

absolute india

VOL. 5, ISSUE 138, NEW DELHI | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL

NATION

> 02

Modi meets BJP MPs from Guj; discusses strategy...



HOLLYWOOD

> 06

Taylor Swift to receive honorary doctorate from NYU...



SPORTS

> 07

ICC Rankings: Wolvaardt replaces Healy as No 1 batter, Mithali...



LCA Tejas being armed with American JDAM bombing kits

- ▶ THE JOINT DIRECT ATTACK MUNITION (JDAM) IS A GUIDANCE KIT THAT CONVERTS UNGUIDED BOMBS, OR "DUMB BOMBS", INTO ALL-WEATHER PRECISION-GUIDED MUNITIONS. JDAM KITS WILL ENABLE TEJAS FIGHTER JETS TO TAKE OUT ENEMY BUNKERS AND RUNWAYS AT DISTANCES OF 80 KM AND BEYOND.
- ▶ THIS WILL GIVE THE HOMEGROWN AIRCRAFT A FURTHER EDGE OVER THE ADVERSARY FIGHTER JETS AS THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO DESTROY TARGETS FROM STANDOFF DISTANCES.
- ▶ THE JDAM "TAIL KIT" INCLUDES ADJUSTABLE TAIL FINS, A CONTROL COMPUTER, AN INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEM, AND A GPS RECEIVER. THIS SYSTEM WORKS WELL EVEN IN BAD WEATHER BECAUSE IT GETS ALL ITS INFORMATION FROM SATELLITE SIGNALS, WHICH AREN'T BLOCKED BY CLOUDS OR OTHER OBSTACLES.
- ▶ IN THE AIR, THE JDAM'S GPS RECEIVER PROCESSES SIGNALS FROM THE GPS SATELLITES TO KEEP TRACK OF ITS OWN POSITION. AS WITH OTHER SMART BOMBS, THE CONTROL SYSTEM ADJUSTS THE FLIGHT FINS TO "STEER" THE BOMB IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid an ongoing conflict with China along the northern borders, the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas are now being equipped with American Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) precision-guided bombing kits to enhance the capabilities of the Indian Air Force (IAF), according to government sources. The LCA Tejas would be the first fleet to be equipped with

American JDAMs, which is going to be one of the mainstays of the force in the future, an agency quoted the sources as saying. The IAF had recently signed a contract for the JDAM kits. Tejas is a single-engined, light-weight, highly agile, multi-role supersonic fighter. It has been designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in collaboration with the Aircraft Research and Design Centre (ARDC) of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.

CONGRESS IN TALKS WITH PATIDAR LEADER, PK FOR GUJARAT POLLS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress is wooing Naresh Patel, an influential Patidar leader and political strategist Prashant Kishor simultaneously for Gujarat assembly polls which are slated at the end of the year, sources said. Congress leaders in Gujarat feel that Naresh can ensure party's win in crucial Saurashtra region and Prashant Kishor can build narrative and strategy for the party. The state is crucial for both BJP and the Congress as the outcome will be booster for the winner for the general elections of 2024.



house to get the feedback. Patel said the survey committee of SKT is working through its network from district to the village level and is approaching

people to seek their opinion. On the Prashant Kishor front, the sources said that he met Gandhis last week and talked about working with the party, but both sides are tight-lipped on the issue. The issue of availing services of poll strategist Prashant Kishor in the Gujarat Assembly polls was discussed in a meeting of state party leaders with senior leader Rahul Gandhi, on March 24. Since then the back-channel talks have been going on after the initial negotiations failed, but the Congress has denied it. However, the party has taken on board a close aide of Kishor, to work for the party without any condition, as the joining of the political consultant was stalled by Congress leaders because he wanted a major say in ticket distribution.

Petrol prices up again; rise by Rs 4.80 per litre in 8 days

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The domestic retail selling prices of petrol and diesel were increased for the seventh time in eight days on Tuesday. Consequently, in the past eight days, petrol and diesel prices have increased by Rs 4.80 per litre in the national capital. These prices were revised for the very first time on Tuesday, March 22, after a gap of more than four months. On Tuesday, the price of petrol and diesel in New Delhi were increased again by 80 paise and 70 per litre. As per pump prices, petrol now costs Rs 100.21 per litre and diesel Rs 91.47 per litre in the national capital. On Monday, petrol prices were increased to Rs 99.41 per litre and diesel Rs 90.77 per litre in Delhi. In the financial capital Mumbai, prices were hiked to Rs 115.04 per litre for petrol and diesel to Rs 99.25 per litre. Besides, the prices of both the transport fuels were raised in Kolkata. The petrol



prices rose to Rs 109.68 and diesel to Rs 94.62 per litre. In Chennai too, they were increased. Petrol there now costs Rs 105.94 and diesel Rs 96 per litre. Till last Tuesday, fuel prices were steady since November 2021 when the Centre reduced excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 5 and Rs 10 per litre, respectively. The OMCs revise the transportation fuel cost based on various factors such as rupee to US dollar exchange rate, cost of crude oil and demand of fuel amongst others. Resultantly, the final price includes excise duty, value added tax and dealer's commission. It was widely expected that the OMCs will revise the current prices due to high crude oil cost. Lately, crude oil prices have been volatile on fears of tight supplies due to sanctions against Russia. The crude oil price range is a cause of concern for India as it may ultimately add Rs 10-15 in petrol and diesel selling prices. At present, India imports nearly 85 per cent of its crude oil requirements.

HEAT ON E-SCOOTER MAKERS AFTER DEADLY FIRES, GOVT STEPS IN

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The recent tragic incident in Tamil Nadu's Vellore district where a man and his daughter died after their e-bike went up in flames has woken up the government, and the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry has ordered a probe. The government has asked independent experts to find the root cause and submit their findings within a month, according to sources. The government was forced to intervene after two back-to-back fire incidents over the last weekend with the latest e-scooters alarmed the industry stakeholders. First, a blue-coloured Ola S1 Pro e-scooter that was parked on the side of a road in Pune was spotted catching fire. The e-scooter burst



into flames that soon engulfed the entire vehicle. The company said it was investigating the incident. After that, an Okinawa e-bike went up tragically in flames due to an electrical short-circuit in Vellore, which eventually led to two fatalities. As per the police's statement, the user plugged the charger of his bike into an old socket in the entrance to his house and went to sleep. An electrical short circuit led to the e-bike going up in flames. The police stated that the socket might be an old one with less voltage capacity to charge an e-bike. Okinawa Autotech said that they adhere to the highest quality standards in their electric scooters.

Fire at Sariska Tiger Reserve; IAF choppers rushed in

Team Absolute | Jaipur

A fire broke out in Rajasthan's Sariska Tiger Reserve. The Indian Air Force helicopters have to be pressed into service to douse the blaze. The IAF's help was sought as there are several tigers in the part of the forest where the fire is raging. Soon, two army helicopters arrived on Tuesday morning to douse the fire. The choppers are collecting water from Siliserh lake. Officials said that more than 200 people, including the staff and villagers of three ranges of Sariska, Alwar and Dausa, are engaged in dousing the blaze. Help has also been sought from the army. Many villages of Sariska have been evacuated. Officials confirmed that the fire broke out in the hills at Baleta Prithvipura Naka on Sunday. After this, efforts were

being made to control the fire with the help of forest workers and villagers from around 8 p.m. on Sunday. But, till Tuesday, the fire could not be brought under control, however, it spread to Narandi, Rotkya and Baheri on Monday evening. Sariska DFO Sudarshan Sharma said that about 150 hectares of forest has been burnt in the fire. The place where the fire broke out in the Akbarpur range houses a tiger nursery which has around 25 tigers. Meanwhile, defence officials confirmed that IAF is extending assistance in controlling fire spread over large areas in Sariska Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan. "The IAF has deployed two Mi 17 V5 helicopters for Bambi Bucket ops - Operation Underway," tweeted PRO Jaipur, Ministry of Defence.

FAKE CRYPTO MORRIS COIN SCAM OF RS 1,200 CR BUSTED, 1 HELD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday said that they have got custody of one Abdul Gafoor till March 31 in connection with a Prevention of Money Laundering case pertaining to fake Crypto Morris Coin case in which 900 investors were cheated to the tune of Rs 1,200 crore by one K. Nishad and others. Gafoor, the director of Stox Global Brokers Private Limited, based in Malappuram, was arrested on March 24 and produced before a competent court in Kozhikode by the ED which initially remanded him to judicial custody. On Tuesday, the ED said that they have got custodial remand of the accused till March 31.

Nishad, the main accused has reportedly fled the country. Property worth Rs 36.62 crore belonging to Nishad and others were earlier attached by the ED. Gafoor was arrested as Rs 39 crore which was reportedly proceeds of crime was transferred through his firm. The ED has claimed that his firm is basically a shell company. Initially, various FIRs were registered by Kerala police. As per these FIRs the accused allegedly cheated 900 innocent investors to the tune of Rs 1,200 crore. Nishad was the main accused, who cheated several investors by accepting investments, under a Ponzi scheme, through his three Bengaluru based firms -- Long Reach Global, Long Reach Technologies and Morris Trading, by offering high returns of dividend of 3 per cent to 5 per cent per day.

MOSCOW TO CUT MILITARY ACTIVITY NEAR KIEV TO CREATE MUTUAL TRUST

ISTANBUL | Agencies

Russia has "drastically" reduced its military activity near Kiev and Chernigov as talks with Ukraine enter the "practical" stage, the deputy minister of defence Alexander Fomin announced on Tuesday. Speaking to the press following the talks with the Ukrainian delegation, Fomin said that "a decision was made to drastically, in several times, reduce the military activity on the approaches to Kiev and Chernigov." "We expect that relevant

key decisions will be taken in Kiev and the conditions for further normal work will be created," he said, RT reported. Fomin called on Ukraine "to fully abide by the Geneva Conventions, including with regard to the humane treatment of prisoners of war." He explained that this decision was taken due to the fact that "negotiations on the preparation of an agreement on the neutrality and non-nuclear status of Ukraine, as well as on the provision of security guarantees to Ukraine" are entering "the practical phase."

ASSAM, MEGHALAYA SIGN "HISTORIC" AGREEMENT TO SOLVE 50-YEAR-OLD DISPUTE

▶ Describing as the historic day for the northeast, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that this will usher in a new era of peace, harmony and progress in both the states.

▶ The Assam and Meghalaya governments had come up with a draft resolution to resolve the border disputes in six of 12 regions along their state boundaries. Assam and Meghalaya share 885 km long border. ▶ The agreement aims to resolve differences in six "areas of differences", that comprise nearly 70 per cent of the total boundary.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Assam and Meghalaya on Tuesday signed an accord to resolve the 50-year-old boundary dispute when Chief Ministers Himanta Biswa Sarma and Conrad Sangma signed an agreement in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the chief secretaries of the two states and other officials of the Home Ministry. This accord paved the way for resolving the interstate boundary disputes at



six places out of 12 which comprise 70 per cent of the boundary, he added. "In 2019, there was an agreement between the

Bodo Accord was signed on January 27, 2020, ending the 50-year-old problem without disturbing Assam's geographical entity format and without disturbing its original character. Then, the Karbi Anglong agreement was reached in September, 2021 and today this agreement and about 70 per cent of the border between the two States has become dispute-free," Shah further said. He said the development of the northeast is not possible unless disputes between states are resolved and armed

groups do not surrender. He thanked the Chief Ministers and officials of both the states on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Central Government. Speaking about the pact, Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma said: "Of the 12 areas of difference, we have come to an agreement with Assam on six areas. Further, a survey will be done by the Survey of India with both states' involvement, and when that's done, the actual demarcation will take place."



'INDIA SEEN AS LEADER IN HEALTH SECTOR FOR ITS COVID HANDLING'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said other countries of the world look at India as a leader in the health sector after "we handled the Covid-19 pandemic so efficiently under the leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

In response to a question on the development of healthcare facilities in the country, the Health Minister said the Central and the state governments need to work together in the health sector.

Replying to another query on states receiving more authority to deal with disease outbreaks, the Health Minister said the House that even though Health was a state subject, there was no gap in between the Centre and the states while tackling issues in the health sector.

Answering a question of Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien who asked questions about the medical bills of ex-servicemen, Mandaviya said that the government is commit-



ted towards the welfare of the ex-servicemen and always ready to provide services to those with Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) cards.

He also said that earlier the CGHS facility was provided to 75 cities in the country which has increased to 81

cities now.

Responding to the question of Samajwadi Party Member Rewati Raman Singh, the Minister of State, Health, Bharati Pawar said that altogether, 22 All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) are being set up in the country.

Out of 10 proposed in the first phase, six have started functioning with all departments.

"Over 15,000 patients are being examined at these six AIIMS, over seven thousand major and minor surgeries have been doing in these AIIMS while the OPD facility in another 10 AIIMS will start soon", Pawar said. Replying to the question of DMK MP T Siva about the new AIIMS proposed in Tamil Nadu, she told the House that the site has been earmarked in Madurai.

"This AIIMS is being built with the funding from Japan International Cooperation Agency and the appointment of the Project Management Consultant has also been appointed."

She said that the land for AIIMS in Darbhanga has been finalised by the state government and the work on the building will start soon.

Modi meets BJP MPs from Guj; discusses strategy for assembly polls

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held a meeting with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs from Gujarat to discuss the party's strategy for the year-end assembly polls.

All Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha MPs from Gujarat attended the meeting held at the Prime Minister's official residence in the national capital.

BJP chief JP Nadda, Home Minister and Lok Sabha member from Gujarat Amit Shah, BJP national general secretary (organisation) BL Santhosh and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi were also present in the meeting.

Sources said the Prime Minister asked the MPs to reach out to the people with the government development and welfare measures.

"PM Modi told all the MPs present in the meeting to tell people about the public welfare schemes of the Central government to each and every village of Gujarat. The party has decided to contest



the election on a development agenda," sources said.

It was learnt that MPs were told to use social media to explain to the people about the government's work.

"We are asked to make a short video and share it with each voter through WhatsApp group. The video will tell about the work of the Union and the state government. The MPs will also be asked to highlight their own work for their parliamentary constituency," a BJP MP said. This was the

second meeting of the BJP MPs from Gujarat with Prime Minister Modi in a week. On March 24, Modi had met BJP MPs from Gujarat. In the last meeting, the Prime Minister asked the BJP MPs about their work in the parliamentary constituency and discussed issues related to the state. "PM Modi asked about the work we are doing in our area and advised us to work for the people," an MP from Gujarat had said after the meeting held last week.

Yogi govt withdraws decision to post women as PS to ministers

Lucknow | Agencies

The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has withdrawn its decision to post women employees as private secretaries (PS), assistant PS, review officers (RO), and assistant ROs with the newly-appointed ministers.

The decision to recall women employees from these posts comes after protests from women employees who said they were "uncomfortable" working at odd hours as personal secretaries to ministers and also travelling with them.

The Chief Minister had earlier approved a new system where the selection of the staff had been digitised and ministers were asked to choose from a list of candidates randomly sorted through a computer lottery undertaken by the Secretariat Administration Department. Also, no support staff which had worked with any minister in the past five years was retained in the new list. This step was taken to increase



participation of women in governance and general administrative work, with 20 per cent planned to be deputed as PS, assistant PS, ROs, and assistant ROs with the new ministers.

This decision had already made several ministers uncomfortable since they are not used to working with women staff because of "practical reasons" like "late night working and travelling".

FIR against woman tout, 11 persons for gang rape of minor Patna girl

Patna | Agencies

The Patna police have registered an FIR against 11 unidentified persons for allegedly gang raping a 17-year-old girl in Faridabad, an official said.

The victim is a native of Patna's Rajiv Nagar locality. She alleged that the woman landlord of her friend was involved in the flesh trade in Patna and was having interstate links.

The victim along with her minor sister came in contact with the woman named Priyanka Devi in February this year. The accused told them that she knew a saint in Faridabad in Haryana who could perform rituals to make them wealthy.

"The victims came under the



influence of Priyanka Devi and reached Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay railway station

(Mughalsarai) where a youth met them. They were taken to Varanasi and then boarded another train

bound for Delhi. The victims were then taken to a house in Faridabad city," as per the FIR.

"There were 10 more persons present in the house of the alleged saint. The victim was asked to sit for a Puja. As the victim's sister was menstruating, they had not included her in the Puja. and asked her to stay outside. The sister became suspicious and fled from the house. The victim was still inside the room and was given prasad to eat. As soon as she ate the prasad, she went into a semi-conscious state. Following that the so-called seer and 10 men gang raped her. After committing the crime, they removed the clothes of the victim, put bundles of currency notes alongside her and made a video clip," the FIR stated.

PROTESTING WORKERS BURN, DAMAGE BUSES IN MANESAR

Gurugram | Agencies

Tension prevailed after hundreds of protesting workers broke the windshield and window panes of two buses of their company (JNS Instruments Limited) and set a bus on fire on Tuesday evening at IMT Manesar, Gurugram.

No one was, however, hurt in the incident, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Manesar), Manbir Singh told IANS: "The company had transferred several employees to another unit located in Bhiwadi (Rajasthan) in November but the protesting employees do not want to go there. Since then, they are protesting out-



side the company and on Tuesday, they damaged two

buses of their company and set a bus on fire."

He said the workers were transferred as per the rules

but they had tried to disrupt the company operations on Tuesday. "We have arrested some employees and tried to identify others for further legal proceedings," Singh said. Inspector Subhash, Station House Officer (SHO), IMT Manesar, told IANS: "We are in the process of registering a case against employees. Also, we are questioning the arrested employees about the incident. The situation in the area is in control, and no one will be allowed to disrupt law and order in the area." Pawan Yadav, President of IMT Industrial Association, said: "Section 144 of the CrPc was imposed on the company on Tuesday and despite that, the employees were protesting.

FOUR HELD FOR KILLING MUSLIM YOUTH IN UP'S KUSHINAGAR; SHO REMOVED

Kushinagar(UP) | Agencies

Four persons have been arrested from Kushinagar district for allegedly killing a Muslim youth, who was celebrating BJP's victory in the recently-concluded state Assembly elections.

Gorakhpur Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) J.Ravinder Gaud, who met the family of the deceased Babar Ali, and assured them of police protection, told reporters on Tuesday that: "Four accused have been arrested but the family is naming another accused. We will probe this further and provide protection to the family."

Gaud further said that state house officer (SHO) D.K. Singh of Ramkola police station Police Station in charge has been removed and sent to lines. Babar had suffered serious injuries in the attack on him on March 20 and died during treatment on March 25.



Sub-Divisional Magistrate Varun Kumar Pandey said that no action was taken, despite the victim complaining about death threats.

"We were informed that the victim had complained about death threats, but no action was taken then. An FIR has been registered," he said.

The accused and the victim both were from the same community.

Hero MotoCorp to raise prices from April 5

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Two-wheeler major Hero MotoCorp on Tuesday announced it will make an upward revision in the ex-show-room prices of its motorcycles and scooters, with effect from April 5.

According to the company, the upward revision has been necessitated to partially offset the impact of increasing commodity prices.

"The price revision will be up to Rs 2,000 and the exact quantum of increase will be subject to specific model and the market," the company said in a statement.

On Saturday, automaker Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) said it will realign the prices of its models, by up to 4 per cent effective from April 1. The company said this hike has resulted due to the rising input cost, including that of raw materials.

"As a committed and customer-centric company, TKM has made all conscious efforts to minimise the impact of rising costs on consumers," a TKM spokesperson has said in a statement. Luxury automobile manufacturer BMW India said it will increase prices by up to 3.5 per cent across its model range effective from April 1. The



price increase will be brought into effect to adjust the material and logistics costs, impact of current geo-political situation and exchange rates, the company had said. Earlier, another luxury carmaker, Mercedes-Benz India had announced an upward revision in price of its entire model range effective from April 1. As per Mercedes-Benz India, the imminent price correction would be in the range of 3 per cent across the entire model range. It said that the constant increase in input prices in addition to an increase in logistics rates have been exerting significant pressure on the overall costs of the company.

Delhi Police's Special Cell strikes in five states, apprehends 12 dreaded criminals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi Police's Special Cell, in a major interstate operation, nabbed 12 dreaded criminals involved in multiple heinous crimes, an official said on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Cell, Manishi Chandra said with this major operation, the police have crippled the Lucky Patial-Bambha-Kaushal alliance, which has been behind sensational organised crimes in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Chandigarh, apart from having significant footprints in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.

The arrested included Sajjan alias Bholu, 37, who carries a reward of Rs 1 lakh from Gurugram police and Rs 50,000 from Faridabad police.

According to the DCP, Sajjan has killed Congress leader Vikas Choudhary in Faridabad in June 2019, and then Youth Akali Dal leader and former Student Organisation of India (SOI) President Vikramjeet Singh alias Vicky Midhu



Khera in Punjab's Mohali in August 2021. Arrested Ajay alias Sunny alias Lefty, 20, a resident of Haryana's Kurukshetra, was identified as an associate of jailed gangster Bhuppi Rana and also involved in Khera's murder as well as another murder in Himachal Pradesh's Baddi.

Another arrested criminal, Tekchand, 30, had a reward of Rs 50,000 from police UP's GTB Nagar, Rs 25,000 from Haryana's Palwal and Rs 5,000 from Rajasthan's Bhiwadi, and is allegedly involved in a sensational double murder case of Ajnara Le Garden in Noida wherein a mem-

ber of a political family of Faridabad was killed. In another murder committed by him in UP's Bulandshahr in March 2021, a UP Police constable had also suffered gunshot injuries.

The other criminals include Dayachand alias Dealer, 30, resident of Haryana's Palwal, was carrying a reward of Rs 50,000 from UP's GTB Nagar police, Rs 25,000 from Palwal police and Rs 5,000 from Bhiwadi police, Kailash Dagar, 29, a resident of Palwal, and on the run for two years, Rahul alias Sadhu, 24, a resident of Gurugram, Sachin alias Gachnu, 25, a resident of Gurugram,

allegedly involved in cases of firing for extortion committed in Hari Nagar, Delhi and later in Vasant Kunj, Saurabh Mishra alias Mogli, 23, a resident of Gurugram, and on the run for one year. The remaining arrested criminals were Kavinder alias Shakti Rana, 22, a logistics backbone of the alliance, supplying weapons, shelter, vehicles etc. for the killers involved in a string of heinous cases across multiple states, and closely associated with gangster Devender Bambha, killed in a police encounter, Sandeep Dagar, 24, of Palwal, wanted in two cases and Gulshan, 26, a resident of Palwal. DCP Chandra said per preliminary interrogations, the role of arrested accused Sachin alias Gachnu in the sensational murder of Kabaddi player Sandeep Singh Sidhhu has emerged. The same is being further verified and identities of others involved with him are being withheld for operational reasons. He said that states concerned are being informed of the arrests. Further investigation is in progress, he added



Modi participates in 'grih pravesham' of 5.21L beneficiaries

PM MODI USHERS NEW DAWN IN THE LIVES OF THE POOR: CM

► PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI ON TUESDAY VIRTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN THE 'GRIH PRAVESHAM' OF ABOUT 5.21 LAKH BENEFICIARIES UNDER PMAY-G (PRADHANMANTRI AAWAS YOJANAN- GRAMIN) IN MADHYA PRADESH.



PM Aawas Yojana is not just a number to count, but a proof that poor people who are unable to build a pucca house, have lived their dream. It is also the determination of the BJP's government's endeavour to make the life of poor people better. Congratulations to all who have received their homes under PM Aawas Yojana in Madhya Pradesh," the Prime Minister said. Meanwhile, he also said that the previous government had only constructed a few lakh houses; on the other hand his government had provided more than 2.5 crore built houses so far. The Prime Minister was addressing the gathering via video conferencing from New Delhi, while the state government has organised a special event for this purpose in Chhatrapur district in the state. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also attended the programme. A large gathering was at the function, which saw some traditional celebrations with conch, lamp, flowers and rangoli being organised in new houses. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that PM Modi is the messiah of the poor. The Prime Minister who brought a new dawn in the lives of the poor, has conducted griha pravesh of five lakh twenty five thousand beneficiaries of the state today. A provision of Rs 10 thousand crore has been made in the next year's budget in Madhya Pradesh to ensure that all the poor

Modi said that his government has targeted to build 80 lakh houses under the PM Aawas Yojana in the current financial year and so far, Rs 2.25 lakh crore have been spent for this purpose. He said of the total houses allotted so far in the country, around two crore are women owners, which will help families to access the benefits of other schemes of the state and the Centre. "This 5.21 lakh houses provided under

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday virtually participated in the 'grih pravesham' of about 5.21 lakh beneficiaries under PMAY-G (Pradhanmantri Aawas Yojanan- gramin) in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also attended the programme.

Launching the ambitious project of his government in the state, the Prime Minister congratulated the beneficiaries saying that more than 24 lakh houses have been built so far in Madhya Pradesh. Modi said his government has set a target to provide pucca houses to each eligible beneficiary by 2024.

10 of family sentenced to life imprisonment for murder

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 4,000 each on the 10 accused

Team Absolute | Morena

A court in Morena district has sentenced 10 members of a family to life imprisonment for killing a man over a dispute 12 years ago.

The second additional judge of a court in Joura town on Monday convicted the accused of charges under relevant sections of the IPC and sentenced them to life imprisonment, a prosecution official said.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 4,000 each on the 10 accused, he said. The

accused had a long-standing dispute with the victim Shivkumar of Tikrouli village. On November 3, 2010, the victim was coming back from a shop when the accused armed with various weapons surrounded him. One of the accused Manoj Gurjar shot the victim from a close range, causing grievous injuries and fled the spot, additional public prosecutor Anil Agrawal said. The victim succumbed to his injuries during treatment and a case of murder was subsequently registered against Gurjar and his family members, he said.

CM EXPRESSED RESPECT TO DR. NARENDRA PRASAD MISHRA

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed his respect to Dr. Mishra for being awarded the Padma Shri award posthumously by the President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan to the late Dr. Narendra Prasad Mishra of Bhopal for medical treatment. Chouhan said that Late Dr. Mishra was a wonderful doctor. He was a great human being. He served as Dean, Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal. He had an illustrious academic record with innumerable medals and awards for excellence in his field. It is worth mentioning that Sunil Mishra, son of Late Dr. Narendra Prasad Mishra received Padma Shri award from President Shri Kovind in the honour ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday.

CHRISTIAN SOCIETY ACKNOWLEDGES GRATITUDE OF CHIEF MINISTER



Bhopal: Representatives of MP Episcopal Council led by Archbishop AAS Durairaj SVD President Bhopal Catholic Mission met Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at the residence office today. The Archbishops of Indore, Bhopal and Ujjain presented a citation and a rose plant to Chouhan. Chief Minister Chouhan appreciated the activities carried out by the Council for the prosperity and welfare of the state. The council praised the activities conducted for education, health, environment, public welfare and development in the state under the leadership of Chief Minister Chouhan. On behalf of the Christian society of the state, the council thanked Chouhan for taking elders to pilgrimage places like Velankani under the Teerth-Darshan Yojna and for conducting public welfare activities by taking all the communities along while promoting harmony.

CM EXPRESSES GRIEF OVER CHHATARPUR ROAD ACCIDENT

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed profound grief over the untimely demise of four members of the same family of Chhatrapur district in a road accident who were returning after having darshan from Banaras, Uttar Pradesh. Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to the family members to bear this loss.

BHOPAL SIZZLES AT 40-DEGREE CELSIUS

► THE CITY OF LAKES, BHOPAL, ON MONDAY WITNESSED SCORCHING HEAT WITH DAY TEMPERATURE AT AROUND 40-DEGREE CELSIUS (39.8) AGAINST 38.7-DEGREE CELSIUS RECORDED ON SUNDAY.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The City of Lakes, Bhopal, on Monday witnessed scorching heat with day temperature at around 40-degree Celsius (39.8) against 38.7-degree Celsius recorded on Sunday.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bhopal would witness 2-3-degree rise in temperature in the next few days. It has predicted that the day

temperature in most parts of the state would be 41-44-degree Celsius.

The Met officials in Bhopal office said the city's temperature is likely to cross the 40-degree mark by the end of this week. Day temperature in almost the entire state touched 40-degree Celsius on Monday, while in some other parts it crossed the 43-degree Celsius mark, according to data shared by the Met department's regional office Bhopal on Monday evening. As per the Met department, Khargone district was the hottest in the state with maximum temperature at 43.3-degree Celsius, followed by Narmadapuram at 42.3, Kanhwa 42.1, Damoh 41, Nowgaon 41, Rajgarh 41, Ratlam 41, Khajuraho 40.8, Gwalior 40.6, Guna 40.4 and Shajapur 40. The Met department has predicted that there would be no relief from the scorching heat and extreme heat-wave conditions are likely to persist for the next few days.

MPSIC ISSUES ARREST WARRANT TO ERRATIC PIO

► THE WARRANT HAS BEEN ISSUED AGAINST SURBHI DUBEY, BLOCK PANCHAYAT OFFICER AT REWA JANPAD PANCHAYAT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, JANPAD PANCHAYAT, REWA AND RAIPUR KALCHIRYA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh State Information Commission (MPSIC) has issued an arrest warrant against a Public Information Officer in Rewa district after the defendant officer jumped all 38 summons issued by the Commission over the past four months while showing continued non-compliance with orders of the Commission.

The warrant has been issued against Surbhi Dubey, Block Panchayat Officer

at Rewa Janpad Panchayat and Public Information Officer, Janpad Panchayat, Rewa and Raipur Kalchirya.

The order was passed on March 25 in the case but a detailed order was issued by the Commission on March 28.

This is the second time in the history of Madhya Pradesh, that Information Commissioner Rahul Singh had issued the arrest warrant. Earlier Singh had issued the arrest warrant against a District Chief Medical and Health Officer after he had shown a blatant disregard for the orders of the Commission over two years.

The issue relates to as many as six RTI applications filed at Janpad Panchayat Rewa and Janpad Panchayat Raipur Karculiyan of Rewa district of the State. In both the Janpad Panchayats, Dubey has been designated as the Public Information Officer. All these six appeals were filed by four different RTI Applicants. Dubey did nothing to make information available to RTI applicants within 30 days as mandated under sec-

tion 7 (1) of the RTI Act.

The Commission in its subsequent orders had asked the PIO to provide information to RTI applicants. Over the past four months, the Commission has issued 38 summons, but Dubey showed continued flagrant indifference and non-compliance with SIC's orders. The Commission issued a show-cause notice of penalty of Rs 25,000 against Dubey in all six appeals. Despite 38 the summons, show cause notices under section 20 and repeated reminders, the officer remained defiant and refused to provide information and appear before the SIC.

Singh in his order said that due to the defiant approach of Surbhi Dubey, the entire mechanism of the RTI Act has been badly affected in both the Janpad Panchayats where the officer is serving as PIO. The SIC had asked the Commissioner, Department of Panchayat and Rural development to replace Surbhi Dubey from the post of PIO and appoint another one under section 19 (8) of the RTI Act.

LANDLORD THREATENS TENANT, 'REMOVE PM MODI'S PHOTO OR VACATE RESIDENCE'

In the visuals accessed from Yusuf's room, an image of PM Modi can be seen put up on the wall next to Sardar Vallabhai Patel's poster.

Team Absolute | Indore

In a bizarre incident from Indore, a tenant has filed a complaint alleging that his landlord was forcing him to remove the photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his room. According to the tenant named Yusuf, he was being harassed and threatened by his landlords to either take down PM Modi's photograph from the wall or vacate the residence.

In the visuals accessed from Yusuf's room, an image of PM Modi can be seen put up on the wall next to Sardar Vallabhai Patel's poster. Speaking to the media, the tenant said, "I respect PM Modi's ideas, and I walk in his footsteps, which is why this controversy has erupted."

After the tenant received the ultimatum from his

landlords, he approached the Madhya Pradesh police to file a complaint against the owners of the house in the matter. An official complaint has been lodged against three persons including his landlord Sharif, Yakub, and Sultan Mansoori.

Officials have launched an inquiry into the matter and have promised necessary action. They have also affirmed that Yusuf had the freedom to put up the poster of the Prime Minister in his house.

"Today, a case was filed where a man complained that his landlord is troubling him since he has put up a picture of PM Modi in his house. He has the freedom to put it up, and we will take necessary action," said a police officer from Madhya Pradesh. More details are awaited.

Man accused of sexually abusing minor killed by victim's father

A man accused of sexually abusing a minor was allegedly killed by the victim's father and uncle. The man's body was cut into pieces and thrown into a river.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A man accused of sexually abusing a minor girl was killed and his body cut into pieces and thrown into a river in Khandwa district. According to a report by PTI, the police said the man was killed by the victim's father and maternal uncle.

The man's dismembered body was found floating in Ajnal river on Sunday.

According to Superintendent of Police Vivek Singh, the river is about 40 kms from the district headquarters. Pictures of the body started circulating on social media after which the deceased was identified as 55-year-old Trilokchand from Saktapur village in Madhya Pradesh.

Sub Divisional Officer Rakesh Pendro said that a probe into the deceased's background revealed that he had

allegedly sexually abused a 14-year-old girl. The girl's father and maternal uncle took Trilokchand on their motorcycle to Ajnal river on Saturday, beheaded him and cut the torso into two parts with a tool used to cut fish.

The police said the two accused have been arrested and the involvement of others is being investigated adding that the deceased and accused are relatives.

CM PLANTED SAPLINGS OF CASSIA AND KADAMBA

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday planted saplings of Cassia and Kadamba in Smart City Park. Along with Chouhan, Anmol Biharia and Chitranshu Sen of Nature Nest also planted saplings.



The organisation is working for the animals and plants for the last 10 years. In view of environmental protection, about one thousand saplings have been planted at different places. The centre for street animals is also being operated by the organisation in which arrangements for medical, food and shelter are being made with their own expense for the animals like cows, dogs etc. roaming on the streets. Food is arranged for more than a hundred dogs every day. Besides, the members of the organisation are educating the children in different settlements and encouraging them to go to school. The bark and leaves of Cassia planted today are used in making Ayurvedic medicines. Kadamba is famous for its medicinal properties in Ayurveda. Its flowers have special significance. The fragrant flowers of Kadamba are mentioned in ancient Vedas and compositions.

Scam-tainted Vyapam's name changed twice in 7 yrs but allegations continue

■ Shivraj Singh Chouhan-led Madhya Pradesh government has changed the scam-tainted Vyapam's name twice in the last seven years, now known as the Staff Selection Board. However, allegations of scams are refusing to die down and the department is in the news again for alleged leak of Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper and the irregularities in police constable recruitment exam.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Shivraj Singh Chouhan-led Madhya Pradesh government has changed the scam-tainted Vyapam's name twice in the last seven years, now known as the Staff Selection Board. However, allegations of scams

are refusing to die down and the department is in the news again for alleged leak of Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper and the irregularities in police constable recruitment exam.

This time the accusation was made against Chief Minister's OSD Laxman Singh Markam by Vyapam whistleblower Anand Rai and the state Congress General Secretary (media) KK Mishra. It came after a purported screenshot of the question-cum-answersheet of TET went viral on social media and the duo (Rai and Mishra) claimed the alleged involvement of Markam in the matter. Rai and Mishra claimed that the purported screenshot was released from Markam's mobile phone and have demanded a probe in the matter. "The screenshot of question-answer sheet surfaced on social media on March 26, which suggests the involvement of CM's OSD. We will present all proof if investigation is ordered in the matter," Mishra told IANS. In response to the allegations, Markam lodged an FIR against Rai and Mishra alleging that the duo had shared 'misleading information' related to him on the paper leak. He accused Rai of making objectionable social media posts and sharing screen-



shots of a person with his name.

Subsequently, politics in the state has heated up. While the Congress reacted with outrage and demanded that the charges be dropped against Mishra, the state home minister Narottam Mishra called it a well-planned conspiracy to defame the BJP government. Madhya Pradesh Congress president and the former Chief Minister Kamal Nath said, "It is a matter of serious concern that the question paper has been found on the mobile phone of a CMO official. Instead of protecting the tainted official, the chief minister should get the matter investigated immediately, so that the

future of these candidates is secured and fears of another Vyapam scam in the state are eliminated."

State Home Minister Narottam Mishra defended Markam and said, "Markam is an honest officer and it is an attempt to defame him and the BJP government for getting political mileage. It is a conspiracy to make accusations against the chief minister's OSD over a mobile phone screenshot. If there is a petition filed asking for a probe in the matter, then the investigation will be ordered."

Sources in the Congress said a petition to seek investigation in the matter will be filed in the High Court soon. The TET was conducted by the Staff Selection Board (earlier known as Vyapam) on March 25. While, the aspirants who appeared in the police constable recruitment exams, have alleged irregularities in the selection system and staged a protest in Bhopal on Monday. The Vyapam scam was unearthed in 2013. The state government first rechristened it as Professional Examination Board (PEB) in 2015 and in February this year renamed it as Karmchaari Chayan Mandal (Staff Selection Board).



EDITOR'S SPECS

Earth Hour: Necessity of today, tomorrow

The Earth Hour has grown rapidly to become the world's most significant grassroots environmental movement. It has inspired the world to save electricity. This Earth Hour, across the country, many marquee landmarks participated in the global switch-off. Rashtrapati Bhavan, India Gate, Shanti Stupa, Ladakh, Qutub Minar, Purana Qila, Humayun Tomb, were major landmarks that stood in solidarity with Earth Hour 2022 by switching off their lights. Earth Hour, celebrated every year on March 26, is the largest global grassroots movement for the environment. Every year, it brings together millions of people, businesses and leaders from around the world to shine a spotlight on the urgent need to address nature loss and climate change. As many as 190 countries across the globe participate in the Earth Hour every year, this year being the 16th edition, with residents switched off their electrical appliances and non-essential lighting fixtures for one hour starting at 8.30 p.m. (local time) to show their concern for the environment. A BSES spokesperson had said: "We sincerely appeal to our over 46 lakh consumers and around 1.8 crore residents in our area to make the right choice for the planet and for the future generations that will inherit it. This Earth Hour, all our actions, albeit small, will 'Shape Our Future'. Citizens can help protect the natural world to safeguard our future by switching off." Moreover, BRPL and BYPL also switched off all non-essential lights at their over 400 offices, spread across an area of around 900 sq km, during the appointed hour.

HUMAN GREED PUTS SUNDARBANS AND IT'S ROYAL BENGAL TIGERS IN DANGER

Nishant Arora

Home to the Royal Bengal Tiger and an ecologically unique biodiversity, the world's largest mangrove forest is now bearing the brunt of both climate upheavals and unabated human greed, leaving the World Heritage Site gasping for life.

Locals here lament that in the past couple of years, several islands have turned into a concrete jungle, with new plush resorts and other real estate structures now distinctively disturbing the natural landscape.

This, coupled with massive cyclones that devastated Sundarbans forests in recent years, has left the inhabitants of 54 islands (out of a total of 102; rest being reserve forests) in constant fear of losing their livelihoods, and lives.

"The construction of embankments as a buffer against natural disasters is not yet complete in several islands. On the other hand, rampant real estate development to squeeze in more tourists has put our islands in further danger," Sayantan, 30, told correspondent.

Out of nearly 10,000 sq km that these mangrove forests cover, a little over 4,000 sq km is in India and the rest is in Bangladesh. In 1987, the Sundarbans National Park was designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Home to over 4.5 million people and many rare and globally threatened wildlife species, like the estuarine crocodile, water monitor lizard, Gangetic dolphin and Olive Ridley turtle -- not to forget the Royal Bengal Tiger whose number rests at 96 on the Indian side of the Sundarbans as per counting last year -- the low-lying islands are facing an existential crisis.

In May 2020, the massive cyclone Amphan ravaged a large part of the deltaic Sundarbans



region, displacing thousands of residents of the islands.

The agricultural lands and all water bodies were filled with saline water and people who earned their livelihood through vegetation, fisheries and cattle farming landed in deep trouble.

Last May, Cyclone 'Yaas' caused severe damage to the Sunderbans Tiger Reserve, and inundated breeding centres for crocodiles and a rare species of turtle.

The mismanagement of the modern embankments has led to salt water entering agricultural lands, making them unsuitable for cultivation, according to locals.

Moreover, nylon net fencing or natural barriers to prevent tigers from entering human habitations were heavily damaged during the storms, and the damage can still be seen at several places.

The straying of the Royal Bengal Tigers into villages has not stopped and the famous emaneaters' of Sundarbans now roam freely and attack humans as their own habitats are being lost to climate change and human intervention.

According to a local guide Sanjib, the nylon net fencing is not working anymore to keep tigers away from human-inhabited



islands as they are not afraid of this fencing anymore.

"Their brains are now adapted to this whole new world where net fencing is no more a threat to them. They easily cross those fences, left open by fishermen and people who enter ecore' forest zones for catching crabs/prawns and honey collection. Tigers have also been drinking saline water for years which has messed up their bodies," Sanjib told correspondent.

The latest media reports say that some 43 crab catchers fell prey to tiger attacks in the last seven months in the Sundarbans.

Locals fear that one day the delta may disappear from the face of the Earth if realistic steps are not taken.

The tiger attacks have risen manifold in West Bengal and the loss of tiger habitat is given as the key reason for the man-animal conflict.

To tackle the erosion of natural barriers, the West Bengal government now plans to construct a robust and ecologically sustainable 'bio-shield' along the state's coastline and the

Sundarbans islands.

The plan is to build earth embankments, plant 36 species of resilient mangrove species and set up a geo-textile cover on embankments, and a second line of embankments on the east-facing concave coastline, where erosion is highest.

The impact of climate change is most severe in the Bengal delta region, where the sea level rise is the highest globally.

The global mean sea level has been rising at 3.6 mm per year between 2006 and 2015. The sea level off the coast of Bengal is rising at around 4 mm per year, according to the latest reports.

The Sundarbans is carved out of two West Bengal districts -- South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas. The alluvial archipelago is formed by 56 riverine islands.

Considered to be one of the richest but most fragile ecosystems on the planet, the Sundarbans delta, formed by the myriad branches of the Ganga, has forest tracts that reach 130 km inland from the coastline.

international

Imran Khan ready to show letter on foreign conspiracy to Pak Chief Justice

Islamabad | Agencies

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan is ready to share a letter that he claimed during the PTT's March 27 rally contained evidence of a "foreign-funded conspiracy" to topple his government - with Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, federal minister Asad Umar said on Tuesday, Dawn reported.



Personally too, the chief justice has a very good reputation. The prime minister said that on the nation's behalf, if necessary, and for the people's satisfaction, he is ready to present the letter to the chief justice of the Supreme Court. "The minister said the letter was dated prior to the submission of the no-confidence motion in the National Assembly, Dawn reported. "This is a very concerning thing and it is important

because this letter clearly mentions the no-confidence resolution. There is no ambiguity that the no-confidence motion is being talked about." He added that the "threat" PM Imran spoke about in relevance to the letter during his March 27 address, "is directly linked to the no-confidence motion". PM Imran Khan had said during his address: "Attempts are being made through foreign money to change the government in Pakistan. Our people are being used. Mostly inadvertently, but some people are using money against us. We know from what places attempts are being to pressure us. We have been threatened in writing but we will not compromise on national interest." Umar further said the letter had only been shared with the top civil and military leadership and a few members of the federal cabinet.

INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA, UKRAINE IN ISTANBUL

Istanbul | Agencies

During the talks between the Ukrainian and Russian delegations in Istanbul, the parties discussed an agreement on international security guarantees for Ukraine, a ceasefire and the resolution of humanitarian issues in Ukraine. Adviser to the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Mykhailo Podoliak at an interim briefing in Turkey said: "Intensive consultations are underway on several important issues. The key one is the agreement on international security guarantees for Ukraine. Only with this agreement can we end the war as Ukraine needs it. An equally important issue is the ceasefire so that we can address the humanitarian problems that have accumulated", Ukrayinska Pravda reported. Podoliak added that "today we have another problem, it is getting bigger and bigger -- the problem of escalating war, escalating hatred, escalating violations of rules of warfare not only on the battlefield". calls are sometimes being made on air to destroy certain nations; the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war is also being violated. The Armed Forces of Ukraine will ensure that the rights of Russian prisoners of war are not violated and expect the same from the Russian side. Podoliak stressed that both sides must abide by the conventions and stop violating them. The Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba stated that the Ukrainian delegation at the talks with Russia in Turkey does not plan to discuss the referendum. Sources in The Financial Times reported that Russia had allegedly withdrawn its demands on Ukraine regarding "de-Nazification", "demilitarization" and the status of the Russian language in Ukraine.



Special operation in Ukraine will continue until set goals are achieved: Russia

Moscow | Agencies

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said that the special military operation in Ukraine will continue until the set goals are achieved.

"The Russian armed forces will continue the special military operation until the set goals are achieved," Shoigu said at a conference call, RT reported. Deliveries of lethal weapons to Ukraine by the West are irresponsible, Shoigu said.

"We consider the position of the West, which supplies lethal weapons to Ukraine, to be irresponsible," Shoigu said.

He noted that the uncontrolled distribution of weapons to the population and mercenaries "only aggravates the situation and in the future may pose a threat to the Europeans themselves." Russian Defence Minister



announced the fulfilment of the main tasks of the first stage of the special operation in Ukraine. "In general, the main tasks of the first stage of the operation have been completed. The combat potential of the Ukrainian armed forces has been significantly reduced, which makes it possible to focus the main attention and main efforts on achieving the main goal - the libera-

tion of Donbass," he said. Shoigu noted that the Ukrainian Armed Forces suffered significant damage. "Air supremacy has been won. The air force and the air defence system were practically destroyed... The country's naval forces ceased to exist. Significant losses were suffered by all formations of the ground and airborne assault forces," the Minister of Defence stat.

SL-INDIA INK MOUS FOR DEFENCE, ECONOMIC, EDUCATION, RELIGIOUS COOPERATION

Colombo | Agencies

Tightening the defence, economic, education, religious and cultural ties, multiple agreements were inked on the first day of Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Sri Lanka.

Meeting the three Rajapaksa brothers -- President Gotabaya, Prime Minister Mahinda and Finance Minister Basil, as well as and Foreign Minister G. L. Peiris, Jaishankar signed six MoUs that are vital for the two countries and future cooperation.

On the security front, an MoU was signed to establish a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) with a grant of \$6 million from India.

Built by the Indian government-owned aerospace and defence electronics company, Bharath Electronics, with the project India is to provide three Dornier maritime surveillance aircraft to Sri Lanka and a 4,000 MT floating barge to Sri Lanka Navy.

The MRCC is to be set up inside the Sri Lanka Navy Headquarters and seven other sub-units are to be positioned around the country including one in Southern city of Hambantota, where the China-run harbour is



located. A separate MoU was signed to implement the Sri Lanka Unique Digital Identity (SL-UDI) programme on a grant of Rs 30 crore.

However both the projects were criticised by Sri Lanka's opposition and activists claiming that the government was selling the coun-

try's national resources at a cost of national security.

They claimed that through the MRCC, the entire airspace is sold to India under the guise of a security system and positioning of even sub-units in naval bases covering entire Indian ocean around Sri Lanka is calling for a

geopolitical war with China.

The Opposition also alleged that with the SL-UDI project the entire digital identities of all Sri Lankans, including the biometrics, will be in the hands of India.

Another MoU was signed to implement Hybrid Power Projects in three Islands off Jaffna where earlier proposed Chinese project was cancelled following objection by India. India has objected to have Chinese presence in the Sri Lankan islands closer to Rameswaram on the Tamil Nadu coastline.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has thanked India for recent economic assistance amounting to around \$2.5 billion extended to Sri Lanka and Jaishankar assured New Delhi's continued support in Colombo's economic recovery process, the Indian High Commission in the island nation announced.

An MoU was also signed in the presence of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to give a \$15 million for the maintenance of important Buddhist sites in Sri Lanka.

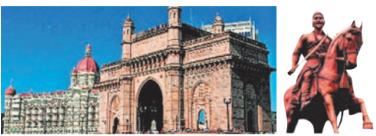
Jaishankar virtually inaugurated the state-of-the-art theatre in Jaffna Cultural Centre constructed with India's grant assistance aimed at expanding cultural infrastructure for people of Northern Province.

CHINA TO HOST MEETING OF AFGHANISTAN'S NEIGHBOURS

Beijing | Agencies

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will host the third Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan's Neighbouring Countries this week. Analysts said the meeting on Wednesday and Thursday will focus on humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and call on the US to return the Afghan people's assets, the Global Times reported. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin announced that Foreign Ministers or representatives from Pakistan, Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are scheduled to attend the meeting in Tunxi. Wang Yi will host the meeting, and acting Foreign Minister of the Taliban-led Afghan government Amir Khan Muttaqi will attend. The Foreign ministers of Indonesia and Qatar will also be invited to join as special guests, according to Wang Wenbin. The meetings comes at a time when international attention has largely moved to the Ukraine crisis from the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. The meetings in China will call on the world to continue to assist Afghanistan and pool resources for the war-torn country, Zhu Yongbiao, director of the Center for Afghanistan Studies in Lanzhou University, told the Global Times on Monday. "The neighbouring countries may also call on the US to fulfil its responsibility to Afghanistan, unfreeze the assets of the Afghan people and help with its rebuilding," Zhu said.





MAHA GOVT TO WITHDRAW LOCKDOWN CASES AGAINST STUDENTS, CITIZENS

In a significant move, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has decided to withdraw all cases filed against students and general citizens for violation of lockdown orders during the past two years of the Covid-19 pandemic.

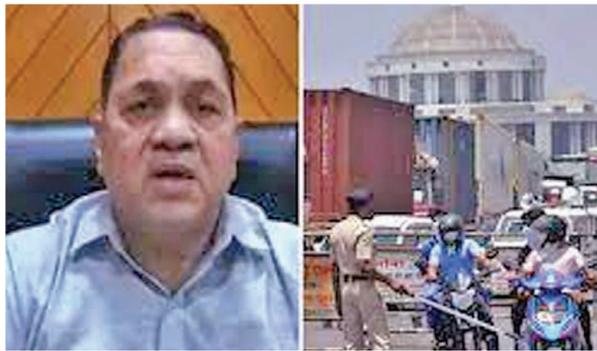
Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a significant move, the Maha Vikas Aghadi government has decided to withdraw all cases filed against students and general citizens for violation of lockdown orders during the past two years of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil said that the cases were mostly filed under Indian Penal Code Section 188, and the proposal shall be put up before the state cabinet for approval.

After the cabinet nod, all such cases lodged across the state shall be taken back, Walse-Patil indicated here on Tuesday.

During the pandemic and the series



of lockdowns implemented, especially during the first and second Covid-19 waves during 2020-2021, thousands of cases were lodged against students, youth and common citizens, even some families, for allegedly flouting the lockdown rules.

A police official explained that the cases were largely for moving around during the strict curfew hours at night, stepping out in groups flouting the prohibitory orders, people venturing out to

public places like beaches where entry was banned during the lockdown, families violating the rules of travel by private vehicles, certain logistics and service providers exceeding the stipulated working hours, etc.

Though the exact number of such violations is not immediately available and being compiled by various authorities, most cases under the IPC Section 188 stand to be withdrawn, giving huge relief to the offenders.

CASE REGISTERED AGAINST MINISTERS IN MUMBAI

Mumbai: A case was registered against Maharashtra Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad, textiles minister Aslam Shaikh for allegedly brandishing swords at a public event in suburban Bandra, informed Mumbai Police on Monday. Police informed that the event took place to welcome the chairman of Congress' Minority Department Imran Pratapgarhi. "A case registered against Maharashtra ministers Aslam Shaikh and Varsha Gaikwad at Bandra Police Station in Mumbai after they were seen brandishing swords at a public event to welcome the chairman of Congress' Minority Department Imran Pratapgarhi," police said. A case was registered against the ministers under Arms Act.

Maha govt withdraws demolition order on Union Minister Rane's home

The Maharashtra government on Tuesday informed the Bombay High Court that it has withdrawn an order to demolish illegal constructions in the bungalow owned by Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra government on Tuesday informed the Bombay High Court that it has withdrawn an order to demolish illegal constructions in the bungalow owned by Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane.

Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakoni made the submission before a division bench of Justices AA Sayed and MS Karnik.

The statement followed a plea against the March 21 order of the Collector ordering Rane to remove the alleged unauthorised constructions carried out in the bungalow failing which the authorities concerned would raze it. Kumbhakoni also said that the government will consider any application by Rane seeking regularisation of the purported illegalities before taking action in the matter, and the court allowed the state liberty to initiate any fresh necessary action in accordance with the law.

Even as a huge row erupted between the Maha Vikas Aghadi government and the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, Rane had



challenged the Collector's order citing various grounds.

These included that there was no show cause notice preceding the order nor a reply sought, no hearings were conducted prior to passing the order, it was without jurisdiction or powers and arbitrary, violated the fundamental rights of the petitioner, etc.

Following the state government's submissions, the high court disposed of Rane's plea.

Patil dismisses reports of CM Thackeray being upset with him

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra home minister and NCP leader Dilip Walse-Patil on Monday said Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray was not upset with him, as claimed in certain quarters, over his reply to BJP leader Devendra Fadnis' allegation that Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was hatching a conspiracy to frame some leaders of the opposition party.

Speaking to reporters here after he met with NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Walse-Patil said Thackeray is not upset with him over any issue. He said on the contrary Thackeray called him and congratulated him (over his reply to Fadnis).



During the recently-concluded budget session of the state legislature, Fadnis had said the MVA was hatching a conspiracy to frame some BJP leaders, including himself, in false cases.

Walse-Patil had in the Assembly announced a criminal investigation department (CID) probe into the matter. Thackeray reportedly

expressed his displeasure over the issue in the cabinet meeting held last Wednesday. "The chief minister is not upset over any issue. Everyone has his/her style (of expression)."

The chief minister is not upset. Rather he had called and congratulated me," Walse-Patil said. He said this issue didn't crop up during his meeting with Pawar. Walse-Patil also dismissed BJP's allegation that IPS officer Sanjay Pandey was appointed as Mumbai police commissioner to frame BJP leaders. "I have clearly said that nobody has been appointed to take revenge. There was no discussion on this in today's meeting (with Pawar)," the minister said.

SHIV SAINIKS TRASH A MAN FOR CRITICIZING UDDHAV THACKERAY

Jalgaon: A man in Maharashtra was thrashed by Shiv Sainiks over criticizing CM Uddhav Thackeray on social media. "We first tried to explain to him peacefully but he was not ready to accept. He did wrong, so he must be taught a lesson. This is Shiv Sena's style of justice," says, Gajanan Malpure, Shiv Sena. The incident took place near a local mall in the city.

Subsequently, a video of the assault went viral on the internet. Hemant Dwitviye, from Dharangaon in Jalgaon district, had shared a post on Facebook against Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

Schools to conduct Classes 1 to 9, 11 exams in third week of April, regular school till April 30

Maharashtra schools have been asked to operate regular classes for students of classes 1 to 9 and 11 till April 30. The annual exams, earlier conducted by April 15, would now be conducted in third week of April. Results would be announced by May.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In view of the loss of learning due to extended lockdown in the state, Maharashtra Education Department has asked the schools to conduct regular classes till April 30, 2022. Schools have also been instructed to conduct the annual examinations for Classes 1 to 9 and 11 in the third week of April and declare results by May.

Postponing the summer vacations (which usually start from April 15), the education department has asked schools to function on full days on Saturdays and voluntarily on Sunday as well. This has been done in order to make up for the loss of learning. The GR issued by Maharashtra

Government I.M Kazi, Joint Secretary, has asked the schools to conduct the examination in last weeks of April and release the results by May. No date for result declaration has been said.

The order, however, has not been received well. Harishchandra Gaikwad, president of the Pune District Principals' Association, has pointed out that the GR was issued too late. He has also pointed out that many schools have already completed the syllabus and are prepared to conduct the annual examination, as per the schedule followed.

"In this GR, the education department has asked schools to declare results by May but no date has been given. Had there been a deadline, it

would have been easy for schools to plan. Now with this new GR, students will have to come to schools till the end of April," Gaikwad said. Calling the GR 'ambiguous', Gaikwad raised concern over delaying the summer vacation and the academic session. He also suggested that instead of postponing the annual exams and summer vacations, the government should have considered reopening schools from June 7 or 8 instead of the usual June 15 for the new academic session.

In the meanwhile, Maharashtra HSC Exams 2022 have already concluded. Maharashtra SSC Exams 2022 are also underway. Maharashtra HSC Results 2022 are expected to be released by May end as well.

IIFA AT ABU DHABI 2022 PRESS MEET



Receiving IIFA trophy from Salman Khan, Varun Dhawan, Ananya Pandey at an event with media & guests on 28 March 2022 AT JW Marriott Juhu. It was a proud moment for Dr. Yogesh Lakhani CMD Bright Outdoor Media PVT LTD who is associated with this award.

HOTEL INDUSTRY DEMANDS 50% WAIVER IN EXCISE LICENSE FEE

Mumbai: The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has urged the Maharashtra Government for a 50% waiver in the Excise Licence Fee for FY 2021-22. The Association has pointed out that due to the COVID-19 curbs, of the twelve months, hotels and restaurants were allowed to operate for only one month without any interruptions. With restrictions of varying extent and nature imposed by the Disaster Management Authority on the license holders, hotels and restaurants in only 14 districts out of the 36 could fully operate and that too just for twenty-eight days between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. The remaining 22 districts across the State continue to operate with restrictions even today, said the Association.

"Maharashtra has around 10,500 hotels and 210,000 restaurants and over the last 24 months around 3,000 hotels and 60,000 restaurants have permanently shut down. Around 50 lakh employees, roughly 40 per cent directly engaged in the industry in the State lost their jobs. During the lockdown period, Maharashtra's hospitality industry has suffered a revenue loss of approximately Rs 5,000 crore monthly. All this was a consequence of the severe nature of restrictions imposed on the industry," Sherry Bhatia, President, HRAWI said.

According to Bhatia, out of the 365 days in that year, the industry had only 28 fully operational days until 31st March 2022. Also, the 28 days were applicable to only 14 districts out of 36 districts in the State. "As things stand, it is only fair that the Government waives off 50 per cent of the Excise Licence Fee for that FY," he said.

IMD WARNS OF HEAT WAVE CONDITIONS IN PARTS OF NORTH MADHYA MAHARASHTRA & MARATHWADA

ACCORDING TO THE FORECAST ISSUED BY THE WEATHER BUREAU, A GRADUAL RISE IN MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES BY 2-3 DEGREE CELSIUS IS VERY LIKELY OVER MAHARASHTRA DURING THE NEXT FIVE DAYS. ISOLATED HEAT WAVE CONDITIONS OVER VIDARBHA, NORTH MADHYA MAHARASHTRA AND MARATHWADA ARE LIKELY DURING MARCH 29TH -31.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned of heat wave conditions in isolated pockets of north Madhya Maharashtra and Marathwada from March 30. While no heat wave alerts have been issued for Mumbai, the day temperature is likely to soar

to 37 degrees Celsius, which is 4-5 degrees above normal, from Wednesday.

Heat waves in one or two pockets are likely in Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal, Buldhana, Washim. According to the forecast issued by the weather bureau, a gradual rise in maximum temperatures by 2-3 degree Celsius is very likely over Maharashtra during the next five days. Isolated heat wave conditions over Vidarbha, north Madhya Maharashtra and Marathwada are likely during March 29th -31.

On Monday, Akola in Vidarbha region was the hottest in the state with the day temperature soaring to 42.9 degrees Celsius. Experts said such a prolonged spell of hot days in the state, including in the coastal areas, have predominantly been due to the warm winds coming from hotter west and northwest India regions, where heat wave conditions prevailed last week. Mumbai and north Konkan areas too experienced high temperatures and heat-wave-like conditions recently. As per the seven-day forecast, the maximum temperature is likely to remain between 36 and 37 degrees Celsius, from Wednesday till April 2. Partly cloudy skies are likely starting next month. On Monday, the maximum temperature recorded at IMD's Santacruz observatory was normal at 33.4 degrees Celsius, while the night or the minimum temperature was a degree above normal at 24.1 degrees Celsius.

4, INCLUDING 1 WOMAN, HELD FOR BLACKMAILING MAN

Mumbai: An official said a woman befriended and lured a 57-year-old man into meeting her in a room in Shirdinagar in Bhayander East on March 23, after which three of her associates arrived at the scene and demanded money posing as policemen. Four people have been arrested for allegedly blackmailing a man and extorting money from him in Navghar area of Thane district, police said on Tuesday.

An official said a woman befriended and lured a 57-year-old man into meeting her in a room in Shirdinagar in Bhayander East on March 23, after which three of her associates arrived at the scene and demanded money posing as policemen. "They took Rs 70,000 from him after threatening to implicate him in various cases since he was found in the company of the woman in a room. When they started pestering him to pay more money, he approached police," the official added.

On Sunday a trap was laid and the woman, as well as her three associates, were arrested while collecting money from the complainant in a hotel, the Navghar police station official added.

7 WEEKS AFTER LATA DIDI'S PASSING, HER KIN FEEL 'ORPHANED'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Nearly seven weeks after the legendary singer, Lata Mangeshkar passed away into eternity, her brother and sisters and other relatives feel they have become 'orphans'.

Emerging in public on Tuesday for the first time after Lata Didi's passing, Hridaynath Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar and others joined for a proud yet emotional moment at the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Auditorium in Vile Parle - the unveiling of a large colourful portrait of their beloved sister.

The portrait of a smiling Lata Mangeshkar was unveiled by a close family friend of nearly seven decades, well-known actor Vikram Gokhale, moving to tears the assembled Mangeshkar clan who yearned for their beloved and eldest Didi, who left them on February 6.

Inaugurating the portrait, Gokhale recalled how his father and the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar families were related for centuries.

"We used to address him as 'Dinaa ba'... Our families had a very close relationship and he was also my father's 'Guru'. He had presented a musical instrument to my father on which he would do 'riyaz' (practice) for hours," said Gokhale with



moist eyes and voice choking. Asha Bhosle confessed how Lata Didi's sudden passing was a huge shock and pain to her and the entire family.

"Whenever I used to go anywhere, I would always take Lata Didi's blessings. She would ask me 'not to touch her feet always, as her blessings and that of our parents', are forever with me,

wherever I am and whether I went to her or not," said Bhosle in a moving tribute. The sole brother, music director Hridaynath Mangeshkar said Lata Didi's passing has proved to be sad and devastating for the entire family, and said "we still can't believe she is no more" with us. "I had seen our father's picture in this auditorium and in four the-

atres in Pune. I never imagined a day would come when I would have to witness the unveiling of our sister's (Lata Didi) photograph besides our father. It causes a lot of anguish," said Hridaynath. The family will put up large-sized pictures of Lata Didi at the four theatres in Pune and also plan to construct memorials for her at various places. Asha Bhosle wondered that after Lata Didi's departure, "whose blessings should I seek, who should I turn to for my problems." "When we were very young and our Baba (father, Deenanath) expired and then our Mai (mom Shevanti) also passed, it was Lata Didi who cared for us as parents. After her departure we have all been rendered as orphans. We never thought it would happen like this and could have lived for many more years," said Bhosle. The family members said that Lata Didi will "continue to inspire us all" and the future generations would feel blessed by her photos hanging on the auditorium walls in Mumbai and Pune. Others present included Usha Mangeshkar, who cared for her Lata Didi for several years, was weeping inconsolably and could not remain present for the photo sessions, Bharti Mangeshkar, Roopkumar Rathod and Sonali Rathod, Adinath Mangeshkar, Krishna Mangeshkar, Jenai Bhosle, Anuja Bhosle, Mayuresh Pati and Ashish Shelar.



TAYLOR SWIFT TO RECEIVE HONORARY DOCTORATE FROM NYU

New York | Agencies

Singer Taylor Swift will be awarded an honorary doctorate of fine arts by the New York University (NYU), and she will speak at commencement at Yankee Stadium.

Swift will deliver her address and receive her honours from NYU along with the class of 2022 at the stadium on the morning of May 18, reports 'Variety'.

Three graduating classes will be honoured that day.

Swift will be part of what is described as a "traditional" ceremony for the current graduating class on the morning of May 18. Separately, in the evening, the university will also be holding a "double-header" commencement for the classes of 2020 and 2021, who weren't able to have a traditional ceremony earlier due to the pandemic.

The official title that will be bestowed on Swift is Doctor of Fine Arts, honours causa.

Swift has previously been associated with NYU, as the university has conducted a class in her work, although she played no direct role in that particular curriculum.



Will Smith apologises to Chris Rock for Oscars slap

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Will Smith has issued an apology after slapping comedian Chris Rock on the Oscars stage.

"Violence in all of its forms is poisonous and destructive. My behaviour at last night's Academy Awards was unacceptable and inexcusable. Jokes at my expense are part of the job, but a joke about Jada's medical condition was too much for me to bear and I reacted emotionally," Smith wrote.

"I would like to publicly apologise to you, Chris. I was out of line and I was wrong. I am embarrassed and my actions were not indicative of the man I want to be. There is no place for violence in a world of love and kindness." The post continued, "I would also like to apologise to the Academy, the producers of

the show, all the attendees and everyone watching around the world. I would like to apologize to the Williams Family and my King Richard Family. I deeply regret that my behavior has stained what has been an otherwise gorgeous journey for all of us. I am a work in progress."

The altercation happened when Rock took the stage to present the best documentary award and made a joke about Jada Pinkett Smith being in a sequel to 'G.I. Jane'.

Pinkett Smith has been open about the fact that she has alopecia, which causes hair loss. Smith then ran on stage, slapping Rock and quickly returning to his seat. "Keep my wife's name out of your f***** mouth!" Smith yelled twice he was seated, reports 'Variety'.

The moment stunned viewers, who took to social media as it wasn't immediately clear whether the altercation was a skit or not. Just a few moments later, Smith won the Oscar for best actor for his performance in "King Richard." In his speech, he apologised to the Academy and his fellow nominees, but did not address Rock.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop singer Miley Cyrus, who was married to actor Liam Hemsworth, during her performance at Lollapalooza festival in Brazil briefly mentioned the matter while helping a couple get engaged at her concert. According to Daily Mail, the 'Malibu' singer brought a gay couple on stage for their proposal, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Honey, I hope your marriage goes better than mine," the daughter of Billy Ray Cyrus congratulated the pair, before adding, "Mine was a f**king disaster." Cyrus and 'The Hunger Games' star were first linked in 2008 after they both starred in the film 'The Last Song'. The then-couple later got engaged in 2012, only to break up the following year. They, however, managed to rekindle their romance in 2015 and eventually got married in December 2018. Unfortunately, their marriage didn't last for more than a year as she was photographed kissing Brody Jenner's ex Kaitlynn Carter. "Ever-evolving, changing as partners and individuals, they have decided this is what's best while they both focus on themselves and careers," a representative for Cyrus revealed to PEOPLE at the time. Miley's whirlwind romance with Kaitlynn only lasted for a month. She later was romantically linked to Australian singer Cody Simpson for ten months. Of their brief relationship, Cody said that it was "just one of those phases... everything ended fairly amicably."

Miley Cyrus calls marriage with Liam Hemsworth a 'disaster'



LASHANA LYNCH SAYS SHE'S UNFAZED BY JAMES BOND BACKLASH

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Lashana Lynch, who played the first-ever female 007 in 'No Time To Die', says she's actually grateful to internet trolls.

Reflecting on her role in the Bond film, she told the Daily Star Sunday newspaper: "There are those who don't support ideas like my character. But I encouraged the dislike and the non-support because it reminded me of the work that I needed to do in the industry."

"I'm so grateful to everyone who sent a bad message because it encouraged me."

Lynch's character Nomi proved to be one of the main talking points from the most-recent Bond movie, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The actress, who starred alongside Daniel Craig, was praised by some young women for helping to break down boundaries in the movie business.

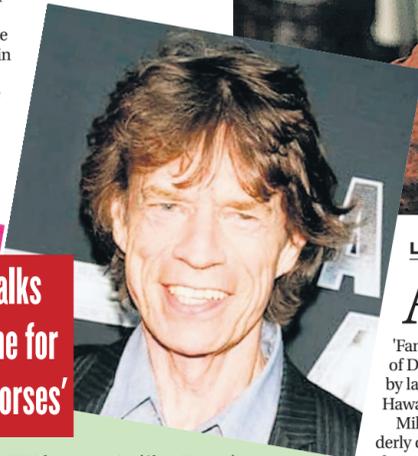
She said: "I got messaged from young women who have been inspired I'm so glad my character exists for them to ask questions. It's a really big deal. I hoped that my parents' generation would have been able to experience the sort of work that is being done now."

"But it's being done now. And for me to experience it in my generation and celebrate it is an honour and a privilege."

Lynch would love to reprise the role in the next Bond movie. But for the time being, she doesn't know if she'll be given the opportunity.



Mick Jagger talks about his theme for series 'Slow Horses'



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Mick Jagger has written his first TV theme, for the Apple TV Plus spy series 'Slow Horses', debuting April 1. And it might never have happened if he hadn't already read and liked the Mick Herron book on which it's based, reports 'Variety'. "It's a quite popular series of books, so I knew what it was about," the iconic Rolling Stones singer tells 'Variety'. "I knew the vibe really well, so as soon as (composer Daniel Pemberton) sent the track to me, I just dashed off a few pages of notes of what I thought it was about. It came very, very quickly, which is always a good sign." Pemberton, the series' Oscar-nominated composer ('The Trial of the Chicago 7'), had been working for months on the series, creating what he calls "a very unique sound world, all based on low-fi recording techniques and slightly wonky sounds". He and Jagger didn't meet due to Covid restrictions, but in December of last year began a whirlwind series of Zoom calls, emails and text messages. "I played him the track on guitar," Pemberton recalls. "I'm not even a good guitarist. That was very weird, playing guitar for Mick Jagger on the Zoom line." Adds Jagger: "I just recorded it on my iPhone and sent it to him, and he loved it. And then we had to do a bit of crafting, trying to get a chorus, calling it 'Strange Game' and trying to get the verses from the point of view of the main character," referring to Jackson Lamb, played by Gary Oldman in the series.



Ezra Miller arrested for disorderly conduct, harassment in Hawaii

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Ezra Miller, who stars in the upcoming film 'The Flash' and 'Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore', was arrested by law enforcement in Hilo, Hawaii.

Miller was charged for disorderly conduct and harassment after an incident at a bar and was arrested on Monday morning, reports 'Variety'.

According to a post by the Hawaii County Police Department, South Hilo officers responded to a report of a disorderly bar patron on Sunday evening at 11:30 p.m. Police determined that the agitator had become unruly while other patrons sang karaoke and had begun 'yelling obscenities'.

Miller then "grabbed the micro-

phone from a 23-year-old woman singing karaoke and later lunged at a 32-year-old man playing darts".

Miller was arrested and charged on offences of disorderly conduct and harassment. Bail was set at \$500, which Miller provided, with law enforcement subsequently releasing him from custody.

In 2020, footage that appeared to depict Miller choking a woman in a bar in Iceland surfaced online. Sources close to the situation described the situation as a serious altercation which led to Miller being escorted off the premises by staff.

Miller's arrest comes at an inopportune time for Warner Bros., as the performer plays a key role in its upcoming 'Harry Potter' spin-off film, 'Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore', which is set to begin its global theatrical rollout in April.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Lourdes Leon



IPL 2022

RAJASTHAN ROYALS THRASH SUNRISERS HYDERABAD BY 61 RUNS

Pune | Agencies

A solid batting followed by a clinical bowling performance helped Rajasthan Royals thrash Sunrisers Hyderabad by 61 runs in an IPL 2022 match at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium, here on Tuesday.

Riding on brilliant attacking knocks by skipper Sanju Samson (55 off 27), Devdutt Padikkal (41 off 29) and a late cameo by Shimron Hetmyer (32 off 13), Rajasthan Royals posted 210/6 in 20 overs. Apart from the trio of Samson, Padikkal and Hetmyer, Jos Buttler (35 off 28) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (20 off 16) also made valuable contributions with the bat. Umran Malik (2/39) and T Natarajan (2/43) were the top wicket-takers for Hyderabad.

In reply, top-order batters -- Kane Williamson (2), Abhishek Sharma (9), Rahul Tripathi (0), Nicholas Pooran (0) couldn't do much for Hyderabad. Lower down the order, Aiden Markram (57 off 41), Romario



Brief scores :

Rajasthan Royals 210/6 in 20 overs (Sanju Samson 55, Devdutt Padikkal 41; Umran Malik 2/39) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad 149/7 in 20 overs (Aiden Markram 57, Washington Sundar 40; Yuzvendra Chahal 3/22) by 61 runs.

Shepherd (24 off 18) and ashton Sundar (40 off 14) tried hard but it wasn't enough as Hyderabad were restricted to 149-7 in 20 overs. Yuzvendra Chahal (3/22), Prasidh Krishna (2/16) and Trent Boult (2/23) were the wicket-takers for Rajasthan.

Earlier, Invited to bat first, openers Jos Buttler and Yashasvi Jaiswal gave Rajasthan a flying start. Both Buttler and Yashasvi played cautiously against Bhuvneshwar Kumar but the England cricketer targeted Umran Malik and hit him for a couple of

boundaries and sixes, taking 21 runs off his over. Both Padikkal and Samson were having a great time in the middle and dealing with boundaries. Their quick 73 runs stand for the third wicket was finally broken when Padikkal was cleaned up by Malik on 41, leaving Royals at 148-3 after 15 overs. The wicket didn't affect Samson that much as he continued his aggressive batting and brought his fifty in just 25 deliveries. However, the Rajasthan skipper couldn't continue his innings longer after that and was dismissed by Bhuvneshwar on 55.

Despite losing the two key wickets of Padikkal and Samson, the run rate didn't drop for the Royals as new batsmen -- Shimron Hetmyer and Riyan Parag combined to trouble SRH bowlers. Hetmyer, who played a late cameo of 32 in just 13 deliveries, was cleaned up by Natarajan in the last over but he had already done the damage. In the end, Parag (12 off 9) and Nathan Coulter-Nile (1) remained not out as Rajasthan Royals posted 210/6 in 20 overs.

ICC Rankings: Wolvaardt replaces Healy as No 1 batter, Mithali climbs three places

Dubai | Agencies

South Africa opener Laura Wolvaardt on Tuesday replaced Australian batter Alyssa Healy as the No. 1 batter while India skipper Mithali Raj climbed three places to be at the sixth spot in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings.

Wolvaardt has scored more runs (433) at the Women's World Cup than any other player. She has made five half-centuries from seven innings, with her top score of 90 coming against tournament favourites Australia in Wellington last week.

The stylish South African batter moved up two places and overtook two Australians in the process to claim the top ranking. She replaced Australia wicket-keeper Healy, who dropped four places to now be rated fifth in the Women's ODI rankings.

Healy's teammate Beth Mooney remains in second place in the rankings, with Australia captain Meg Lanning (third) and England veteran Nat Sciver (fourth)



rounding out the remainder of the top five batters on the latest rankings.

Mithali Raj's fifty against South Africa helped her make a three-place jump to No 6. However, the match ended in heartbreak for the Indian skipper as her team crashed out of the World Cup in a last-ball thriller.

Among other Indians, opener Smriti Mandhana occupied the tenth position. Veteran Jhulan Goswami is the only bowler from India in the top ten, while she has company from Deepthi Sharma in the all-rounders' category.

While there is plenty of movement in the latest rankings for the batter, the same cannot be said for the bowling or all-rounders rankings.

England spinner Sophie Ecclestone -- who is the leading wicket-taker at the World Cup with 14 scalps -- remains the highest-ranked bowler, while Australia's Jess Jonassen is second.

In-form South Africa seamer Shabnim Ismail moves up one spot to take third in the rankings from Australia veteran Megan Schutt, while India pacer Jhulan Goswami rockets up two places to fifth.

Tsitsipas, Medvedev secure fourth-round spots in Miami Open



Miami | Agencies

Greek tennis ace Stefanos Tsitsipas scored a dominant 6-4, 6-3 victory over Australia's Alex de Minaur in a 90-minute contest to secure a place in the Round of 16 at the Miami Open on Tuesday (IST).

The world No. 5 Greek improved his ATP head-to-

head against De Minaur to 8-0, which includes a pair of straight-sets wins this season.

The win sets up Tsitsipas' fourth-round showdown against Spain's Carlos Alcaraz. Tsitsipas' fifth-set tie-break loss to Alcaraz was one of the shocks of last year's US Open, but the 18-year-old Spaniard has proven his run to the New

York quarterfinals was no fluke.

Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia continued his fine form with a 7-6(4), 6-3 win over Sebastian Korda of the US. He'll take on another American in Taylor Fritz for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, top seed and world No.2, Daniil Medvedev of Russia, looked every bit a four-time ATP Masters 1000 winner as he brushed past Spain's Pedro Martinez 6-3, 6-4 to reach the fourth round. The 26-year-old will reclaim the No. 1 spot in the ATP Rankings that he lost two weeks ago with a semifinal run in Miami. Medvedev will take on American Jenson Brooksby in the fourth round. Brooksby rallied from 0-4 in the third set to upset 15th seed Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

I-League: Sudeva Delhi fight back to salvage a point against Real Kashmir

Naihati, (West Bengal) | Agencies

Two goals down, Sudeva Delhi FC managed to salvage a point against Real Kashmir FC after a thrilling 2-2 draw in the I-League 2021-22 here on Tuesday.

A first-half brace by Tiago Adan gave Real Kashmir a lead to carry at the break, but an inspired second-half fightback saw Sudeva Delhi take away a point from the contest thanks to goals from Sreyas V.G and Seithenlang Lotjem.

Real Kashmir got off to a fantastic start by taking the lead through Brazilian frontman Tiago Adan as early as the 2nd minute. With the ball in his possession on the edge of the Sudeva Delhi box, Pratesh Shirodkar was shaped to shoot at first but ended up playing a delightfully weighted clipped pass for Tiago Adan.

Adan made a clever run in space behind the Sudeva Delhi defence and calmly slotted the ball into the far corner with his first touch.

Goalkeeper Sachin Jha got a touch on the ball, but it wasn't enough to stop his side from falling behind in the early exchanges.

The side from the Capital made a steady recovery despite the early setback, seeing plenty of the ball



in the opposition half, albeit without a clear look at the goal.

Sudeva Delhi had another scare in the 23rd minute when Tiago Adan's mishit cross from the left came back off the woodwork, bamboozling Sachin Jha in goal.

If his previous effort left room for interpretation, there was no doubting Tiago Adan this time around, as the Brazilian got his second goal of the

match in the 39th minute. After his initial through pass was blocked, the ball ricocheted back into the path of Adan, who produced an instinctive snapshot from 20 yards that beat Sachin Jha all ends up and curled beautifully inside the far post.

However, coach Mehrajuddin Wadoo freshened things up for the second half, making a number of changes in personnel in order to find a way back into the game.

The renewed vigour paid dividends in the 51st minute, as substitute Sreyas pulled one goal back for Sudeva Delhi FC.

The game continued along with the same pattern in the second half, with Sudeva Delhi holding plenty of ball possession, and the Snow Leopards defending resolutely to keep their slender lead intact. As the contest boiled down to the final minutes, Sudeva Delhi's perseverance earned them a well-deserved equaliser in the 91st minute. With a set-piece opportunity, Abhijit Sarkar delivered a flat and bending cross into the front post, which was nodded on towards the far post with an expertly taken header by Seithenlang Lotjem.

The two substitutes combined to snatch a late equaliser for Sudeva Delhi and end the contest with nothing to separate the two sides.

Tickner takes 4 wickets, Young slams unbeaten ton as Kiwis score big win

Mount Maunganui | Agencies

New Zealand's right-arm pace bowler Blair Tickner took four wickets on ODI debut, while Will Young scored a maiden century to set up the Blackcaps' emphatic seven-wicket victory with 69 balls to spare against the Netherlands in the opening match at Bay Oval on Tuesday.

The 10 points helped the hosts move up two places -- from 12th to 10th -- on the Cricket World Cup Super League (CWCSL) table. If New Zealand continue the momentum in the three-match series, they have a good chance to climb higher.

The 28-year-old Tickner finished with 4/50 from his 10 overs, claiming Vikramjit Singh and Bas de Leede in his first spell, before



returning to pick up Logan van Beek and Pieter Seelaar. Despite

the early loss of Martin Guptill, the Blackcaps collected 10 ODI Super

League points, thanks to Henry Nicholls and Will Young, the latter scoring his maiden ODI ton.

Young and Nicholls looked at ease at the crease. Young, playing just his third ODI, scored boundaries regularly and raced to his maiden ODI fifty in 54 balls. The wickets of Nicholls and Ross Taylor came too late in the innings for the Netherlands. Young hit the winning runs and converted his maiden fifty into a hundred as New Zealand took a 1-0 lead.

Brief scores :

Netherlands 202 in 49.4 overs (Michael Rippon 67, Pieter Seelaar 43; Kyle Jamieson 3/45, Blair Tickner 4/50) lost to New Zealand 204/3 in 38.3 overs (Henry Nicholls 57, Will Young 103 not out; Michael Rippon 2/32) by 7 wickets.

HOCKEY PRO LEAGUE: ENGLAND WOMEN'S TEAM PULLS OUT OF INDIA TOUR DUE TO COVID CASES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian women's hockey team's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League matches against England have been postponed due to the high number of Covid-19 positive cases in the English team.

The double-header between the men's teams from the two nations will however go ahead and will be played on April 2-3 at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

The announcement regarding the postponement of the Pro League match between India and England women's teams was made by FIH after England Hockey conveyed to them that the women's team would not be travelling to Bhubaneswar for the two matches as "several members of the team have positive for Covid-19 while some were unavailable due to injuries in the squad".

It appears a situation similar to the matches against Germany a few weeks ago when their women's team toured India for two Pro League matches while the men's team pulled out citing "several Covid cases



in the team". Earlier, the Netherlands women's team had not travelled to India for their Pro League matches because of an adverse travel advisory by their government because of the Covid-1p pandemic.

Not just medallists, everyone who represents India needs to be celebrated, says Tendulkar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar feels that engagement at the grassroots is a must to develop India into a 'Sporting Powerhouse'.

"For any country to become a sporting power, it is very important to have a sporting culture. In India, while we love watching sports, we don't really love playing sports that much. So, that transformation is very important and it has to start from the grassroots," Tendulkar said at the inaugural edition of the Apollo Tyres Sports Conclave.

The batting great said that sports should be made com-



pulsory at the school level and children should be allowed to play whatever they like.

"This will also enable experts to identify talent at an early stage. At the end of the day, we are essentially looking at building a fitter and healthier India that can perform well in everything."

The former India captain emphasised that once a child

has been identified, the next steps are to ensure a good sporting infrastructure, proper guidance, training camps, among others.

"If the child loves what he plays and wants to pursue it, he could very well be the next Neeraj Chopra, who is the reigning Olympic champion in the javelin throw. Our athletes need to be celebrated, and I am not talking only about the ones who won medals. Everyone who represented India needs to be celebrated. The more you interact with these athletes, the more the younger generation will be inspired to become like them, and it will create a cycle of producing sportsmen," Tendulkar added.

U.P, A.P, KARNATAKA, CHHATTISGARH WIN LEAGUE MATCHES

Kakinada | Agencies

Top contenders Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Chhattisgarh Hockey, Hockey Rajasthan, Hockey Andhra Pradesh and Hockey Karnataka registered victories in their respective matches on the fifth day of the 12th Hockey India Junior Women's National Championship 2022 here on Tuesday.

In the first match of the day, Chhattisgarh Hockey defeated Hockey Himachal 11-0 in their Pool F match. Aanchal Sahu (4', 17', 27') scored a hat-trick, while Sampada Nirmalkar (6', 20'), captain Monika Tirkey (11', 12'), Nema Nirmalkar (28', 39') scored a brace each. Meghna Sahu (20') and Simran (47') scored one goal each for Chhattisgarh Hockey.

In Pool G, Uttar Pradesh Hockey earned a hard-fought 3-2 victory over



Hockey Mizoram. Swarnika Rawat (35', 49', 51') scored a hat-trick for Uttar Pradesh Hockey, while Lalthantlangi (45') and Vanlalhratpui (54') scored the goals for Hockey Mizoram. Hockey Rajasthan defeated Hockey Bihar 7-5

in their Pool G match. Komal Gurjar (9', 12', 43', 47', 55') scored five goals, while Lichhama Bhambu (33', 36') scored a brace for Hockey Rajasthan. Meanwhile, Shanti Kumari (28', 39', 60') scored a hat-trick, while Punam Kumari (20') and Pratima Kumari

(52') scored one goal each for Hockey Bihar, Hockey India informed in a release on Tuesday. In Pool H, Hockey Andhra Pradesh registered a comprehensive 16-0 victory over Hockey Gujarat. Bobbili Jhansi (7', 31', 48', 52', 56') scored five goals, while Gedela Gayatri (10', 25', 38') and Lotla Krupa (17', 32', 50') scored hat-tricks. Bommu Ankitha (4', 33') and Thokala Yuvarani (20', 59') scored a brace each. Garlanka Varahamma (2') scored the other goal for Hockey Andhra Pradesh.

In the last match of the day, Hockey Karnataka defeated Hockey Bengal 9-0 in their Pool H game. Sahana CM (38', 40', 54') scored a hat-trick, while Dechamma Ganapathi P (6', 15') and Vudumula Sowmya (32', 43') scored a brace each. Nisarga SB (42') and Apsara HA (59') scored the other goals for Hockey Karnataka.



WE NAILED THE CHALLENGES: DIVYA AGARWAL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Divya Agarwal, who is gearing up for 'Abhay 3', the third instalment of the hit crime-thriller series starring Kunal Kemmu in the lead role, recently shared an experience from the shoot which turned into a fun challenge for her.

Sharing the details of her favourite scene, Divya said that it was a very demanding underwater sequence, "Talking about my most memorable scene, it would be shooting the underwater sequence. I think that was the most difficult scene of my life. We were 15 feet under the water and it was quite a difficult scene for me and Tanuj both."

But the two eventually pulled off the scene courtesy their camaraderie, "However, with our partnership, I think we nailed it. That's the coordination and that's the friendship I'm talking about. When we are together, we just get into it then it becomes like a fun challenge to us. I had never done that before and I don't know when I'll get to do that again. Regardless, that is something that I enjoyed a lot."



'I'm touched beyond words': NTR's heart-welcoming thank you note

Hyderabad | Agencies

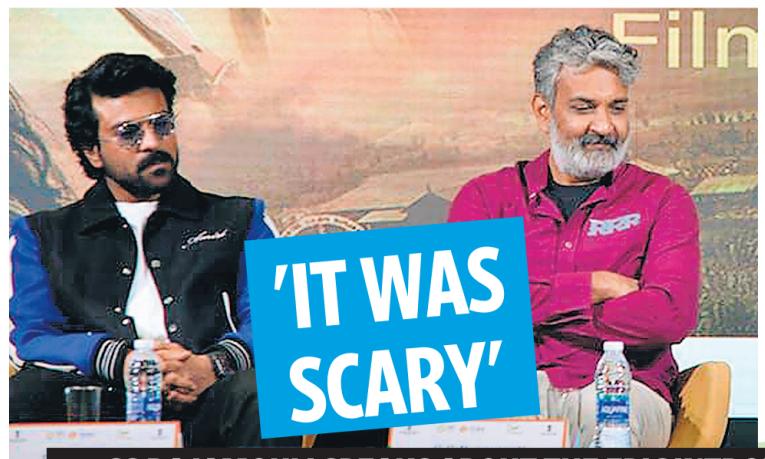
Jr NTR, who essayed the dynamic Komaram Bheem in S.S. Rajamouli's epic 'RRR', took to his social media to express his gratitude for the praise coming his way.

The actor who penned a lengthy note thanked everyone name by name, expressing how overwhelming it is, to be a part of such a mammoth project. Quoting his press note, Jr NTR shared, "I am touched beyond words".

"Thank You! All of you heaped praises on RRR and showered us with love since the film's release. I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who made RRR, a landmark film in my career, possible", NTR wrote.

The 'Simhadri' actor conveyed to Rajamouli, "Thank you Jakkanna for inspiring me to give my best. You truly brought out the best in me and made me feel like water, versatile. You pushed me as an actor and made me mould into my character and all his layers with great ease and conviction." Thanking his co-actor, Ram Charan, NTR wrote, "Charan, my brother, I can't imagine acting in RRR without you. No one else could have done justice to the role of Alluri. Not only RRR but Bheem would have been incomplete without you. Thank you for being the fire to my water."

NTR also thanked Alia Bhatt, Olivia Morris, Ray Stevenson, Alison Doody, producer DVV Danayya, music director MM Keeravani, writer Vijayendra Prasad, cameraman Senthil, line-producer Karthikeya, singer Kala Bhairava, Prem Rakshit, and others.



SS RAJAMOULI SPEAKS ABOUT THE EPIC INTRODUCTION SCENE OF MEGA POWER STAR RAM CHARAN IN RRR

There are several noteworthy introduction scenes in Indian cinema and then there is the OG introduction scene that creates history will remain in the minds forever. Mega Power Star Ram Charan's introduction scene from RRR is the latter. From making us whistle to taking us to the edge of the seat to making our hearts palpitate faster, the introduction scene of Ram Charan in RRR has done it all in and in the most epic way.

Speaking on the same, director SS Rajamouli affirms that, "When you

see a 1000 people ganging up on one guy, you will feel the adrenaline rush. Filming Charan's introduction block was a scary experience. Soon after I said action, 1000 people, with Charan amongst them would move at once and there used to be dust all over. It was scary not to see him clearly amidst such a huge crowd. Luckily, he came out unscathed."

The director who is now hailed as cinematic genius adds that, "The unit prepared for this scene for 3-4 months

and then filmed it for 15-16 days."

Now when one looks back at the scene that may have lasted for minutes, one can only imagine the months and hardwork of this entire unit and the sheer talent of Ram Charan along with the guidance of SS Rajamouli that has now created a cult status of its own!

Diljit Dosanjh to flag off the world tour

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh is all set to kick off his 'Born To Shine' tour on April 9. This will be the first time since the pandemic began that he will get back to touring.

It will begin on April 9 in Gurugram at Backyard Sports Club followed by Jalandhar at Lovely Professional

University.

Commenting on the same, he said that he has been waiting to interact with his fans and get back to the space of live concerts. "All entertainers have waited for the chance to interact with their fans in a way that was not possible during the toughest months of the pandemic. I could not be happier to be back where I belong."

The tour has been co-sponsored by

Saregama Live and realme, and with this tour Saregama is now venturing into live events under the umbrella of 'Saregama Live', to which Diljit says, "On a stage, entertaining fans and soaking in their excitement gives me immense happiness. Anybody who loves music has grown up with Saregama and its inexhaustible musical riches. And to have this label back my tour is like coming full circle."



SHILPA SHETTY, RAKUL PREET, JACQUELINE GROOVE TO TAMIL CHARTBUSTER

Team Absolute | Chennai

The Tamil chartbuster 'Arabic Kuthu' from director Nelson Dilipkumar's upcoming action entertainer 'Beast' continues to make people groove, with actresses Shilpa Shetty, Rakul Preet Singh and Jacqueline Fernandez being the latest to do so.

On Instagram, the actress posted a fun video of actor John Abraham saying that he had choreographed the song and that all three actresses were his students and that he was showing them how to dance to the number. Soon after, all three actresses are seen shaking a leg to the immensely popular number from the Tamil film.

Posting the video, Shilpa Shetty also wrote, "Fun-tastic Four! Burning up the dance floor!"

Shilpa Shetty, Rakul Preet and Jacqueline are the latest celebrities to dance to 'Arabic Kuthu', which has now garnered a phenomenal 240 million views on YouTube.

Several actresses have already danced to the number including Samyuktha Hegde, Aashna Zaveri, Rashmika Mandanna, Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Keerthy Suresh and Yaashica Anand.



Team Absolute | Chennai

Khushbu Sundar, who has conceptualised the story of TV serial

'Meera' says she got the spark for the story by observing several instances in which

women felt that it was okay to be abused by their husbands because it was considered normal. Talking to IANS, Khushbu, who apart from conceptualising the story of the serial also plays the titular role of 'Meera', says, "At present, we see a lot of women being abused by their husbands. And they (women) tend to give up their self-esteem and feel that it is okay to be abused because they think that it is part and parcel of married life. I am telling them that it is not right to be abused by your husband and every woman should stand up, if and when abused."

"I've seen many instances where this has happened. We can't say that this problem exists only in the lower strata and that it does not exist in other places. This problem persists everywhere."

"Why do women keep quiet is the first thing. Even if women are educated they think that it is okay and that one has to adjust and tolerate. This is not done."

Stating that the message 'Meera' intends to send out is as much for women as it is for those from the future generations, Khushbu says, "In the serial, my husband plays a very positive role. However, in a fit of rage, he raises his hand against me in front of the children. I am not going to set a wrong example to my children."

Every woman should stand up when she's abused: Khushbu



Daisy Shah