

absolute india

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India women lose to Chile 0-3; second successive defeat in...

**GOVERNMENT DENIED OPPON'T'S DEMAND, SANS DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT**

Contentious Laws Repealed

The three Bills that stand repealed now are: Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020.

► THE GOVERNMENT HAD SIMILARLY RUSHED THROUGH THE TWO HOUSES WHEN THE THREE ORIGINAL BILLS WERE PASSED ON SEPTEMBER 17 AND SEPTEMBER 20 LAST YEAR. OPPON'T PARTIES HAD ATTACKED THE GOVERNMENT THEN AND, ON MONDAY, MINCED NO WORDS AS THE BILL TO REPEAL THOSE LAWS WAS BULLDOZED THROUGH BOTH THE HOUSES.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A year and two months after the President gave assent to the three contentious farm laws, the Parliament on Monday passed a Bill to repeal them, a demand kept alive by the farmers and opposition parties alike for the past year.

First the Lok Sabha and then the Rajya Sabha passed The Farm Laws Repeal Bill, 2021 by voice vote sans a debate amid heavy sloganising by the opposition that wanted a discussion on the issue. In both the houses, the Bill was passed within minutes of introduction by the government. Farmers across the country under the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) banner had been agitating since last one year demanding repeal of the three farm laws and legalizing minimum support price (MSP) among other issues.

In the Lok Sabha, soon after it assembled at 12 noon, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar presented the Bill when opposition members started raising slogans, some left their seats and walked down towards the well, and all demanded a discussion on the Bill. Speaker Om Birla said the dis-

**CENTRE MUST REPLY TO DEMANDS BY TODAY: SKM**

New Delhi: Terming the repeal of the farm laws in Parliament a victory of the protesters, farmer leaders from Punjab urged the Centre to decide on their other demands, including legal guarantee of minimum support price for crops, in the session on Tuesday. Leaders said that the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) has called an emergency meeting on Wednesday to discuss the future course of action. "This is a victory for us and a historic day. We want withdrawal of cases against the farmers. We want a committee to be formed on the legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops. The Centre has time till tomorrow (Tuesday) to reply to our demands. We have called an emergency meeting of SKM on Wednesday to discuss the future course of action," the farmer leaders told media in a press conference on Monday. The SKM also demanded compensation for farmers who died during the movement. "The Centre should reply to our demands in Parliament tomorrow," the farm leaders said.

cussion will happen if only the members behaved and stopped sloganising and sat in their respective seats. The opposition members did not relent. The Speaker put the Bill for voice vote and it was cleared within. In the Rajya Sabha, when the House assembled at 2 p.m., the Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar introduced the Bill. Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge said, opposition parties welcomed

the Bill and stated the opposition's view on the Repeal Bills demanding a discussion. When he spoke for more than three minutes, Deputy Chairperson Rajya Sabha asked him to stop and allowed the Agriculture Minister to move the motion, immediately prompting the opposition benches to raise slogans.

However, saying that "there is no need for a discussion," Tomar moved the motion to pass the Bill and it was passed by voice vote.

RS SUSPENDS 12 OPPN MPS FOR MONSOON SESSION RUCKUS

New Delhi: The Rajya Sabha on Monday suspended 12 MPs for the entire winter session of parliament for creating ruckus in the house during monsoon session of the parliament on August 11. The members are -- Syed Naseer Hussain, Akhilesh Prasad Singh, Phulo Devi Netam, Chhaya Verma, Ripun Bora and Rajmani Patel of the Congress; Priyanka Chaturvedi, Anil Desai of the Shiv Sena; Elaraman Kareem of the CPI-M, Binoy Viswam of the CPI, Dola Sen and Shanta Chhetri of the Trinamool. The suspension of the members could be a new flash point between opposition members and the government in the winter session of the parliament. In the morning, the Rajya Sabha chairman indicated that he is unhappy over the affairs of the house in the previous session.

GOVT IS SCARED: RAHUL GANDHI

"We knew that the Bills would be repealed. This is farmers' victory. But this government is afraid of discussions. It was wrong on the part of the government to withdraw bills without a discussion."

WE ARE STILL NOT LEAVING: RAKESH TIKAIT

"The government wants there should be no protests but we will not leave the site before MSP is discussed among other issues."

No proposal to recognise Bitcoin as currency: Sitharaman

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre has no proposal to recognise Bitcoin as a currency in the country, the Parliament was informed on Monday. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha, also said that the government does not collect data on Bitcoin transactions. Bitcoin is a form of digital currency which allows people to buy goods and services among others.

In the ongoing winter session of Parliament, the Centre aims to table the



Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, through which it seeks a ban on all private cryptocurrencies. At present, there is no regulation or ban in the country on cryptocurrencies.

The Reserve Bank of India has maintained its strong views against cryptocurrencies, saying they pose serious threats to macroeconomic and financial stability. The central bank also doubted the reported number of investors trading on them and their claimed market valuations.

INDIAN-ORIGIN PARAG AGRAWAL IS NEW TWITTER CEO

New Delhi: In a surprise development, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey on Monday decided to step down from a company he was deeply associated with, handing over the baton to Indian-origin Parag Agrawal, the current CTO, who will be the new CEO and a member of the Board, effective immediately. Dorsey will remain a member of the Board until his term expires at the 2022 meeting of stockholders. Agrawal has been with Twitter for more than a decade and has served as Chief Technology Officer since 2017. "I've decided to leave Twitter because I believe the company is ready to move on from its founders. My trust in Parag as Twitter's CEO is deep. His work over the past 10 years has been transformational. I'm deeply grateful for his skill, heart, and soul. It's his time to lead," said Dorsey.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

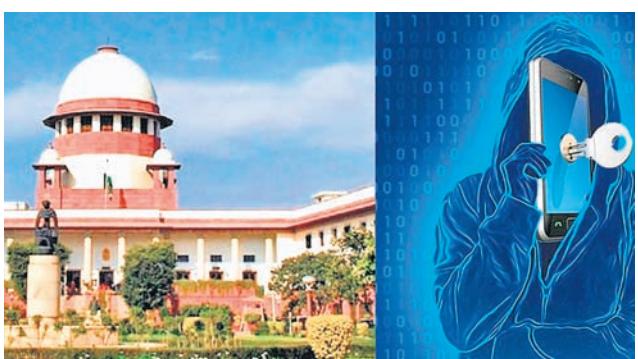
The 3-member expert panel constituted by the Supreme Court to investigate whether the Centre has used the Pegasus spyware to snoop on citizens has sent



out mails to petitioners asking them to submit their mobile instruments for testing/technical examination. The petitioners have been asked to respond by December 5. According to a source, the email has been sent to all 11 petitioners before the top court, though only

those petitioners who suspected their phones were hacked were supposed to provide their mobile devices for technical examination.

The technical committee also told the petitioners, if they wish to give a statement before it, then they would have to inform the committee for making arrangements for recording the statement.

**4 TRAPPED IN JHARKHAND COAL MINE COME OUT ALIVE MIRACULOUSLY**

► AFTER THESE FOUR PEOPLE GOT TRAPPED, VILLAGERS RAISED AN ALARM, AND THE LOCAL POLICE AND BCCL OFFICIALS REACHED AT THE SPOT.

► THE RESCUE TEAM OF BCCL WAS ALSO CALLED, BUT THEY REFUSED TO DO ANYTHING IN VIEW OF THE DANGEROUS CONDITION OF THE MINE.

► ON MONDAY, THE NDRF DECIDED TO EXCAVATE AND BEFORE THEY COULD DO SO, ALL THE FOUR CAME OUT OF THE MINE ON THEIR OWN, SENDING A WAVE OF HAPPINESS IN THE ENTIRE VILLAGE

Shambhu Nath Chaudhary | Ranchi

Four people who were trapped for nearly 90 hours in an illegal coal mine in Bokaro district of Jharkhand, came out alive miracu-

lously on Monday morning.

Narrating the ordeal, they said they kept digging for hours to find a way out of the coal mine. They were carrying torches which came handy as there was complete darkness inside the coal mine, not even a shade of

sunlight. They lit one torch at a time to keep the battery going for a longer period of time. After digging for several hours, they finally managed to find a way out. All four of them said they drank dirty water in the mine to keep themselves alive.

They had entered the coal mine under Chandankiari block of Bokaro district at around 9 a.m. on November 26 to extract coal illegally, but got trapped inside after the mine shaft collapsed suddenly.

Laxman Rajwar, Ravana Rajwar, Bharat Singh and Anadi Singh, all residents of Tilatand village of Chandankiari, are those who came out alive after fighting a battle with death for 90 hours.

Hundreds from several villages in the area illegally extract coal from the coal block in Parvapur which has been closed for years. This coal block belongs to BCCL, but due to various reasons, the company has stopped mining here for the past several years.

FLUORIDES, NITRATES, ARSENIC, IRON POLLUTING GROUNDWATER IN INDIA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Fluorides, nitrates, arsenic and iron have been found above the optimum levels in the groundwater of 370, 423, 154 and 341 districts of the country, respectively, the Parliament was informed on Monday.

The groundwater in 92 districts of 14 states is partially affected with lead, which can be harmful to human health even at low exposure levels, while the salinity of groundwater was above the permissible limits in 249 districts of 18 states, Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Bishveswar Tudu, told the Rajya Sabha.

Cadmium and chromium were found in groundwater of 24 districts in nine states and in 29 districts of 10 states, respectively.

Among all the states, Punjab is severely affected by both the contaminants as 10 of 22 districts in the state are partially affected by chromium while cadmium has now spread to 9 of its districts.

As groundwater pollution poses a major risk to human life by being an important source of freshwater, Tudu listed out various initiatives



taken by the Central government in the past few years to tackle the problem.

He said that the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees (SPCBs/PCCs) is implementing the provisions of the Water (Prevention & Control) Act, 1974 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

to prevent and control pollution in water. The CPCB has made a comprehensive programme on water pollution for controlling point sources by developing industry specific standards and general standards for discharge of effluents notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for enforcement by SPCBs/PCCs.

As per the directives of the CPCB,

online continuous effluent monitoring systems are installed by the industrial units in the country for getting real time information on the effluent quality and non-complying units are identified for follow-up inspections and actions.

The Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has issued guidelines for control and regulation of groundwater extraction with pan-India applicability. The guidelines include suitable provisions on measures to be adopted to ensure groundwater free from pollution.

The groundwater pollution owe its origin to contamination of surface water sources also which upon percolation pollute the groundwater aquifer system and therefore, various efforts have been made in the country to address this by installing sewage treatment plants, effluent treatment plants and better systems of sewage networks etc.

Tudu said that the Central government in partnership with states, is implementing the Jal Jeevan Mission since August 2019 to provide potable tap water supply of prescribed quality to every rural household in the country by 2024.

No proposal for lockdown, take precautions, says Bommai

DAVANAGERE | Agencies

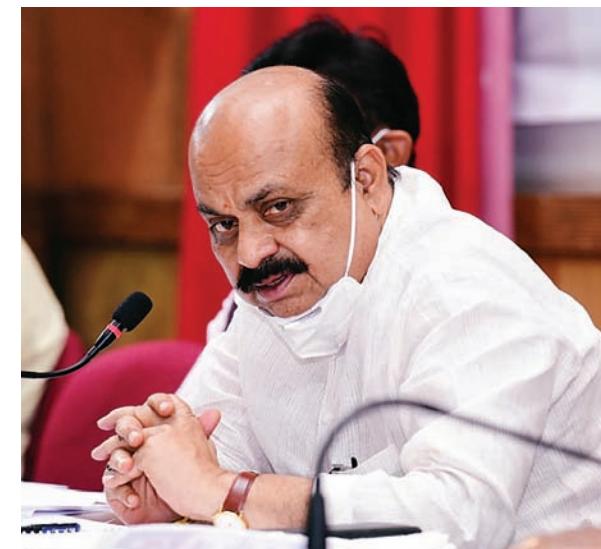
Karnataka: Seeking to allay apprehensions, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday made it clear that there was no proposal to impose lockdown in the state.

"We have instructed for strict precautions at schools and colleges, but not to close them. There is no proposal to impose a lockdown," he said.

Addressing media persons in Davanagere, he urged the people not to panic about Omicron, the new strain of the Covid, and strictly follow the Covid guidelines.

"Those arriving from the Omicron prevalent countries are being screened at the airports. They are being allowed into the cities only if found negative on testing. Covid negative report had been made mandatory for students from Kerala who are studying in Karnataka and a second test is being done for them on the 7th day of the first negative report," Bommai said.

The state government is in



constant consultation with experts and the Union government, and precautions are being taken according to their guidelines, he added.

On a question about a person who arrived from South Africa found to be having different symptoms, Bommai said: "The test report of the person has been sent for genome sequencing. Exact variant of the virus would be known from the genome

sequencing report." He also said that the state government is awaiting the instructions from the Centre on administering booster dose of the vaccine. "Our concern is that it is already over 6 months since the health workers received two doses of the vaccine. We will act according to directions from the Centre," Bommai said.

Afghan national found dead on Delhi road

Team Absolute | New Delhi

An Afghan national was found dead on a street in Delhi, police said on Monday.

There were reports that the deceased had a bullet injury on his body.

According to the official, a call was received on Sunday night that a man, who appears to be an Afghan, was lying unconscious on street no 9 in Wazirabad area of north Delhi.

"The caller was a passer-by," the official said.

The police personnel immediately rushed to the spot and found Afghan, identified as Siraj, lying dead on the street. The police said that the deceased used to work as a small-time trader in the Ballimaran area.



A forensic team was also dispatched which thoroughly checked the area and took all the samples from the spot after which the dead body was sent for post-mortem.

The cause of death is yet to be ascertained, however, preliminary investigation found that there was bullet injury on the deceased's body.

The police have registered an FIR under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code at the Wazirabad police station.

The official said that they have identified the accused, however, he is yet to be apprehended. "Further probe is on," the official added.

BRIDGE COLLAPSES IN UP DISTRICT, NO CASUALTIES



Shahjahanpur: The longest 2-km Kolaghata bridge suddenly collapsed on Monday morning.

There has been no report of any casualty in this accident that took place in the early hours of Monday since there was no traffic.

This bridge was constructed 11 years ago in the Kola area of Jalalabad police station on the Ramganga river.

It was built in the year 2002 at a cost of about Rs 11 crore and connected Jalalabad to Mirzapur.

Following the collapse of the bridge, traffic has been diverted via Alhaganj.

Cricket betting racket busted in Telangana, Rs 2 crore cash seized

HYDERABAD | Agencies

Police in Telangana's Warangal town on Monday busted an online cricket betting racket with the arrest of two organisers and seized over Rs 2 crore cash.

The organisers were running the racket mainly from Mumbai and were making customers through a website. They had received bets for the recent Twenty20 World Cup and India New Zealand Twenty20 series.

Police arrested Madhishetty Prasad, a native of Hanamkonda district and Abhay Vilas Rao, native of Yavatmalha district in Maharashtra and booked three cases. Warangal Police Commissioner Tarun Joshi told reporters that Rs 2,05,14,000 in currency notes of various denominations were seized from the accused. Police also used 15 debit cards and 43 cheque books used for frequent withdrawal of money from different banks. Eight mobile phones, which were being used for bet-



ting, were also seized. The Police Commissioner said the WhatsApp group in each mobile phone had 150-200 members. Explaining the modus operandi, he said the organisers were making customers and sending them links with user-name and password to participate in the online betting. "The betting was for every

ball and every player and the organizers were offering big returns if the winning chances of a team were low," he said.

The accused were also using their platform for other forms of betting and games like Teen Patti. The police official pointed out that all such games are prohibited in Telangana.

TWO DIE IN POISON GAS LEAK AT VIZAG PHARMA CITY

Visakhapatnam: In a tragic development, two young men died after reportedly inhaling poisonous gases, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Pharma City in Parswada. The mishap took place at the sewage pump house, in the wee hours of Monday, police sources said.

The deceased, identified as Manikanta (22) and Durgaprasad (21), were contract workers on the night shift. According to police sources, the two workers inhaled toxic gases leaking from a valve that they were turning. Both of them died on the spot. Police are investigating the matter, and said the leak has been contained.

Bill To Help Sex Workers In Parliament This Session, Centre Tells Court

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The centre today informed the Supreme Court that it is bringing a bill in Parliament during the ongoing winter session to curb trafficking and rehabilitation of sex workers in the country.

The Supreme Court directed all the states and Union Territories to not insist on the requirement of ration cards or any other identity proofs from the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) identified sex workers and provide them dry ration during the pandemic period in compliance with the earlier orders of the court.

A bench of Justices LN Rao and BR Gavai recorded the submission of Additional Solicitor General RS Suri that the centre has planned to



bring in legislation during the ongoing winter session to curb trafficking and rehabilitation of sex workers.

The bench said, "Right to Food has been recognised as a human right under Article 21 of the Constitution. Though there is some improvement in the situation

caused by the COVID pandemic, we are of the view that there is the constitutional obligation of the States/UTs to provide basic amenities to its Citizens, which takes into its fold the sex workers, who are also entitled to dry rations". The court was hearing an application filed by an

Rajasthan's jobless youths protest at UP Cong office to meet Priyanka

Lucknow | Agencies

After carrying out shirtless agitations, offering roses to ministers as a mark of protest and going on hunger strikes, unemployed youth from Rajasthan are now staging a dharna' outside the Congress party headquarters in Lucknow, demanding an audience with Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

The protests in Uttar Pradesh - organised under the banner of Rajasthan Berozgar Ekikrut Mahasangh (RBEM) - are aimed at pressuring the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan to accept long-standing demands made by the unemployed in Rajasthan. Their demands



include appointments in several government jobs for which recruitment exams have already been conducted, increase in the number of vacancies for state government jobs and formulation of a non-bailable law against those who leak question papers in competitive examinations. "We are sitting on 'dharna' outside the UP Congress Committee and have now started a hunger strike. For the past 47 days, we have been protesting in Jaipur. We want to meet Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. The Congress has announced that they will give 20 lakh jobs in Uttar Pradesh. Before the 2018 Assembly elections we had lent support to the Congress. But promises made to us have not been fulfilled," said Open Yadav, president of RBEM on Monday. Earlier, the RBEM had said that it will oppose the Congress in the Uttar Pradesh elections at rallies of its leaders, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. "The Congress has a government in Rajasthan. Despite this, they are not fulfilling the promises made to the unemployed youth and instead making tall promises to the people of Uttar Pradesh."

Kerala-based med tech startup wins 'Startup India Grand Challenge 2021'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Sascan Meditech, a Kerala-based medical technology startup, has been adjudged the winner of Startup India Grand Challenge 2021 in the medical device category.

Sascan Meditech, incubated at the Technology Business Incubator of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST), Thiruvananthapuram, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), received a cash grant of Rs 15,00,000 at the Grand Challenge organised by the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Union government, along with Startup India and InvestIndia.org.

The award was announced by Amitabh Kant CEO, NITI Aayog, after a rigorous evaluation process, and Sascan was selected from among 310 startups that had participated in the grand challenge, a statement from the Ministry of Science & Technology said.

It has developed OralScan, a handheld device for early,



accurate and cost-effective detection of pre-cancerous lesions in the mouth. It is a bio-photonics technology-based device, and the results of clinical trials have been published in a scientific journal. OralScan was launched in October 2020 and has reached eight states in India. Its second product, CerviScan, a hand-held non-invasive device for cervical cancer screening and early detection of cervical cancer, will be launched soon.

The startup was also recently selected as the winner of 'Anjan Mashelkar Inclusive Innovation Award 2021' from the Anjan Mashelkar Foundation, which engages in recognising, rewarding and encouraging those responsible for creating value for the society in science, technology and innovation domain.

The startup, founded by Subhash Narayanan, a scientist-turned-biomedical entrepreneur, focuses on developing affordable healthcare products and solutions for cancer care and screening, based on biophotonics and allied technologies.

FIVE RIDING ON A BIKE KILLED AFTER BEING HIT BY TRUCK

Prayagraj: In a shocking incident, five people, including four members of the same family, died in a road accident in the Nawabganj area in Uttar Pradesh.

All five were riding on the same motorcycle when a truck rammed into them on the Shringverpur highway road on the intervening night of Sunday/Monday.

The victims were returning after attending a marriage.

Police sources said that the deceased have been identified as Ram Saran Pal, 60, his son Lallu Pal, 35, Samay Lal, 35, grandson Arjun Pal, 11 and their neighbour Chander Pal, 55.

According to reports, hearing the screams, the villagers reached the site of the accident and informed the police.

After listening to their screams, villagers living nearby reached the spot and informed the police.

The police rushed the injured to the hospital where the doctors declared all of them dead.

The driver fled with the truck after the accident.

NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS MUST BE TAKEN DUE TO FEAR OF THIRD COVID WAVE: CM

- COVID VACCINE MUST - THIS IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF PREVENTION
- GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S RULES FOR PASSENGERS COMING TO MP FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WILL BE STRICTLY FOLLOWED
- PEOPLE WITH SYMPTOMS OF INFECTION SHOULD GET TESTED IMMEDIATELY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has appealed to take all necessary measures against Corona in the wake of the possibility of a third wave of Corona. Wear a mask, clean your hands from time to time and keep the necessary distance from others. Cases of new variants of Corona are being reported in some



countries. As of now there is no information of its presence in India, but precautions are necessary. This appeal has been made by Chouhan to the people of the state through social media. The Chief Minister has also tweeted to this effect.

Chouhan has said in the appeal

that Covid vaccine must be administered. It is our priority to administer both the doses of vaccine to all the citizens of the state by the month of December. This is the most effective way to prevent Corona. Right now there will be no ban on public programmes, but the people of the state must follow all the rules and precautions to prevent infection.

Chouhan has said that the surveillance rules of the Government of India will be strictly followed in respect of passengers coming to Madhya Pradesh from other countries. Chief Minister Chouhan has appealed to the people coming from other countries to be cooperative. Chouhan said that those who notice even the slightest symptoms of infection should get tested immediately. He urged people not to be careless, and follow all necessary rules to prevent the spread of infection. The government will leave no stone unturned. It is the state government's endeavour to ensure that there is no third wave.

ANOTHER TIGER DIES IN MP, TOLL MOUNTS TO 40

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Yet another big cat was reported dead in Madhya Pradesh on Monday, pushing the toll to 40 this year so far in the state, the highest across the country.

In the fresh incident, a 10-year-old tigress was reported to have died two days after being rescued from a buffer zone of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Umaria district. As per the forest official, the dead tigress identified as T-66, was spotted in the Khotoli and Panpatha buffer zones of the reserve since the past one month. The official told IANS that a forest team was constantly monitoring the carnivore and it seemed to be unable to hunt its prey due to some serious injuries.

The feline was rescued from the Khotoli zone on November 26 and was brought to Bahera enclosure where a team of doctors from Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary



Science University (Jabalpur) was treating the tigress, official added. "The tigress was found injured and starved. Efforts were made to feed as per the advice of veterinary experts, but the tigress was unable to eat and died on Sunday," Forest official said in a statement on Monday. Later, an autopsy was conducted and carcasses were disposed

as per the directives of the National Tiger Conservation Authority, statement read. With this new death, the Madhya Pradesh which is known as the 'tiger state' and has renowned reserves such as -- Kanha Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Pench Tiger Reserve, Satpura Tiger Reserve and Panna Tiger reserve, has reported as

many as 40 big cats dead between January 1 to November 29.

Last week, the Madhya Pradesh High Court issued notices to the Centre and State government along with Forest and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) on the increasing number of tiger deaths in Madhya Pradesh.

CM PLANTED SAPLINGS OF KARANJ AND GULMOHAR

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Karanj and Gulmohar in Smart City Park along with Rajendra Madan, Vimal Madan and Sachin Madan of Parv Foundation committed to making a plastic free state and working in this direction.

In order to encourage the participation of the society in the activities of environmental protection, Chouhan does plantation every day with the organisations and individuals active for environmental protection in the state. The representatives of the organisation presented a set of dona-pattal made of leaves to the Chief Minister.

The members of the organisation informed Chief Minister Chouhan about the activities of the organisation. Parv Foundation is working in



the field of skill development. For the

last two years, this organisation has

given training to about 200 people in the manufacture of dona-pattal from leaves and gau kashta from cow dung.

The organisation believes that in place of plastic plates and bowls, the use of plastic can be reduced to a great extent by using plates and bowls made of leaves. Through this medium, this organisation is also active in the direction of making villagers and tribal brothers and sisters self-reliant by providing maximum employment. The organisation is conducting its activities in Betul.

Karanj is useful from medical and environmental point of view. Gulmohar is considered one of the most beautiful trees in the world. Flowers blooming in big bunches between the leaves of Gulmohar give a distinct attraction to this tree. In summer, instead of leaves, Gulmohar trees are laden with flowers. It is also rich in medicinal properties.

Omicron fear as Botswana woman goes missing in Jabalpur

A woman from Botswana has gone missing in Jabalpur district and a hunt has been launched by the administration.

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

A search is reportedly underway in Madhya Pradesh for a woman from Botswana who arrived in Jabalpur on November 18. Since the first cases of the omicron variant of Coronavirus were detected in Botswana, travellers from the country are being tracked and made to follow recently issued guidelines for Coronavirus.

Jabalpur chief medical and health officer Dr Ratnesh Kurariya said they were informed by an official from the Botswana Embassy that

the woman is in isolation at a military organisation in Jabalpur. "We have asked him to share her mobile phone number and her local contact," the officer said.

The officer said efforts were on to find the woman, identified as Khuno Oremet Selyn, in line with guidelines issued by the Union government's health surveillance to check the spread of Covid-19.

Dr Kurariya said the woman came to Jabalpur from Delhi, going by the records shared by the Union government. The location of her mobile number mentioned in Jabalpur's Dumna airport record was traced to Delhi. The investigation conducted by police so far suggested that the phone has not been moved out of Delhi since the last one month.

Meanwhile, the officials are also examining CCTV footage of the Jabalpur airport to find the woman.

CM reviews law and order situation in the state

Make smart policing system better and more effective: Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that law and order should be made better in the state. Under no circumstances should criminals be spared. Smart policing system should be made better and more effective. Chouhan was addressing the Inspectors General of Police and Superintendents of Police at Mantralaya today through video conferencing.

Reviewing law and order situation, Chief Minister Chouhan said that even the identified offenses come under the category of serious crimes. The percentage of punishment in such offenses should be increased. He said that immediate action should be taken against the usurers. Action should be taken by implementing the future action plan of cyber crime and cyber security at the earliest. The National Counter Drone Policy should be prepared as per the instructions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Best practices for standardization of hardware should be identified and maintenance of CCTV system should be ensured. Action should be taken in the issues of foreigners staying past

vista period. He said that the organizations that spread enmity and break the society should be identified. NGOs receiving unwanted foreign funding should be identified and stopped.

Collectors-SPs must make regular joint visits to streamline the administrative system in the border areas. Necessary action must be taken under the Police Technology Mission constituted at the national level. Drone based surveillance and technology must be made use of in anti-Naxal operations. In such areas benefits of government schemes must be provided on priority while behaving sensitively, so that people do not get dissatisfied. Work in the form of a campaign for this. Chouhan gave instructions to effectively prevent and bring down crime graph in the state. He said that swift action should be

taken and fear must be instilled in the criminals. He directed to make the best use of the available resources. Property related offenses must be properly analyzed and effective action must be taken. Chouhan directed the SPs of weak performing districts to take effective action against crimes on the basis of overall evaluation of the districts. He said that justice should be ensured.

Chief Minister directed to take action by running a campaign for the recovery of missing boys and girls. He said that bandit gangs are the enemies of the society, against whom effective action should be ensured. He said that dacoits should not be allowed to thrive at any cost. Chouhan said that crimes against women will not be tolerated in the state. Crime against women is shameful. Such

MP HC notice to state on Kamla Nehru hospital fire

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday issued notice to the state government and sought its reply on the Kamla Nehru hospital fire incident which left at least five infants dead.

The court issued notice while hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by P.G. Najpande, seeking direction to lodge an FIR against erring officials and employees of the hospital.

Also, the petitioner claimed that over a dozen infants had died of suffocation in the incident, while the state had put the figure at five.

"My argument was based on two main points - why should an FIR not be registered against erring officials and why is the government hiding actual number of deaths," he said.

A bench headed by the Chief Justice Ravi Malimath,



while hearing the petition, asked the state government to submit its reply as soon as possible.

"The court has issued notice to MP government and sought its reply," an advocate representing the petitioner told IANS.

On November 8, a fire had broken out in the special newborn care ward of Kamla Nehru Hospital, located on the premises of the state's largest medical Institute - Hamidiya Medical College.

The fire broke out when a ventilator machine was plugged in and sparks flew,

and an enquiry report the state government has then said.

The incident had then prompted parents and other locals to stage a protest outside the hospital for over two days. Also, the opposition Congress had then staged a protest demanding action against the erring officials and have been accusing the state government of hiding actual number of deaths.

Based on an inquiry report by Bhopal district collector, the state government had then suspended several officials, including CMO of Kamla Nehru hospital.

Commissioner-Collector Conference has become an effective medium of good governance: CM

- Giving good governance to public is dependent on the work of Collector-SP
- Good work of Collector-SP has a better effect
- The government's image is affected by the laxity of the police administration
- CM addressed the video conference of Commissioner-Collectors and Superintendents of Police

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Collector, SP are the representatives of the government at their own level. Giving good governance to the people is dependent on their work in the districts. Various schemes of the government reach the public due to their works. The good work of the Collector-SP at the district level has a better effect, but the image of the government is affected where there is laxity. Chief Minister said that the entire administrative staff should work with full commitment.

Chouhan was addressing the video conference of Commissioners, Collectors, Inspectors General of Police and Superintendents of Police. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary General Administration Vinod Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Home Rajesh Rajoura, Director General of Police Vivek Johri were present in this conference at Mantralaya. Senior officers of various departments also joined the conference virtually. Chief Minister said that first of all the law and order situation will be reviewed and analysed.

In the conference, action against mafia, control of crime against women and law and order situation and use of land freed

from mafia encroachment will be reviewed. In order to ensure easy availability of benefits of various beneficiary-oriented schemes to all eligible beneficiaries, the special campaign being run from November 15 to December 15, 2021 will also be reviewed. In the conference, the resolution of the cases of CM Helpline and the process of applying the second dose of Covid-19 vaccination is also to be reviewed. Progress of Pradhan Mantri Shahri Path Vikreta Svanidhi Yojna and Mukhyamantri Gramin Path Vikreta Yojana will also be reviewed.

In the video conference, Mukhyamantri Udyam Kranti Yojana, CM Rise Yojana, Mukhyamantri Ration Aapke Gram Yojana, Madhya Pradesh Sickle Cell (Haemoglobin) Mission, presentation of Chief Minister Residential Land Rights Scheme and expectations from district collectors will be discussed. In the video conference, there will be a presentation on the ongoing innovations in Sehore district in one district-one identity scheme. Along with this, a presentation will also be made on the ongoing activities in Sheopur district for the empowerment of self-help groups and the status of implementation of the Swamitya Yojana in Harda district.

NGOs receiving foreign funds under govt's scrutiny in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday asked senior officials to scrutinize all Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) operating in the state and are receiving funds from overseas.

During a virtual meeting with senior officials from all districts in the state, the chief minister asked the officials to prepare audit report on funding of NGOs and money being spent by them (NGOs) and submit a report to his office. He said it has been noticed that some NGOs are involved in conversion especially in tribal areas and instructed the officials that it must be stopped immediately.

ly. "Find out all NGOs involved in religious conversion in the state. There is no place for such practices in Madhya Pradesh," Chouhan said. He further said that many NGOs are involved in spreading hatred among the communities. "Who are these NGOs and what are their resources, their flow -- all this needs to be probed immediately," Chouhan said while reviewing law and order situation of the state on Monday. District Collectors, Commissioners or the Director General (IG) of police are responsible to ensure law and order situation in their areas. At the same time, they are also responsible to ensure that schemes of the State government and the Centre are reaching at ground level and real beneficiaries are benefited. "You (District Collectors, Commissioners and IGs) are head of your districts and also the direct representatives of the Chief Minister's Office and therefore, you are responsible to provide security and safety to the people and also to implement government schemes at the ground level," Chouhan added. Earlier this month, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) uncovered an alleged conversion racket wherein Hindu girls were being converted in a Christian Missionary Girls Hostel in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh.

crimes must be analyzed and effective action must be taken. The work of honoring real heroes has started in the state in order to ensure women's safety, to prevent crimes against them and to generate public awareness. This must continue. He congratulated the real heroes selected from different districts. The Chief Minister said that the real heroes help the police in catching the criminals. Chouhan said that atrocities and crimes against weaker sections are unfortunate and shameful. Immediate effective action should be ensured against these offences. He said that the hotspots of such crimes should be identified and action should be taken against the criminals. Chouhan said that effective action should be taken against mining mafia through joint teams. Strict action should be taken in cases of illegal sand transportation and mining. Mafia should not be spared at any cost. Strict action should be taken against the habitual mafia of illegal liquor. Strict action should be taken against those guilty of chit fund companies, adulteration, spurious food grains and milk products. Strict action is must against factories manufacturing adulterated food items.

India's digital growth is unusual

Over the past five years, India's mobile internet and digital services ecosystem has grown rapidly, owing to the pioneering efforts of large private sector players. Although this industry-led growth is somewhat unusual, it offers a model that could benefit other developing countries, wrote Michael Spence, a Nobel laureate in economics, in Project Syndicate. More chapters in the Digital India story will be written in the coming years. But the country already offers important lessons for understanding and adapting development models to an era in which traditional sources of employment (especially manufacturing) will be displaced by automation and Artificial Intelligence. India has experienced an unusually rapid expansion of digital connectivity and access to services. This has had a positive impact on the inclusiveness of economic growth; on efficiency and productivity in retail, supply chains, and finance; and on entrepreneurial activity. Reliance Jio invested heavily in building the fiber-optic infrastructure to support broadband access and a national mobile internet system. The result was explosive growth in the number of Jio subscribers (which reached 400 million in 2020) and smartphone users across the country. Data costs in India went from being among the highest in the world to the lowest—from roughly \$3.50 per gigabyte before Jio to less than \$0.30 cents per GB after its entry and expansion. The combination of higher speeds and low costs led to rapid growth in internet use in multiple sectors, including e-commerce, social media, streaming video and other forms of digital content. The major players - including Amazon, Netflix and Facebook - entered the Indian market or expanded their presence there. Reliance Jio benefited from some excess capacity in the underlying network infrastructure; and, more importantly, it used its early growth to integrate forward into a wider range of profitable service offerings on its network, enhancing the returns on the investment in low-cost mobile-internet offerings.

absolute edit



J&K ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS LIKELY BEFORE 2022 AMARNATH YATRA

Sheikh Qayoom

With the assembly elections likely to be held by May-June next year, various political parties in Jammu and Kashmir have started increasing their foothold on the ground first time after August 5, 2019 when article 370 was scrapped.

Top sources indicate that the delimitation commission has completed its draft report of new re-alignment of some old assembly seats in J&K.

The commission is headed by retired Supreme Court judge, Ranjana Desai.

"The draft report is ready. It will now be shared with the associate members, including three Lok Sabha members from the National Conference (Farooq Abdullah, Hasnain Masoodi and Akbar Lone) and the BJP's Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma", top sources told IANS adding that the commission has already been communicated that there would be no further extension of its time period which ends in March 2022.

All major political players including leaders of the National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Indian National Congress (INC), J&K National Panthers Party (JKNPP), J&K Apni Party, Peoples Conference (PC) and other smaller groups have started public interactions through meetings and rallies.

Close on the heels of PDP chief, Mehbooba Mufti's visit to the Chenab Valley, NC Vice President, Omar Abdullah started his visit of the region on Saturday.

The BJP has already told its party cadre that the assembly elections would not be deferred further and these are being held next year before the annual Amarnath Yatra which begins in the last week of June each year, but was called off due to the pandemic this year.

Sources close to the senior leaders of NC, BJP, PDP, Congress and others indicate that none of these parties believes that it could get the majority in the new assembly of its own.

"Whatever the senior leaders of these parties say in public or to the media, the fact is that none of them believes to get an absolute majority on its own", said a former bureaucrat believed to be close to the NC.



After the fresh delimitation, the assembly is likely to have 90 seats. In the previous assembly there were 87 seats, four of which belonged to the Ladakh region which is a separate UT now. The Valley had 47 and the Jammu region had 36 seats. Sources indicate that at least 6 seats would be added to the Jammu region and 2 new assembly constituencies would be carved out of the existing ones in the Valley.

In addition to this, assembly constituencies would be reserved in J&K for tribals, scheduled caste etc which is likely to throw up a different political map for the UT.

In the last state assembly, PDP had 28, BJP 25, NC 15 and the INC 12 seats.

Both the PDP and the NC have lost a sizeable chunk of their public support in both the Valley and the Jammu region. The BJP is also not the same as it was during the 2014 assembly elections.

Most of its local leaders have disappointed their voters. None of the existing local BJP leaders can today claim unchallenged victory in the constituencies they comfortably won in 2014.

Sources in the central leadership of the party say this reality has already been taken

care of by the BJP's top leadership in Delhi. "Don't be surprised if most of the BJP leaders, who were fielded in 2014, find themselves out of the hustings.

"There are genuine emerging faces in the local leadership and the high command has decided to field majority of them in the 2022 assembly elections", said a source in the central leadership of the party.

In addition to the idea of doing a major overhaul in the list of candidates, BJP's trump card, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi is still the most popular leader in the Jammu region.

The persona of Modi is something the BJP rivals might not be able to dismantle despite the growing unpopularity of the party's local leadership.

In the Valley, the NC and the PDP are likely to face challenges both from each other and other political parties like the PC headed by SajadGani Lone and the Apni Party headed by Syed Altaf Bukhari.

The PC and the Apni Party might still be far away from creating the type of ground level cadre as the NC and the PDP might have, but there is no doubt that these two parties can upset some of the hitherto foregone ground

realities and thereby play as a very big spoiler for the two traditional parties, the NC and the PDP.

The PDP has already lost most of its support because of many reasons. It used to be the unchallenged winner in south Kashmir districts of Anantnag, Kulgam, Shopian and Pulwama.

"No longer today. Undoubtedly, because of her hectic recent political activities, Mehbooba Mufti appears to have gained some of her party's lost ground, but it is still far below what the party could aim at in 2014", said a former PDP leader who left the party after the death of its patron, Mufti Muhammad Sayeed.

The NC has tried to maintain a very hard anti-BJP and anti-centre posture since the abrogation of article 370 and yet its best supporters do not believe the party could get enough seats to claim power after the 2022 elections. The INC is smitten by an internal leadership feud between Ghulam Nabi Azad and G.A. Mir, the state president of the party.

Mir is supported by the senior party leadership including Rahul Gandhi, but Azad has far greater reach and support on ground in J&K.

If Azad continues to remain disenchanted with the central Congress leadership, as he is at present, the Congress would be the worst sufferer in J&K assembly elections.

If Azad is forced to leave the party, he is likely to form a dissident Congress party that would fight the 2022 assembly elections on its own.

There is no doubt that Azad is highly respected in the Chenab Valley region that includes the districts of Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar and Reasi. His departure or disenchantment with the Congress would create a parallel political force that could become the 'King maker' if the 2022 elections deliver a fractured mandate.

Given these realities, there is a strong possibility that 2022 assembly election results would compel major political parties to descend from their high pedestal and look for support from smaller parties to cobble up a political government.

international

S KOREA HOPES FOR PROGRESS IN IRAN NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea welcomed on Monday the resumption of negotiations on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and expressed hope for "substantive progress," amid the ongoing diplomatic row over Teheran's assets frozen here under US sanctions.

The US, Iran and five world powers gathered in Vienna earlier in the day to discuss ways to salvage the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which imposed limits on Teheran's nuclear programme in exchange for eased sanctions. Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia were also involved in the talks, Yonhap news agency reported.

"The Korean government



looks forward to substantive progress and encourages all parties involved to engage with patience," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

It added it hopes all parties concerned will reach agreement on the nuclear accord and faithfully comply with it to promote regional peace and stability.

For its part, the Seoul government vowed to continue "diplomatic efforts" to revive the landmark deal, considering the significance of the alliance with the US as well as its relations with Iran.

Although Seoul is not part of the multilateral accord, it has closely communicated with Washington on the matter amid a prolonged diplomatic feud with Iran over its assets here frozen under fresh US sanctions.

About \$7 billion worth of Iranian assets remain locked in South Korean banks under US sanctions that were put back in place following Washington's 2018 withdrawal from the JCPOA.

SOCIAL MEDIA WILL BE FORCED TO DISCLOSE USERS BEHIND TROLLS IN AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison is all set to introduce a new anti-troll Bill that would force online social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to reveal the identities of anonymous users, in an effort to crack down on online trolling.

According to ABC News Australia, the new laws would require social media companies to collect the details of all users, and allow courts to force the social media firms to hand over the identities of users to aid defamation cases.

"Companies would be required to create a complaints process for people who feel they have been defamed online. The laws would allow courts to force companies to handover the identities of users if people wanted to pursue legal action," the report said on Sunday.

Parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan transparent, democratic: Observers

Bishkek: International observers on Monday said that the latest parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan were transparent and democratic.

"The mission recognises the past elections as transparent and democratic.

There have been no violations of the country's legislation that cast doubt on the legitimacy of the elections," Yerik Ashimov, who heads the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) observer mission, said at a briefing in Bishkek.

Observers from the CIS mission said that they had noted a few violations which would not affect the outcome of the elections.

'Iran has serious demand for lifting sanctions in new round of nuke talks'

Tehran | Agencies

Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, said Iran has a "serious" demand for the lifting of US sanctions during the new round of Vienna talks, official IRNA news agency reported on Monday.

"We have entered the negotiations with a serious will and strong preparation for lifting illegal and oppressive sanctions," Bagheri Kani told IRNA in Vienna just hours ahead of the beginning of the talks on the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The Iranian official revealed that he attended meetings in the Austrian capital with some of the participating sides in the talks over the past days, including "useful discussions" with Russian and Chinese delegations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Asked about the duration of the new round of the talks, Bagheri Kani, also Iran's deputy foreign minister, said the duration cannot be predicted regularly, but "the future perspective of this round of talks will be discussed by the delegations" at Monday's meeting and "it is likely that the framework and timing of this round of talks will be determined."

Nearly six months after the pause in the negotiations over the restoration of the



Iranian nuclear accord, Iran and the remaining parties to the deal, with indirect involvement of the US, will resume the talks on Monday in Vienna.

The US government under former President Donald Trump withdrew from the 2015 agreement in May 2018 and unilaterally re-imposed sanctions on Iran. In response, Iran has gradually stopped implementing parts of its commitments to the deal since May 2019.

Washington | Agencies

Republicans are locking in newly gerrymandered maps for the legislatures in several US battleground states, The New York Times wrote in a report published recently.

"In Texas, North Carolina, Ohio and Georgia, Republican state lawmakers have either created supermajorities capable of overriding a governor's veto or whittled down competitive districts so significantly that Republicans' advantage is virtually impenetrable," the report read.

This redistricting cycle, according to the report, "builds on a political trend that accelerated in 2011, when Republicans in swing states including Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan drew highly gerrymandered state legislative



maps."

Gerrymandering is a tool used by both parties in swing states as well as less competitive ones, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Democrats in deep-blue

Pakistani KP province's economic potential to be tapped through SEZs

Islamabad | Agencies

Authorities in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province are determined to tap the economic potential of the province through the development of special economic zones (SEZs), chief executive officer (CEO) of the KP Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC) said.

The investment-friendly policies of the KP government and efforts of the KPEZDMC have enabled the province to attract foreign and local investments, CEO Javed Iqbal Khattak told the country's state news agency Associated Press of Pakistan on Sunday.

The province has now five economic zones including the Rashakai SEZ being constructed under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, he said, adding that the management of the company is following highly business-friendly policies to facilitate the investors, Xinhua news agency reported.

He said that work on other SEZs in other parts of the province is also passing through different stages, and the



KPEZDMC has also mobilised investment of 165 billion Pakistani rupees (about \$934 million) through new and existing economic zones, and since March 2020 has allotted 357.61 acres of land to investors.

"The company is committed to providing world-class industrial infrastructure and facilitating investors through its industrial facilitation offices," he added. He said that the company is working

on sector-specific industries in the economic zones, with a special focus on minerals, jewels, marbles, fruits and vegetables. For fruits and vegetables, the economic zones' sites are situated adjacent to the districts known for the production of various fruits and vegetables, where the horticultural products would be value-added for both domestic and export purposes, he added.



OMICRON THREAT:

Maharashtra demands ban on flights, decrease in gap between vaccine doses

The Maharashtra cabinet discussed that flights from 12 countries of concern for Omicron variant should be banned. The state is likely to propose the same to the Centre. Monday, his family sources said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra cabinet on Monday discussed that flights from 12 countries of concern for the Omicron variant should be banned, said Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope. The Maharashtra government is also likely to propose Centre for banning of flights.

Tope said the cabinet expressed concerns about 12 countries. "We may request Centre to stop flights coming from these countries, including South Africa. As of now, we are implementing the protocols suggested by centre on testing and institutional quarantine of travellers from 12 countries. After quarantine, travellers will be tested again," said Tope.



While BMC has decided to write a letter to Centre on the decrease in gap between vaccine doses, environment minister Aditya Thackeray has sent a municipal commissioner regarding the same.

BMC has done 102% vaccine of 1st dose (100% resident population and 2% floating population) and 72% population of the second dose.

As Omicron peeps, Maha to reopen all schools from Dec 1

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Marking a significant step, Maharashtra government has issued the SOPs and guidelines to reopen all schools for offline classes from December 1 in urban and rural areas, officials said, even as a threat of the new Covid-19 variant Omicron has just emerged. The guidelines, issued late on Sunday in continuation of School Education Minister Prof. Varsha E. Gaikwad announcement on November 26, has mandated physical distancing, face-masks, hygiene and other guidelines as schools gear up to welcome the students back. Earlier on October 4, the schools were thrown open for students in higher Classes 8-12 in urban areas and 5-12 in the rural areas, eliciting a good response with smooth handling reported by the schools.

Emboldened by the exercise and the fall in the number of cases and fatalities, the state will reopen Class 1-7 in urban and 1-4 in rural areas from Wednesday. Besides, if any students found with any symptoms, they will not be permitted to enter the school campus/premises, all schools must keep clean with regular sanitisation, all must wash/sanitise their hands frequently to keep away infection risks. If at any time, more than five students test Covid-19 positive within a fortnight, the local authorities would review the school's preventive measure and decide accordingly. For the time being, schools have been advised



to avoid biometric attendance systems and use alternative ways, avoid crowds like assembly, prayers, games, etc., and 'quarantine students' must be granted access to online education. Setting an optimistic tone, Prof. Gaikwad said that drawing from the earlier experience of reopening schools, the feedback from officials and school authorities, the going would be smooth and safe from December 1. "From December 1, children as young as 6 years old will sit in schools once again. Their safety and wellbeing is our priority. Reviewed preparedness for this phase of schools reopening with municipal commissioners, Zilla Parishad CEOs, Deputy Directors of Education and other district level officers," said Prof. Gaikwad. The development comes days after the state government lifted all lockdown norms on November 27 to pre-pandemic levels even as the new risk of Omicron was thrown up, raising questions on the future course of action.

**Quashing single-bench order:
Malik, Wankhede Sr on same page**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Dnyandev Wankhede, father of Narcotics Control Bureau Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede, said he had no objection to a plea by Nationalist Congress Party Minister Nawab Malik seeking to quash a single-judge order declining interim relief to Wankhede Sr in his defamation suit against the NCP leader. Though a single-bench order of November 22 by Justice Madhav Jamdar refused interim relief to Wankhede Sr, Malik had filed a plea for quashing the same as it had certain observations against him too. In his plea, Malik suggested that after quashing the order by Justice Jamdar, the interim application in Wankhede Sr's suit could be remanded back to the same court for re-hearing the matter. Accordingly, after Wankhede Sr consented, a division bench com-

prising Justice SJ Kathawalla and Justice Milind Jadhav said that the single-judge order has been consensually set aside and remanded it back to the single-judge to hear afresh the interim relief aspects. The division bench granted Malik time till December 9 to file his reply to the Wankhede Sr's interim application and the latter is required to submit his rejoinder by January 3, 2022. Meanwhile, Malik will refrain from making any statements a series of sting exposures by religious credential, the alleged fake caste certificate submitted by Sameer Wankhede to get the plum job in IRS, and other issues, Wankhede Sr had filed a Rs 1.25 crore defamation suit against Malik and sought an interim relief to temporarily restrain the minister from making any statements against the family till the pendency of the case.

Last month, the BJP functionary had filed the defamation case against the NCP leader for allegedly defaming him by revelations that his brother-in-law Rishabh Sachdev was among the persons detained by the Narcotics Control Bureau after it raided the Cordelia Cruise on October 2 and was released later. Bhartiya contended that the minister allegedly used his power and position to raise doubts and spread canards about the release of his brother-in-law, and has spoiled his image and reputation. After examining

Nawab Malik granted bail in defamation case filed by BJP activist

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A Mumbai court on Monday granted bail to Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik in a Rs 100 crore defamation suit filed by Bharatiya Janata Party activist Mohit (Kamboj) Bhartiya.

Malik, who responded to a notice by the Mazagaon Magistrate Court three weeks ago, was granted a bail of Rs 15,000 and the matter has been posted for further hearing on December 30.

Malik, the Magistrate ruled that prima facie, Malik's statements at his media briefings on October 9 and 11 pointed at defamation and issued the process against him. Interacting with media, Malik said that he had honoured the court notice and appeared before the Magistrate in the defamation suit filed by Bhartiya, but denied the all contentions of the complainant. "We have also brought on record how Bhartiya himself is a fraudulent person

involved in a scam of Rs 1,100 crore and the raids by the Central Bureau of Investigations on him. When the scam started coming out, he changed his name from Kamboj to Bhartiya, we have submitted all evidence to the court and will provide more later," he said. Soon after the minister's expose, Bhartiya had sent him a couple of legal notices and when the allegations continued, he filed the defamation case against Malik before the Mazagaon Magistrate Court.

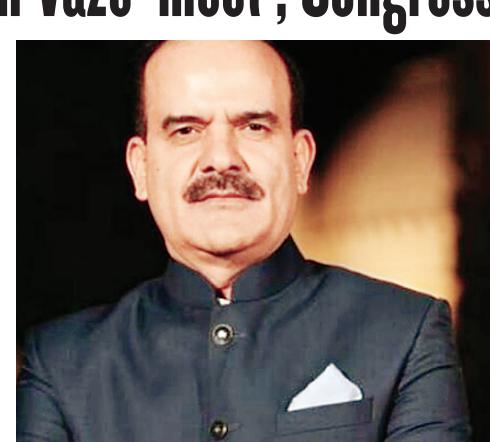
Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra Congress red-flagged a purported meeting between former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and his former junior, sacked cop Sachin Vaze, on Monday, terming it as "a conspiracy" and demanding a high-level probe.

According to the party, the duo - accused in multiple cases by several state and central agencies - had a meeting this afternoon, shortly before they appeared before the Justice K.U. Chandiwal Commission of Enquiry, set up by the Maharashtra government.

In a statement, state Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe said the Singh-Vaze meeting flouts rules which clearly state that any two accused persons going for any probe cannot be allowed to "meet" in such a manner.

"Why have they met? Who allowed this meeting and what was the purpose for it? What did they discuss as they are both accused in several cases by



various agencies," he asked.

Both Singh and Vaze are individually under investigations by various agencies like the NIA, the CBI, the ED and Mumbai Police, in different cases pertaining to extortion, corruption, conspiracy,

murder, terror, etc.

Singh had been declared a 'Proclaimed Offender' by a Mumbai court, had bailable and non-bailable warrants of arrest (since withdrawn) from Mumbai and Thane courts, while Vaze and other accused are facing murder, terror and conspiracy charges related to the SUV planting outside the home of industrialist Mukesh Ambani, and the subsequent murder of its owner Mansukh Hirani, in February-March this year.

Urging State Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil to order a thorough probe into the "meeting", Londhe sought to know if any high-level politicians or officials had conspired to arrange the meeting with a view to derail the ongoing sensitive probes by the agencies concerned. Incidentally, Singh had been "untraceable" since the past 6 months but resurfaced in Mumbai last Thursday, after which he has joined the probe in various police cases against him and also attended the Justice Chandiwal hearing on Monday, even as he was granted interim protection against arrest till December 6.

'Omicron' Test For Africa-Returned Maharashtra Man Who Tested Covid+

It was not known so far where he had contracted the "Omicron" variant of the virus, which was identified as the variant of concern by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the official said. Monday, his family sources said.

Thane | Agencies



Kalyan-Dombivli township not to panic due to the recent developments and strictly adhere to the COVID-19 safety protocols.

The man arrived in Dombivli town of Thane district on November 24 after travelling from South Africa, Dubai and Delhi.

He later underwent a test, as per the government's recent protocol on account of the new virus variant, and was found to have contracted the coronavirus, Dr Panpatil said.

Eight of his family members were also tested and their reports came out negative, another official said. The civic authorities are gathering details of the man's co-passengers to know their health status, Panpatil said. After the engineer arrived from South Africa, his brother went for a test and it came known after seven days, Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation's (KDMC) epidemic control officer Dr Pratibha Panpatil said. It was not known so far where he had contracted the "Omicron" variant of the virus, which was identified as the variant of concern by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the official said. KDMC Commissioner Dr Vijay Suryavanshi has appealed to citizens of the

Covid test, quarantine must for those coming from at-risk countries

Our ICU beds, oxygen beds and manpower have been increased and we're ready to go all-in, in case of sudden spurt," Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar said Monday, his family sources said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In view of the emergence of the new Omicron variant of coronavirus, the Maharashtra government will conduct Covid-19 (RT-PCR) tests and mandatory quarantine for travellers coming from countries affected by the new strain.

"Our ICU beds, oxygen beds and manpower have been increased and we're ready to go all-in, in case of sudden spurt," Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar said on Monday.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has also expressed concern over tracking those international passengers who don't land directly in Mumbai but then travel to the state



using other means. He said it will be easier to stop the spread of coronavirus infection if information about such travellers is shared.

The issue of the new variant was also discussed in the Cabinet meeting here. "The meeting also discussed the issue of how to check the passengers arriving from abroad without landing directly at Mumbai or other airports in Maharashtra and then travelling to other places in the country by domestic airlines, road or

rail. The question is how to test such people and the prime minister should be apprised of this," a statement quoting CM Thackeray said.

"Information of the passengers coming from abroad should be received regularly so that they can be monitored and the infection can be prevented in time," the statement said.

No confirmed case of the Omicron variant is detected so far in Maharashtra. Countries that are cur-

rently recording a spike in the cases are witnessing the biggest wave.

France, Germany, the Netherlands and Austria are reporting more than 30,000 people (cases), the CM noted. Currently, masks are most needed for prevention, he stressed.

The Centre has made it mandatory for passengers from 12 countries to take the RT-PCR test 72 hours before boarding a flight. RT-PCR test is made mandatory once they land here, the CM said. South African scientists identified a new version of the coronavirus that they say is behind a recent spike in COVID-19 infections in Gauteng, the most populous province in that country.

It's unclear where the new variant first emerged, but scientists in South Africa alerted the World Health Organisation in recent days, and it has now been seen in travellers arriving in several countries, from Australia to Israel to the Netherlands.

On Friday, the WHO designated it as a variant of concern, naming it Omicron after a letter in the Greek alphabet. The new variant has forced several countries to impose fresh travel restrictions.

NAGPUR MLC POLL: CORPORATORS ON EXCURSION, EXERCISE TO KEEP FLOCK TOGETHER

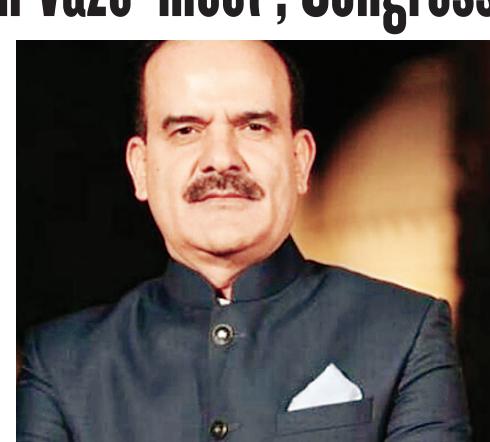
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Election to the lone seat in the local bodies constituency on December 10 has turned the fortunes of a majority of the elected representatives in Nagpur.

A majority of the corporators left the city on Sunday and Monday for various tourist destinations leaving behind their cellphones. They will be brought back only on the eve of the polling day. Confirming this, a BJP leader said that they have been sent on an educational tour to the BJP-ruled states of Uttarakhand and Goa, while a few have gone to Jammu and Jaipur. Some of the corporators opted for Shirdi. Few women corporators have gone to Vaishnodevi, some of them along with their children. A top BJP leader said on condition of anonymity, "We have to keep the flock together till polling takes place. Only 10 corporators Dayashankar Tiwari, have not moved out of the city. Some of the corporators turned down the proposal to travel owing to weddings in their close family circuit." There are 108 BJP corporators in the House. When contacted, Congress' leader of opposition denied having sent any corporators outside Nagpur. In the December 10 election, former state Energy Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule is pitted against ex-BJP corporator and ex-District Mayor Ravindra Bhoyar. Both belong to the OBC category.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Param Bir Singh-Sachin Vaze 'meet', Congress cries foul, seeks probe



murder, terror, etc.

Singh had been declared a 'Proclaimed Offender' by a Mumbai court, had bailable and non-bailable warrants of arrest (since withdrawn) from Mumbai and Thane courts, while Vaze and other accused are facing murder, terror and conspiracy charges related to the SUV planting outside the home of industrialist Mukesh Ambani, and the subsequent murder of its owner Mansukh Hirani, in February-March this year.

Urging State Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil to order a thorough probe into the "meeting", Londhe sought to know if any high-level politicians or officials had conspired to arrange the meeting with a view to derail the ongoing sensitive probes by the agencies concerned. Incidentally, Singh had been "untraceable" since the past 6 months but resurfaced in Mumbai last Thursday, after which he has joined the probe in various police cases against him and also attended the Justice Chandiwal hearing on Monday, even as he was granted interim protection against arrest till December 6.

PARAM BIR SINGH APPEARS BEFORE PANEL PROBING FORMER MAHARASHTRA MINISTER

Former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh on Monday appeared before the commission probing corruption allegations against former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh on Monday appeared before the commission probing corruption allegations against former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh. The panel had earlier fined Singh on multiple occasions for failing to appear before it and also issued a bailable warrant against him. Singh, who was transferred from the post of Mumbai police commissioner in March in the aftermath of the Antilia bomb scare episode, had alleged that Deshmukh asked police officers to collect Rs 100 crore a month from bars and restaurants in the city, clared absconding by a court here in an extortion case, Singh surfaced in public last Thursday after six months, and appeared before the Mumbai crime branch to record his statement. The Supreme Court has granted him temporary protection from arrest. Singh appeared before Thane police on Friday in connection with an extortion case filed against him and some other police officials on the complaint of a local builder.



Opening numbers of Adele's '30' surpass those of Taylor Swift, Drake

London | Agencies

Grammy winning-singer Adele's '30' enjoyed the biggest opening numbers of any blockbuster album in 2021, as expected, with 839,000 album-equivalent units, according to an announcement by Billboard Sunday night.

Her big premiere beats the previous mark set by Drake's 'Certifiable Lover Boy' when it bowed with 613,000 back in September, reports variety.com.

It also comes in ahead of Taylor Swift's 'Red (Taylor's Version)', which just a week ago had the second-biggest debut of the year, with 905,000 album units, and now bumped to the third most sizable of 2021.

The biggest part of Adele's tally came in full-album sales, as was true of Swift's massive debut last week. These two superstars are generally regarded as the last two who are guaranteed to sell massive amounts of physical product -- CDs as well as the more in-vogue vinyl versions.

'30' racked up a staggering 692,000 in actual album sales, by

far the most for any release this year. '30' was no slouch in the streaming world either, registering 185 million on-demand streams during its first week out, according to Billboard.

Although vinyl sales can outdo CD sales for many artists nowadays, Adele fans were attracted first and foremost to the compact disc, so Swift's 'Red (Taylor's Version)' still holds the record for the most LPs sold in a week.

Adele's album sales amounted to 378,000 as CDs and 108,000 in the vinyl format. Digital album sales came in between those two formats, with 205,000 downloads sold. A cassette version sold exclusively in the artist's web store sold just under 2,000 to serious completists. The numbers are indisputably huge by today's standards, although the unit figure doesn't come close to matching what Adele's previous album, '25', did when it came out six years ago. In the land of 2015, a very different time for physical sales and mind-boggling album numbers, '25' debuted with 3.38 million copies, still an all-time record.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Former Gucci creative director Tom Ford has said that he found it "hard to see the humour and camp" in Ridley Scott's film 'House of Gucci' because he was so close to the scandal, though he still believes the movie will be a "hit". He wrote in an essay for digital weekly Air Mail: "I recently survived a screening of the two-hour-and-37-minute film that is 'House of Gucci'. The shiny,

ambitious, beautifully filmed and costumed tale of greed and murder is stunning by the sheer number of stars that have been cast. The movie rivals the nighttime soap 'Dynasty' for subtlety but does so with a much bigger budget..."

"I was deeply sad for several days after watching 'House of Gucci', a reaction that I think only those of us who knew the players and the play will feel. It was hard for me to see the humour and camp in

Tom Ford 'deeply sad' after seeing 'House of Gucci'

MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY WON'T RUN FOR GOVERNOR OF TEXAS IN 2022

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Matthew McConaughey has decided against throwing his hat into the ring to be elected the next Governor of Texas.

The actor made the announcement on Sunday through a video posted to his official Twitter account, reports variety.com.

"Over the past two years, I've been working on the answer to the question of how I can be most useful in this life going forward... One category of service I've been exploring is politics. I've been considering a run

for the governor of Texas," McConaughey said in the clip.

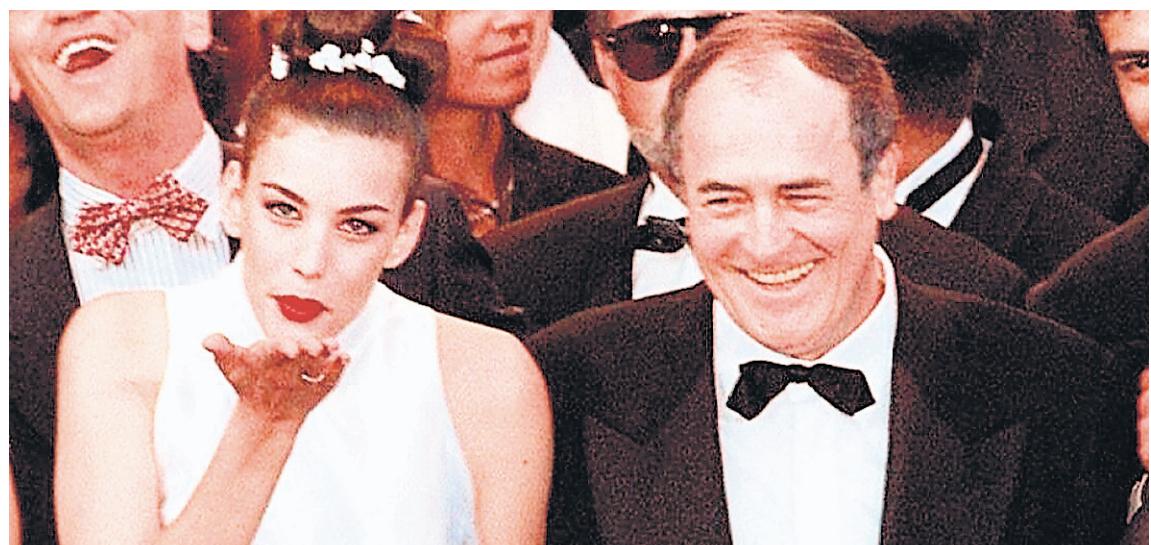
He added: "It's a humbling and inspiring path to ponder. It is also a path that I am choosing not to take at this moment."

"I am going to continue to work and invest the bounty I have by supporting entrepreneurs, businesses and foundations that I believe are leaders, establishments that I believe are creating pathways for people to succeed in life."

The Oscar-winning actor had been teasing a potential entry into his home state's 2022 gubernatorial race over the past few months, McConaughey had not begun to organise serious fundraisers to back his political efforts.

His decision comes a little over two weeks ahead of the state government's December 13 deadline to enter the race.

'Last Tango in Paris' series to focus on Maria Schneider's perspective



Los Angeles | Agencies

Tango', a limited event series based on the tumultuous events surrounding the making of Bernardo Bertolucci's 1972 erotic drama 'Last Tango in Paris', is in the works by CBS Studios.

Lisa Brühlmann and Jose Padilha will co-direct the series, with Greg Silverman and JP Sarni of Stampede Ventures executive producing. CBS Studios will co-produce under its international first-look agreement with Stampede, with SVP of international co-productions and development

Meghan Lyvers overseeing the project for the studio, reports hollywoodreporter.com.

Based on a script by Jeremy Miller and Daniel Cohn, 'Tango' traces the 18 months before, during and after the production of 'Last Tango in Paris', exploring the story through the lens of the three participants at the centre of events -- actors Maria Schneider, Marlon Brando and director Bertolucci.

'Last Tango In Paris', which stars Schneider as a young woman who starts an affair with a middle-aged American businessman based only on

sex, has been at the centre of controversy and debate since its release.

The film grossed \$36 million at the time, the equivalent of \$186 million today, and garnered Oscar nominations for Brando and Bertolucci -- the men behind the film who have been sharply criticised for their treatment of Schneider, who was allegedly exploited and humiliated during the shoot and ridiculed afterward for her part in the film. The young actress received only \$4,000 compensation for her role and has said the experience on set led her down a path to addiction and mental health issues.

GEORGE CLOONEY THOUGHT HE'D DIE IN MOTORBIKE ACCIDENT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star George Clooney thought he would die in his 2018 motorbike crash and said he was frustrated that people stopped to film him on the ground instead of helping.

The 60-year-old actor-director flew over the handlebars of his bike when a car turned in front of him while riding in Sardinia, Italy, in 2018, and was convinced he would die in the aftermath, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

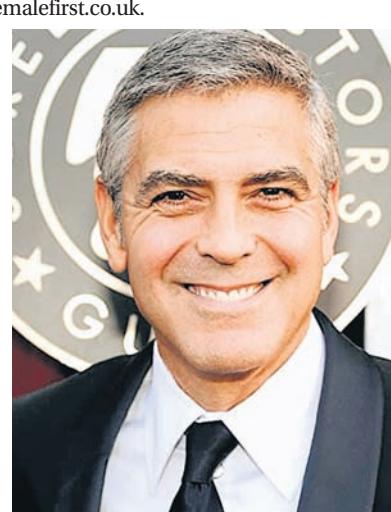
He said: "I was waiting for my switch to turn off. I'm fine now."

George was not impressed when a gathered crowd started to film him out on the ground rather than trying to help.

He told the Sunday Times Culture magazine: "If you're in the public eye, what you realise when you're on the ground thinking it's the last minute of your life is, for some people, it's just going to be entertainment for their Facebook page. I'm a pretty positive guy, but that told me - clearly - that you really are here just for their entertainment... You want to take everyone and shake them!"

The 'Tender Bar' director "fights against" the modern instinct to constantly document everything that happens in their lives. Recalling a fundraiser for Barack Obama, he said: "Everyone was filming, I said, 'They can't say they met the president - they filmed it.' People are living their lives this way and I fight against it."

"If my kids do something cute, I want to take a picture, but I have to say, 'Be in the moment - you don't have to record everything.'" Clooney feels "lucky" that he didn't find global fame until he was in his 30s because he doesn't think people can ever be "prepared" for it at a young age.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Charlotte Dawson


INDIA VS NEW ZEALAND, FIRST CRICKET TEST MATCH

RAVINDRA, PATEL'S STUBBORN RESISTANCE FORCES THRILLING DRAW

Kanpur | Agencies

Rachin Ravindra and Ajaz Patel put up 52 balls of stubborn resistance to help New Zealand force a thrilling draw against India in the first Test of the two-match series at the Green Park Stadium here on Monday. From 155/9, Patel did a fine job of hanging in at the crease but it was the debutant Ravindra, who faced 91 balls and gave a great account of his temperament and composure to deny India a win. After going wicketless in the opening session of day five, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Umesh Yadav, and Axar Patel picked eight wickets in the next two sessions. But a stonewalling effort from Ravindra and Patel defied the Indian bowling attack, which was in a race against time as lights began to fade in the final half-hour of the day. Axar Patel struck on the seventh ball of the final session, trapping Henry Nicholls lbw with the one turning in a little and went past the outer edge to hit the back pad. Ravindra Jadeja got some help from the pitch, getting one to grip and turn past Kane Williamson's


Brief scores

India 345 (Shreyas Iyer 105, Tim Southee 5/69) and 234/7d in 81 overs (Shreyas Iyer 65, Kyle Jamieson 3/40) drew with **New Zealand** 296 in 142.3 overs (Tom Latham 95, Axar Patel 5/62) and 165/9 in 98 overs (Tom Latham 52, William Somerville 36, Ravindra Jadeja 4/40, Ravichandran Ashwin 3/35).

bat, pretty similar to the jaffa from Umesh Yadav which squared up Williamson in the second session. In his next over, Jadeja trapped Williamson plumb lbw on the back-foot with a ball that came in and kept low. Jadeja ensured that the let-off on the second new 'all won't be cost-

ly as Jamieson was trapped lbw by one spinning past the outer edge to hit the back pad. Jadeja scalped his fourth wicket of the innings by trapping the outer edge of Tim Southee's bat and trapping him lbw in front of off-stump. Ravindra and Patel were sturdy in defence as India were in a

race against time to wrap the innings. Ashwin 'tricked' Patel's pad but was given not out as the ball pitched outside leg. India took the review but were unable to change the decision, thereby losing all reviews. Ravindra and Patel survived 52 balls for just 10 runs as New Zealand managed to eke out an escape by the barest of margins. Earlier, India picked up three crucial wickets, including one each on the first and last ball of the second session, to make a comeback in the match. After not getting a wicket in the first session, India got one on the very first ball post-lunch as William Somerville tried to pull a short ball from Umesh Yadav, but it flew to Shubman Gill running in from fine-leg and completing a superb forward diving catch. India seemed to be a bit frustrated over not getting their first wicket of the day. Such was the desperation to get a wicket that they took a review for a Latham lbw despite the impact outside the off-stump, thereby wasting a review as New Zealand survived the rest of the session unscathed and eventually, the day.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Multiple-time world champion and winner of the World 6-Red snooker crown, Pankaj Advani of Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB), survived a scare from qualifier Santosh R of Karnataka before snatching a tight 4-3 win in a first-round match in Men's 6-Red Snooker section of the 88th National Billiards & Snooker Championship 2021 and being played at the Sage University Campus, on Monday.

In ladies' first-round encounters, Madhya Pradesh's cueists Amee Kamani and Ishika Shah smoothly rolled into the second round. Amee got the better of Tamil Nadu's Neena Praveen winning 4-1 (49-10, 34-01, 22-45, 14-37, 37-01). Ishika created a major sensation defeating Karnataka's seasoned Chitra Maghimairaj also in five frames coasting to a 4-1 (13-34, 57-12, 56-12, 25-11). Indi's ace cueist Advani, owner of 24 world titles, produced a late flourish against his Karnataka rival and went on to carve out a tense 27-28, 39-00, 42-28, 45-00, 00-45, 08-35, and 66-00 win to advance to the second round.

A satisfied Advani said after the match,



"The 6-Red snooker format is unpredictable just like T20 cricket. Any move can change the whole turn of the game. I am happy to win a closely fought match against Santosh with whom I practice occasionally in Bengaluru. It was a neck-and-neck contest and I am aiming to improve my performance for the upcoming matches in the Nationals".

In one of the most exciting matches, Maharashtra's Kreish Gurbaxani rallied from the brink of defeat to turn the tables on Karnataka's ML Lakshman snatching a creditable 4-3 (14-42, 08-64(64), 00-41, 38-08, 62-04, 40-21, 41-08) victory.

Harbhajan congratulates Ashwin for becoming India's third-highest wicket-taker in Tests

Kanpur | Agencies

Former India spinner Harbhajan Singh congratulated Ravichandran Ashwin after becoming India's third-highest wicket-taker in Test cricket on Monday. Ashwin is now behind Anil Kumble (619) and Kapil Dev (434) in India's all-time list of highest Test wicket-takers.

Ashwin had equalled Harbhajan's tally of 417 wickets on Sunday after he dismissed Will Young on Day 4. Ashwin dismissed Tom Latham in the second innings of New Zealand at the Green Park to go past Harbhajan's tally of 417 wickets in Tests. In the first innings of the Kanpur Test,



Ashwin.

"Congratulations @ashwinravi99 wish you many more brother.. God bless. keep shining," Harbhajan wrote in a tweet on Monday.

Harbhajan took to Twitter on Monday to congratulate

KYLE KUMARAN WINS SR NATIONAL ROTAX KARTING TITLE

Bengaluru | Agencies

Young racer Kyle Kumaran turned in yet another sterling performance to clinch the Senior Max title in the Meco FMSCI National Karting Championship Rotax Max class 2021 at the Meco Kartopia Track, near here in wet conditions.

The 18-year-old looked to be in supreme form and won all but one race to not only pocket his maiden national title but also help his team Peregrine Racing win the Team Championship in the senior category.

The UAE-based racer from Thiruchirapalli dominated the season finishing first in all the five final races and four out of five pre-final races. Kyle, who last week won the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Nations Cup in DD2 class, also won the driver of the year award and



bagged other prizes for the most number of wins and poles. His teammate Suriyavarathan finished second in the championship while the 2012 champion Ameya Bafna could only finish third.

"This is my first championship in India and I am glad we won it. We were consistent and my team Peregrine Racing did a good job and supported me well. I am looking forward to the Rotax Max World Finals. Wearing India colours and racing for Team INDIA is a proud moment and I am eagerly looking forward to the Grand Finals in Bahrain," said Kumaran.

In the junior section, MSport's Ruhaan Alva who won the Senior title in X30 won his maiden Rotax Max National in this class. Roahan Madesh, who broke his chain in the final round, saw Abhay pip him to the second spot, while the young

Late Vinicius strike gives Real Madrid win over Sevilla

Madrid | Agencies

Vinicius Jr.'s goal three minutes from time gave Real Madrid a 2-1 win at home to third-placed Sevilla and strengthened their position at the top of La Liga. The Brazilian received the ball on the left before cutting inside and unleashing an unstoppable shot from the edge of the area that leaves his side four points clear of Atletico Madrid and Real Sociedad.

Sevilla opened the scoring from Rafa Mir's free header in the 12th minute and moved the ball with relative ease as Real Madrid failed to pressure late on Sunday night.

Lucas Ocampos smashed a curling shot against the Real Madrid post on the half-hour, and three minutes later, Sevilla keeper Bono gifted Madrid an equaliser. Eder Militao's 40-yard shot didn't look dangerous, but the keeper made a horrible mess of his save, pushing the ball onto the post to leave Benzema with a simple tap-in.

Vinicius' goal came just when a draw was looking a likely result but even after that Sevilla were close to an



equaliser, with Thibaut Courtois clawing Thomas Delaney's effort off the line, Xinhua reports. Real Sociedad's title challenge looks to be running out of steam after they lost 1-0 away to Espanyol, who scored

thanks to Yangel Herrera's deflected shot 15 minutes from time.

Diego Lopez was another of Espanyol's heroes with some excellent saves and Real Sociedad had a goal ruled out from Alexander Isak after the ball hit referee Mateu Lahoz in the buildup.

Atletico Madrid moved up to second after a 4-1 thrashing of Cadiz with all of the goals came in the second half.

A tight first 45 minutes saw the teams go in 0-0, but Thomas Lemar's 56th-minute header put Atletico ahead and from there it was all one-way with Antoine Griezmann, Angel Correa and Matheus Cunha rounding off a surprising display of attacking football from Diego Simeone's men.

Levante remain winless all season after three second-half goals from Juanmi overturned their 1-0 halftime lead to give Betis a 3-1 win.

Skodran Mustafi had put Levante in front in the sixth minute, but Juanmi's hat-trick saw Betis roar back in the second half and left Levante coach Javier Pereira in danger of losing his job.

INDIA WOMEN LOSE TO CHILE 0-3; SECOND SUCCESSIVE DEFEAT IN BRAZILIAN TOURNAMENT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Following their 1-6 drubbing to Brazil in the opening game, India displayed good fighting spirit but still went down 0-3 to Chile in their second game of the Women's International Football Tournament at the Amazon Arena in Manaus, Brazil on Monday.

Striker Maria Urrutia gave Chile a first-half lead before two back-to-back goals towards the end snuffed out any hopes of an Indian comeback.

India made three changes to their starting line-up from the match against Brazil with M Lintongambi Devi replacing Aditi Chauhan under the bar and Martina Thokchom and Manisa Panna coming in for Kamala Devi and Dangmei Grace.

The first chance of the match fell to the goal-scoring star of the game against Brazil, Manisha Kalyan, who



met an in-swinging corner in the sixth minute but directed it straight at goalkeeper Endler.

Chile then took control of the game and created their first opportunity in the 12th minute. Maria Rojas sent in a low cross from the right for Javiera Toro who made a back-heel attempt to score but was thwarted by Linthoi.

A minute later, Chile opened the scoring as Rojas progressed down the right and found Urrutia, who scored with a first-time finish.

The rest of the half passed by without much incident as Linthoi and her defence kept the Chilean attack at bay with some good organisation.

Just when India seemed to be growing in stature, Chile scored twice in the space of two minutes through substitute Isidora Hernandez and Karen Araya to seal off the game.

India will play their final game of the Women's International Football Tournament against Venezuela on December 2.

BAN v PAK, 1st Test:

Openers put Pak 93 runs away from Test win

Chattogram | Agencies

Unbeaten half-centuries by Abid Ali and Abdullah Shafique put Pakistan just 93 runs away from registering a victory over Bangladesh in the first Test here.

Pakistan were comfortably placed at 109/0 at stumps on Day 4 on Monday and needed just 93 more runs to win with the final day to go and take a 1-0 lead in the series. Both the openers made half-centuries for the second time in the game as they put Pakistan in firm control in the first Test.

Earlier, despite Liton Das' fighting half-century in the second innings, Bangladesh were all out for just 157 runs in their second innings. Taijul



Islam was the last to depart, stumped off Sajid, who finished with three wickets, as Bangladesh were bowled out for 157, setting a 202-run target for the visitors.

Brief scores :

Bangladesh 330 & 157 (Liton Das 59, Yasir Ali 36; Shaheen Afridi 5-32, Sajid Khan 3-33) vs Pakistan 286 & 109/0 (Abid Ali 56, Abdullah Shafique 53*).

'TIME'S UP FOR ISHANT SHARMA': NETIZENS SLAM INDIAN PACER

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After an ordinary outing in the first Test against New Zealand, netizens are questioning the place of pacer Ishant Sharma in the Indian cricket team and demanding to drop him from the playing XI in the next match in Mumbai.

'Time's up for Ishant Sharma!' These messages were trending on social media following the Indian pacer's wicketless show in the first Test against New Zealand in Kanpur.

New Zealand managed to draw the first Test against the Ajinkya Rahane-led side. Following this, calls for removing Ishant from playing XI and bringing Mohammad Siraj for the second Test have gained pace.

The 33-year-old bowled 15 overs in the first innings and gave away 35 runs without taking any wicket. And in the second innings, he bowled seven overs before leaving the field with an injured finger. He returned



later but didn't bowl. Meanwhile, Ishant, on Day 5 of the first Test, also claimed an unwanted Test record of bowling the most number of no balls. The pacer while bowling William

Somerville, bowled a shortish delivery, which the batsman stood tall and defended. However, in the process of bowling a short ball, the Indian pacer overstepped the line. With that no

ball, the pacer has now bowled 300 no-ball in his career. The Delhi seamer has so far represented India in 104 Test matches picking up 311 wickets in the process.



'THE VERY DEFINITION OF A BUBBLE IS NOW ETCHED IN MY MIND FOREVER'

SUSHMITA SEN OPENS UP ON SHOOTING AARYA 2 IN MIDST OF PANDEMIC

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After emerging as one of the most gripping thrillers from India with an International Emmy nomination for best drama series, Aarya is set to hit the digital scene with Season 2. What makes it one of the most anticipated OTT series is that its trailer is rife with surprising twists. The key question its trailer raised is - 'Can Aarya Sareen escape her past, or will her own family betray her, yet again?' Disney+ Hotstar, Endemol Shine India and Ram Madhvani Films are ecstatic to offer Aarya Season 2, starring Sushmita Sen in the role of an unwilling outlaw. Conceptualised and created for India by Ram Madhvani, the series is an official adaption of the hit Dutch series Penoza by NL Film (Banijay Group). Aarya Season 2 will be available only on

Disney+ Hotstar on 10th December 2021. Ahead of the release of the second installment of Aarya, Sushmita Sen has opened up on her experience of shooting for the show in the midst of a pandemic. Sushmita shared, "We've become lockdown specialists now! We either release during a lockdown or shoot during it, that's our new thing! When we completed the shoot for Aarya 2, on our farewell, we said how blessed we were to be working during the pandemic. There were so many people who had to sit at home, but this is also a nice culmination of teamwork. We had Disney+Hotstar, Ram Madhvani film, the entire crew and the cast together. Everyone just pulled in following the rules and making it possible."

Sushmita added, "My God! The very definition of a bubble is now etched in my mind forever. For any crew member to work in a PPE kit, covered from head

to toe for 10 hrs a day is seriously tough! And the constant tests, making sure we lived away from our family, the quarantine for 7-10 days before starting to work, all these measures initially seemed difficult. But in the bigger picture, we were full of gratitude to be working at such a time and being able to create something that you love. I mean Aarya season 2 is a big leap from the first season!"

The second season of Aarya follows the journey of a mother combatting the dark world of crime and enemies closing in on her family and children. Will her family continue to be her strength or will her own trustworthy people turn against her? Sushmita Sen will be seen reprising the role of Aarya Sareen and she will be joined by actors Sikandar Kher, Vikas Kumar, Mayo Sarao, Ankur Bhatia, Akash Khurana, Dilnaz Irani amongst others.

'I'm an actor not a salesman'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As major brands are lining up to sign actor Pankaj Tripathi for endorsements, the actor refuses to recklessly sign deals because he feels he has a moral responsibility towards his fans and the society. His characters like Kaleen Bhaiyya ('Mirzapur'), Sultan ('Gangs of Wasseypur'), Rudra ('Street') and many others have resonated with the audience. He chooses to endorse what he uses and only those products that are approved by the governing body. Talking about the same, Pankaj says, "I am an actor not a salesman. I am also a responsible citizen of my country. What I do or say is heard by millions in my country today. Why would I do something just for the sake of it? I have been very true to my craft and as a public figure I want to be true to my fans and followers as well." Maintaining his firm stance that stems from a strong set of ethics, the actor adds, "These are the people who watched my films, appreciated my roles and made me who I am today. It is my ethical responsibility to endorse only those products I use in personal capacity or those that are not harmful to society in any manner. The thing is, it is very easy to get lured in this glittering world. But my upbringing hasn't let me slip and I owe this to my solid background".

PANKAJ TRIPATHI ON BRAND ENDORSEMENTS



'MONEY HEIST'

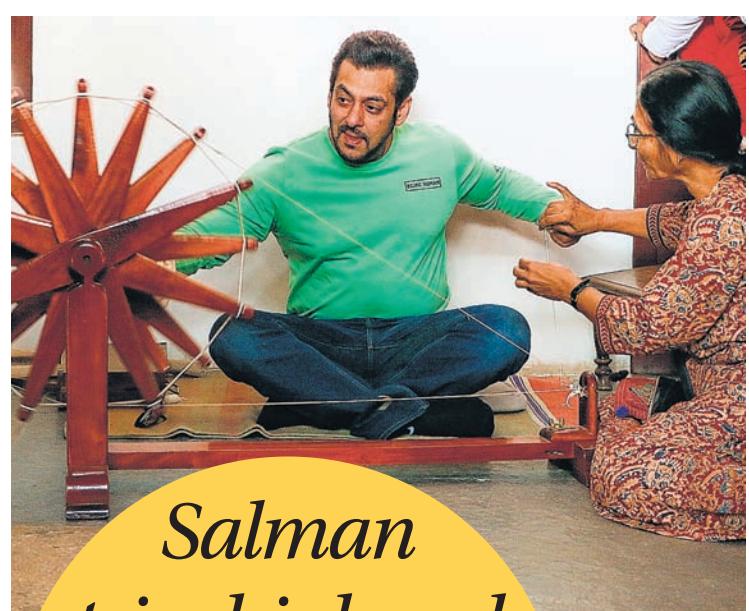
rightfully found prominent place in pop culture: Ayushmann Khurrana

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Ayushmann Khurrana has confessed his love for the popular Spanish series 'Money Heist' and has paid homage to his favourite character 'Professor' played by Sergio Marquina.

In a fun take, the star paid homage to the famed 'Professor' character, launching the #IndiaBoleCiao Fan Contest allowing fans to capture and share their love for the series. Ayushmann is also seen singing his own rendition of the classic 'Bella Ciao' on the piano.

Ayushmann said: "Over time, I've become a huge fan of 'Money Heist' and it's rightfully found a prominent place in pop culture. Getting to work on this unique project has been special given my fondness for the series as well as the 'Professor'. The Bollywood actor feels disappointed as the Netflix show is coming to an end as the final five episodes of 'Money Heist Part 5: Volume 2' will premiere on December 3 on Netflix. Ayushmann added: "The characters give us an immersive experience and you feel completely invested in their journey throughout the series. While I'm super excited for the finale, it's definitely disappointing that this heist is coming to an end."



Salman tries his hand at 'charkha' in Sabarmati Ashram

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is currently in Ahmedabad to promote his latest release 'Antim: The Final Truth'. He even visited the famous Sabarmati Ashram.

The actor was pictured on Monday at the Sabarmati Ashram and even tried his hands at the spinning wheel or 'charkha'.

The superstar looked dapper in

jeans paired with a light green T-shirt. In the pictures obtained, the 'Dabangg' star can be seen sitting on the floor and observing how a charkha works. He then tries himself at spinning it. He was also seen writing a special message in the guest book.

'Antim: The Final Truth' marks the return of Salman Khan on the silver screen after a long wait of two years. The megastar earlier was seen in 'Radhe' which had a hybrid release divided over OTT and a theatrical release outside of India.

'Antim: The Final Truth' starring Salman Khan, Aayush Sharma and Mahima Makwana is directed by Mahesh Manjrekar, produced by Salma Khan, and presented by Salman Khan Films.



NITHYA MENEN REVEALS WHAT EXCITES HER ABOUT 'SKYLAB'

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Nithya Menen, who is one of the main leads in the upcoming movie 'Skylab', has also co-produced the venture. With the movie slated for release on December 4, the makers had arranged a grand pre-release event on Sunday.

Nithya, who is also one of the producers with Prithvi Pinnamaraju, explains that she was only concerned about acting when on the sets. "I have not been involved in production-related things during the shoot. Only after the shoot, I get to take up production-related things," the actress said.

Talking about the story, Nithya said, "Skylab can excite anybody. The folktale is such a great plot. This is the story your parents missed telling you. The story takes place in the backdrop of a village, but the BGM is Western. The paradoxical treatment is something I love."

Nithya also reveals that there are no combination scenes between the main leads. "This tale revolves around three people. Satya Dev, Rahul Rama Krishna, and me are not involved in any combination scenes," the actress revealed.

Talking about a few technicalities used for 'Skylab', Nithya said, the background music was done in Macedonia with a 40-piece orchestra. Western classical music is imbibed as the score in this film, which gives it an entirely different approach.

"The village backdrop is cinematic because the frames are polished and saturated. The entire film was shot in sync sound," Nithya said.



Nushratt Bharuccha