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LOC ISSUED AGAINST ABG SHIPYARD, DIRECTORS IN LOAN FRAUD CASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In the latest development in the Rs 22,842 crore fraud, allegedly committed by ABG Shipyard company, the CBI said that it has issued a Look Out Circular (LOC), against the accused in the case.

The CBI revealed that there are around 100 high value bank fraud cases that could not be registered due to non-accordance of specific consent u/s 6 of the DSPE Act by the state governments where the general consent has been withdrawn.

The CBI has recovered incriminating documents, ie account books of ABG Shipyards, its sale-purchase details, minutes of board meetings, share registers, contract files.

Also, the bank account details of ABG Shipyards and related parties have been obtained. Subsequently, LOCs against the accused have already been opened by the CBI. Earlier, the State Bank of India had



also opened LOCs against the main accused in 2019.

In the present case, there are 28 banks involved in a consortium with a huge amount of disbursement.

There were different types of bank loans including CC Loan, Term Loan, Letter of Credit, Bank Guarantee etc. that were given in advance by the banks.

The fraud is primarily on account of huge transfers by ABG Shipyard Ltd to its related parties and subsequently making adjustment entries. It is also alleged that huge investments were made in its overseas subsidiary by diverting the bank loans. Funds were diverted to purchase huge assets in the name of its related parties. The CBI official said that ABG Shipyard Ltd has been in business with the SBI since 2001. The account of ABG Shipyard turned NPA on 30 November 2013. As per the bank complaint, the NPA

is to the tune of Rs 22,842 crore and the majority of the disbursement happened between 2005 and 2012 by a consortium of 28 banks led by ICICI Bank and including SBI.

The account was restructured under the CDR mechanism on 27 March 2014. However, the operations of the company could not be revived.

On 10 September 2014, N V Dand and Associates was deputed to conduct a stock audit of ABG Shipyard Ltd. The audit firm submitted its report on 30 April 2016 and observed various faults on the part of the accused company.

Subsequently, the account of ABG Shipyard Ltd was declared NPA. Ernst & Young LLP was appointed Forensic Auditor. As per the usual practice, these forensic audits cover a period starting approximately three to four years prior to the date of the declaration of the NPA, which,

in this case was 2016.

The forensic audit of ABG Shipyard Ltd therefore covers the period from 2012 to 2017. Meanwhile, the company ABGSL was also referred to NCLT, Ahmedabad on 1 August 2017 by ICICI Bank, being the lead bank, for Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP).

Now, CBI pushes back ABGSL scam 'birth date' by 8 years!

Mumbai: A day after Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman declared that ABG Shipyard Ltd's Rs 22,842-crore scam was detected "faster than normal average", the Central Bureau of Investigation on Tuesday pushed back the fraud date by 8 years.

Spelling embarrassment for the Centre, the CBI declared that a perusal of the records and the initial investigations show that the scam's "critical period was 2005-2012" - making it nearly 18 years old now. The CBI said the ABGSL was conducting business with the SBI since 2001 and the bank declared it as a Non Performing Asset on November 30, 2013.

Referring to the SBI complaint, the CBI said the fraud was to the tune of Rs 22,842-crore and "the majority of disbursements took place between 2005-2012" by the consortium of 28 banks, led by the ICICI Bank, including the SBI.

Hijab row: Angry parents protest, girl refuses to write exam



Bengaluru | Agencies

The hijab row continued to simmer in Karnataka on Tuesday over alleged denial of entry for girl students into schools with their headscarves on in some places, as one such girl announced boycotting her exam in response to the dictat. Scenes of angry parents of such children arguing with police and school authorities and an instance of a student trying to flaunt a saffron scarf as an apparent retaliation were also reported.

The Karnataka high court, in its interim order last week restrained all the students from wearing saffron shawls, scarves, hijab and any religious flag within the classroom.

High schools were reopened across the state

on Monday, even as there were instances of students turning up in hijab and burqa then, only to be denied entry or asked by officials to remove them, citing the high court order.

On Tuesday, at a school in the district headquarters town of Shivamogga, a burqa-wearing girl refused to write her exam when the school authorities asked her to remove her hijab first.

In a government school in Indavara village in Chikkamagaluru district, Muslim girls were not let inside the school and were asked to go back.

Soon, their parents reached the school and staged a protest.

They barged into the campus, raised slogans and demanded that the order should be given to them in

writing. As the protest intensified, another student pulled out a saffron scarf from his school bag. On the direction of his teachers, he put it back inside. Sensing the situation, the principal closed the school for the day.

In another institution in Chikkamagaluru town, denial prevailed over denial of entry to the students with hijab. Parents swarmed the school and questioned the school authorities how their children were not allowed inside.

Police deployed there told the crowd that there was a high court order not to let anyone wearing hijab or saffron scarves but the parents were not ready to listen and insisted that their wards be allowed to write the exam.

SEBI drops mandatory splitting of CMD post

New Delhi: In a relief to a number of top companies especially family owned businesses, the board of SEBI Board has decided to make the splitting of Chairman and MD position as a voluntary move and will not be a mandatory stipulation. A SEBI board meeting held on Tuesday decided that considering rather unsatisfactory level of compliance achieved so far, with respect to this corporate governance reform, various representations received, constraints posed by the prevailing pandemic situation and with a view to enabling the companies to plan for a smoother transition, as a way forward, SEBI Board at this juncture, decided that this provision may not be retained as a mandatory requirement and instead be made applicable to the listed entities on a "voluntary basis".

Lakhimpur Kheri case

Accused Ashish Mishra walks free after four months

LUCKNOW | Agencies

Ashish Mishra, son of union minister Ajay Mishra Teni, who was accused of mowing down four farmers in Lakhimpur on October 3 last year, following a protest by farmers, was released from Lakhimpur jail on Tuesday evening, after the Allahabad High Court corrected its order.

Ashish Mishra had moved the Lucknow bench of the High Court seeking insertion of sections 302 (murder) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy)

of IPC that were 'inadvertently' not mentioned in the high court order as the jail authorities would not release him due to the omission.

"It is a mere typographical error, while the court already considered the bail under these sections too and, as such, the same may be allowed making the addition of these sections in the order," said the application.

Ashish Mishra was arrested on October 9 last year by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) that was probing the incident.

RUSSIA DOES NOT WANT WAR: PUTIN AMID UKRAINE CRISIS

Brussels | Agencies

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday he was ready to continue working with the West on security issues to de-escalate tensions over Ukraine. "We are ready to work further together. We are ready to go down the negotiations track," Putin told a press conference following talks in Moscow with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

Putin said that "of course" Russia does not want war. But it "cannot turn a blind eye" to how Washington and NATO "freely interpret" the principle of the indivisibility of security -- that no country should strengthen its security at the expense of others.

Scholz's meeting with Putin comes a day after he travelled to Kyiv to shore up support for Ukraine during



talks with President Volodymyr Zelensky. Earlier on Tuesday, the

Kremlin confirmed a pull-back of some forces from Ukraine's borders but said

Indian nationals asked to leave Ukraine

Kiev/New Delhi: In a latest advisory issued on Tuesday, the Embassy of India in Kiev has asked Indian nationals in Ukraine, particularly students whose stay is not essential, to consider leaving the country temporarily in the wake of the current situation. "Indian nationals are also advised to avoid all non-essential travel to and within Ukraine," it added.

the move was planned and stressed Russia would continue to move troops across the country as it saw fit.

No sign of any de-escalation from Russia so far: NATO chief

New Delhi: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has said that it has not seen any sign of de-escalation on the ground from the Russian side with regard to Ukraine.

Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said in Brussels, "We haven't seen any de-escalation so far by Russia on the borders with Ukraine," BBC reported.

But, he added, "signs" coming from Moscow about diplomatic efforts give "some reason for cautious optimism".

MP CM SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN TESTS COVID POSITIVE

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said he has tested positive for Covid-19 and isolated himself at home.

Chouhan urged people who came in contact with him in the last few days to get tested for the virus.

The Chief Minister also informed that he has normal symptoms and will be actively working and participating in meetings virtually till his Covid-19 report comes negative.

"I underwent Covid-19 test and report was positive. I have normal symptoms. I have isolated myself as per Covid-19 guidelines and will do all the upcoming work virtually," Chouhan posted in Hindi on his Twitter handle. The state government recently allowed schools, colleges, cinema halls and all types of public gatherings. Except night curfew between 11 p.m. to 5 a.m., all public, business, sports activities are allowed at full capacity in the state.

WHO WARNS OF FRESH WAVE OF OMICRON IN EASTERN EUROPE

London: A new wave of infections from the Omicron variant of coronavirus is moving towards the east of Europe, the World Health Organisation said on Tuesday, urging authorities to improve vaccination and other measures. WHO's Europe regional director Hans Kluge, in a statement, said that the past two weeks, cases of Covid have more than doubled in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Russia, and Ukraine, reports said.



The comments come at a time when several European countries including Sweden, Denmark, and Norway have all lifted Covid restrictions, while the Czech Republic and Poland have hinted at easing of Covid-19 restrictions next month, if daily infection numbers kept falling. Over 165 million Covid cases and 25,000 deaths have been recorded so far across the WHO European region in the last week. The global health body stressed the continued need for measures such as rapid testing and masking, as well as avoiding crowded locations, and improving ventilation.

'75,000 CHILDREN GET CANCER IN INDIA EVERY YEAR'

Symptoms of childhood cancers generally include unexplained weight loss, persistent pain in bone, joints or legs, lumps/mass in the abdomen, chest, neck or pelvis, excessive bruising or bleeding, prolonged fatigue, whitish appearance of the pupil etc.

Hyderabad: | Agencies

India is home to at least 20 per cent of the global childhood cancer burden, with nearly 75,000 kids getting cancer every year, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Non-communicable diseases, including cancer, account for nearly 50 per cent of the total deaths among children aged between 5 years and 14 years and this situation can be improved by ensuring there is an enhanced awareness about the problem and ensuring access to quality healthcare for all, say doctors on International Childhood Cancer Day on February 15. In infants and children less than one year, neuroblastoma appears to be one of the most common cancers while in children between 1-4 years leukemias are



common, and in children aged between 9-16 years, bone cancers are common. Treatment for such cancers would include surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, or a combination depending on the

nature of malignancy and its stage of presentation. Doctors say focus should be on improving awareness about childhood cancers and its symptoms among parents and healthcare providers and improving

healthcare access to remote areas. India needs to have a policy framework specifically to address childhood cancer care, they added.

Most common types of childhood cancers are leukemias, brain cancers, lymphomas, and solid tumours like neuroblastomas and Wilms tumours. The burden of childhood cancers is high in low- and middle-income countries where the health system is weak and contributes to cure rates of less than 30 per cent due to significant barriers in early diagnosis, inability to accurately diagnose, poor access to health care facilities, and inability to initiate treatment promptly.

BIG JOLT TO CONGRESS, EX-LAW MINISTER ASHWANI KUMAR QUILTS

New Delhi: Ahead of the Assembly polls in Punjab, the Congress suffered a big setback on Tuesday as former Law Minister Ashwani Kumar quit the party.

He sent his resignation letter to Sonia Gandhi on Monday. "Having given my thoughtful consideration to the matter, I have concluded that in the present circumstances and consistent with my dignity, I can best serve larger national causes outside the party-fold. I am accordingly quitting the party after a long association of 46 years and hope to proactively pursue public causes inspired by the idea of transformative leadership, based on the dignitarian promise of a liberal democracy envisioned by our freedom fighters," he added.



Have you gone back on automatic enhancement of pensions, SC queries Centre on OROP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Centre whether it can consider automatic annual revision instead of the existing policy of periodic review, done once in five years, during the hearing of a plea in connection with One Rank, One Pension (OROP) in the armed forces.

A bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud asked the Centre's counsel that after agreeing to OROP, whether the government went back on its decision over automatically passing on any future enhancements in pension to the pensioners.

The petitioners have questioned the November 7, 2015, notification issued by the Centre while implementing OROP, in which the government adopted a modified definition of the expression, under which the gap between the rates of pension of current and past pensioners were to be bridged at periodic intervals.

Senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for Indian Ex-servicemen Movement (IESM), said the government's decision is arbitrary and mala fide, as it creates a class within a class and effectively grants one



rank, different pensions. The bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Vikram Nath, noted that the government agreed to OROP in the Parliament in 2014, and put a volley of questions to Additional Solicitor General N. Venkatraman, who represented the Centre. Venkatraman argued that petitioners say the base

year for OROP implementation should be prospectively from 2013 and not 2014, and following this, there would be no end to it. Citing the November 7, 2015 decision, he said it was a policy decision, which was formulated after holding extensive discussions between different stake-holders and inter-ministerial

groups. As the top court queried whether the government went back on its decision to automatically pass on the future enhancements in pension, besides granting uniform pension to personnel retiring in the same rank and service tenure, regardless of retirement date, the ASG said that automatically passing the future enhancements in pensions, is inconceivable in any kind of services. He emphasised that a policy decision involves different buckets like economics, socio-economic, politics, psychology, and budget.

Venkatraman added that OROP seeks to bridge the gap -- first the lowest and the highest pension is taken within that rank of pensioners, holding the same rank and same service tenure to reach an average. He added the exercise of bridging the gap is to be carried out periodically once in five years.

The hearing in the matter will continue on Wednesday.

The top court, in July 2016, sought Centre's response on a petition by IEMS seeking implementation of OROP as recommended by the Koshiyari Committee with an automatic annual revision, and not the periodic review of once in five years.

Lalu convicted in fifth fodder scam, sent to judicial custody

Ranchi | Agencies

A special CBI court in Ranchi on Tuesday convicted Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad in the Rs 139.35 crore Doranda treasury scam, the fifth fodder scam case, after which he has been taken into judicial custody. The former Bihar chief minister has filed a plea in the CBI court seeking bail. He said in the plea that if not granted bail, he should be sent to judicial custody in Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) as he is unwell. The quantum of punishment will be announced on February 21. Beside Lalu Prasad, the court has convicted 74 others including former MP Jagadish Sharma, Public Accounts Committee president Dhruv Bhagat in the case while 24 have been acquitted for want of evidence. Thirty-six convicted persons have been sentenced up to three years in jail. Earlier, the former Bihar chief minister was found guilty in four cases related to the Rs 950 crore fodder



scam, and is serving a sentence of 27.5 years of imprisonment. In the fifth case related to the scam, an FIR was lodged in the Doranda police station in 1996 and later the CBI took over the case for investigation. Initially, in case number RC 47 A/96, a total of 170 were accused of corruption, of which 55 have died, seven became witnesses, two confessed to the crime while six are still absconding. During the hearing of the case in the CBI special court, 575 people testified on behalf of prosecution, while 35 from the defendants. The probe agency produced 15 documents in the case. Crores of rupees were illegally withdrawn in the name of transporting animals and arranging fodder for them in Bihar's animal husbandry department. The animals

included bull, buffalo, cow, goat and sheep. The documents submitted by the department regarding the transportation were found to be fake. The vehicle numbers shown in the documents were of scooters, mopeds and motorcycles. The cases occurred during the period of 1990-1996. The Bihar CAG had sent the information about the graft to the government time and again, but the government did not pay heed to it. The CBI produced the documents in the court, which showed that then Chief Minister Lalu Prasad, despite knowing everything, did not take any action. Lalu also held the portfolio of Finance Ministry. Earlier, the former Chief Minister has been to prison six times, but was granted bail by the High Court each time.

RED FORT VIOLENCE ACCUSED DEEP SIDHU DIES IN ROAD ACCIDENT

New Delhi: Punjabi actor Deep Sidhu, who was arrested in connection with the violence at Red Fort during farmers' tractor rally on Republic Day 2021, died in a road crash near the spot near the Delhi border where the farmers held a year-long protest against the three controversial farm laws. He was travelling in a private vehicle along with his friend from the US, when the accident occurred. His body sent for a post-mortem examination to Haryana's Sonapat.



4 killed while clicking selfies on railway track in Gurugram

Gurugram | Agencies

Four youths were killed while they were reportedly clicking selfies on a railway track near the Basai-Dhankot railway station in Gurugram on Tuesday evening, the police said.

The police said that as per an initial probe, it has emerged that the four youths were busy clicking selfies on the tracks when they were hit by a train.

The incident took place at 5.15 pm when the Jan Shatabdi Express, which was going from Sarai Rohilla in Delhi to Ajmer, was crossing the Basai-Dhankot railway



station. The deceased are yet to be identified, the police said. The Government Railway Police (GRP), which is investigating the incident, said all four died on the spot.

"According to people who were present nearby, they had come on a scooter and after parking it near the railway line, they were clicking selfies on their phones when they were hit by the train," a police officer said.

The police said they are trying to trace the families of the victims. The bodies have been sent to the mortuary at the general hospital here for further investigation.

WOMEN WITHOUT HIJAB RISK RAPE IN INDIA COMMENT INTENDED FOR MUSLIM MEN: RSS LEADER

Bengaluru: Karnataka RSS leader Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat provoked a controversy by stating on Tuesday that Congress MLA B.Z. Zameer Ahmad Khan's statement that hijab will prevent Muslim women from getting raped in India is pointed at Muslim men.



"MLA Zameer has spoken about his community. Muslim women wear a burqa inside houses also fearing the action by the males in the family. In Arab countries women wear burqas out of the fear of being raped. Likewise here in India also Muslim women clad in burqa get protection from their own community members," Bhat said. He stated that wearing of saffron shawls by Hindu students is just a reaction. "What has happened in our country is that Hindus are trampled upon so much that there is no reaction for action from them. I appreciate the boys who wore saffron shawls to schools and colleges. They are not trained by RSS, the students are expressing themselves by flaunting saffron shawls," he maintained. The government should not hesitate to initiate action in this regard. It should not have declared holidays for schools and colleges after the hijab row surfaced, he opined.

Andhra Pradesh DGP Gautam Sawang shunted out

Amravati | Agencies

The Andhra Pradesh government on Tuesday shunted out Director General of Police D. Gautam Sawang and appointed Kasireddy V. R. N. Reddy as the new police chief.

Sawang has been directed to report to the General Administration Department for his next posting.

KVRN Reddy, Director General of Police (Intelligence) has been given full additional charge as DGP till further orders.

Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma has issued a Government Order (GO) to this effect.

Belonging to the 1992 batch of the Indian Police Service (IPS), KVRN Reddy has been serving as the Intelligence chief of the state since August 2020.

He had earlier worked in various posts including



Deputy Commissioner of Police in Hyderabad, Vijayawada Railway SP and also as Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam Police Commissioner. He also headed the narcotics control cell.

Sawang's transfer has come as a surprise as he is due to retire in July 2023. The development has raised a few eyebrows in bureaucratic cir-

cles. This comes nearly two weeks after government employees held a huge protest in Vijayawada despite police denying permission and imposing restrictions in the city. Thousands of employees from across the state managed to reach the city for 'Chalo Vijayawada' on February 3. This was seen as a big failure of the police.

Scheme to empower de-notified, nomadic tribes to be rolled out

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The 'Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT' (SEED) for the welfare of de-notified, nomadic and semi nomadic communities will be launched by the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry on Wednesday, an official statement said.

Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar will launch the SEED on February 16 at Dr Ambedkar International Centre here.

In a statement, the ministry said that the de-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes are the most neglected, marginalised and economically and socially deprived communities. "Most of them have been living a life of destitution for generations and still continue to do so with an uncertain and gloomy future. De-notified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes somehow escaped the attention of our developmental framework and thus are deprived of the support unlike Scheduled Castes and Scheduled



Tribes," the ministry said. According to the ministry, a scheme for empowerment of DNT communities have been formulated for families having income from all sources of Rs 2.50

lakh or less per annum and not availing any such benefits from similar scheme of centre government or the state government. The scheme will have four components with an

approximate cost of Rs 200 crore to be spent over a period of five years starting Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26. Component of scheme are to provide coaching of good quality for candidates from the communities to enable them to appear in competitive examinations, to provide health insurance to DNT/NT/SNT communities, as per norms of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, to facilitate livelihoods initiative at community level to build and strengthen small clusters of communities institutions and to provide financial assistance for construction of houses to members of the communities. As per the ministry, historically these communities never had access to private land or home ownership. These tribes used forests and grazing lands for their livelihood and residential use and had strong ecological connections. Many of them are dependent upon various types of natural resources and carve out intricate ecological niches for their survival. The changes in ecology and environment seriously affect their livelihood options.

Sweeper arrested in 87-yr-old Delhi woman's rape case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Police have arrested a 30-year-old man for allegedly raping an 87-year-old woman at her residence in the national capital's Tilak Nagar area.

The police said they have also recovered the stolen mobile phone from the accused, identified as Ankit.

"He was living in a nearby locality and worked as a sweeper," Additional DCP (west district) Prashant Gautam said. The official said soon after the incident, several teams were constituted to nab the accused. As the police examined the CCTV footage around the area they got their first clue about the accused.

"Within 16 hours, we zeroed in on the accused and cracked the case."



the official said. On Monday, the police had formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the incident of alleged rape of the elderly woman in west Delhi.

According to the police, initially a written complaint of theft of a mobile phone from a house in Tilak

Nagar was received from the daughter of a senior citizen on Sunday after which an FIR was registered. However, the complainant on Monday reported that the senior citizen of the house, where the theft took place, was also allegedly raped. "Sexual assault has been further

alleged by the complainant and subsequently, relevant sections of law have been added to the FIR and investigation taken up," the police informed.

Sections 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt) and 376 (punishment for rape) were the latest charges added to the FIR.

Meanwhile, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) also took note of the incident and termed it a "very serious matter". DCW chief Swati Malwal asked the police to submit a copy of the FIR registered in the matter, details of the accused identified and person(s) arrested in the matter; and a detailed action report in the matter.

Considering the gravity of the matter, the police was asked to submit this information by February 17.

'Wife stayed away from matrimonial home': SC dissolves marriage on desertion

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that the wife has not established any reasonable cause to remain away from her matrimonial home as it dissolved the marriage on the ground of desertion.

A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and Abhay S. Oka said that perusal of the wife's evidence does not disclose any effort made by her to resume the matrimonial relationship and she has also not filed a petition for restitution of conjugal rights. It noted the husband was carrying on business at Assam's Tezpur and his wife was working at a college in Guwahati, and they have been staying separately since July 1, 2009.

The bench said on account of the death of the husband's mother, she visited her matrimonial home in December 2009 and stayed there only for one day, which cannot be termed as resumption of cohabitation. "She has not stated that she came to her matrimonial home on December 21, 2009 with the intention to resume cohabitation. The intention on the part of the respondent to resume



cohabitation is not established. Thus, in the facts of the case, the factum of separation has been proved," it held.

Justice Oka, who authored the judgment on behalf of the bench, said: "From the evidence on record, an inference can be drawn that there was animus deserendi on the part of the respondent. She has not pleaded and established any reasonable cause for remaining away from her matrimonial home".



ऐसा चाहूं राज में, मिले सबन को अन्न।
छोट-बड़ा सब संग बसे, रविदास रहे प्रसन्न।।



श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री



श्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान
मुख्यमंत्री

संत शिरोमणि रविदास जयंती

माघ पूर्णिमा के अवसर पर
उन्हें शत-शत नमन

मुख्य अतिथि
श्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान
मुख्यमंत्री

16 फरवरी, 2022
दोपहर 12:00 बजे
संत रविदास मंदिर प्रांगण,
बरखेड़ा पठानी, बी.एच.ई.एल., भोपाल

अध्यक्षता
सुश्री मीना सिंह
मंत्री
जनजातीय कार्य विभाग एवं
अनुसूचित जाति कल्याण विभाग
मध्यप्रदेश शासन

विशिष्ट अतिथि
डॉ. प्रभुराम चौधरी
मंत्री
लोक स्वास्थ्य एवं
परिवार कल्याण विभाग
मध्यप्रदेश शासन

अनुसूचित जाति के विकास हेतु प्रतिबद्ध - मध्यप्रदेश सरकार

अनुसूचित जाति कल्याण विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश

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EDITOR'S SPECS

Jayant Chaudhary: Key factor of UP politics

The battle for Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) president Jayant Chaudhary is almost over with the completion of the first two phases of polling in Uttar Pradesh. The question now is whether Jayant Chaudhary, who is making his first independent foray into electoral politics after the demise of his father Chaudhary Ajit Singh last year, will regain lost ground for the party and emerge as a political force to reckon with. Jayant faces the challenge of carrying forward the legacy, not only of his father, but also grandfather and former Prime Minister, late Chaudhary Charan Singh. The RLD has been on the downslide since 2014 when majority of Jats went with the BJP after the Muzaffarnagar riots. In the past five years, when his father Ajit Singh took a back seat, Jayant has been quietly touring the villages in western UP, meeting Khap leaders and repairing his ties with Jats. The year-long farmers' agitation against the three farm laws, gave RLD a chance to reclaim lost ground. Jayant extended support to the agitation and the farmers, too, did not resent his presence even when other political parties were asked to stay away. Jayant now has the sympathy of Jats after his father's demise and his supporters are enthused over the renewed Jat-Muslim bonhomie to a great extent. The climate has been favourable for the RLD. Jayant, who had lost his Lok Sabha seat to BJP's Hema Malini in 2014 - his party drew a complete blank in these elections. Political analysts feel that RLD could have gained more if it had allied with the BJP but, apparently, Jayant responded to the mood of the farmers and opted for Samajwadi Party for an alliance. Political soothsayers also believe that Jayant Chaudhary could emerge as the proverbial dark horse in state politics if the polls throw up a hung assembly.

WHY UKRAINE IS TESTBED FOR BIG POWER CONTESTATION?

Major General S.b. Asthana

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declares February 16, 2022 as 'Day of Unity' apprehending Russian invasion based on US assessment, after speaking to his American counterpart Joe Biden about Russia's military buildup along Ukraine's borders, with both committing to pursue "diplomacy and deterrence". It comes after inconclusive talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Biden suggesting 'swift and severe costs in case of invasion, as well as Normandy format between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany. USA continues to hype the threat, following it with evacuation of troops and citizens, whereas Russia maintains that it has no intention to invade Ukraine, but draws a red-line for Ukraine not to join NATO. Ukraine stands encircled from three directions by Russian troops with largest military posturing since World War II. Mass concentration of troops in Eastern borders, posturing and joint exercises with Belarus and Russian Black Sea Fleet combat ready with bases at Crimea. Ukraine too, fully aware of its military capacity limitations, is getting combat ready to protect its sovereignty. While the flashpoint may be Ukraine but contestation is of big powers involved directly or indirectly. The outcome of this face-off has global implications not only in Europe, but globally including countries who are outside the region. Diplomacy is trying its best, but failing so far. The geo-strategic location of Ukraine is such that, in the midst of continuing geopolitical maneuverings, it can't help but be the test bed for this Russia-NATO competition. Main Stake Holders and their Stance Russia: In his meeting with former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on February 9, 1990, then US Secretary of State James Baker's famous "not one inch eastward" assurance about NATO expansion was one of a cascade of guarantees about Soviet security provided by Western leaders, but no agreement was signed. Post USSR disintegration in 1991, NATO adopted open door policy allowing erstwhile USSR countries to join NATO, if agreed by all existing members, which was viewed as eastward expansion of NATO and resented by successive leaders, but NATO prevailed. When such eastward expansion, after

adding 14 countries, reached at consideration of Georgia and Ukraine, Putin drew a red-line, failing which Russia would have to face a direct land border with NATO at strategically sensitive area and perhaps deployment of NATO arsenal threatening Russia. It would have also made Russian Black Sea fleet redundant, thus compromising security of Russia. Russia thus reacted with annexation of Georgia, Crimea and posturing Ukraine, after it renewed its effort to join NATO, and is firm that it will not allow Ukraine's entry into NATO at any cost. Ukraine: Ukraine is tensed, but getting ready for confrontation knowing fully well that the recent threat is asymmetric in favour of Russia, if conflict is not prevented by diplomacy. Ukraine has a reason to feel betrayed because in 1994, 'The Memorandum of Security Assurance' was signed at Budapest, in which Russia, US and UK assured that its sovereignty will not be compromised, which was a major factor in Ukraine giving up its nuclear arsenal (Third largest nuclear arsenal in the world at that time) and signed NPT. Now, Russia appears to be threatening its sovereignty, and the United States and the United Kingdom are unwilling to send boots on the ground to protect it. Ukraine is not yet a member of NATO, so NATO and the US are not obligated to defend it. Instead, they are opting for the easy option of assisting Ukraine in building its capacity to fight Russians, with the threat of crippling sanctions on Russia if it invades Ukraine, which haven't been effective in the past. Strategically and geographically, Ukraine finds itself as test bed to gauge Russian resolve against NATO having lost Crimea already, with threat of proxy war from Eastern region, even if it shelves/postpones decision of joining NATO. Ukraine continues with its demand to join NATO as its sovereign decision, although there are many NATO members, who don't want to include it. US: Struggling with loss of face post annexation of Georgia, Crimea and recently botched withdrawal from Afghanistan, losing footprints in most of West Asia, US wants to checkmate Russian aggressive stance by taking up sovereignty issue of Ukraine in terms of freedom to join NATO or otherwise. It however, has no appetite to put boots on ground in Ukraine, but is worried that a westward

expansion of Russia can make some of the existing NATO allies vulnerable and is doing symbolic strengthening of its allies, with hardware support to Ukraine. US is also concerned that if Nord Stream 2 pipeline project succeeds many more NATO allies will be dependent on Russia, which will strategically weaken the declining NATO. It is also a test case for US-Taiwan relationship, which has almost similar equation with slight variation. If it blinks here, it loses psychological edge against China too. The US hype about full scale invasion could also be influenced of lobby of arms dealers to promote sales. European Union (EU): EU members who are NATO allies are trying to put up a joint brave front, but the cracks are visible. EU's 40 percent dependency on Russia is crucial to preserve its energy interest. It may be easy for Biden to say that Russian offensive will be end of Nord Stream 2, but it may not be easy for Germany to second it. The best option for them is diplomacy, which they are trying hard with inconclusive visit of French President Emmanuel Macron and the ongoing visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Ukraine and Russia with no worthwhile success so far. Other Global Players China: Its happiest situation for China, as the face-off has diverted attention of US from China to Europe, to some extent. It can derive pleasure out of awkward position of US, cementing ties with Moscow as never before, at the same time test the appetite of Biden, in case it decides to invade Taiwan. It bears no obligation and can watch from sidelines playing neutral with no cost to bear. India: India has good relations with all affected parties and can remain neutral. No country including Ukraine can criticize India for neutral stance, as most stake-holders held similar position when China violated all CBMs to enter areas, where it was not supposed to and Ladakh standoff continues. Indian concerns will include its diaspora, trade (edible oils, pharmaceutical exports etc) with Ukraine and impact of sanctions on Russia, if announced by Washington. NATO allies and partners in Indo-Pacific like Taiwan, Japan, Australia and South Korea are also watching NATO responses keenly as the situation could replicate itself, should President Xi Jinping

decide to reunify China or assert further in South/East China Sea or Indo-Pacific. Possible Scenarios Full Scale Invasion: Strategically the cost benefit analysis doesn't suggest a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, because NATO, which was already reluctant in admitting Ukraine into NATO has been shaken up adequately not to do so. Having achieved its major aim, annexation will be cost prohibitive in terms of casualties and economic sanctions, forcing NATO to respond directly or indirectly to avoid loss of face, without achieving anything substantial. It will unnecessarily join direct land borders with NATO, which is worse than having Ukraine as a buffer in between. Limited Objective: Russia integrates Donetsk People Republic and Luhansk People Republic, who already treat themselves as republics, to teach Ukraine a lesson and tests NATO reaction. The cost paid by Russia will be lower than full scale invasion, but sanctions, economic cost will be almost the same. It will strengthen Ukraine's case for induction in NATO, with sharp criticism of Russia. Proxy War and De-escalate: There will be no additional gains for Russia. It can be loss of face for Putin with no change in probability of Ukraine's inclusion into NATO. NATO declares non-acceptance of Ukraine as member or Ukraine gives up demand for inclusion in NATO. In this case Putin will come out stronger and it will be loss of face for Joe Biden, loss of credibility of NATO and confidence of its allies in Indo-Pacific. Standoff continues: It may be too costly for Russia and Ukraine in terms of finances. Unlikely beyond a point. Diplomacy Prevails: Both sides provide a face-saver to each other to de-escalate. Best option in global interest. In all scenarios, China benefits immensely from the situation and US doesn't seem to gain much, except some additional arms sale in case of full or limited invasion. (Major General S.B. Asthana is a strategic and security analyst, a veteran Infantry General. He is the Chief Instructor, United Service Institution of India. The views expressed are personal)

international

'RESPONSIBILITY DOESN'T LIE WITH CHINA ON BORDER SITUATION WITH INDIA'

The ins and outs of the situation on the China-India border are very clear and the responsibility does not lie with China, a spokesperson at the Foreign Ministry in Beijing has said.



actions toward Australia. And then separately, he mentioned the clash between India and China on the border had been discussed during Quad meetings. And at that time, he put the blame on China for the ongoing border conflict. "On the China-India boundary issue, it is China's consistent view that both sides jointly safeguard peace and stability in the border area following the agreements already signed. We hope the two sides will keep up communication through military and diplomatic channels to properly resolve remaining boundary issues," the spokesperson said.

Western countries destroyed without a single shot being fired: Russia

As Russia announced that it was withdrawing some troops from the Ukrainian border, the Foreign Ministry in Moscow said Western countries have been "destroyed without a single shot being fired", the BBC reported.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As Russia announced that it was withdrawing some troops from the Ukrainian border, the Foreign Ministry in Moscow said Western countries have been "destroyed without a single shot being fired", the BBC reported. In a Telegram post, Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said: "February 15, 2022 will go into history as the day western war propaganda failed. They have been disgraced and destroyed without a single shot being fired." Units of Russia's Western and Southern Military Districts are heading back to base by rail and by truck at the conclusion of their training, the Russian Defence Ministry said. "Units of the Southern and Western Military Districts, which have accomplished their missions, are boarding trains and trucks and will head for their garrisons later today. Some units will join military convoys and will perform self-propelled marches," Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov was



quoted as saying by the Russian media. Later, the Defence Ministry released a video showing Russian armoured vehicles returning to base from exercises. The video features an off-road march of tanks, as well as tanks, infantry combat vehicles and self-propelled artillery systems being loaded onto a train, according to Russia's Interfax news agency. The Russian ruble has also strengthened against the dollar and euro in response to the news from the Russian military, the BBC reported. "The absence of armed action on the Ukraine border and indications about the willingness to talk seem sufficient to soothe market nerves," said Michael Leister,

S Korea to urge NYC officials to take actions against anti-Asian crimes

The South Korean government plans to formally call on the authorities in New York City to step up actions to counter a surge in crimes there against Asians in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, officials here said Tuesday.

Seoul | Agencies

The South Korean government plans to formally call on the authorities in New York City to step up actions to counter a surge in crimes there against Asians in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, officials here said Tuesday. Chung Byung-hwa, South Korea's Consul General in New York, will meet Edward Mermelstein, New York City's commissioner for international affairs, on Friday to convey concerns over unprovoked attacks on Koreans and those of Korean descent, Yonhap News Agency reported citing a Foreign Ministry official as saying. "(Chung) will deliver the Korean American community's concerns over the surge in anti-Asian crimes and request that the New York



City make proactive efforts to prevent the recurrence of such incidents," the official added. A Korean-American woman was stabbed to death in her Manhattan apartment on Sunday. Last week, a South Korean diplomat with the nation's diplomatic mission to the UN was punched in the face by an unknown assailant near Koreatown, and an investigation is currently underway.

EU trade ministers discuss trade partnerships with AU, US

Trade ministers from the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union (EU) have discussed the bloc's trade policy priorities, and partnerships with the African Union (AU) and the US.

Paris | Agencies

Trade ministers from the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union (EU) have discussed the bloc's trade policy priorities, and partnerships with the African Union (AU) and the US. They also discussed the EU's strategy for multilateral trade issues with Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director-general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They also discussed an urgent reform of the WTO to adapt to the pandemic, and ensure fair competition in global trade. Dombrovskis said increased cooperation is required with countries in need of vaccines. "To address this challenge we need a holistic approach to trade and investment," he added.



Riester, French Minister delegate for foreign trade and economic attractiveness, said during the meeting held in Marseille. The Ministers' first session of talks concerned the French priority during its presidency of the bloc to enhance trade relations between the AU and the EU. This means increased investment and broader trade arrangements, Riester explained. For Valdis Dombrovskis, European

Commissioner for Trade, the upcoming summit between the two continental unions must result in a "new deal" for digital transformation in African economies and free-trade areas. "African countries are key partners for the EU," he added. The Ministers' second session of talks focused on transatlantic trade relations, and preparation for the upcoming meeting of the EU-US Trade and Technology

Council in France in May. Ministers discussed the EU-US partnership, and how both partners should focus on resolving "common vulnerabilities", Riester said. Multilateral trade issues "must be overcome", Riester and Dombrovskis said, via dialogue to ensure fair competition, while also considering environmental sustainability goals. During the meeting, the Ministers discussed the EU's strategy for multilateral trade issues with Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director-general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). They also discussed an urgent reform of the WTO to adapt to the pandemic, and ensure fair competition in global trade. Dombrovskis said increased cooperation is required with countries in need of vaccines. "To address this challenge we need a holistic approach to trade and investment," he added.

Israel PM embarks on historic trip to Bahrain

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has arrived on a historic trip in Bahrain, marking the first-ever visit by a premier of the Jewish state to the Gulf nation.

Jerusalem | Agencies

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has arrived on a historic trip in Bahrain, marking the first-ever visit by a premier of the Jewish state to the Gulf nation. Before departing for Bahrain on Monday, the Prime Minister told reporters that he is scheduled to meet King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa and hold a series of meetings, "the goal of which is to provide content and energy for the peace between the two countries". In a separate statement, the Prime Minister's Office said Bennett and the Crown Prince will also discuss "additional ways to strengthen bilateral ties" and exchange views on "the

importance of peace, advancement and prosperity in the region, and especially the advancement of diplomatic and economic issues, with an emphasis on technology and innovation." Bennett is slated to meet other Bahraini Ministers and representatives of the local Jewish community during the duration of the trip, Xinhua news agency reported. During their meeting on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow last November, the Bahraini Crown Prince invited the Israeli premier for a first official visit. In September 2020, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) agreed to normalise their ties with Israel under US-brokered agreements, known as the Abraham Accords.



CM Expresses Grief over Deaths in Road Accidents

4 KILLED, 15 INJURED AS VAN FALLS INTO SINDH RIVER

Four labourers were killed and 15 others injured after a van in which they were traveling overturned and fell into Sindh river in Shivpuri district on Tuesday.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Four labourers were killed and 15 others injured after a van in which they were traveling overturned and fell into Sindh river in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district on Tuesday.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed profound grief over the death of four workers of West Bengal after a pickup vehicle overturned.

According to the police, the labourers, hailing from West Bengal, were proceeding towards a bridge construction site in Vira village.

The incident occurred at 2 a.m. near Goritla Hirapur village, around 25 km from Shivpuri district headquarters, the police said.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the accident occurred because



the van driver lost control following which the vehicle plunged into the river, the police said.

"Four labourers died and 15 others were injured, some of them seriously," a senior police officer told

reporter over phone.

The labourers had reached Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh) by train on Monday night. From Jhansi, they reached Padora village in Shivpuri by a bus, the police said. Three of the

deceased have been identified as Hamid Mohammed Abdullah, Khahul Ameen and Hakim Mustafa. The injured have been admitted to a hospital. Police said further investigation is underway.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed profound grief over the death of four workers of West Bengal after a pickup vehicle overturned in Kolaras police station area of Shivpuri district and untimely demise of four people of Rajasthan in road accident in Ratlam. Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to the family members to bear this loss. While instructing the Shivpuri district administration for proper treatment of the workers injured in the incident, Chief Minister Chouhan has wished for speedy recovery of the injured.

Datia college bans hijab after VHP women's wing protests against it

► DURGA VAHINI, THE WOMEN'S WING OF VISHVA HINDU PARISHAD (VHP), STAGED A PROTEST AGAINST THE INSTITUTE IN DATIA FOR ALLOWING MUSLIM STUDENTS TO WEAR HEAD-SCARVES ON CAMPUS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A government college in Datia district has banned hijab after members of Durga Vahini, the women's wing of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), staged a protest against the institute for allowing Muslim students to wear headscarves on campus.

The ban comes days after a directive in Karnataka against allowing women wearing hijab in classrooms triggered

protests. The Karnataka high court issued an interim order on Friday barring students from wearing religious attire in classrooms until it decides on the case.

High schools across Karnataka opened on Monday, but Muslim students were forced to remove their hijab amid simmering tensions in the state. "All the admitted students/girls in the college are informed that they will not be allowed to enter the college in clothes belonging to any particular community or other special dress like hijab, etc. All the students should enter this temple of education in a decent dress," said Datia College's principal, DR Rahul, in an order on Monday.

The order followed Durga Vahini's protest after its members spotted two students wearing hijab in the college. The members created a ruckus at the principal's office and demanded action to stop the entry of students wearing hijab.

Durga Vahini district convener Rani Sharma said they were informed that students were going to college wearing hijab and burqa. "When we came here on Monday afternoon, we spotted two students in burqa and hijab. We staged a protest for equality of students."

Rahul said the order was issued for uniformity in the college dress. "Earlier, the students used to come in normal dress but after this (Karnataka) hijab row, a few have started wearing hijab and burqa."

Home minister Narottam Mishra, who is a lawmaker from Datia, said there is no confusion about hijab in Madhya Pradesh. "I request you not to create any confusion about it. I have asked the district collector to inquire into the [college] order."

Last week, a principal forced a Muslim student to write an apology letter for wearing hijab in the college in Satna after some students staged a protest against her dressing.

Grand event will be held on Sant Shiromani Ravidas ji's birth anniversary

State level programme will be held in Barkheda Pathani Bhopal. Chief Minister Chouhan will take part virtually.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A grand function will be held on 16 February 2022 at 12 noon at Sant Ravidas Mandir premises, Barkheda Pathani, Bhopal on the birth anniversary of Sant Shiromani Ravidas ji. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be the chief guest of the programme. He will virtually address the programme. Tribal Affairs and Scheduled Castes Welfare Minister Meena Singh will preside over the programme.

Public Health and Family Welfare Minister Prabhuram Choudhary, former Minister Tribal Affairs and Scheduled Castes Welfare Lalsingh Arya, MLA Goteogaon Kailash Jataw and MLA Krishna Gaur will also attend the programme.

In the state level function, saints will be honored with garlands and darshan-pujan in the temple of Sant Ravidas ji. Acceptance letters will be distributed for skill upgradation of SC trainees, in which there will be wide participation

of the SC category. Successful entrepreneurs will also participate in the programme which will mainly focus on the Scheduled Castes category. Concerned MLAs will participate in the programme to be held at the block headquarters.

Apart from this, members of Antyodaya Samitis, social workers and members of social organizations will also take part. Programmes of Ravidas Jayanti will also be organized in the district, block and village panchayat.

CM PLANTED COCONUT SAPLING IN RESIDENCE PREMISES

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

planted a coconut sapling in the residence premises. Chouhan has been planting saplings every day since the last Narmada Jayanti as part of his resolve. Chief Minister has tweeted - "Coconut plant is of religious and medicinal importance has been planted in the residence premises today. We all must plant trees to protect the environment. I plant saplings every day, I appeal to all of you to plant saplings on auspicious occasions at home." Coconut is considered propitious and auspicious in Indian civilization. Coconut is called 'Shriphal' in Sanskrit, Shri means Lakshmi. Coconut water contains a good amount of electrolytes, which removes fatigue or weakness. One coconut contains about 600 milligrams of potassium.



Winning Clean Establishments of Urban Bodies Honoured

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh has informed that all sections have participated with full enthusiasm in the "Swachh Pratishtan" survey campaign which started from 26th January on Republic Day in the state. By releasing the results of the campaign on Monday, 14 February, among the establishments located in the civic bodies, private and government offices, small and big shops, showrooms, hospitals, clinics, hotels, restaurants, schools etc. were hon-

oured for their excellent performance. MPs, MLAs and public representatives distributed "Swachh Pratishtan" certificates in a dignified felicitation ceremony organised in urban bodies. Singh has informed that a 15 Day "Swachh Pratishtan" survey campaign was conducted in 308 urban bodies of the state to make all the cities garbage free and to fulfill the target of getting 5-star to all municipal corporations and 3-star to other urban bodies in star rating of garbage free cities in the Swachh Survekshan-2022. In this, entries were received from 1827

hotels/restaurants, 1181 health establishments, 1823 schools, 767 hawkers zones, 1458 office establishments and 1159 market establishments. The main objective of the survey in this cleanliness competition was to encourage establishments for sanitation and waste management. In the ceremony, the winning establishments were honoured with "Symbol of Cleanliness" award by the bodies. Apart from this, the selected establishments will also be nominated for state level awards after inspection by the state level team.

Big relief to colonizers, will be able to work in the entire state on single registration

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The urban administration has given a big relief to the colonizers. Now colonizers will be able to do construction work in the entire state on a single registration. Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh on Tuesday launched the online portal for registration. Colonizers will now get relief from registering in different urban bodies. With the entire process becoming online, certificates will be issued within a time limit of 30 days.

Singh said that the online registration process would be simple and will accelerate development of the state. We have also made provisions for regularization of illegal colonies through Madhya Pradesh Municipality Colony Development Rules 2021. This process of improvement will continue. Principal Secretary Manish Singh,



Commissioner Urban Administration and Development Nikunj Srivastava, Additional Commissioner Gajendra Singh, Superintending Engineer Rajiv Goswami, Deputy Director MP State Electronics Development Corporation Vinay Pandey etc. were present.

The facility of application will be available on e-nagar palika portal, MP Urban website and e-service portal. This includes online payment of registration fee, tracking application status, uploading of online documents, online approval process, digitally signed certificates, intimation to the applicant through SMS and WhatsApp, facility to issue certificates through WhatsApp and there will be facility of various reports for monitoring purpose for Directorate. The new integrated registration of colonizers will now be done online at the Directorate level, which will be valid for all municipal bodies.

THRILL OF SKY DIVING NOW IN MADHYA PRADESH TOO: SHUKLA

Bhopal: To experience the thrill of flying like birds in the sky, the golden opportunity of sky diving will now be available in Bhopal and Ujjain. Principal Secretary Tourism and Culture and Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board Shiv Shekhar Shukla informed that a sky diving camp is going to be organized on 1st and 2nd March in Bhopal and 3rd to 6th March in Ujjain in collaboration with Pioneer Flying Academy, Aligarh, for the first time in the state. The camps will be put up near Raja Bhoj Airport in Bhopal and Airstrip in Ujjain. The fee for sky diving will be from 8 am to 6 pm. Those interested can book online at booking.skyhighindia.com or contact on mobile number 98188 90885.

GOVERNOR PATEL WILL INAUGURATE THE 48TH KHAJURAHO DANCE FESTIVAL

Ministers Thakur and Sakhlecha and MP Sharma Will Also Be Present. 48th Khajuraho Dance Festival from February 20 To 26 · National Kalidas Award and State Rupankar Kala Reward Will Be Given · Khajuraho Dance Ceremony Will Be Held Again In The Temple Premises · For the First Time Ever Dil Khol Ke Ghoomo Marathon · Enjoy Tourism Activities Along With Cultural Programmes

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel will inaugurate the 48th 'Khajuraho Dance Festival-2022' at world famous tourist destination Khajuraho in the Amrit Mahotsav being celebrated on the 75th anniversary of independence. Tourism, Culture and Spirituality Minister Usha Thakur, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Om Prakash Sakhlecha and MP Vishnu Dutt Sharma will also be present. Principal Secretary Culture and Tourism Sheo Shekhar Shukla informed that the 48th 'Khajuraho Dance Festival' will be held from February 20 to 26, 2022.

Like last year, this year also it will be the glory of the temple courtyard. It will be an unmatched confluence of devotion of God and dance. Renowned artists of the country and the world will give their dance performances in the dance festival. National Kalidas Award for dance and Madhya Pradesh State Rupankar Kala Reward will also be presented at the ceremony.

In the ceremony, there will be major events like the event centred on cultural landscape of Indian dance-styles and the exhibition of art-travel focused on Kathak- Nepathya, the art exhibition of

other countries of the world including India Art-Mart, dialogue of artists and art scholars- Kalavarta, exhibition focused on art contribution of senior painter Shri Laxminarayan Bhavsar-Pranati, fair of indigenous knowledge and tradition - Hunar and films centered on artists - Chalchitra. Shukla informed that the dance festival is being organised with the joint efforts of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, Archaeological Survey of India and District Administration Chhatrapur along with Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Academy of Culture Department, Madhya Pradesh Sanskriti Parishad. There will also be a 5 km 'Dil Khol Ke Ghoomo' marathon on February 20 for women in the 'Safe Tourism Project for Women' this year. It aims to inculcate a sense of security among women in tourist destinations with the slogan "Hindustan Ke Dil Mein Aap Safe Hain". Shukla informed that Khajuraho dance festival was started in 1975 from the temple premises itself. In the beginning, it was not allowed to be performed in the temple premises only for two-three years, as a result of which this ceremony was performed outside in the ground. It is noteworthy that last year, the Culture Department's attempt

to organise this programme in the temple premises was successful and this year also this function will be held in the temple premises itself. National Kalidas Award for dance will be awarded to Sunayana Hazari Lal for the year 2019-20 and Shanta-VP Dhananjayan for the year 2020-21. Along with this, the State Rupankar Kala Reward will be given for the year 2022 and an exhibition of their works will also be organised. Shukla informed that the state's culture is the mainstay of tourism. Along with enjoying cultural programmes, art lovers will also enjoy tourism. The tourism department has made all necessary arrangements for the tourists to get acquainted with the culture, heritage, traditions, customs and food of the region. On the second day, Odissi by Sujata Mohapatra Bhubaneswar, Bharatanatyam Kathak Samagama by Nirupama Rajendra Bangalore and Kuchipudi group dance by Jayarama Rao and Saathi Delhi will be performed. On the third day of the ceremony, on February 22, Mohiniyattam by Neena Prasad Trivandrum, Bharatanatyam group by Parshwanath Upadhyay Bengaluru and Kathak dance by Tina Tambe Mumbai will be performed. On the fourth day, Kathak by Sonia Parchure Mumbai,

Kathakali-Bharatanatyam by Kalamandalam Sunil and Paris Lakshmi Kottayam Kerala, Kathak by Ragini Nagar New Delhi and Udarata Netuma dance by Danika Aryavansa Sri Lanka will be performed. On the fifth day of the function, Kuchipudi group dance by Vasant Kiran and partner Kadiri Andhra Pradesh, Kathak by Sharvari Zamenis and Partner Pune, Bharatanatyam Group Dance by Sandhya Pooracha and Group will be performed. On the sixth day, 25 February, Kathak by Devika Devendra S Mangalamukhi Jaipur, Odissi group by Rudraksh Foundation Bhubaneswar and Kathak group dance by Nayanika Ghosh and Partners Delhi will be presented. On the last day of Khajuraho dance festival, on February 26, Bharatanatyam-Kathak by Shweta Devendra and Kshama Malviya Bhopal, Manipuri group by Tapasya Impthal and Kathak group dance by Shama Bhat and partner Pune will be presented.

Shukla has cordially invited all art lovers, tourists and general public to be a part of Khajuraho dance festival of international. It is the topmost festival of the country, centred on Indian classical dance styles, which is well known nationally and internationally.

NAAC GRADING WILL ALSO BE MANDATORY FOR PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES: YADAV



Bhopal: Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav has said that in order to enhance the quality of education in the state, now private colleges and universities will also have NAAC grading. Soon a guide-line will be issued for this. Yadav was reviewing the departmental activities on Tuesday. Yadav said that the guidelines have been issued by NAAC that colleges and universities which have completed one academic year will be eligible to apply for Provisional Accreditation Certificate. Till now it was a system that only those institutions which have completed six years could apply for NAAC certification.

Yadav said that soon a Yuva Samvad program would be organized in the hospitality of Chief Minister Shivraj Chouhan. He said that preparations are also being made to make all the 238 colleges of the state multi-faculty in the context of the new education policy. In order to give priority to agriculture in the academic campus, it is necessary to include related subjects like organic farming, horticulture etc. in the curriculum. This year about 75 thousand students have chosen the subject of organic farming. Yadav said that Madhya Pradesh is an agricultural state. With the implementation of the new education policy, the youth will now give a new dimension to the concept of self-reliant Madhya Pradesh by using new modern agricultural techniques.

Yadav held a virtual discussion with the Vice Chancellors of government universities regarding the preparations for the upcoming examinations. He congratulated everyone for successfully conducting the semester examinations offline. Yadav said that online examinations had to be conducted for the last two years due to Corona, but to maintain the quality of education, it is necessary to conduct offline examinations. This is a big responsibility. Yadav said that make complete preparations for the examinations to be held in the month of March. In view of the situation of Corona, prepare to conduct examinations in other government buildings also. He said that changes should be made in the centers of government and private colleges for transparency in examinations. Arrange for invigilators of other colleges also during the examinations.

Additional Chief Secretary Higher Education Shailendra Singh, Commissioner in-charge Sonali Wayangankar and departmental officers were present.



Jaime King in the 'Lights Out'



American actress Jaime King has been signed for the upcoming action movie 'Lights Out', which is currently in production.

Los Angeles | Agencies

The film, a modern gritty action film, brings together the essence of 'Road House' and 'Kickboxer' against the backdrop of the underworld of Los Angeles, reports Variety.

In addition, the film also stars Frank Grillo, Mekhi Phifer and Scott Adkins and features an original screenplay by Garry Charles and Chad Law. As per Variety, filmmaker Christian Sesma has taken the director's chair under the banner of Brandon Burrows of Firebrand.

The Exchange, the world sales agent whose virtual European Film Market line up includes titles like John Cena and Brian Cox's 'The Independent', Kaley Cuoco and Pete Davidson's 'Meet Cute', Justine Bateman's 'Violet' and Aubrey Joseph, Tyrese Gibson and Vivica A. Fox's 'Bosco', will be introducing 'Lights Out' to buyers at the virtual European Film Market.

Amy Schumer, Regina Hall, Wanda Sykes to host Oscars this year



Los Angeles | Agencies

Comic artists Amy Schumer, Regina Hall and Wanda Sykes are in talks to host the 94th Academy Awards, reports Variety.

The producer for the awards, Will Packer, has been in meetings for weeks trying to find the right recipe for Hollywood's biggest night. As per Variety, scenarios that 'Girls Trip' filmmaker Packer had been toy-

ing with included a three-act structure, which would showcase a different pair of emcees every hour.

A laundry list of top talent has met with Packer over the past weeks, including 'Mad Men' star Jon Hamm who exited talks over the weekend, sources told Variety. A formal announcement with regards to the hosts will be done on Good Morning America' on Tuesday (U.S. Pacific Standard Time). Amy

Schumer posted an Instagram slideshow with some of her biggest career highlights, with the ominous caption 'Big fun news comin'. (sic), on Sunday.

Packer, who has been entrusted with injecting the excitement back to the festivities to boost the viewership, has found his best line up in Sykes, Hall and Schumer. Packer has selected an all-female team with broad appeal and comedic chops.



FULL-FRONTAL SCENE WAS THE 'HARDEST THING': EMMA THOMPSON

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Emma Thompson says her naked scene in 'Good Luck to You, Leo Grande' was "the hardest thing" she's ever done.

The Academy Award-winner has admitted she found it challenging getting naked for the camera and highlighted how women have been "brainwashed all our lives to hate our bodies", reports femalefirst.co.uk.

Speaking at a press conference for Berlin's Berlinale Special Gala, she said: "If I stand in front of a mirror, I'm always sort of pulling something, or I'll turn to the side, I'll do something. I can't just stand there. Why would I do that, it's horrifying." But that's the problem, isn't it, that women have been brainwashed all our lives to hate our bodies. That's just the fact. And everything that surrounds us reminds us how imperfect we are, and everything is wrong with us."

Thompson encouraged the audience to "just accept" and "not judge" themselves the next time they see themselves in the nude. Her latest comments on the subject come after the veteran actress recently discussed the "dreadful demands" placed upon women to maintain perfect figures.

She said: "Nothing has changed in the dreadful demands made upon women in the real-world world but also in acting. This thing of having to be thin is still the same as it ever was, and actually in some ways I think it's worse now." Thompson also described plastic surgery as "a form of collective psychosis".

'Friends' LGBT storylines censored in China

The hit US sitcom 'Friends' has been edited on Chinese streaming platforms, including iQiyi and Youku, which have removed all references to Ross Gellers former-wife Carol being lesbian and in a relationship with another woman.

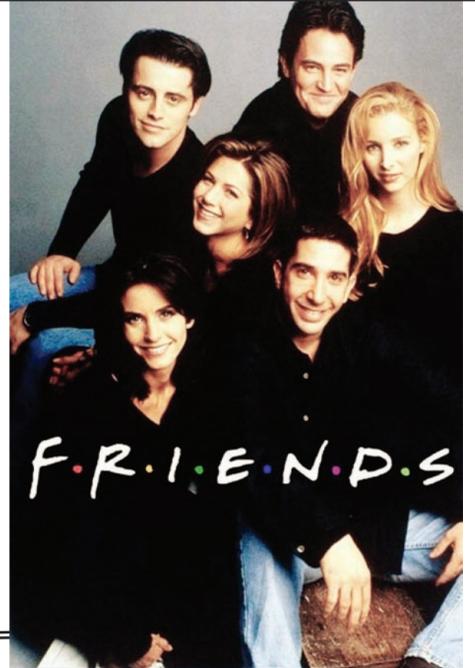
Los Angeles | Agencies

Carol, who was played originally by Anita Barone, before she was replaced by Jane Sibbett, was edited out of her first appearance in the show, including all references to Ross, played by David Schwimmer, getting divorced, the South China Morning Post newspaper reports, according to femalefirst.co.uk.

Meanwhile, a scene that showed Joey, played by Matt LeBlanc and Chandler, played by Matthew Perry, kissing at a New Year's Eve party has also been removed by the streaming platforms.

Fans of the comedy recently took to the Chinese social media site Weibo to voice their opposition to the move, using the hashtag FriendsCensored. However, the hashtag has now been removed from the site, according to CNN. Prior to this release, the unedited version of the sitcom was available between 2012 and 2013 on platforms such as Sohu and iQiyi.

However, in 2016, the Chinese government brought in new guidelines that prohibited TV programmes from featuring gay relationships, along with topics that "exaggerate the dark side of society".



'The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim' set for April 2024 release

The anime feature 'The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim', which is set roughly two centuries before the events of J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings', has secured April 12, 2024 as its release date.

Los Angeles | Agencies

As per Variety, Kenji Kamiyama, whose credits include TV series 'Blade Runner: Black Lotus' and 'Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex', has taken the onus of directing the feature along with 'Blade Runner: Black Lotus' producer Joseph Chou through his anime studio Sola Entertainment.

Philippa Boyens, who was on the Academy award-winning screenwriting team for 'The Lord of the Rings' and 'The Hobbit' trilogies, will join the team as the executive producer for the film which is yet to make announcements with regards to its voice casting.

Boyens' daughter, Phoebe Gittins, and writing partner Arty Papageorgiou are penning the screenplay based on written source material from Jeffrey Addiss and Will Matthews. In addition, the creative team includes Richard Taylor (the Academy Award winner for makeup and visual effects for 'The Lord of the Rings'), Alan Lee (who won an Oscar for art direction for 'LOTR'), along with Tolkien illustrator



John Howe.

Talking about the film's creative army, Philippa Boyens said in a statement accessed by Variety,

"I'm in awe of the creative talent who have come together to bring this epic, heart-pounding story to life, from the mastery of Kenji Kamiyama to a truly



RIHANNA: YOU WILL STILL GET MUSIC FROM ME

Los Angeles: Singing sensation Rihanna has said her pregnancy and impending motherhood won't stop her from releasing new music.

She told 'Entertainment Tonight': "Well, yes You're still going to get music from me."

When jokingly asked if she will release lullabies, she laughed: "Oh my goodness, not a lullaby. My fans would kill me that they waited this long for a lullaby!"

In December, the 'Talk That Talk' singer promised new music is coming "soon, soon, soon", reports femalefirst.co.uk.

In an exchange with a paparazzi, who asked: "Any new music? Anything?", she replied: "Soon soon soon."

Rihanna previously promised her new album will be 'worth the wait', while she has teased fans can expect a "completely different sound".

The 'Rude Boy' hit-maker said she is "always" working on her music and despite fans' pleas for her to share her latest material, she wants to wait until she's completely satisfied.



Julia Fox



IF MEDIA KEEP QUIET FOR A WHILE, KOHLI WILL DO FINE: ROHIT

Kolkata | Agencies

India captain Rohit Sharma on Monday brushed aside concerns over Virat Kohli's form, saying the stylish batter is in "great mental space".

Kohli managed only 26 runs over three ODIs against the West Indies earlier this month. When asked how the captain and head coach Rahul Dravid are going to deal with Kohli's inconsistent form, Rohit said, "I think it all starts with you guys (the media). He is in a great mental space from what I see."

"He knows how to handle pressure. If you guys can keep quiet for a while, I am sure he will be fine," Rohit said on the eve of the T20I series against the West Indies.

It will be interesting to see how Kohli approaches his T20I innings against the West Indies, considering he will play as non-captain for



the first time in the format in over four years.

On Monday, the BCCI announced that Washington Sundar has been ruled out of the T20I series due to a left hamstring muscle strain. Kuldeep Yadav will replace him in the squad.

Rohit Sharma has said that as the IPL mega auction is over, players have been told to focus on playing for India. He added that clarity has been given to all the players and it is up to them on how they want to adapt.

"Whatever has happened has happened, for the next two weeks, now we have to focus on playing for India,

nothing else," said Rohit during a virtual press conference.

"There is no consideration of the IPL here honestly. We will be focusing on the T20 against the West Indies. I know these guys do different roles for their franchises, what we need from them here is important. IPL will happen later, we will take care of it," he said.

India face West Indies in a three-match T20I series, starting Wednesday. India whitewashed the West Indies 3-0 in the ODI series last week and will look to stamp their authority in the T20I series.

India look to continue winning momentum vs West Indies

Kolkata | Agencies

After a clinical performance in the ODIs, Rohit Sharma-led India will look to continue the winning momentum when they lock horns with the West Indies in the first T20I of the three-match series, at Eden Gardens, here on Wednesday.

In comparison to ODIs, the T20I series is expected to be more competitive as the shortest format of the game is arguably the West Indies' strongest suit.

In their most recent T20I outing, West Indies registered a 3-2 series win against England. On the other hand, India are also on a six-match winning streak in the T20 format. After winning against Afghanistan, Scotland and Namibia in the T20 World Cup, India also blanked New Zealand 3-0 at home. There will be some changes in India's ODI set-up, where the likes of Rituraj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, Harshal Patel and Venkatesh Iyer could slot in. Bhuvneshwar Kumar could also return to add some experience to the bowling unit. Washington Sundar though has been ruled out



after suffering a hamstring muscle strain. Though, the most pressing question for India is: who will be Rohit Sharma's opening partner in absence of KL Rahul who also has been ruled out of the series due to injury. The likes of Ishan Kishan, Rituraj Gaikwad and Venkatesh Iyer are the three options, who could open the innings for India. Kishan, who got a hefty deal in the recently concluded IPL mega auction and has opened for India in the past as well,

could be the front-runner for the position. West Indies have some dangerous players in their ranks to challenge the hosts. They also have a plethora of all-rounders - Odean Smith, Akeal Hosen and Jason Holder, who will provide options in bowling and the batting will have depth as well. The two sides last faced off in a T20I series in 2019 which was hosted by India. It was a closely-fought series with India just edging the visitors 2-1.

SQUADS

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Ishan Kishan, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Surya Kumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Chahar, Shardul Thakur, Ravi Bishnoi, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Avesh Khan, Harshal Patel, Rituraj Gaikwad, Deepak Hooda, Kuldeep Yadav and Harpreet Brar.

West Indies: Kieron Pollard (captain), Nicholas Pooran (vice-captain), Fabian Allen, Darren Bravo, Roston Chase, Sheldon Cottrell, Dominic Drakes, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosen, Brandon King, Rovman Powell, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Kyle Mayers, Hayden Walsh Jr.

I WOULD SKIP FRENCH OPEN, WIMBLEDON INSTEAD OF GETTING VACCINATED: NOVAK DJOKOVIC

London: World number one tennis player Novak Djokovic said that he would skip the French Open and Wimbledon this year if they require vaccination against Covid-19. He added that he is still unvaccinated and plans to remain that way, even if it means foregoing major tennis competitions including Grand Slams.



"Missing competitions and foregoing defending titles are the price that I am willing to pay," Djokovic was quoted as saying by BBC. However, he reiterated that he did not want to be lumped in with the anti-vaccine movement and was "never against vaccination."

Djokovic, who has been treated as a hero by the anti-vaccine community after he was denied entry into Australia last month for the Australian Open, said that he is not part of that movement, but thinks people should have the "freedom to choose" what is "appropriate for them." "Everyone has the right to choose, to act, or say whatever they feel is appropriate for them. I think everyone should have, the freedom to choose what you put into your body. And, for me, that is essential," he said. For the 20-time Grand Slam winner, this is a decision that could certainly impede his ability to compete in many of the upcoming tournaments.

Mandhana slides four places in latest ICC rankings, Mithali keeps No.2 spot

Dubai | Agencies

India's WODI skipper Mithali Raj continues to hold on to her No.2 spot behind Australia's Alyssa Healy in the latest ICC ODI Player Rankings for batters released on Tuesday, while top batter Smriti Mandhana has slipped four places and is currently placed eighth.

Mithali Raj with 744 points is second behind Healy, who is just five points ahead of the Indian at 749, while Mandhana with 696 points has been overtaken by England's Tammy Beaumont (No.4), the Australian duo of Meg Lanning (No.5, 706 points) and Beth Mooney (No.6, 705 points), and South Africa's Lizelle Lee (No.7, 702 points).

Among bowlers, Jhulan Goswami has maintained her fourth position with 718 points, with Australia's Jess Jonassen the leader (762



points), while among all-rounders Deepti Sharma is static at fourth spot with 289 points. No.1 all-rounder, Australia's Elysse Perry, is way ahead on 438 points. Meanwhile, New Zealand and Australia stars have made big gains in the ODI rankings after their brilliant showings in their respective series against India and



England. Ahead of the 2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, New Zealand and Australian players have displayed some fine form which bodes well for their respective sides as they amp up the preparation for the tournament. In the ODI batting charts, New Zealand's Amy Satterthwaite has jumped up to the third spot, gaining one

Ramkumar, Tseng ousted as seeds fall by the wayside

Bengaluru | Agencies

Seventh seed and local favourite Ramkumar Ramanathan flattered to deceive and lost in the first round as many fancied players fell by the wayside in the first round of the Bengaluru Open 2 ATP Challenger here on Tuesday. Ramkumar Ramanathan went down to unseeded Frenchman Mathias Bourgue 6-4, 3-6, 2-6. The biggest casualty on Tuesday was defending champion and eighth seed Chun-Hsin Tseng crashing out of the tournament on Tuesday. The in-form Tseng, who had won the Bengaluru Open 1 just a couple of days ago, went down tamely to Greece qualifier Markos Kalovelonis in straight sets 2-6, 2-6 in a match that lasted just 62 minutes. The second set saw both breaking each other's serve in the first two games before the 27-year-old attacked the net often, not allowing Tseng to settle. A total

of five seeded players bit the dust in their opening encounters on Tuesday. While Swiss Antoine Bellier fell fourth seed Federico Gaio of Italy in straight sets, 6-4, 6-3, Andrey Kuznetsov of Russia won a long-fought battle against fifth-seeded Czech Vit Koprivá 6-1, 1-6, 6-3. Runner-up last week Czech Borna Gojo survived a scare against qualifier Dominik Palan before prevailing 4-6, 6-3, 6-4. The only consolation for the Indian camp was the entry of Sidharth Rawat into the last 16 after he went past Mukund Sasikumar 6-4, 6-4 and the doubles pair of Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Purav Raja (IND) who pulled the challenge of Australians Thomas Fancutt and Jason Kubler 6-3, 7-5 to enter the quarterfinals. Meanwhile, Ramkumar India's No. 1 player began with a bang earning a break in the opening game which set the tone for the rest of the set, which he eventually won 6-4.

Brazil, Argentina to replay suspended World Cup qualifier



Rio de Janeiro | Agencies

The suspended World Cup qualifier between South American rivals Brazil and Argentina will be replayed, world football governing body FIFA has said.

The match in Sao Paulo last September was halted shortly after kick-off when Brazilian health officials walked onto the pitch to

object to the participation of four Argentine players for allegedly breaching COVID-19 protocols.

Brazilian health agency Anvisa said Premier League players Emiliano Martinez, Giovanni Lo Celso, Cristian Romero and Emiliano Buendia failed to comply with entry regulations for travellers from the United Kingdom, Xinhua reports. The entity claimed the play-

ers should have been in quarantine because of a rule at the time that applied to foreigners arriving from Britain, South Africa, Northern Ireland and India.

Argentina team officials denied knowingly breaching travel guidelines, arguing that they believed players could travel across South America without restrictions, as they did during the Copa America in June.

India's efforts in vain as Amelia Kerr smashes unbeaten century in 2nd WODI

Queenstown | Agencies

New Zealand all-rounder Amelia Kerr slammed a superb unbeaten century (119 off 135 deliveries) and also grabbed a wicket as the hosts defeated India Women by three wickets in the second One-day International to take a 2-0 lead in the five-match series at the John Davies Oval here on Tuesday.

In one of the most dominating performances by New Zealand Women ahead of the ICC Women's World Cup at home next month, the White Ferns played remarkably to overhaul India's stiff target of 270/6 in 50 overs for the loss of seven wickets and an over to spare. The 21-year-old Amelia Kerr saved the White Ferns from an early collapse, putting on 128 for the fourth wicket with Maddy Green in the middle overs, before guiding the team home with the tail-enders, in a match many predicted India would



win after the tourists posted an imposing total. Earlier, India posted their highest Women's ODI total against New

Zealand, making 270/6 after an amazing start at the top of the order from Sabbhineni Meghana. One of the most aggressive batters in the

world, Shafali Verma (24 off 38 balls), curbed her attacking instinct as Meghana (49 off 50), smashed seven boundaries. She, however, fell agonisingly short of a maiden half-century.

Five bowlers shared the wickets in New Zealand's bowling effort, including Amelia Kerr who chimed in with 1/43 (8) before her batting masterclass. The teams will meet for the third ODI on February 18.

Brief scores :

Brief scores: India Women 270/6 in 50 overs (Sabbhineni Meghana 49, Yastika Bhatia 31, Mithali Raj 66, Richa Ghosh 65) lost to New Zealand 273/7 in 49 overs (Sophie Devine 33, Amelia Kerr 119 not out, Maddy Green 52; Deepti Sharma 4/52) by three wickets.

BCCI ANNOUNCES REVISED SCHEDULE FOR HOME SERIES AGAINST SRI LANKA

Mumbai: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Tuesday announced a change in schedule for the upcoming Sri Lanka tour of India. Sri Lanka will first play the T20I series comprising three matches followed by a two-match Test series, which will be a part of the ICC World Test Championship, 2021-23.



Lucknow will now host the first T20I while the next two will be played in Dharamsala. The first Test will now be held in Mohali from March 4-8 and the second will be played from March 12-16 in Bengaluru.

Revised schedule:

- 1st T20I: February 24, Lucknow
- 2nd T20I: February 26, Dharamsala
- 3rd T20I: February 27, Dharamsala
- 1st Test: March 4-8, Mohali
- 2nd Test (D/N): March 12-16, Bengaluru

England to host India Women for ODIs and T20Is series

London | Agencies

The England Women cricket team will host India in the summer of 2022, with visits to Lord's and the Riverside Ground, and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) confirmed on Tuesday.

After the Commonwealth Games and The Hundred, India will be England's opponent for three T20s and three ODIs, with the summer culminating in an ODI at Lord's on Saturday, September 24.

Before the series with India, South Africa will be the first visitors from June-July, competing in a multi-format series that takes in a Test match, three ODIs and three T20s.

Managing Director of



Women's Cricket, Clare Connor, said, "We're absolutely thrilled to have scheduled two series against two of the best teams in the world, in what is destined to be another hugely exciting year for the women's game." "It's fantastic that we've been able to include Lord's and the Riverside Ground as venues for two of this year's fixtures. They will be exciting

events for the women's game as we continue to try and take our game to as many fans as possible," she said. "With the second year of The Hundred and the unique opportunity of the Commonwealth Games on home soil, we're really looking forward to what 2022 will bring for women's cricket." England Women's home fixtures 2022 against India.

T20I series

Saturday, September 10: England v India (The Riverside Ground, Durham, 7 pm)

Tuesday, September 13: England v India (The Incora County Ground, Derby, 6.30 pm)

Thursday, September 15: England v India (Bristol County Ground, 6.30 pm)

ODI series

Sunday, September 18: England v India (The 1st Central County Ground, Hove, 11 am)

Wednesday, September 21: England v India (The Spitfire Ground, Canterbury, 1 pm)

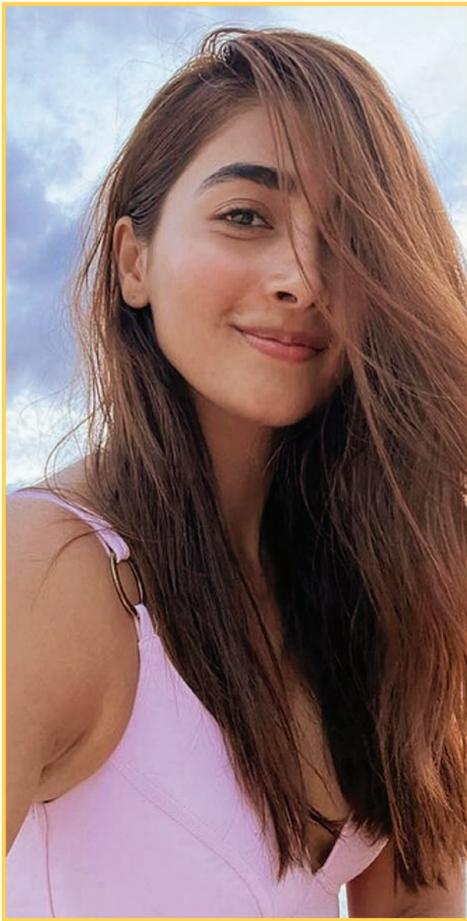
Saturday, September 24: England v India (Lord's, 11 am)

COMMENTATOR ISABELLE VS CRICKETER VANITHA OVER MITHALI RAJ

New Delhi: British commentator and journalist Isabelle Westbury and Indian cricketer VR Vanitha were involved in a war of words on social media over Mithali Raj, following India's three-wicket loss against New Zealand in the second ODI on Tuesday.



India skipper Mithali, who has scored two consecutive half-centuries in the first two matches -- (59 off 73) and 66 not out off 81 balls) was severely criticised by former England cricketer turned commentator Isabelle Westbury, apparently because of her low batting strike. "Mithali Raj is both the best and worst thing about Indian cricket right now," said Isabelle in a tweet. The English journalist's opinion didn't go well with the VR Vanitha and she went berserk on her reply. "There is only the 'BEST' to it. Rather than worrying so much about Indian cricket, it will do you a world of good to worry about England. They were drubbed by the Aussies," tweeted Vanitha, who has played six ODIs and 16 T20Is for India. Thereafter Isabelle replied to the Indian cricketer, saying that she worries a lot about England.



POOJA HEGDE'S EXTRA EFFORTS TO ENSURE HER ROLES IN MOVIES DON'T GET SIDELINED

Hyderabad | Agencies

Being one of the busiest actresses of the south right now, Pooja Hegde is all set for a couple of big releases ahead.

Going back in time, Pooja had stated in one of her older interviews, how she maintains to be in focus, and not get sidelined in movies starring actors whose persona is so much larger than life.

On being quizzed about how Pooja strikes a balance to maintain her glam quotient, and also don't become just the decoration in a film, Pooja said that that confidence comes from within.

"I think it comes from an inner self-belief", as she quotes an instance from the Allu Arjun starrer 'Ala Vaikunthapuramuloo', "People did talk about 'Butta Bomma', and the songs much more than anything else. But, there were a few scenes where I tried to strike a balance, indicating how much importance my role carries, in the story".

"Also, I go an extra mile, and dub for my movies, even though the language is difficult. Now or later, people will recognize me and my efforts", the 'Radhe Shyam' actress had said.

On being asked about her experience working with Prabhas for 'Radhe Shyam', Pooja said, "Prabhas is quite a goofy person, though at first, he looked so shy. I enjoyed time with him and felt comfortable to act alongside him. That is why our chemistry in the movie has come out so well".

Prabhas and Pooja Hegde-starrer 'Radhe Shyam' gears up for its release, while Pooja's appearance alongside Vijay in the movie 'Beast' has raised much buzz as well.

Richa loses 15 kilos, says actors are expected to look a certain way

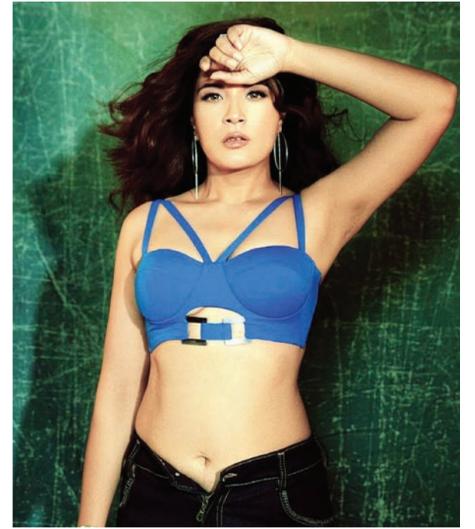
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Richa Chadha has shared a video flaunting her jaw-dropping transformation. The actress has lost 15kgs in just three months.

In the clip she shared, Richa also talked about her body weight and the expectations show business has towards actors.

Richa posted a video on her Instagram handle, where she is heard talking about how she has lost and gained weight but there is better conversation that needs to be made.

In a video montage featuring the actress, Richa is heard saying: "It's never easy being in front of the camera, much less for someone who wants to swim upstream. Be vocal or



woke. The world is going to tell you there's a premium on youth. But that is also for public consumption only, na? Your success, failure, public! Won't matter if you are self-made or self-paid. Everyone has advice. "You've gained weight. You've lost weight." "Yes I've lost weight, I've gained weight. But surely there's better conversation to be made."

The actress added: "You can lose cartilage, health or sanity over what ends up being a terrible film. And all your well-intentioned effort amounts to be a big fat zero. When you are harassed, people will say it's a part of your job. Well, to hell with people. This isn't some before and after montage. It's me. It's my body, ever-changing. No literally, every cell, every scar, everything dies and is reborn, every six months. Why not me? Kaun Rokega (who will stop me)."

RAM CHARAN TO DEBUT IN OTT



Hyderabad | Agencies

'RRR' actor Ram Charan is reportedly being considered for a prestigious project which will be produced by Netflix.

Apparently, Netflix is orchestrating an interesting series, which will be made with a huge budget. As soon as possible, the OTT giant intends to talk with Charan about the web series. Telugu star Ram Charan, who is currently one of the most happening actors in India, is likely to accept the offer, as this venture will launch him into the OTT space, as per sources. Though there is no official confirmation regarding the same, Netflix will announce the project once they officially get Ram Charan on board.

For now, Ram Charan is busy shooting for his upcoming movie 'RC15' under Shankar Shanmugam's direction, while he awaits the release of S.S. Rajamouli's visual wonder 'RRR'.



Udit Shukla: Portraying a positive role is a new experience

Actor Udit Shukla feels playing a positive character is a new challenge for him.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

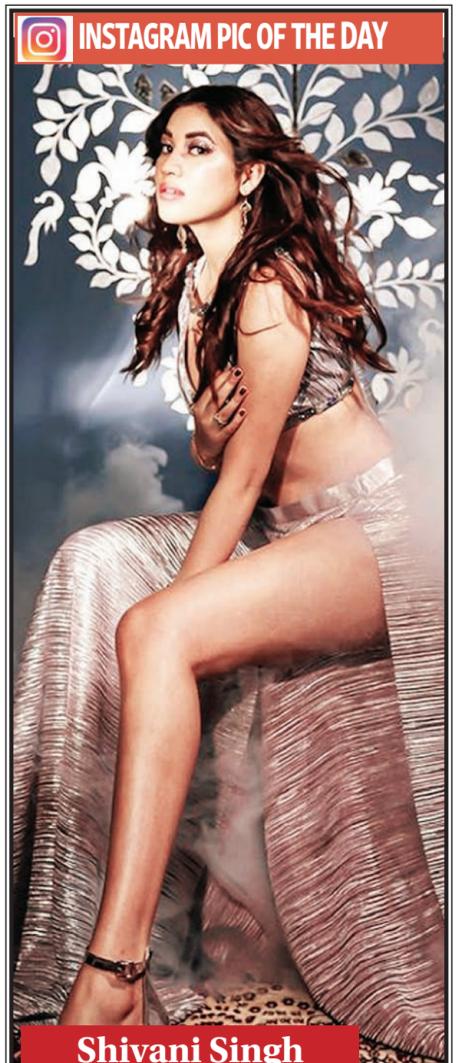
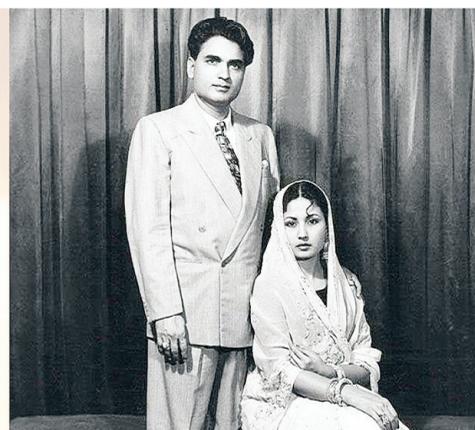
He is seen as Abhishek Pandey in the show 'Rang Jaun Tere Rang Mein'.

The show stars Karam Rajpal and Megha Ray in lead roles.

He says: "Personally I love playing negative roles. Previously I actually acted mostly for negative and grey shaded characters only.

But for the first time I'm playing a very positive role. In a way I'm enjoying it as it is completely new and fresh to me. It's a new challenge in my acting career. As an actor I'm always open to putting myself in such challenges and try essaying something new each time." Udit, says unlike reel life even in his real life he is very much responsible for his family.

Talking about his role he adds: "I'm playing Abhishek Pandey in the show. He is kind of the backbone and is the support system of the family. He handles the family business. In real life too my family looks up to me. I'm natively from Satna, Madhya Pradesh. My parents are there only. But as I work here in Mumbai, I'm settled here with my wife."



Shivani Singh

Meiyang Chang loves to toy around characters with differing shades



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor and singer Meiyang Chang, who is gearing up for the second season of the crime thriller 'Undekhi', recently spoke about the changing arc of his character in the show.

Characters with different shades are something that the actor in him craves for.

Elaborating on the same, Meiyang Chang said, "I love playing characters of differing shades. It's a need and greed for the actor in me. Abhaya is someone who was once on the side of darkness but must put the past behind and atone for his sins."

He also spoke about his experience of shooting with the cast of the series, "I had a lot of fun working with the entire cast of Undekhi; a good mix of seasoned and fresh performers, and an all-round fun-loving gang."

'Undekhi 2' is directed by Ashish R Shukla and produced by Applause Entertainment, stars Surya Sharma, Harsh Chhaya, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Ankur Rathee, and Anchal Singh with Nandish Sandhu and Meiyang Chan

LOVE STORY BETWEEN KAMAL AMROHI AND MEENA KUMARI IN WORKS

Bilal Amrohi, the grandson of the renowned filmmaker Kamal Amrohi, will be working on a fictional series that will portray the love story between Kamal Amrohi and his muse - Meena Kumari that came alive during the sixteen-year journey of the making of 'Pakeezah'.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Talking about the series, Bilal Amrohi said: "It will be a tall order to do justice to the vision of my grandfather. I have heard stories of his tireless perfectionism and how he even drew the set design to the last detail, ensured that the costumes of the stars and each of the supporting actors were perfect, imported chandeliers from

Belgium, and spent lakhs on the exquisite carpets." He further spoke about the colossal budget of the film back in the day, "The film cost almost one-and-a-half-crore rupees at the time of its making but more than the money, 16 years of my grandfather's life was also invested in it." The series will be produced under the banner of Yoodlee Films, the studio production arm of Saregama.