.

Madonna, born Madonna Louise Ciccone, appears to be in a frozen state, standing with her eyes closed and her hands placed on the V Magazine cover, which came under fire for its depiction of Madonna recreating Marilyn Monroe's death.

She wore her hair in braids for the snaps while showcasing her remarkably smooth complexion and donning a simple black ensemble.

Her accompanying caption read: "Proud of my collaboration with @stevenkleinstudio For @vmagazine and knowing that against all odds..."

Madonna sparks controversy again

I'M SO LUCKY TO BE IN YOUR LIFE'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Taylor Swift has said she is 'so lucky' to be in her fans lives as she accepted the award for Favourite Pop Album for Evermore at the American Music Awards on Sunday. The singer, who also took home the award for Favourite Female Pop Artist, appeared via video link remotely after reportedly wanting to 'take a break' following the release of her re-recorded album Red. In her video acceptance speech, she said: "Thank you so much to the fans, this is such an amazing honor. The fact that you would do this for Evermore, I've always been so proud of this album. I've always looked at evermore as sort of Folklore's adventurous, fun younger sister. So, thank you so much for doing this. Also, I just wanted to say to the fans, thank you for all the amazing support that you have thrown my way with Red (my version). It's been so much fun. I'm so lucky to be in your life and to get to have you in mine. Have a great night. Love you guys." According to Hollywood Life, Taylor skipped the awards ceremony as she wanted to take it easy following the re-release of Red, which originally came out in 2012, reports dailymail.co.uk.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Jojo Siwa



ICC unveil their new Global Growth Strategy

Dubai | Agencies

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday unveiled its growth strategy, developed in partnership with the members, that places women's cricket at the forefront. The strategy will help strengthen and grow the game across the globe with a vision of making it accessible to more nations, players, and fans.



The world governing body gave a detailed account as to how they intend to strengthen, grow and protect the game digitally.

"In order to strengthen the sport, ICC has promised to deliver more cricket for all members and also invest in women's cricket. Through ICC.tv, ICC plans to provide fans from across the globe with a platform to watch the game they love and also spoke about the development of a new mobile game." To promote growth, ICC will also push for cricket's inclusion in the Olympics so as to make the game

available to a wider audience. The ICC will aim to focus on entry-level programme while also prioritising female participation," the ICC said in a statement.

ICC is keen to protect the game of cricket with its continued commitment to keep the sport corruption-free. Through its global community outreach programme, the ICC Cricket 4 Good, ICC will be looking to transform

the lives of children and families worldwide, it said.

Given the growth of women's cricket is among the six ambitions and strategic priority projects, Barclay spoke about the importance of women's events being played and what the immediate future looks like.

"I think it is really important that we ensure that women's events have an equal standing and same amount of recognition as the men's events," said Barclay.

"We are looking forward to a big 12 months. We have got the Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand and then the Commonwealth Games in July and August in Birmingham. In early 2023 we have got a Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa." ICC also recently announced the host nations for every major men's limited-overs event between 2024 and 2031. The T20 World Cup will now be played every two years while the Champions Trophy will fill the gap between two World Cups.

HARDIK PANDYA DOUBTFUL FOR SOUTH AFRICA SERIES, SAYS REPORT

New Delhi:

Flamboyant India all-rounder Hardik Pandya is doubtful for the upcoming tour of South Africa. Hardik has been asked to report to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) as selectors want him to recover and then prove his fitness at the NCA for selection, as per a report in InsideSport.



He is nurturing his shoulder injury sustained during the T20 World Cup opener against Pakistan. It was believed that his injury is a minor one and he is likely to be available for the home series against New Zealand, but he opted out due to a shoulder injury.

"His recovery from injury will mainly depend on rest. He should be visiting the NCA soon and we will take a call on his inclusion in South Africa tour depending on his fitness," a BCCI official told InsideSport.

The official also confirmed that at the moment Hardik is nowhere near full fitness and that is concerning.

AISHWARYA POSTS FOURTH CONSECUTIVE WIN AT INRC

Chikmagalur (Karnataka) | Agencies

Rider Aishwarya Pissay was at her dominant best yet again, winning the Ladies Class in the fourth round of the MRF MOGRIP FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) 2021 for two-wheelers, here.

The TVS Racing factory rider Aishwarya throttled through with a solid performance in the super special spectator stage on Saturday. The Motor Sports Club of Chikmagalur (MSCC) organises this stage regularly at the INRC to attract crowds.

Well-versed with the terrain, Aishwarya controlled the pace and consistently made time. She won the rally and clocked a total stage time of 1hr 05min 12.915sec on Sunday. The defending champion from Bengaluru continued her strong form finishing well-ahead of competitors in her class and registering another top-15 finish overall.

The champion rider claimed a solid win at Hampi and went on to take another facile victory in Round 2 at Bengaluru, where she conquered the slushy terrain and now leads the table in the woman's category with her fourth consecutive



win. The final two rounds will be held on December 11 and December 19 in Coimbatore and Nashik, respectively, and the topper will be declared the National champion. With one hand on the trophy, the seven-time National champion supported by IIFL, Scott, Puma India, and GoPro is eyeing bigger cross-country desert rallies after the National championship.

Time right for Cummins to be made Test skipper: Clarke

Sydney | Agencies

Former Australian cricketer Michael Clarke feels the time is right for pacer Pat Cummins to be made the captain of the Test team despite his leadership inexperience. He added that the seniors in the team can help Cummins in adjusting to captaincy duties.



Cummins is the front-runner to lead Australia in the Ashes after Tim Paine decided to step down from the post due to an off-field scandal. In the past few days, several former Australian players have said in unison about elevating Cummins from vice-captain to captain. Clarke is now the latest to join the list.

"If we were three or five years on it might be differ-

ent. But with so much seniority in the team, I think it is the right time for him. Because they can help him. Steve Smith, David Warner, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood. These guys

have played a truckload of Test cricket. They can be there to help him, with or without the C or VC next to his name," Clarke said on the Big Sports Breakfast show on Sky Sports Radio.

BAI announces National Ranking tournaments till March 2022

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the domestic badminton season starting with two All-India Senior Ranking Tournaments in December after almost twenty months gap due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Badminton Association of India (BAI) has nominated all subsequent age category tournaments till March 2022 as selection tournaments with an eye on building the next generation of stars.

The two senior ranking tournaments in Chennai and Hyderabad respectively will be followed by junior tournaments for U-15, U-17 and U-19 meets in Panchkula in January followed by the third senior ranking in Chhattisgarh in the month of March 2022, BAI said in a statement on Monday.

The players participating in the upcoming senior and junior tournaments is mandatory and their performance will be considered ahead of the trials for the inclusion of shuttlers for the Senior and Junior National Coaching Camp; for participation in BWF International Tournaments and finalization of Tops Elite and Development Groups.

"Because of the pandemic, domestic badminton could not take off for almost 20



months, and gauging performance of players based on National and International ranking alone don't seem to be the best fit in the current circumstances. Our objective is to conduct transparent tournaments and trials and ensure a proper evaluation of players' performance and their fitness levels are reviewed every six months, so that, fresh and deserving talents also gets the opportunities to be part of the Camp as well as the TOPs list of players," BAI general secretary Ajay Singhania said. BAI would also create a reserve list of elite and junior players who can be prepared subsequently with an eye on creating bench strength as well as replacement to the main list of shuttlers if needed.

Harmanpreet Kaur in WBBL-7 Team of the Tournament

Perth: India all-rounder and T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur, playing for Melbourne Renegades, has achieved the distinction of being one of the only two international cricketers to have been selected in the official Women's Big Bash League-7 (WBBL) "Team of the Tournament" announced by Cricket Australia (CA) on Monday. In a field dominated by local players, Sophie Devine of New Zealand, who plays for Perth Scorchers, is the only other non-Australian cricketer to be in the WBBL-7 "Team of the Tournament", being nominated skipper of the side. Harmanpreet played 12 matches for the Renegades this season, scoring 399 runs in 11 innings at an average of 66.5 and a strike rate of 135.25. She scored three half-centuries, with her highest being an unbeaten 81. As a bowler, Harmanpreet took 15 wickets at an average of 20.4, with her best being 3/22. Harmanpreet Kaur has been a dominant force with bat and ball for the Renegades, spearheading their rise back up the ladder after joining her new club. With bat in hand she has been unstoppable, hitting a competition-best 18 sixes, while she's also thrived in her new role with the ball in the Powerplay following the injury to star leg-spinner, Georgia Wareham," cricket.com.au wrote on Monday. A total of eight Indian cricketers competed in the WBBL this season.



16 teams ready to battle it out for FIH Men's Junior World Cup

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

Hockey fever is set to grip the nation as 16 participating teams prepare to battle it out for top honours at the FIH Odisha Hockey Junior World Cup Bhubaneswar 2021, scheduled to begin on November 24.

All four teams in their respective pools will be aiming to finish in the top half of their pool, as the top two teams from each pool will qualify for the quarterfinal.

In Pool A, European heavyweights Belgium will face off against Malaysia, Chile and South Africa.

Defending champions India are placed in Group B, along with Canada, France, and Poland, who all arrived here to battle it out for the title in the past week.

India, led by captain Vivek Sagar Prasad, will be looking to retain the prestigious trophy as they take centre stage on their home turf.

"Our team became champions in 2016 and now our team's aim is to continue to perform in a similar manner," Vivek, who was part of India's historic bronze-medal winning performance at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, said.

"While we did not have overseas competition, the team played some practice games against the



senior side in Bhubaneswar, which were quite valuable. Since arriving in Bhubaneswar, we have been getting used to the stadium. The Kalinga Hockey Stadium is truly iconic. It's good that we are getting to train here before we start," India chief coach Graham Reid added on the team's preparations. India will begin their campaign against France

on November 24. Netherlands, Spain, Korea and USA will lock horns in Pool C. Pool D will see Germany, Pakistan, Egypt and Argentina face off against each other.

Belgium will play against South Africa in the first game on November 24.

Ronaldo sends good wishes to Solskjaer

Manchester | Agencies

After Manchester United were outplayed by Watford on Saturday, conceding four goals in a dreadful match, the management was quick to relinquish Ole Gunnar Solskjaer from the coaching job. Now Manchester United star Cristiano Ronaldo shared his emotions, saying Ole is an outstanding human being. Taking to Twitter, Ronaldo wrote, "He's been my striker when I first came to Old Trafford and he's been my coach since I came back to Man United. But most of all, Ole is an outstanding human being. I wish him the best in



whatever his life has reserved for him. Good luck, my friend! You deserve it!" United have lost seven of their last 13 matches across all competitions, something that certainly wasn't expected after a summer of strong investment. Manchester United stated in an official statement, "Ole will always be a legend at Manchester United and it is with regret that we have reached this difficult decision. While the past few weeks have been disappointing, they should not obscure all the work he has done over the past three years to rebuild the foundations for long-term success."

With Zverev flying high, Djokovic's dominance could be tested next year



Turin | Agencies

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic will have his hands full when the new season commences with the first major of the year -- the Australian Open -- as he not only has to contend with a resurgent Daniil Medvedev of Russia but also Germany's Alexander Zverev, who won the Nitto ATP Finals here late on Sunday night.

Zverev, the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games gold medalist, finished his 2021 season in the best way possible when he claimed his second Nitto ATP Finals trophy, signalling what could be an even bigger 2022 for the 24-year-old star.

Zverev is flying high after beating world No. 2 Medvedev in the Turin final and could now be poised to chase Djokovic's No. 1 spot in the ATP Rankings alongside Medvedev next year.

When the ATP Rankings are released later on Monday, Djokovic will have a lead of nearly 3,000 points over Medvedev and nearly 4,000 over Zverev. But with three major titles -- Australian Open, French Open and the Wimbledon -- to defend in 2022 and two rising stars in great form, the Serbian will have his hands full in 2022.

Since the start of the Tokyo Olympics, Zverev has played the best tennis of his career, winning 32 of his 36 matches to close his season. He earned the singles gold in Tokyo, his fifth ATP Masters 1000 crown in Cincinnati and his second Nitto ATP Finals trophy. Of his four losses during that stretch, three have come against Djokovic (1) and Medvedev (2).

Bowling was our biggest plus in the series, says Rohit Sharma

Kolkata | Agencies

India T20I captain Rohit Sharma has pointed out bowling as the biggest plus of the series for the hosts. He was also in praise of off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, terming him as an attacking option for a team, especially in the middle overs. India, under a new captain in Sharma and head coach in Rahul Dravid, beat New Zealand by 73 runs in Kolkata to complete a 3-0 series win, marking a good start in their preparation for next year's T20 World Cup in Australia. "Bowling was our biggest plus in the series. We came back really (well) in the



first two matches after explosive starts by New Zealand. To restrict such a strong New Zealand batting line-up in the 160-mark is really commendable. We did well in all the three games. Whenever I go to the ground, I always want to think how many runs we have saved. And, in all the three matches we have saved about 15 runs and also had two run-outs on Sunday," said Sharma in the post-match press conference. Sharma had special praise reserved for Ashwin, who has picked up nine wickets since making a comeback into T20Is during the World Cup. In the series against New Zealand, Ashwin delivered crucial scalps while stemming the run-flow in the middle overs.



It is an honour to get film screened in IFFI: Kartik Aryan

Team Absolute | Mumbai

"I am happy to be in IFFI this time when my film is being screened, earlier I was here only as a fan," said Actor Kartik Aryan while interacting with media on the sidelines of 52nd IFFI. He expressed happiness over organising arrangements of the film festival. Kartik Aryan's film Dhamaka is being screened in OTT section of the festival. "It is an edge-of-the-seat drama and you will enjoy it," said the beaming actor who visited International Film Festival of India, Goa.

He said he supports screening of the

films on OTT as well as in theatre screens as these days people watch movies on any platform that they get access to.

Dhamaka which is a 1 hour and 44 minute long thriller was shot in a room using 360 degree technique. The movie is directed by Ram Madhvani. "There were 8 to 10 cameras focussed on me in that room while I was shooting it," said Aryan. Dhamaka is being screened on Netflix and it will be screened in IFFI as a part of BRICS films. For the first time ever, films from five BRICS nations, namely Brazil, Russia, China, South Africa along with India's will be showcased through the BRICS Film Festival alongside IFFI.



Saif leaves everyone in stomach-hurting splits!

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Fans have been waiting to watch Saif on the big screen once again, making Bunty Aur Babli 2 one of the most awaited films of the year. And boy, were they left in 70 MM sized splits! Saif Ali Khan has done it once again - donned his comic cape in the most impeccable way possible!

After his rib-tickling performance in Bhoot Police as Vibhooti, Bunty is a another addition to his comic characters over the years! While Bhoot Police was a horror-comedy, Bunty Aur Babli 2 is a spiritual sequel to the black comedy blockbuster of 2005. Juggling the sub-genres of comedy with grace, it's no wonder that Saif has always been the chosen one when it comes to experimenting with genres. His meteoric rise has been an outcome of these successful experiments.

A man of many shades and genres, we have seen Saif in his cruel worst, playboy cool, authentic most, bad boy best and

funnyman whole onscreen.

With critically acclaimed performances over the years, Saif has showcased a different shade in his recent movies like Tanhaji, Sacred Games, Laal Kaptaan and Bhoot Police. Now, add Bunty Aur Babli 2 to that versatile list of Saif's genres. We'd say Saif is a genre unto himself. And now, fans can't wait to see what magic he will cast in his next Vikram Vedha, for which he will soon begin shoot... or so we hear.

SUJOY GHOSH ON WHY ABHISHEK BACHCHAN WAS CAST AS 'BOB BISWAS'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

From the time the trailer of 'Bob Biswas' dropped, while the fans are excited to watch Abhishek Bachchan as a contract killer, there is a different kind of curiosity around the film over its casting. The film is a spin-off to the earlier 'Kahaani' released in 2012, in which Bob's character was portrayed by Saswata Chatterjee.

Talking about why Abhishek is cast, writer Sujoy Ghosh told reporter: "It was a very conscious decision of casting a new actor to play Bob Biswas because I wanted to move away from 'Kahaani', this is not that film. The world of this film is differ-

ent. This is a new film, which has its own standing.

"Through this film, we have attempted to create a new world of Bob Biswas which has a fresh new perspective to the story. That is in fact, one of the reasons why I did not direct the film. In the earlier film, when the introduction of Bob happened (referring to 'Kahaani') he only had a presence of eight minutes. Now, we have a full story on him."

In the past, there were many such legendary characters in which the same actor played the character in different films.



NAWAZUDDIN, RAM MADHVANI, VIR DAS IN LINE FOR INTERNATIONAL EMMYS



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Ram Madhvani's 'Aarya' and the now-controversial Vir Das are among the host of nominees for the International Emmy Awards, which will honour excellence in television programming at its 49th edition at Casa Cipriani in New York City on Monday night (U.S. Eastern Time).

The event will see awards being handed out in 11 categories for which nominees from 24 countries are in contention. Three titles from India have been named in the nomination list this time.

Siddiqui has been nominated in the best performance by an actor category for the Sudhir Mishra directorial 'Serious Men'. At the 47th International Emmy Awards in London in 2019, he had received the award on behalf of the cast and crew of McMafia, the crime drama. In 'Serious Men', Nawaz plays the protagonist in the film, a satire based on the book of the same name by Manu Joseph. It tells the story of a middle-aged man named Ayyan Mani, who works as an assistant at the National Institute of Fundamental Research in Mumbai.

The second nomination from India is 'Aarya', a crime thriller series directed by Ram Madhvani (most recently in the news for the Kartik Aryan-starrer 'Dhamaka'). It has been nominated in the Best Drama category. Vir Das, has been nominated for the Netflix comedy special 'Vir Das: For India'. In it, the comedian celebrates India's history from the time of the Vedas to Bollywood with his unique perspective on the subject.

CHILD JURY & ARTISTS KICK OFF KIDZCINEMA 2021

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On the occasion of Universal Children's Day, 2nd edition of KidzCINEMA was kicked off in Mumbai. The festival opening was done by the Child Jury and Artists, including celebrity child artist Dishita Sehgal along with Ithita Jain, Kyra Narain, Os Mishra, Ojasvini Kumar, Karman Singh Talwar, Purvahi Dhawan, and Fathima Neha.

Universal Children's Day, is celebrated on 20th November each year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare. The festival's theme this year is "stories of positivity," and the festival is available virtually for a month (20th November to 19th December) through MovieSaints, the streaming partner.

Praveen Nagda, Festival Director, KidzCINEMA informed, "The aim of



the festival is to reach out and seek, and bring best children's films from across the world on a single online platform. This year's theme is Stories of Positivity and the films we received reflect that strongly."

Many interesting workshops have also been lined up. This includes Master Class by Ritesh Taksande on Mobile Filmmaking, Acting workshop by Suvahhdan Aangre, Theatre workshops by Raell Padamsee's ACE Productions, Navrasa workshop by

Actor Mithila Naik, Voice modulation workshop by Actor and Model Leena Nandi, and Photography workshop by Pritesh Rao, of Pearl Academy.

This festival is supported by CIFEJ (Centre International de Film pour l'enfance et La Jeunesse i.e. The International Centre of Films for Children and Young People), which was established in Brussels in 1955 and is among the largest global organizations supporting children's cinema.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Ek Deewana Tha' actress Donal Bisht, who was also seen as a contestant in 'Bigg Boss 15', got a lot of support from fans after her eviction from the show.

During the recent press conference,

Pratik were having a normal conversation with her. The netizens too slammed the actress and connected the scenario with the Donal Bisht incident where a similar issue had taken place where Tejaswi spoke to Donal in an arrogant way and the latter got quite emotional after that.

'BIGG BOSS 15'

Tejaswi questioned over her antics, fans recall Donal Bisht incident

the media questioned Tejaswi Prakash for making a big hue and cry in the kitchen when Nishant and

"Tejaswi who had claimed that Donal apparently cried for no reason, got her 'karma'," wrote a Twitter user. Another 'Bigg Boss' fan tweeted tagging Tejaswi Prakash and said: "Sorry not sorry for your fake tear. No one's gonna sympathise with you for the tears you shed in the kitchen. As you did exactly that to @DonalBisht and many more."

The context of all the tweets remained the same wherein everyone claimed that Tejaswi got the same as she did with Donal.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Nidhi Agerwal