

absolute india

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IPL teams commanding higher valuations than global football counterparts

Revenue CAGRs of Manchester United (MANU), Juventus and Borussia Dortmund have been at 1.1 per cent, 4.7 per cent and 4.0 per cent, in the past seven years, with a TTM price-to-sales of 2.4x, 1.7x and 1.1x, respectively. Conversely, IPL teams' revenue CAGR has been more than 10 per cent in the past seven years, commanding a much higher valuation than football counterparts, mainly due to higher revenue growth and stellar viewership, Elara Securities said in a report.

THE BOSS



Team Absolute | New Delhi

IPL's title sponsorship is currently held by the Tata Group and has posted a 19.3 per cent CAGR in the past 15 years to reach Rs 5.62 bn per year. Historically, IPL sponsors have been companies from different verticals, bidding for the much-coveted sporting league. Right from traditional companies (DLE, Pepsi), modern day smartphone (Vivo) play-

ers and gaming fantasy companies (Dream 11) to large Indian conglomerates (TATA group), the IPL Title has had a varied sponsorship run. Clearly, IPL's muscle in the Indian sports ecosystem and its ability to generate viewership/revenues are peerless, the report said. Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad posted revenue CAGRs within 11-14 per cent in the past

seven years, much higher than global peers. Such revenues should grow further due to value increment in media rights. As per an analysis of revenue/operating expense breakdown of Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings and Royal Challengers Bangalore, media rights revenue comprises a huge chunk of overall revenues and plus 40 per cent of the operating expenses emanate from team players/staff remuneration.



MEDIA RIGHTS' REVENUE GROWTH IS ON THE TOP

New Delhi: On pricing, IPL per match is poised at a 70 per cent discount to global averages, which may converge to 20-30 per cent, led by IPL renewal in 2023-2027. Also, IPL media rights revenue CAGR at 10.4 per cent is much higher than other global leagues' (EPL, NFL, NBA) 8 per cent CAGR since their inception, Elara Securities said in a report. Thus, cricket, especially IPL, is approximating a trailblazer innings in India, Elara Securities said in a report. The Global Sports industry has emerged as a mega-growth opportunity, with US sports' media rights revenue CAGR at 8.2 per cent through CY12-21, accounting 45.2 per cent of 2021 global media rights revenue. Of this impressive pie, soccer commands a lion's share of 39 per cent. However, of all the sports, cricket rules the Indian market, with a stupendous 94 per cent share in media rights vis-a-vis a mere 3 per cent, globally. Cricket may continue to enjoy such sheer dominance in India, medium term, propped by large-lucrative properties such as IPL. Thus, expect IPL renewal to underpin media rights growth in India, medium term. The report said digital segment, is the big delta for IPL. IPL teams' (average of four teams) revenue CAGR is 14 per cent historically. Expect a 16 per cent CAGR through FY22-28E. Further, media rights revenue forms 70 per cent of total revenues and should sharply spike on rights renewal. Media rights in earlier cycle (2008-17) had grown 4x to Rs 163.47 billion (2018-22). Expect IPL media rights for the next cycle (2023E-2028E) to grow in 3-4x range (25 per cent growth due to more matches) to Rs 500-600 billion, led by the sharpest growth in digital media, the report said.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

'Solution to problem of climate change lies in science'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Even as other experts asserted the need to break silos and work in collaboration across borders, ministries, departments and sectors to mainstream sustainability, a top scientist on Friday said though industrial development played a part in accelerating climate change, the solution to the problem also lies in science. The virtual curtain-raiser to the 22nd edition of the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS 2023) - the annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) to be held on the theme of 'Mainstreaming Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience for Collective Action' - held ahead of the World Environment Day on June 5. Delivering the keynote address, Ovais Sarmad, deputy executive secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), said: "We have not inherited the environment from the previous gener-



ation, but borrowed it from the future generation. We have a huge moral and ethical responsibility to protect that. We have to keep the perspective of human development and the individual at the centre of it all. Unfortunately, sometimes the policies and discussions fail to do that." Pointing out that inclusive multilateralism is the only way forward

"Technology driven industrial development led to climate change. It is going to be Science and Technology (S&T) led coping strategy and clean technology that will help address climate change. The new S&T policy will focus on creating the STI ecosystem that meets the challenges of SDG goals and aligns with national priorities."

Dr Akhilesh Gupta,
Senior Advisor, Department of Science and Technology

to address climate change, recover from current conflicts and the crisis we are living through, Sarmad also added: "In both developed and developing countries, there is an increased importance towards mainstreaming the effects of climate change and addressing them in climate policies." Calling for the integration of sustainable development across sectors of climate policy, finance, science, technology and innovation, Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI, said: "Perspectives from a variety of lenses and institutional vantage points become important when we talk about mainstreaming sustainable development."

Darshan Kumar: I always pray to get an excellent cast

Shachi Chaturvedi | Mumbai

talks about Nothing, according to the performer, determines which character will work, and Tinka Singh is an example.



The self-proclaimed godman Baba Nirala returns for ten more episodes in Prakash Jha's famous series Aashram's third season. To prevent upsetting anyone, the series is now officially titled Ek Badnaam...Aashram.

In Conversation with the cast of Aashram season 3, Absolute India asked them some interesting questions. To which the actors gave some bold replies.

When asked about her part and how she feels about the series actress Anurita Jha quipped, "I was a little apprehensive since it was a dark series and I was in a deeper place where there is no room. As actors, we must become the blood and heart of the character, adapting it to our own experiences that caused us to feel anguish. In the role, I felt degraded, and it wounded me at times."

Speaking about his character, Adhyaan stated that his part as Tinka Singh would be much greater than what we have seen in the first two chapters. Later, he said that because of his ineffective career, he went to babas and tried everything. The actor also

being on the set of filmmaker Prakash Jha has been a thrilling experience for him. Darshan revealed that he always wishes for an excellent cast. "I believe that when we work with an outstanding cast, our workload is cut in half because their amazing performance enhances your performance and allows you to learn a lot."

Talking about the trauma a character can bring Darshan shed insight on how he spent restless nights while shooting Kashmir files since he had to view all the footage and talk to individuals on a sensitive issue.

To keep the intrigue alive, the actors of Aashram 3 didn't divulge much about their characters, but they all remarked how much fun they had filming together and how they still talk on video calls. For the unversed, Aashram season 3 premiered on an OTT platform on 3rd June.



Rajasthan becomes 2nd Indian state to sign MoU to save soil

Team Absolute | Jaipur

Rajasthan has become the second Indian state to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to save soil by preventing and reversing desertification of fertile lands.

In the Save Soil programme held in Jaipur on Friday night, Rajesh Chand Meena, state minister for panchayat raj and rural development, Lalchand Kataria, state agriculture minister with Sadhguru, Founder of Isha Foundation, called for immediate policy-driven action to save the state and country's agricultural land from becoming barren.

Kataria and Sadhguru exchanged MoU to save the

soil of the state by making farmer and soil friendly agriculture policies.

Sadhguru, who is currently on a 100-day, 30,000-km solo motorcycle journey across Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East to build a global consensus to address soil health, hit the Indian coast on May 29 at the port of Jamnagar, Gujarat.

Thousands of people flocked to the Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre (JECC) for the event.

The basic objective of the Save Soil campaign is to tackle the extinction of soil and to insist on ensuring at least 3-6 per cent organic matter in agricultural land through immediate policy reforms on all the countries of the world.

THE GREEN DATING TREND

New Delhi: With the growing concerns around climate change and environmental issues, conversations around nature and saving resources have become dinner table discussions. In India, while millennials have been known to promote environmental activism, it's now the Gen Zs who are also taking the conversation forward. In fact, environmental activism is a huge part of their dating life, and their concern for the cause is becoming a deciding factor when it comes to choosing a partner or who they want to date. The 'Green Dating' trend is gaining traction in India as people are making more values-driven dating decisions and have an increased appreciation of the outdoors thanks to park walks and pandemic-induced alfresco dating. Data from Bumble, the women-first dating app, shows that 'environmentalism' ranks as one of the top value interest badges to Bumble profiles in India. In fact, of those who recently added value interest badges to their dating profile, over a quarter (28 per cent) selected 'environmentalism'. Research from Bumble conducted last year also found that post-lockdown, single Indians are now planning to keep first dates 'active' with a walk in the park or an outdoor picnic. Walk in the park or around the neighbourhood was one of the top choices for ideal first dates for single Indians per Bumble's recent research.



Centre writes to states to phase out Single Use Plastic

Of the 4,700-odd urban local bodies (ULBs) across India, only some 2,500 have notified the ban on single use plastic (SUP) from July 1, prompting the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to ask them to phase out SUP and contribute to the overarching clean and green mandate.

A total of 2,591 out of 4,704 ULBs have already reported notification of SUP ban as per the directions of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), therefore, the states / UTs will need to ensure that the remaining 2,100-plus ULBs notify the same by June 30, the Ministry said on Saturday on the eve of World Environment Day.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Under the Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban 2.0, plastic waste management, including elimination of SUP, is a crucial area of focus.

The Ministry has also issued a detailed advisory to the states and UTs wherein it appeals to take up a range of activities including large scale cleaning and plogging drives, with special emphasis on plastic waste collection, as well as large scale tree plantation drives, with participation of all citizens.

As per the Plastic Waste Management (Amended) Rules, 2021, the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic less than 75 microns (i.e. 0.075 mm in thickness) has been banned with



effect from September 30, 2021 as opposed to 50 microns recommended earlier under PWM Rules, 2016.

In accordance with the PWM (Amended) Rules, 2021, a range of complementary initiatives will also be taken up to strengthen enforcement. ULBs will need to identify SUP-alternatives (such as cloth/jute/plastic bags, degradable cutlery, etc.) readily

available in the market and create awareness about such alternatives among citizens.

Corporate entities, dealing with bottled drinks may be requested to set up Bottle Banks (where users can get paid for dropping off PET bottles), and also set up subsidized reusable plastic bottle booths at different locations, as part of their Extended Producers'

Responsibility (EPR) mandates. Alongside, ULBs may establish Thaila (bag) / Bartaan (Utensils) kiosks or bhandars to provide citizens with alternatives to SUP, especially for use in public meetings and festivals, thereby helping to reduce SUP consumption. These initiatives may be strengthened through 'Swachhata Raths' to be deployed in all public places, markets, and other high footfall areas to spread awareness against use of SUP and for availing SUP-alternatives.

ULBs may also encourage citizens to take pledges to not litter plastic and prevent plastics getting into landfills, along with reward campaigns to publicise good disposal behaviour in media or social networks to encourage others to stop SUP usage.



ASSAM GOVT DENIES PPE 'SCAM' CHARGE TARGETING CM; SARMA THREATENS TO SUE MANISH SISODIA

GUWAHATI/KOLKATA | Agencies

The Assam government on Saturday strongly denied the allegations of irregularity in supply of PPE kits and sanitisers and that Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's family was involved in the reported malpractice.

Earlier on Saturday, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had levelled a fresh allegation of corruption against Sarma, accusing the latter of awarding PPE kit contracts to his kin during the Covid emergency.

Referring to a media report, Sisodia said that while the Assam government procured PPE kits for Rs 600 a piece from other companies, Sarma gave urgent supply orders to the firms of his wife Riniki Bhuyan Sarma and son's business partners for Rs 990 a piece, taking advantage of the emergency situation.

Sarma later hit back at Sisodia, threatening to file a criminal defamation suit against him. "Stop sermonising and I will see you soon in Guwahati as you will face criminal defamation," Sarma tweeted.

In another tweet, Sarma said: "At a time when the entire country was facing the worst pandemic in over 100 years, Assam hardly had any PPE kits. My wife took the courage of coming forward and donating around 1,500 free of cost to the govt to save lives. She didn't take a single penny."

The opposition Congress, Trinamool Congress, Rajiv Dal and Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) and other political parties have been demanding a Supreme Court monitored probe or by the central agencies into the matter.

Assam's Information and Public Relations Minister Pijush Hazarika, who is also the state government's spokesman, said there was no irregularity in the supply of PPE kits and no member of Sarma's family was involved. Claiming that the allegations are "bogus, malicious and imaginary", Hazarika, who was the minister of state of Health and Family welfare in 2020, said that the false campaign is a



handiwork of a certain section with vested interests.

"If they have evidence they can go to the appropriate court instead of making false and unsubstantiated allegations," the Minister said. The political controversy erupted after a New Delhi-based online media outlet along with a Guwahati-based media outlet claimed that the Assam government in 2020 placed four Covid-19 related emergency medical supply orders without following the proper procedures.

Hazarika said that considering the emergency situation, orders for supply of PPE kits were placed with 35 firms and for supply of sanitisers, orders were placed to nine firms.

A supply order of only Rs 85 lakh was given to the firm referred to by the media portals, the minister said.

Sarma, now the Chief Minister, was the Health and Family Welfare Minister in the previous Assam government headed by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who is now

a Union minister. The Chief Minister's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sarma, said in a statement that a news website has come out with an unfounded accusation with regard to her supply of PPE kits to the National Health Mission.

"In the first week of the pandemic, not a single PPE kit was available in Assam. Taking cognisance of the same, I reached out to a business acquaintance, and delivered around 1,500 PPE kits to the NHM with a lot of effort. Later, I wrote to the NHM to treat the same as a part of my CSR. A due acknowledgment is enclosed. I did not take a single penny out of this supply. I have always been transparent about my belief in giving back to the society, irrespective of my husband's political standing. My organisation has also supported the NHM in the fight against Covid by donating to the Aarogya Nidhi," she said.

In Kolkata, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha member Sukhendu Sekhar Ray, quoting media reports, said that PPE kits were purchased at the rate of Rs 2,200 per piece.

"However, the actual price of the same at that time in the open market was Rs 600-700. The time referred to here is March-April of 2020 when these PPE kits were procured."

"A total of 10,000 PPE kits were procured from Agile Associates at the rate of Rs 2,200 per piece. Two companies named Agile Associates and Meditime Healthcare were involved, and it included the participation of the wife and son of then Health Minister of Assam," Ray said.

Meditime Healthcare bagged orders worth Rs 4.20 crore for the supply of PPE kits, he said. On the other hand, Agile Associates received orders worth Rs 2,20,50,000 for the same. These facts surfaced in the RTI replies and documents submitted on the purchases by the concerned departments which were published in the media, said Ray, who's also a senior lawyer.

Congress leaders in Guwahati announced that they would continue their agitation till a probe is ordered to unearth the "irregularities".

Uphold 1991 law to protect Gyanvapi mosque, says Jamaat-e-Islami Hind



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) on Saturday asked the central government to uphold the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 to protect Gyanvapi and other mosques in the country.

Addressing a press briefing at its headquarters here, JIH Vice-President Prof Mohammed Salim Engineer voiced concern over the recent developments related to the targeting of Muslim places of worship in the country. He said that the courts should not have entertained petitions pertaining to

demands for survey of Gyanvapi and other mosques when the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 prohibits altering the character of religious places.

He asked the central government to uphold the 1991 law in the interest of justice and peace. JIH vice-president said that on the occasion of Ram Navami, various processions were deliberately carried out in communally sensitive areas and attempts were made to hoist saffron flags on the minarets of mosques. "All this was done with the police and local administration looking the other way", he added.

Final autopsy report cites 'myocardial infarction' as reason for KK's death

KOLKATA | Agencies

The final post-mortem and chemical analysis reports of playback singer Krishnakumar Kunath, popularly known as KK, was handed over to the Kolkata Police on Saturday.

Both the reports cited 'myocardial infarction' as the cause of the singer's death.

As per the final post-mortem report, cholesterol accumulation narrowed the posterior intramuscular artery to a great extent which affected the pumping of blood by the heart. There were blockages in the coronary artery as well.

Sources in Kolkata Police said that they had taken up the investigation by filing an FIR relating to unnatural death.

"But after the preliminary and final post-mortem reports, as well as the chemical analysis report, the theory of unnatural death can be ruled out now," said an official on condition of anonymity. It what turned to be his final show at the Nazrul Mancha in south Kolkata on Tuesday evening, KK had com-



plained of uneasiness a number of times and even went to the backstage restroom to take rest. Doctors feel that those were subtle signals of the forthcoming danger, which those present there, including KK himself, might have ignored. Had KK insisted on concluding the performance and rushed to a nearby hospital, there could have been a possibility of avoiding the unfortunate end.

4 KILLED, 7 INJURED IN J&K ROAD ACCIDENT

Jammu: Four persons were killed while seven others were injured in a road accident in J&K's Poonch district on Saturday.

Police sources said a Tata Sumo taxi went out of driver's control and rolled down into the Barari Nallah in Saujiyan village of Poonch district.

"One person was killed on the spot while 10 others received injuries. All of them were shifted to the Saujiyan sub-district hospital where another injured person succumbed to his injuries."

"Later, eight injured persons were referred to the Poonch district hospital, where two more persons died, taking the toll to four."

"The remaining passengers are being treated in the hospital," sources said.

Akali Dal nominates Beant Singh killer's sister for Sangrur bypoll

CHANDIGARH | Agencies

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Saturday announced Kamaldeep Kaur Rajoana, the sister of Balwant Singh Rajoana who was convicted for the assassination of former Chief Minister Beant Singh in 1995, as the joint candidate of SAD, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and all panthic organisations for the Sangrur parliamentary bypoll.

A decision to this effect was taken after SAD President Sukhbir Singh Badal held thorough consultations on this issue with the BSP leadership as well as the panthic organisations, including the Sant Samaj and the Bandi Sikh Rihai Committee.

The SAD chief appealed to the 'panth' to wholeheartedly support Kamaldeep Rajoana's candidature.

Disclosing this, party spokesman Daljit Singh Cheema said that



Kamaldeep Rajoana would contest the bypoll on SAD symbol. She will file her nomination on June 6.

Cheema said there was a long-standing demand from the panthic organisations that the joint panthic candidate for the Sangrur bypolls should be from the families of 'Bandi Singhs'.

"The panth feels that this will draw attention on the plight of the Sikh detainees who have been languishing in jails even after completion of their sentences. Akal Takht Sahib Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh had also relayed a message to the community in this regard. The SAD has taken all these factors into consideration before deciding to field Kamaldeep Kaur Rajoana as the joint panthic candidate on the party symbol."

Cheema said Kamaldeep Rajoana was also a victim of police atrocity.

Jamia masjid row: K'taka historical town turns into police fortress

MANDYA, (KARNATAKA) | Agencies

Karnataka's historical town Srirangapatna has turned into a police fortress on Saturday against the backdrop of Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP) "Srirangapatna Chalo" call to chant Hanuman Chalisa in Jamia Masjid.

The district administration has clamped curfew from Friday evening till Sunday morning in the town.

District Superintendent of Police Yathish. N stated that action will be initiated against those who violate the prohibitory orders.

The police have sealed off roads leading to Jamia Masjid and 400 police personnel have been deployed around the mosque. The police have conducted the flag march in the Srirangapatna town. SP Yathish, who led the flag march, said all necessary measures are undertaken to maintain peace in the town.



State Home Minister Araga Inanendra has given directions to the police to take appropriate measures to maintain law and order situation. He has also stated that Hindu activists can voice out their rights and demands in a democratic way. Bajrang Dal leader Kallahalli Balu stated that they are all set to enter Srirangapatna town. Sri Rama Sena Founder Pramod Muthalik slammed the

ruling BJP government, stating that measures should have been taken to prevent Muslims from running madrasas inside the masjid instead of stopping Hindus from conducting prayers in the masjid. ADGP Alokumar (Law and Order) stated that the police will not let anyone violate the law and order situation. Jamia Mosque was built by erstwhile ruler of Mysuru Tipu Sultan. Hindutva groups have also sought nod from authorities to conduct prayers in the mosque. The issue has become a hot topic in the state.

Jamia masjid also called as Masjid-i-Ala, is located inside the Srirangapatna fort. It was built in 1786-87, during the rule of Tipu. The mosque has three inscriptions that mention nine names of Prophet Mohammad.

Narendra Modi Vichar Manch organisation claimed that Jamia masjid was built after razing down Hanuman temple.

IN A FIRST, A JUDGE COUPLE IN RAJASTHAN HC

Jaipur: The Union Ministry of Law and Justice has appointed Kuldeep Mathur and Shubha Mehta as two new Judges of the Rajasthan High Court.

As Shubha Mehta's husband Mahendra Goyal is already a judge in the Rajasthan High Court, it is for the first time when both husband and wife will both be judges.

The total number of judges in the Rajasthan High Court will now increase from 25 to 27 with these appointments. However, 23 posts still remain vacant despite the new appointees.

The order of the names of Kuldeep Mathur and Shubha Mehta was issued by the Central Government on Friday evening.

GOVT WANTS TO HAVE ME KILLED: RAKESH TIKAIT

MEERUT | Agencies

Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) national spokesperson Rakesh Tikait has alleged that the government "wants to get him killed" and that the attacks on him in Karnataka and Delhi are proof enough.

He was addressing the farmers and union members at "Kisan Panchayat" in Meerut's Kanker Khara on Friday.

Termining the recent black paint attack on him in Karnataka a "well-planned" conspiracy, he alleged that there was also a plot to kill him when he visited General Bipin Rawat's residence in Delhi to pay homage to him after he passed away in a helicopter accident last December.

It is a crucial time which cannot be wasted in infight-



ing as the government is playing "sabotage" politics to disband the farmers' union, he stated.

"The Tikait family has always raised the farmers' voice strongly and will con-

tinue doing it. After Baba Mahendra Singh Tikait, Naresh Tikait has now dedicated himself to the cause. The Tikait family will not succumb to the pressure," he asserted.

PIL in SC challenges National Commission for Minorities Act

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has moved the Supreme Court challenging the validity of Section 2 (C) of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) Act, 1992 terming it 'arbitrary' and 'contrary' to the Constitution.

Petitioner Devkinandan Thakur Ji, filed through Advocate Ashutosh Dubey, also sought directions from the Centre to define 'minority' and lay down a guidelines for identification of minorities at district level in order to ensure that only those religious and linguistic groups, which are socially economically politically non-dominant and numerically very inferior, get the benefits and protections guaranteed under Articles 29-30.

"Hindus are merely 1 per cent in Ladakh, 2.75 per cent in Mizoram, 2.77 per cent in Lakshdweep, 4 per cent in Kashmir, 8.74 per cent in Nagaland, 11.52 per cent in Meghalaya, 29 per cent in Arunachal Pradesh, 38.49 per cent in Punjab and 41.29 per cent in Manipur but the Central government has not declared them 'minority' under Section 2(c) of the NCM Act and Section 2 (f) of the NCMEI Act, thus Hindus are



not protected under Articles 29-30 and cannot establish-administer educational institution of their choice," the PIL contended.

It further stated that the Act using unbridled power under S. 2(c), the Centre arbitrarily notified five communities --Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsi-- as minority at national level.

Cause of action continues till date because fol-

lowers of Judaism, Bahaim and Hinduism, who are real minorities in Ladakh, Mizoram, Lakshdweep, Kashmir, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Punjab, Manipur, cannot establish and administer educational institutions of their choice because of non-identification of 'minority' at state level, thus jeopardising their basic rights guaranteed under Article 29-30, the PIL claimed. Their right under Articles

29-30 is being siphoned off illegally to the majority community in the state because the Centre has not notified them as 'minority' under NCM Act.

Followers of Judaism, Bahaim and Hinduism are being deprived of their basic rights to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. "On the other hand, Muslims are in majority in Lakshdweep (96.58 per cent) and Kashmir (96 per cent) and there is significant population in Ladhakh (44 per cent), Assam (34.20 per cent), Bengal (27.5 per cent), Kerala (26.60 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (19.30 per cent) and Bihar (18 per cent); can establish & administer educational institutions of their choice. Christians are a majority in Nagaland (88.10 per cent), Mizoram (87.16 per cent) and Meghalaya (74.59 per cent), and there is significant population in Arunachal, Goa, Kerala, Manipur, Tamil Nadu & West Bengal, can also establish and administer," it read. Likewise, Sikhs are a majority in Punjab and there is large population in Delhi, Chandigarh, Haryana, but they can establish and administer.

Similarly, Buddhists are majority in Ladakh but they can establish and administer educational institutions of their choice, the PIL added.

ASSAM COP, WHO NABBED HER FIANCE FOR FRAUD, ARRESTED

Guwahati: Junmoni Rabha -- a woman Assam Police Sub Inspector, who had come to the limelight after she had arrested her fiance in a case of fraud, was arrested on Saturday.

The police in Majuli have arrested Rabha in connection with a case against her fiance on various charges, including criminal conspiracy and cheating. She was presented at the court following which the magistrate sent her to a 14-day judicial custody. Two contractors -- Ram Abatra Sharma and Ajit Bora, had filed two separate FIRs against Rabha's fiance Rana Pogag, alleging huge financial transactions between them.

The complainants claimed that Junmoni had introduced Pogag to them and it was because of her perusal, that they had given the money to Pogag for getting contract works from the ONGC. At that time, she was posted in Majuli.

The police questioned Junmoni Rabha for the last two days and finally arrested her. Even as her name appeared in the FIRs, she was not an accused. Following the case, Rabha was transferred from Nagaon to Kaliabor.

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“ We know what we are, but know not what we may be.”
William Shakespeare

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WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

GO GREEN, PLEASE...

India's green cover spreads across 81 mn hectares, carbon footprints also increasing

▶ **INDIA IS AMONG THE TOP 10 COUNTRIES WITH MOST TREES AND MANY REPORTS SUGGEST THAT THE TOTAL FOREST COVER IN INDIA IS ABOUT 81 MILLION HECTARES (800,000 SQ KM), WHICH IS 24.62 PER CENT OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF INDIA. THOUGH MARGINAL, BUT IT HAS SEEN AN INCREASE FROM 24.56 PER CENT IN 2019.**

▶ **EVEN THE FOREST AREA COVER HAS INCREASED BY 2,260 SQ KM. THE CARBON STOCK HAS ALSO SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED. THE CURRENT ASSESSMENT SHOWS THAT TOTAL CARBON STOCK IN THE COUNTRY'S FOREST IS ESTIMATED TO BE 7,204 MILLION TONNES, MARKING AN INCREASE OF 79.4 MILLION TONNES SINCE 2019.**

▶ **WE NEED AT LEAST ONE MATURE TREE OR FOUR TO FIVE SMALL TREES TO MAKE ENOUGH OXYGEN FOR ONE PERSON. ON THE CONTRARY, INDIA HAS A WHOPPING 36 BILLION TREES, BUT ITS POPULATION IS ALSO MORE THAN A 1.35 BILLION. HENCE, EVERY INDIVIDUAL WOULD GET JUST 25-26 TREES EACH.**



plantation, it is also about pollution control, water conservation, energy conservation, civic sense, and above all, being a responsible citizen, who is an advocator of sustainable planet.

The change begins from an individual, and then individuals make a society and finally envisage a collective vision of a country. It is not about just being environment conscious, it is also about thinking for the future, thinking about the economic development and building a responsible and sensible society.

World Environment Day is celebrated across the world on June 5

with an intention to let everyone know that there is one Earth and it is the responsibility of each individual to balance it in such a way that everyone lives here in harmony. This is also the theme of World Environment Day 2022.

When we need to care about the future, the future generation needs to take the reins in their hands. The young children of today will become the torch-bearers of tomorrow.

We have one planet to stay and no more to go. Protect it before it decides to protect itself, as the nature does carry the power to protect itself.

about 390 billion trees, or 13 per cent of the world's trees.

This may sound as if the Earth is full of trees. But the reality is that we have lost 80 per cent of the world's trees to logging, clear cutting, burning, and environmental degradation, according to data from the organisation 'One Tree Planted'. Overall, we have cut 47 per cent of trees since the beginning of the civilisation.

It is also true that protecting the environment is not just about tree

Pavan Kaushik | New Delhi

The Earth is home to over three trillion trees and this number is so large that it's almost impossible to grasp fully.

The good news is that it is more than seven times the earlier estimation of 400 billion trees. By comparison, the Amazon Rainforest, which comprises over half of the Earth's remaining rainforests, is home to

TWITTER, YOUTUBE ASKED BY GOVT TO PULL DOWN LAYER'R SHOT PERFUME AD 'Promotes rape culture'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry has written to Twitter and YouTube to remove video advertisements of a deodorant brand Layer'r Shot for their alleged obscene content. "It has come to the notice of the ministry that an inappropriate and derogatory advertisement of a deodorant is circulating on social media. The Ministry has asked Twitter and YouTube to immediately pull down all instances of this advertisement," the ministry tweeted, attaching the email it has sent to the platforms.

Also, the TV channel on which it appeared has already pulled it down on directions of the broadcasting ministry, another tweet said. The move by the ministry came after the advertis-



ing body Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) found the advertisements going against the existing codes. The ministry found that the ads violate the Rule 3(1)(b)(ii) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021, and are detrimental to the portrayal of women in the interest of decency or morality. The video has been watched around a million

times and has been shared in other social media platforms, the ministry said in the email to the platforms.

"The ad is in serious breach of the ASCI Code and is against public interest. We have taken immediate action and notified the advertiser to suspend the ad, pending investigation," the email said.

The ad was brought into the notice of ASCI via Twitter by some viewers on Friday, as per a report.

MP GOVT ISSUES CHICKENPOX ADVISORY AFTER DETECTION OF 31 CASES IN 7 DISTRICTS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

“ A total of 31 cases of fever with rashes has been registered in the last one month in Chhatarpur, Chhindwara, Datia, Neemuch, Bhopal, Dhar and Khandwa districts. A presumptive diagnosis of chickenpox has come up in the clinical examination of these cases,” Dr Sudam Khade, Commissioner and Secretary, Health, said.

The Madhya Pradesh Health Department on Saturday issued an advisory after 31 chickenpox cases were detected in seven districts in the state, an official said. The chief medical and health officers of all districts have been directed to take action as per the advisory issued regarding the prevention and treatment of chickenpox, said Health Commissioner and Secretary (Health) Dr Sudam Khade.

Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease and can infect children, pregnant women and adolescents, the official added.

ED REQUESTS UAE GOVT TO KEEP WATCH ON ABHISHEK BANERJEE IN DUBAI



Kolkata: The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is probing the coal and cattle smuggling cases in West Bengal, has requested the UAE government through the Ministry of External Affairs to closely monitor the movements of Trinamool Congress national general secretary

Abhishek Banerjee and his wife Rujira Narula during their ongoing trip to Dubai.

Accompanied by his wife, Abhishek Banerjee is currently in Dubai to undergo ophthalmological treatment.

While the ED was unwilling to allow his Dubai trip, later a single-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court permitted him and his wife to travel to Dubai.

However, before leaving for Dubai, the couple had to submit their travel details to the ED officials as per the court order.

It is learnt that through the Ministry of External Affairs, the ED sleuths have forwarded the travel details of the couple to the UAE government for the convenience of the latter to monitor their movements. The ED has briefed the UAE government about their interrogation in connection with the coal smuggling scam.

Meanwhile, Bengal BJP President Sukanta Majumdar has raised questions over Abhishek Banerjee's Dubai trip for ophthalmological treatment.

12 dead, many injured in explosion at Chemical factory in Uttar Pradesh



Hapur | Agencies

Twelve people died in a fire at a chemical factory in Uttar Pradesh's Hapur district. Police and fire-engines have rushed to the spot and rescue operations are on.

The accident happened after a boiler burst at an

industrial facility in Dhaulana, around 60 kilometres from New Delhi, police spokesman Surendra Singh told Reuters.

The factory is located adjacent to a CNG pump. Rescue and relief measures were taken up at the site, according to officials.

The impact of the explo-

sion was so intense that the roofs of some of the factories located in the vicinity were damaged. It took three hours for the fire tenders to douse the blaze in the factory.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the loss of lives.

"The accident in the chemical factory of Hapur, Uttar Pradesh is heart-wrenching. I express my condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives in this. The state government is actively involved in providing treatment to the injured and all possible help," Modi tweeted.

The chief minister directed that the incident be probed by experts.

In a statement issued in Lucknow, Adityanath asked the district administration to extend all possible help to the families of the victims.

He also said that necessary treatment should be provided to the injured.

Odisha CM to revamp cabinet, all ministers resign



Bhubaneswar | Agencies

Just a day after completion of the bypoll to Brajarajgarh Assembly seat, Odisha Chief Minister and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president Naveen Patnaik has initiated the process for a complete revamp of his

cabinet.

According to BJD sources, all the ministers have been asked to step down with immediate effect. Accordingly, the ministers have submitted their papers, the source said.

Similarly, Assembly Speaker S.N. Patro has also

resigned from his seat. The Speaker has submitted his resignation to deputy speaker Rajani Kanta Singh. It is speculated that for the first time a woman BJD MLA will be appointed as Speaker. Patro may get a berth in the new cabinet.

For the first time, Naveen is going to make a complete revamp of his cabinet. The new ministers are likely to take oath at Raj Bhawan convention hall on Sunday.

Local political analysts feel that such a move has been taken to ensure that there will be no conflict or indifference among the outgoing ministers. Soon after the reshuffle, some senior leaders, who were dropped from the cabinet, will be given key roles in the organisation aiming at the 2024 elections.

CORBEVAX GETS DCGI NOD AS HETEROLOGOUS BOOSTER FOR ADULTS

New Delhi: Hyderabad-based Pharmaceuticals firm Biological E Ltd (BE) on Saturday announced that its Covid-19 vaccine Corbevax has been cleared by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) as a heterologous Covid-19 booster for 18 plus population after their primary vaccination with two doses of Covishield and Covaxin.

With this, Biological E Limited's Corbevax has become the first Covid-19 vaccine in India to be approved by the DCGI as a heterologous Covid-19 booster dose. The Corbevax booster can be given six months after administration of the second dose of the vaccine. The adults fully vaccinated with Covishield or Covaxin can take Corbevax as their third or booster dose.

Hyderabad boy loses Rs 36 lakh playing mobile games



Team Absolute | Hyderabad

A 16-year-old boy lost a whopping Rs 36 lakh by playing online games on mobile phone.

The boy, a resident of Amberpet area in Hyderabad, used the bank

from her mother's bank account to play the game. As he became addicted to the games, he started spending huge amounts without the knowledge of family members.

The class 11 student, son of a deceased police official, kept making the payments ranging from Rs 1.45 lakh to Rs 2 lakh. When his mother went to the State Bank of India (SBI) to withdraw the money, she was shocked to learn that there is no money left in the account. A total of Rs 27 lakh was spent from the account. She then checked her account with HDFC bank and found that Rs 9 lakh had disappeared.

The woman approached the cyber crime police station. She told police that it was her late husband's hard earned money. The monetary benefit received by the family following the officer's death was also credited in the two bank accounts.

Top Congress leaders join BJP in Punjab

Team Absolute | Chandigarh

In a setback to the Opposition Congress in Punjab, four former ministers and an ex-MLA switched loyalties and joined the BJP in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Former ministers Gurpreet Singh Kangar, Balbir Singh Sidhu, Raj Kumar Verka and Sunder Sham Arora and ex-MLA Kewal Singh Dhillon were inducted into the BJP at a function here in the presence of BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

While Verka was the Dalit face of the Congress, Arora was the working president of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee. Sidhu and Kangar are Jat-Sikh leaders.

Kewal Dhillon, a former Congress MLA from Barnala, also joined the BJP. Former MLA Sarup Chand Singla, who quit the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in March, also joined the saffron party.

Except for Dhillon, all the Congress leaders who joined the BJP had lost the February 20 elections.



Earlier, former Punjab chief Sunil Jakhar, a prominent state's Hindu face, joined the saffron party.

He shared a video of the rebel Congress sitting with him in Panchkula before their joining to the BJP. Responding to mass exodus of lead-

ers, state Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring said the switchover was a "blessing in disguise".

He said the BJP had taken "trash" into its fold and would realise in the next elections what gift Shah was taking with him.



NO DECISION ON MAKING MASKS COMPULSORY, HEALTH MINISTER RAJESH TOPE CLARIFIES

▶ **SPEAKING TO THE MEDIA IN PUNE, TOPE SAID THAT THE USE OF CERTAIN WORDS IN A THREE-PAGE LETTER SENT TO LOCAL CIVIC BODIES HAD CAUSED THE CONFUSION.**



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope clarified on Saturday that the state government has not decided to make masks mandatory in the state but appealed to people to use masks when in closed spaces. Speaking to the media in

Pune, Tope said that the use of certain words in a three-page letter sent to local civic bodies had caused the confusion. "Districts like Mumbai, Thane, Palghar, Pune and Raigad have seen a small surge in numbers. In this regard, the Union health ministry had sent a letter asking for action to be taken. The letter had the word 'must' which seems to have created confusion," he said. Earlier this week, the media had reported that masking was compulsory in closed spaces due to an

increased number of cases reported in the state. Tope said this was not the case. He added that as of now, there is no compulsion but appealed to people to use masks in closed spaces.

The government is keeping a close watch on the situation and necessary action would be taken after 10-15 days, he said. Most cases being reported are mild, he added. District authorities have been asked to ramp up vaccination and increase testing, Tope said.

For 4th day in a row, new COVID-19 cases cross 1,000-mark

OUT OF 8,10,35,276 LABORATORY SAMPLES 78,91,703 HAVE BEEN TESTED POSITIVE (09.74%) FOR COVID-19 UNTIL TODAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra on Saturday, June 4 recorded 1,357 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the number of active cases to 5,888. Besides, 1 COVID-19 death was reported in the day, taking the tally to 1,47,865.

595 patients were discharged in the day, taking the tally to 77,37,950. The recovery rate in the state is 98.05%. The case fatality rate in the state is 1.87%.

Out of 8,10,35,276 laboratory samples 78,91,703 have been tested positive (09.74%) for COVID-19 until today. The Mumbai circle that consists of MCGM, Thane, TMC, Navi Mumbai, KDMC, Ulhasnagar MC, Bhivandi Nijampur MC, Mira Bhayandar MC, Palghar, Vasai Virar MC, Raigad, Panvel MC recorded 1227 new cases. The Nashik circle that consists of Nashik, Nashik MC, Malegaon MC, Ahmednagar,

Ahmednagar MC, Dhule MC, Jalgaon, Jalgaon MC, Nandurbar reported 4 fresh COVID-19 cases. The Pune circle that includes Pune, PMC, PCMC, Solapur, Solapur MC, Satara--recorded 104 new cases. The Kolhapur circle that includes Kolhapur, Kolhapur MC, Sangli, Sangli MC, Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri reported 7 new cases.

The Aurangabad circle that consists of Aurangabad, Aurangabad MC, Jalna, Hingoli, Parbhani, Parbhani MC reported 3 fresh cases.

The Latur circle that consists of Latur, Latur MC, Osmanabad, Beed, Nanded, Nanded MC recorded 3 fresh cases. The Akola circle that includes Akola, Akola MC, Amaravati, Amaravati MC, Yawatmal, Buldhana, Washim recorded 2 fresh cases. Nagpur circle that includes Nagpur, Nagpur MC, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur, Chandrapur MC, Gadchiroli reported 7 fresh cases.

Maharashtra steps up vigil as Covid cases rise

There is no decision on compulsory masking, we however want people to wear masks on their own as a precaution due to a rise in covid cases, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said. "We have just implored people to wear masks in closed spaces like schools, offices, buses, trains, for people to wear masks. This was just an advisory," Tope added.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra has stepped up effort to detect and control rising cases in the state - with the state government advising citizens to wear masks in public places.

There is no decision on compulsory masking, we however want people to wear masks on their own as a precaution due to a rise in covid cases, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh

Tope said. "We have just implored people to wear masks in closed spaces like schools, offices, buses, trains, for people to wear masks. This was just an advisory," Tope added.

"We are just appealing to the people." The Maharashtra health department on Friday asked district and civic authorities to ramp up coronavirus testing as the numbers of samples being examined had fallen while cases were rising.

In a letter to collectors, municipal corporations and chief executive officers, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Pradeep Vyas said all districts should ensure the proportion of RT-PCR tests was at least 60 per cent.

In view of rising cases, it said people should be advised to wear masks in closed public spaces like trains, buses, cinemas, auditoriums, offices, hospitals, colleges and schools.

The state has seen a sharp spike in cases over the last week, with June 1 reporting 1,081 cases, the highest since February 24.

Maharashtra Rajya Sabha polls: MVA MLAs to be moved to 5-star for 3 days

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With BJP firm on contesting the sixth RS seat in state, a Sena MLA told TOI the party had asked all its MLAs to reach the hotel on June 8. "The invitation has been extended to not just Sena MLAs but also all MLAs from the MVA. We will follow instructions of the party," the MLA said.

The MVA ministers wanted the BJP to withdraw its candidate so the polls would take place without a contest.

This is the first time in over two decades that Rajya Sabha elections are being contested in Maharashtra. Before this, elections to RS were usually held unopposed. The Sena has 55 MLAs, the Congress 44 and NCP 54, out of which two MLAs, Anil Deshmukh and Nawab Malik, are in jail. During the formation of the MVA government in the state in 2019, MLAs from the Congress, NCP and



Shiv Sena had been kept in different five-star hotels.

A Sena functionary said, "Since the elections are going to be held on June 10, we have advised all MLAs from Sena and also its alliance partners to stay together in South Mumbai in a hotel so there can be a common strategy and better coordination as the

BJP may try and play spoilsport." State BJP chief Chandrakant Patil said the MVA representatives wanted BJP to withdraw its third candidate and in return, they said it will be given the fifth seat in the legislative council elections. Patil said this was unacceptable to his party. Patil said they have conveyed that

BJP is a national party and for it, the Rajya Sabha seat is important. "In the last few years, it has been the norm to ensure candidates are elected unopposed to avoid cross-voting. The decision on who gets the seat is made on logical grounds. We have 30 surplus votes, while the three parties put together do not even cross 30 so our claim is logical. Also, last time we had three Rajya Sabha candidates from Maharashtra," he said.

It is BJP versus Sena for the sixth seat. The Sena has put up Sanjay Pawar as its candidate for the sixth seat, while BJP has nominated Dhyanraj Mahadik. While BJP can easily ensure the win of two candidates - union minister Piyush Goyal and Dr Anil Bonde - the Sena can ensure the victory of Sanjay Raut. Patil said they are not in touch with candidates from other parties. "That is not how we function," he said.

'Nitin Gadkari is voice of Maharashtra's sugarcane growers': Sharad Pawar

Sharad Pawar, who was speaking at the Sugar Conclave conducted by the Vasantdada Sugar Institute in Pune, on Saturday praised the BJP leader for his help to the sugar industry.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a show of political bonhomie, former Union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar praised Union cabinet minister Nitin Gadkari as the voice of Maharashtra's sugarcane growers in the Centre. Pawar, who was speaking at the Sugar Conclave conducted by the Vasantdada Sugar Institute in Pune, on Saturday praised the BJP leader for his help to the sugar industry.

The two-day conclave will see the sugar industry deliberate about the various issues facing the sector. Gadkari's advocacy for the sugar industry, especially in production of ethanol, has helped many mills get profit.

Earlier, Pawar had talked about the need to increase cane acreage in the Vidharbha region of the state. Pawar also said that the Gosekhurd project would help in increasing the availability of water in the region. "Cane was a crop in the Vidharbha region but over the years, farmers have diverted to other crops. Vasantdada Sugar



Institute should develop varieties suitable for the region." He also said Gadkari, who is an MP from Nagpur, runs four sugar mills in the region. Most of the mills which had started operations had gone bankrupt due to various reasons. During the programme, which was attended by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and other state ministers like Jaiprakash Dandegaonkar, the chairman of the Maharashtra State Cooperative Sugar Factories Federation called Gadkari the second pillar of the sugar industry in the state.

Dandegaonkar's statement came after a book about Pawar's contribution to the sugar industry was released.

Man stalks former classmate for over seven years, arrested

▶ **THE COMPLAINANT TOLD THE POLICE THAT THE ACCUSED STUDIED WITH HER AT A COLLEGE IN LONAVALA FROM WHERE SHE GRADUATED IN 2014. THOUGH HE HAD TRIED TO BEFRIEND HER SHE IGNORED HIM. AFTER HER GRADUATION, THE MAN STARTED STALKING HER.**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 27-year-old man from Lonavala was arrested by the Khar police for

allegedly stalking a woman since 2014, officers said. Earlier this week, the man followed the complainant, who was his classmate in college, to her workplace twice and forcibly hugged her following which she approached the police and got him arrested on June 1. The complainant told the police that the accused studied with her at a college in Lonavala from where she graduated in 2014. Though he had tried to befriend her she ignored him. After her graduation, the man started stalking her. He twice went to her bungalow in another district in Maharashtra, she said, but she gave him a strict warning after which he stopped trailing her. Seven years ago, the complainant moved out of her residence and started living on rent in Mumbai.

But the accused managed to trace the locations of her

rented place and workplace, and started to stalk her again, she said. On May 22, he went to her office in Khar and tried to strike a conversation with her. Though she asked him to leave, he waited there till evening and approached her while she was returning home, according to the complainant. The woman said she fled the place in panic in an autorickshaw, but he tried to meet her again at the office on May 30, and this time he grabbed her by the hand and hugged her. The woman soon rang up her friend and filed a complaint with the Khar police, which registered an FIR. The police arrested him on June 1 acting on a tip-off that the accused will be at Khar railway station. Officers said the man was produced before a magistrate court and remained in police custody till June 2, and was later sent to judicial custody.

Maharashtra health dept asks district, civic officials to increase Covid-19 testing

▶ **IN A LETTER TO COLLECTORS, MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY (HEALTH) PRADEEP VYAS SAID ALL DISTRICTS SHOULD ENSURE THE PROPORTION OF RT-PCR TESTS WAS AT LEAST 60 PER CENT. IN VIEW OF RISING CASES, IT SAID PEOPLE SHOULD BE ADVISED TO WEAR MASKS IN CLOSED PUBLIC SPACES**

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra health department has asked district and civic authorities to ramp up coronavirus testing as the numbers of samples being examined had fallen while cases were rising. In a letter to collectors, municipal corporations and chief executive officers, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Pradeep Vyas said all districts should ensure the proportion of RT-PCR tests was at least 60 per cent. In view of rising cases, it said people should be advised to wear masks in closed public spaces like trains, buses,

cinemas, auditoriums, offices, hospitals, colleges and schools. The state has seen a sharp spike in cases over the last week, with June 1 reporting 1,081 cases, the highest since February 24. "Testing in the state has considerably reduced despite repeated instructions. As per the June 1 data, there has been gross shortfall in the number of weekly tests conducted in 26 districts which is a major cause of concern. Overall testing in all districts should be increased immediately," the letter said.

The State has seen a sharp spike in cases over the last week, with June 1 reporting 1,081 cases, the

highest since February 24. "Testing in the state has considerably reduced despite repeated instructions. As per the June 1 data, there has been gross shortfall in the number of weekly tests conducted in 26 districts which is a major cause of concern. Overall testing in all districts should be increased immediately," the letter said.

The ACS (Health) said the state had last week reported BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants, and while there were no complications associated with these cases, one must not get complacent. Vyas also asked officials to carry out periodic analysis of new cases with respect to time,

place and person so that a localised action plan can be carved out. The letter also stated that an appropriate number of samples need to be referred for genomic sequencing to identified INSACOG laboratory.

Vyas stressed on the need to keep track of the overall clinical spectrum of cases and analyse the proportion of breakthrough infections and reinfection cases periodically. The letter said vaccination coverage needed to be increased, adding that precaution dose should be promoted and expedited, while vaccination in the 12-18 age group needs to improve.

Covid compensation sanctioned, but many families yet to get amount from govt

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Six months after applying for ex-gratia, many families of Covid-19 victims are still waiting for the compensation amount announced by the government. In some cases, despite sanction of the payments, the amount has not been credited to their bank accounts, leaving the families in a lurch. Many of these families are waiting for the sum to pay house rent and school fees of their children.

In April 2021, 46-year-old Nagesh Vishwas Unde succumbed to Covid-19 infection in the District General Hospital in Ahmednagar. His medical certificate clearly mentions his cause of death as pneumonia and Covid-19. The family applied for the ex-gratia amount in December on the portal developed for disbursement of the compensation, but is yet to receive the



amount. Sharing their struggle, Unde's 19-year-old son Rohan said that due to the financial constraints, his mother has been forced to work in a farm, earning Rs 200 daily to feed the family. For three months after applying for the ex-gratia, the family didn't

even get any response. The beneficiaries and local activists claim that the system is not user friendly for the affected family members, some of whom are illiterate. The applicants receive the updates on their phones through SMS but many of the Covid widows

don't know how to read them. "The state needs to address the issue at the block level. These people from rural parts of the state don't understand online language," said Kulkarni.

Meanwhile, following the directive of the Supreme Court, a Central team had scrutinised Covid-19 ex-gratia claims from 10 districts in Maharashtra in May.

Considering the huge gap in the claims that have been sanctioned, and those that have been disbursed, as well as the state's total Covid-19 death toll, the team had also randomly screened 5 per cent of the applications to identify false claims. As of May, a total of 1.81 lakh applications for ex-gratia have been approved by the state government.

Despite repeated attempts, Aseem Gupta, principal secretary of the State Disaster Management, could not be reached for comment.

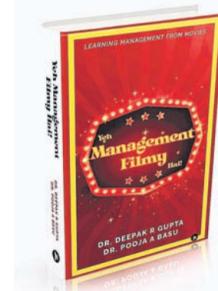
The Management study simplified

When two professors of Management Studies, who are also movie buffs, join hands to make their students understand the management concepts, the outcome is known as "Yeh Management Filmy Hai".

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The book, Yeh Management Filmy Hai has been written by Dr. Deepak R Gupta and Dr. Pooja A Basu, professors at NMIMS University, Mumbai. They both have over 15 years of corporate and teaching experience.

Dr. Deepak R Gupta is a Marketing Guru and teaches the subject in a manner that makes class understand the tricky concepts in a simplified manner. Dr. Pooja A Basu is an expert in Behavioral Sciences and her teaching skills leave the class spellbound. During their stint as professors, they realised the gaps in making the student understand the management concepts and wanted to present the same in a simplified manner. During one such discussion, they struck the idea of correlating the



management concepts with Bollywood movies. They carried out research on their novel idea and started working on the same. With their thorough knowledge of the management subjects and in-depth analysis of movies, they finally came out with their book.

Through this book, authors want to tell their students and those keen on learning management that the concepts are as simple as a movie. Breaking down the

complex topics into movies and characters was a task well achieved by the authors in their work.

The book has been published by Notion Press and is moderately priced at INR 299 only. For purchase, the book is available through the publisher's website, Amazon and Flipkart e-retailers.



CM expresses grief over road accident

12 KILLED, 35 INJURED IN THREE ROAD ACCIDENTS

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the untimely demise of local citizens in accidents in Betul, Khandwa and Singrauli districts, in that a total 12 persons were killed including five women and three children and at least 35 others were injured, 18 of them are serious.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Twelve persons, including five women and three children, were killed and at

least 35 others were injured, 18 of them seriously, in three separate road accidents in Madhya Pradesh's Betul, Khandwa and Singrauli districts, police said on Saturday.

In Betul, five persons, including two women, were killed and 23 others injured when a speeding tractor-trolley overturned around 12.30 AM on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday on the Kesia-Kanhegaon Road, around 10 km away from the Betul district headquarters, said Chicholi police station in-charge Tarannum Khan. She said 12 seriously injured persons were referred to the District Hospital after initial treatment at the Community Health Centre at Chicholi. The persons travelling in the tractor-trolley were return-

ing to Bondri village after attending a marriage function at Imlidhana, she added. In Khandwa, two children and three women were killed and at least 15 others injured when the tractor-trolley they were travelling in overturned near Dhanora village on the Khirkia-Khalwa road under the Roshani police post on Friday night, said Sub-Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP) Ravindra Vaskale. He said about 35 people were travelling in the tractor-trolley headed to Medhapani village after attending a function in Harsud. "The condition of six persons is serious. They are undergoing treatment at the Khandwa District Hospital," Vaskale said. In Singrauli district, a man and a boy were killed when their motorcycle was hit by

a truck near Amrahwa village on Friday evening, said Mada police station in-charge, Nagendra Singh. He said the boy's mother, who was riding pillion, was injured. The truck was impounded and further legal action is being taken, he said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the untimely demise of local citizens in accidents that occurred in Betul, Khandwa and Singrauli districts. Five persons died in an accident that occurred when a tractor trolley overturned in Dhanora village of Khandwa district.

Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to the bereaved families and for the speedy recovery of the injured.

SAVE ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN SHOULD NOT BE OF ONE PERSON, IT SHOULD BECOME A PUBLIC CAMPAIGN: CM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has greeted the citizens on World Environment Day-June 5. Chouhan has appealed to the citizens to plant saplings on various occasions.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

He told to contribute to the environment development by planting saplings on the occasion of birthdays and marriage anniversaries of family members.

Chouhan said that saplings should be planted in the memory of the deceased members of the family. Chief Minister has planted around 700 saplings in the last 15 months. Apart from Bhopal, Chouhan has planted saplings during his stay in New Delhi, Indore, Jabalpur, Bhopal, Pachmarhi, Narmadapuram, other cities of the state and also in different cities of the country. Chief Minister has decided to plant saplings with the members of various social organizations on Environment Day. At present, he is planting

saplings with members of a social organization. Smart Garden Shyamala Hills is witness to the regular plantation work of Chief Minister Chouhan. Different species of plants are growing in the Smart Garden.

Smart Garden located in Shyamala Hills of Bhopal has been made a green area. There was a time when the area was rocky. In two parts of Smart Udyan, Chouhan has been planting saplings of different species every day. More than 150 organizations of the capital have participated in the plantation programme. Mango, Lime, Neem, Banyan, Amla and fruit-bearing and flowering plants of various species have been planted. A number of ornamental plants and distinctive plant species adorn the smart garden. In the coming time, this garden

of Bhopal will become more attractive. The Horticulture Department, Municipal Corporation Bhopal and other departments are working in coordination for the maintenance of plants in the Smart Park located between the Tribal Museum, State Archaeological Museum and Regional Science Center.

Chouhan started the plantation campaign on 19 February 2021 by planting Sal sapling from Amarkantak. On completion of one year of the campaign, a total of 450 saplings were planted along with environmental lovers and social organizations of Bhopal. This campaign is being run with the cooperation of the people. Residents associations in different colonies are doing plantation work in the gardens of the area.

4 including contract killer arrested for killing RTI activist

Vidisha superintendent of police Monika Shukla said Jaswant Raghuvanshi, also a contractor, made the payment and gave the weapon, to Ankit Yadav, who pulled the trigger

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Three local contractors in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha district have been arrested on charges of killing Ranjeet Soni, a contractor who also filed right to information requests with the public works department (PWD), police said. Ankit

Yadav, the 24-year-old who allegedly pulled the trigger, has also been caught.

Soni was shot dead outside the PWD office in Vidisha, about 60km from state capital Bhopal. The hitman and three contractors, Aish Kumar Chaubey, Jaswant Raghuvanshi and Naresh Sharma, have been arrested, said Sameer Yadav, additional superintendent of police (addl SP), Vidisha.

Yadav said the three accused told the police in their preliminary interrogation that they decided to eliminate Ranjeet Soni because he was creating trouble for them in the context of some contracts. Yadav did not elaborate, saying the investigation was still at its initial stages. The three

allegedly hired Ankit Yadav, a resident of Raisen about 30km from Vidisha to kill Soni. "Yadav came on a bike and shot him on the head, and went back to his village in the neighbouring Raisen district," said Yadav.

The contract killer was the first one to be tracked down and was arrested within hours of the crime. He allegedly told the police team that he was hired by Jaswant Raghuvanshi, who named the others. The police officer said the accused and Soni had been rivals for some time and filed cross-cases in 2017, accusing the other of posing a threat to their life.

Ranjeet Soni is also an accused in a cheque bounce case registered in 2016 which is still pending.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR CALLS ON CHIEF MINISTER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Ambassador of France, Emmanuel Lenin, today called on Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at his residence today. Welcoming Emmanuel Lenin on his visit to Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Chouhan said that work is being done on special projects in the fields of tourism, industrial development, environment, education, health, agriculture and energy in Madhya Pradesh. Various French companies have shown their interest in the field of industry. Efforts can be made for mutual teaching of French and Hindi in the field of education.

Chouhan told Ambassador Lenin that 660 MW floating solar plant is being set up at Omkareshwar in the state. Efforts have been initiated in the field of



natural farming. Initiatives have been taken for the development of 3 World Heritage Sites in the state. In addition to the development of tourism in Khajuraho, Bhimbetka and Sanchi, the state has been recognized in the area of Tiger Reserve. Work has started on the plan to develop Sanchi as the first solar city of the state.

Chouhan said that his meeting with the Ambassador of France, Emmanuel Lenin, should not be an informal meeting but should be significant and benefit Madhya Pradesh for which efforts are necessary.

The French Ambassador described his visit to Madhya Pradesh as pleasant. He said that he has come to Bhopal for the first time and the city is very beautiful. Chief Minister Chouhan also presented a replica of the Sanchi Stupa to Lenin.

ALL THREE RS CANDIDATES FROM MP ELECTED UNOPPOSED

All three candidates from Madhya Pradesh were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha on Friday, an official in the state Assembly said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

All three candidates from Madhya Pradesh were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha on Friday, an official in the state Assembly said.

Out of the three, two are from the ruling BJP -- Sumitra Valmiki and Kavita Patidar -- and one is a Congress nominee -- Vivek Tankha.

While senior advocate Tankha was elected to the Upper House for

the second consecutive term, Sumitra Valmiki and Kavita Patidar are making their RS debut.

Madhya Pradesh Assembly's principal secretary and returning officer for the elections, A. Singh, announced the results as no other candidate had filed nomination for the three vacant seats as of Friday, said an official. While the BJP had nominated two women one from the OBC community (Patidar) and another from the Dalit community (Valmiki) the Congress had given second term to Tankha, a Kashmiri Pandit. The BJP's choice of candidates was seen as significant ahead of the upcoming local body polls, which were delayed over the OBC reservation issue before the Supreme Court resolved it, and next year's Assembly elections. Patidar had earlier served as a

member of the State Women's Commission, while Valmiki was elected as a corporator in the Jabalpur Municipal Corporation thrice and had also served as an alderwoman of the local body.

Tankha, a senior Supreme Court lawyer, is currently a member of the Rajya Sabha. The current terms of Tankha as well as the two BJP Rajya Sabha MPs from the state, M.J. Akbar and Sampatiya Uike, are ending this month.

Of the total 11 Rajya Sabha seats from Madhya Pradesh, the BJP holds eight while three are with the Congress. The BJP's other members in the Rajya Sabha from the state are Union ministers Jyotiraditya Scindia, L Murugan and Dharmendra Pradhan, Ajay Pratap Singh, Kailash Soni and Sumer Singh Solanki.

TWO MORE BODIES RECOVERED FROM TAMAS RIVER IN REWA

Bhopal: Two more bodies were recovered from the Tamas river in Madhya Pradesh after a rowboat carrying six people capsized around 75 km from the district headquarters of Rewa on Wednesday evening, taking the death toll to three, the police said on Friday. The body of a 19-year-old youth was recovered on Thursday. The other three persons were rescued by the local people. While the body of 19-year-old Satyam Kewat, who was rowing the boat when the mishap occurred, was recovered on Thursday, the bodies of two others -- Pavan Kewat (20) and Ramshankar Kewat (18) -- were fished out by the Home Guard divers later, the police said.

SEC Gave Instructions

Commissioner and IG Should Review the Availability of Force, Manpower and Ballot Box

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The commissioner of the division and the IG should review the sending of the force, manpower and polling boxes from one district to another as per the requirement for panchayat and urban body elections. State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh gave these instructions to all the divisional commissioners and IG police in a review meeting about election preparations and security arrangements. Singh reviewed the election preparations through video conferencing. Singh said that Panchayat

and urban body elections are being held simultaneously, so there is a need to pay special attention to security and order. Take all possible steps for fair and peaceful elections in the state. Make an effort that there should not be any unpleasant situation anywhere. Hold a district wise review. Singh said that the booklets about "Important Acts related to the election of local bodies" and "Law and order during elections" must certainly be studied. Singh said that ensure that the model code of conduct is followed. Take action for preventive action, NSA, ban on sale of illicit liquor

etc. Inspect the printing system of the ballot papers, so that the work can be done on time.

Secretary State Election Commission Rakesh Singh discussed regarding election programme, polling party formation, security arrangements, suspension of arms license, property defacement, etc. He said that when the proposal for counting of votes at the block level comes, it must surely be reviewed at their level.

OSD Durg Vijay Singh, Deputy Secretary Arun Parmar along with other officers were present in the meeting.

An element of revenge in Guna 'fake' encounter by MP Police: NCHRO report

The fact-finding team included state president of the NCHRO advocate Aradhana Bhargava, NCHRO's state general secretary Vasid Khan, senior social activist Rakesh Mishra and NCHRO member, Shrikant Vaishnav.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An element of revenge was there in the fake encounter conducted by Madhya Pradesh Police when three Muslim youth, who had allegedly shot dead their three police officials while poaching in the state's Guna district, were gunned down.

This has been alleged in the fact-finding report released by the rights group National Confederation of Human Rights Organizations (NCHRO). The report said that these encounters were carried out to "take revenge and protect the real culprits of the poaching."

However, police have dismissed their findings and said that "what we (police) have said is the truth." This was revealed by fact-finding member Vasid Khan when he approached the police officials. Notably, three Muslim men Naushad, Shahzad and Chotu Pathan alias Zaheer Khan were killed by the police in encounters on May 13, 14 and 17, 2022 in the Guna district over allegations of poaching blackbucks and peacocks. According to police, a team of police officials reached the spot after being informed in the wee hours of May 14 that some people were

poaching blackbucks and peacocks in the Sagar Bakhera jungle.

"The poachers allegedly opened fire on the team of police in which three police officials were killed. The police also shot at the poachers in which Naushad was killed," the police said to the media. While Shahzad escaped at that time and was killed in the encounter on the evening of May 14, according to police.

"In this incident, the deceased policemen are also responsible for the crime as are the poachers. The accused has a relationship with the politicians and their photos with the politicians have been published in the newspapers. The police are killing people belonging to the minority to protect the high profile criminals," the report noted. The team pointed out that if the call details of slain Shahzad were obtained, it would expose many things related to the incident. "But the police are not willing to do this. The government and administration are active to protect the high profile mafia and smugglers while innocent people belonging to minority communities are being killed," the report said.

The fact-finding team included state president of the NCHRO advocate Aradhana

Bhargava, NCHRO's state general secretary Vasid Khan, senior social activist Rakesh Mishra and NCHRO member, Shrikant Vaishnav. The team visited Viduria village of Guna district on May 20 where the alleged poachers lived. They spoke to family members of the slain accused.

According to Vasid Khan after killing Naushad, the police killed his brother Shahzad when he came to perform the funeral rites of Naushad at the graveyard. "The police could have nabbed him with ease as Shahzad was alone at that time. But they didn't arrest him but rather killed him after laying siege," he said.

According to Khan, the two brothers Naushad and Shahzad were regularly in contact with the local BJP leaders and had friendly relations with the local police.

In the case of Chhotu Pathan, the police are saying that he was fleeing while his family members said that he was taken by the police from his home, per the report.

Meanwhile, according to media reports, Naushad and Shahzad had done poaching two days before the encounter. ASI Rajkumar Jatav was given a tip-off about poaching. Jatav had

warned them not to poach again. But they had told Jatav to allow them to poach five blackbucks on the occasion of their niece's marriage and offered bribes to him. Jatav had rejected the bribes. Talking about the incident, 55-year-old Haseen Bano, mother of Naushad and Shahzad, told the fact-finding team that on May 14, his son Siraj's daughter was set to get married. "A day before, they were celebrating rituals of Mehendi at night when Gagan sarpanch and Kalla sarpanch came to our home with arms to take Naushad and Shahzad to the jungle for poaching. Later at night, both Sarpanchs brought Naushad unconscious and laid his body on the ground. Then, the police came and took away his body," she said.

She alleged that the police also beat up her 77-year-old husband Nisar and his son Siraj. "They were beaten up even in the jail. The police also plucked all the nails of Nisar and demolished houses belonging to her three sons and other villagers." "The police could have taken my sons Naushad and Shahzad into custody and given them a punishment of 10 years in jail. They should have allowed my sons to live," she said.

CM TO ADMINISTER OATH FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will administer the oath for protection of the environment to the people in a state-level programme to be held at Kushabhau Thackeray International Auditorium in Bhopal on June 5 on World Environment Day at 12 noon. Renowned social worker and environmentalist Dhyaneshwar Jamdar and environmentalist Padmashree Popat Rao Pawar are also taking part in the programme. Along with the presentation of Narmada Plantation Year 2022 by the Forest Department, a booklet related to the plans of plantation on the banks of river Narmada will also be released. Programmes based on the theme 'Only One Earth' are being organized in the state on World Environment Day.

Environment Department will announce state level awards in 8 categories for people and institutions doing excellent work for environment-protection and safety. Also, forest committees doing excellent work in the field of environmental protection will also be honoured by the Forest Department. Painting and quiz programmes will be organised in the Jal-Tarang Complex located at Boat Club, Bhopal.

Environmental race 'Run for Nature' will be organized at each development block headquarters from 6 am to 8.30 am to mark the world Environment Day. All the development block headquarters will also be connected to Bhopal's state level program through webcast from 11 am.



TAHAR RAHIM SET TO STAR IN 'MADAME WEB' ALONGSIDE DAKOTA JOHNSON

Los Angeles | Agencies

French actor Tahar Rahim, who played Charles Sobhraj in 'The Serpent', will join Dakota Johnson in Sony Pictures' 'Madame Web'.

Also on board are Sydney Sweeney, Celeste O'Connor and Isabela Merced for director S.J. Clarkson. Matt Sazama and Burk Sharpless penned the screenplay, with Kerem Sanga also penning a previous draft, reports 'Deadline'.

In the comics, Madame Web is depicted as an elderly woman with myasthenia gravis and thus was connected to a life-support system that looked like a spider web. Due to her age and medical condition, Madame Web never actively fought any villains.

For that reason, sources told 'Deadline' that it is possible the project could turn into something else. Insiders say that due to her psychic sensory powers, she is essentially Sony's version of 'Doctor Strange'. Rahim's role in the film is currently being kept under the wraps.

Rahim recently wrapped filming Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon', in which he co-starred opposite Joaquin Phoenix. Up next, he will be in Apple TV+ and Scott Z Burns' limited series 'Extrapolations', as well as 'Don Juan', a French musical directed by Serge Bozon that recently premiered at the Cannes Film Festival.



SARAH JOINS CAST OF BRADLEY COOPER DIRECTORIAL 'Maestro'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Sarah Silverman is the latest addition to the ensemble cast of the upcoming streaming biographical film 'Maestro', which is based on the American music composer-conductor Leonard

Bernstein. The film, directed by Bradley Cooper stars him as the iconic composer, reports 'Deadline'. Silverman joins Carey Mulligan, who will play Bernstein's wife Felicia, as well as Matt Bomer and Maya Hawke. Pic will be produced by Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Kristie Macosko Krieger and Fred Berner and Amy Durning. Sources have told 'Deadline' that Silverman will play Bernstein's sister in the film. In his directorial follow-up to 'Star Is Born', Cooper will star as Bernstein and produce from the script he co-wrote with Oscar-winning Spotlight scribe Josh Singer. The drama tells the complex love story of Leonard Bernstein and Felicia Monteleone Cohn Bernstein, a story that spans over 30 years -- from the time they met in 1946 at a party and continuing through two engagements, a 25-year marriage, and children Jamie Bernstein, Alexander Bernstein and Nina Bernstein Simmons. As per 'Deadline', Cooper developed the film together with Bernstein's family, and the film is currently in production. 'Maestro' will be available to stream on Netflix in 2023.



Johnny Depp, Jeff Beck to release album together in July

London | Agencies

English rock guitarist Jeff Beck has announced that he'll be releasing a new album with Johnny Depp next month, reports 'Variety'.

The album will mark Depp's first major project released since the end of his highly-publicised defamation trial against ex-wife Amber Heard. Depp bowed to the crowd when Beck made the announcement at the English city of

Gateshead.

"I'm gonna take this opportunity and tell you I met this guy five years ago, and we've never stopped laughing since," Beck told the crowd about Depp (via Stereogum). "We actually made an album. I don't know how it happened. It will be out in July."

Depp joined Beck onstage at the concert for a six-song set that reportedly included covers of Dennis Wilson, Marvin Gaye, Jimi Hendrix and Killing

Joke, according to 'Variety'.

Depp has joined Beck on a string of recent concert appearances in the United Kingdom. Depp performed with Beck at London's Royal Albert Hall a couple of days before the verdict was announced in the defamation trial.

Beck has three more concerts lined up, but it is not immediately clear if Depp will continue to perform alongside him.

Park explains how Cannes award-winning 'Decision to Leave' is different



Seoul: Director Park Chan-wook has said that he left behind stimulating elements in his previous films, such as 'Oldboy' (2003) and 'The Handmaiden' (2016), for his latest Cannes-winning film 'Decision to Leave' in order to help the audience focus on the complex and subtle emotions of the characters, reports Yonhap News Agency.

"I didn't hesitate to use literally 'expressions that stimulate the peripheral nerves' in my previous films. I'm not saying it's wrong to do so, but I intended them to be so," Park said during a press conference in Seoul to promote the new film.

"I wanted to make a different movie this time. Since it's a story of people who hide their true emotions, I wanted to make the audience become eager to approach these people, to peek into their mind, curious about what they are thinking," he added.

Park then compared this kind of film to a song where subtle vocal expressions are required.

"Think of a situation where drum and guitar sounds are too loud when a singer has to sing finely and wispily. I thought I had to lower the volume of such accompaniment for this film. I think that is what makes it different from my previous works, if any," he said.

Tang Wei, the Chinese actress who stars in the film, added: "I don't know if I can put it this way, but Park's previous titles have strong tastes. If I say they had a strong taste of kimchi, this film would taste fresh, plain and sweet."

'Decision to Leave' is a genre-combining film about a detective who suspects a mysterious widow in a murder case and later falls in love with her after days of stakeout. It is Park's first Korean-language film in six years after 'The Handmaiden' and his fourth entry for competition in the Cannes Film Festival.

This past Sunday, he won best director for the new feature at the festival's 75th edition, making it his third prize at Cannes, following the Grand Prix for his thriller 'Oldboy' in 2003 and the Jury Prize for the horror film 'Thirst' in 2009.



MARIAH CAREY SUED OVER 'ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter-record producer Mariah Carey has been accused of plagiarism as a country music songwriter has claimed copyright infringement over 'All I Want For Christmas Is You'.

Mariah and co-writer Walter Afansiuff are named in the lawsuit by songwriter Andy Stone, who claims his 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' by Vince Vance & the Valiants from 1989 is being infringed, reports 'Deadline'.

Stone filed his papers in the US District Court in the Eastern District of Louisiana. While the songs have the same title, there is only a hint of

Mariah's melody or lyrics beyond the title call-out. Her version of the song came out in 1994 and has become a holiday staple on radio, streaming, and the NBA's annual slate of games on Christmas Day.

As per 'Deadline', Stone claims his song received extensive airplay during the 1993 holiday season. He is asking for \$20 million in damages. Stone claims Mariah and Afansiuff "intentionally engaged in a campaign to infringe" his copyright on the work.

Pamela Koslyn, a Los Angeles attorney specialising in music and intellectual property rights, noted there are 177 works, many of them musical compositions, with 'All I Want For Christmas Is

You' as the title. Koslyn noted that she would have a different answer if all of the lyrics are "substantially similar" to Carey's version. Koslyn said in a statement accessed by 'Deadline': "Song titles aren't entitled to copyright protection. That's why there are 177 works using the same title. An even more popular title is 'My Baby', which has 4860 works registered with the Copyright Office. And that doesn't even count 'common law' (unregistered) works using the same title." The Mariah Carey version of the song has over 1 billion streams on Spotify alone. Last year, it became the first song to be a No. 1 hit in three separate runs on the Billboard Hot 100 Singles chart.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Leigh-Anne Pinnoch



ISSF World Cup

INDIA END BAKU CAMPAIGN WITH GOLD IN 50M RIFLE 3-POSITIONS MIXED TEAM EVENT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India ended their campaign at the ISSF World Cup in Baku with a gold in 50m rifle 3-positions mixed team competition, after Swapnil Kusale and Ashi Chouksey beat Ukrainians Serhiy Kulish and Daria Tykhova 16-12 in the gold-medal match on Saturday.

This was India's second gold in the Baku World Cup after the women's air rifle team had won one earlier. India also have three silver from the tournament and ended second behind South Korea.

It was also Swapnil Kusale's

first gold and third medal overall in the Baku World Cup, after he won silver in men's 3P individual and men's team competitions.

It was a hard-fought win for the pair of Swapnil and Ashi. In the first qualification stage, they finished fourth with a combined score of 881/900 to qualify for stage two. The Ukrainian pair finished second to also march into the top-eight stage.

In stage two, Swapnil and Ashi finished second with an effort of 583/600. It was the same score as the Ukrainians but the latter topped on countback, going into the gold-medal match with a mental edge over

the Indians.

In the final, Ukraine started stronger and opened up a 6-2 lead after the first four single-shot series. But the Indian pair fought back admirably, winning six of the next eight series to go ahead 14-10.

Serhiy and Daria were not ones to give up and narrowed the deficit down to 14-12. But the Indians closed out professionally for a well-earned victory. This was India's second ISSF Rifle/Pistol World Cup of the year. They had topped the first World Cup stage in Cairo. The rifle and pistol teams then opted out of the Rio World Cup in April.



FRENCH OPEN 2022

IGA SWIATEK OVERCOMES COCO GAUFF TO CLINCH WOMEN'S SINGLES TITLE

Paris | Agencies

Capping off her flawless clay-court season, World No. 1 Iga Swiatek clinched the French Open singles title after beating No 18 seed Coco Gauff 6-1, 6-3 in the final, here on Saturday.

Two years ago, Swiatek shocked the field by winning her first Roland Garros title as an unseeded teenager. This time, the polish star claimed her second French Open title by winning a staggering 35th consecutive match, tying Venus Williams for the best winning streak this century.

Venus' historic run of 35 straight victories came in 2000. If Swiatek manages to win her next match, she will hold the best winning streak of the century alone, and tie Monica Seles's 36-match run from 1990. Another victory after that would tie Martina Hingis's 37-match winning streak from 1997.

Swiatek also becomes only the tenth woman to win multiple Roland Garros singles titles in the Open Era (since 1968). Having just turned 21 on Tuesday, Swiatek is the fourth-youngest player to triumph more than once in Paris -- only Monica Seles, Stefanie Graf, and Chris Evert were younger when they did so.

She is also the youngest woman to win multiple majors since Maria Sharapova won her second Grand Slam title aged 19 at the 2006 US Open.

Swiatek's latest triumph is her sixth title of the year, all coming in a row during her winning streak (following Doha, Indian Wells, Miami, Stuttgart and Rome). She is the first player to win six titles in a row since Justine Henin in 2007 and 2008.

On the other hand, Gauff, the third-youngest player to reach a Grand Slam singles final this century at 18 years and 84 days old,

HAVLICKOVA BEATS SIERRA TO CLINCH JUNIOR CROWN

Paris: Czech tennis player Lucie Havlickova clinched the French Open junior title after beating Argentina's Solana Sierra 6-3, 6-3 in the final, here on Saturday.



The 17-year-old Havlickova is the fifth Czech winner of the title following Renata Tomanova (1972), Regina Marsikova (1975), Hana Mandlikova (1978) and Linda Noskova (2021). Havlickova now owns a 29-6 record in the junior competition this year, having also won the Criciuma Grade A tournament in February as well as reaching finals in Vrsar and Offenbach.

Havlickova will have the chance to claim a Parisian double later with compatriot Bejlek. As the No 1 seeds in the doubles draw, they will take on No 2 seeds Celine Naef and Nikola Bartunkova in the final.

made a valiant effort in her first major final, collecting enough games to just surpass that average. However, Swiatek was too tough at key moments, converting five of 10 break points and claiming 60 per cent of points off of Gauff's second service.

GABY LEWIS STARS FOR IRELAND IN REGISTERING UPSET WIN OVER SOUTH AFRICA



Dublin | Agencies

Brief scores:

Ireland 143/7 in 20 overs (Gaby Lewis 52, Leah Paul 47; Tumi Sekhukhune 3/32, Sune Luus 1/12) beat South Africa 133/7 in 20 overs (Anneke Bosch 29, Chloe Tryon 26; Arlene Kelly 2/25, Rachael Delany 1/0) by 10 runs.

A superb, disciplined all-round display, led by skipper Gaby Lewis, saw Ireland claim just their second-ever victory over South Africa in women's T20I cricket at Pembroke Cricket Club and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

It was a record-breaking Friday on two fronts for first-time captain Gaby Lewis. At 21, she became the youngest person to captain Ireland while, with the bat, she overtook Clare Shillington to become Ireland's leading run-scorer in women's T20I cricket. Her partnership with Leah Paul set the tone for Ireland's glorious day.

Having been inserted in to bat by South Africa, the hosts reached 40 without loss at the end of the powerplay. The 98-run opening stand was Ireland's joint third-highest in women's T20I cricket with Gaby involved in all of Ireland's top four partnerships in the format. After Gaby was run-out for 52, South Africa made a comeback, with seamer Tumi Sekhukhune taking three wickets in the 20th over as Ireland slumped from 107/2 to 143/7 in 20 overs.

On a true pitch and a fast outfield, Ireland enjoyed a dream start in their defence as Rachel Delaney claimed the wicket of Lara Goodall with the very first ball of the innings.

Maguire's opening spell of 0/10 in three overs kept South Africa in check as the required rate quickly went past eight runs per over. South Africa needed 18 runs off the final over but Ireland kept their calm to register just their second ever win over South Africa in women's T20I cricket.



GRAND PRIX BADMINTON LEAGUE LAUNCHED WITH SINDHU, SRIKANTH, PRANNOY AS MENTORS

Bengaluru | Agencies

Top Indian shuttlers like two-time Olympic medalist P.V. Sindhu, former World No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth, World championship bronze medalist B. Sai Praneeth, Jwala Gutta, Ashwini Ponappa, Chirag Shetty, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and H.S. Prannoy will act as mentors of the eight franchises that will clash for honours in the inaugural edition of Grand Prix Badminton League (GPBL) which will be held from July 1-10. The Grand Prix Badminton League, Karnataka's own Premier League, played under the aegis of the Karnataka Badminton Association, was officially launched at a function held here on Saturday. Sindhu, who is the co-owner of the City team Bengaluru Lions, said she was excited to be a part of GPBL. "We all know what these kinds of leagues have done to games other than cricket. I think this is a platform to unearth talent while taking the

game to the masses. I am super thrilled to be a part of GPBL," said Sindhu after unveiling the Trophy. Besides Bengaluru Lions, the seven other teams in the fray are Mangalore Sharks, Mandya Bulls, Mysore Panthers, Malnad Falcons, Bandipur Tuskers, KGF Wolves, and Kodagu Tigers. Each team comprises 10 players each, of which, a minimum of five players will have to be from the State and a minimum of three women players, the organisers informed in a release on Saturday. The total prize purse will be Rs 60 lakh with the winning team walking away with a cheque of Rs 24 lakh while the runners-up will pocket Rs 12 lakh. The semi-finalists will be richer by Rs 6 lakh apiece while the 5th placed team will receive Rs 4 lakh. The last three placed teams will earn Rs 3 lakh, Rs 2 lakh and Rs 1 lakh respectively. Apart from the team honours, various individual performances in every game and the overall season will be awarded.

WE ARE TAKING ON THE INDIAN T20 SIDE, NOT THE 'A' OR 'B' TEAM: TEMBA BAVUMA



New Delhi | Agencies

South Africa's white-ball skipper Temba Bavuma quashed talk of them seeing the India T20I squad for the upcoming five-match series as an 'A' or 'B' team, saying that they are expecting tough competition from the K.L. Rahul-led side.

For the series against South Africa starting from June 9, India will be without regular skipper Rohit Sharma, senior batter Virat Kohli and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, with the trio being rested.

The hosts are also without all-rounders Deepak Chahar, Ravindra Jadeja and batter Suryakumar Yadav due to injuries.

"We don't really see it as taking on the B-side. We are taking on the Indian T20 side, not the 'A' or 'B' team or anything like that. So, in terms of going to the game, we will still be as motivated as ever. The competitiveness will be there. The attitude, and mindset of the Indian team, as seen in the last couple of years, has changed," said Bavuma in a virtual press conference. "It's guys who play cricket hard

and very competitively. So, whether Rohit Sharma or Virat Kohli is not there, the Indian fighting spirit will still be there. We don't expect to take it easy on us and expect it to be tough and will be approaching in that manner," added Bavuma.

Bavuma felt that with India rewarding IPL 2022 performers like Umran Malik, Arshdeep Singh and Dinesh Karthik, their objective will be to win the series as the road to Men's T20 World Cup in Australia in October-November this year resumes.

1ST TEST, DAY 2

Mitchell, Blundell put New Zealand on top against England



Lord's | Agencies

Brief scores

New Zealand 132 and 236/4 (Daryl Mitchell 97 not out, Tom Blundell 90 not out; Matty Potts 2/50) lead England 141 (Zak Crawley 43; Tim Southee 4/55, Trent Boult 3/21) by 227 runs

Daryl Mitchell (97 not out) and Tom Blundell's (90 not out) 180 run stand for the fifth wicket put New Zealand on top against England on the second day of the first Test, here on Friday.

New Zealand, who were on the backfoot for the major part of the game on the first day, reached 236/4 at stumps on Day 2, leading England by 227 runs.

Beginning the day, the ever-reliable New Zealand duo of Trent Boult and Tim Southee combined to pick up seven wickets to help bowl out England for 141, the hosts getting a slim lead of 9 runs.

In reply, New Zealand suffered yet

another dismal start as James Anderson dismissed Will Young (1) in the third over. The visitors were further dented by Matty Potts.

New Zealand had to depart for Lunch at a slightly worrying score of 38/3 with Potts' figures reading 2/11. However, the tenor of the match shifted in the second session.

After Devon Conway's wicket, the pair of Daryl Mitchell and Tom Blundell dug in. The duo was initially slow and scored at a snail's pace but they concentrated on stabilising the innings. The shift finally came when Mitchell milked 12 runs off a Ben Stokes over. Taking that as a sign to break free, Mitchell and Blundell started taking control of the match.

Mohit completes a double, Gayatri emerges women's champ in AITA Pro Circuit event



Bengaluru: In a clash of qualifiers, Mohit Mayur Jayaprakash of Tamil Nadu emerged on top to claim the men's singles title crashing the dreams of local lad Manish G. with a 6-3, 6-4 victory in the Rs 1 lakh prize money Topspin AITA Pro Circuit here on Saturday. Manish thus completed a double after he had clinched the doubles title yesterday. Meanwhile, seventh-seed Pratibha Prasad Narayan of Karnataka staged a late fightback but it was not enough against Gayatri Rajesh Menon as she went down 1-6, 5-7 to the Kerala lass.

Results (all finals) Men's singles: Q-Mohit Mayur Jayaprakash (TN) bt Q-Manish G (KA) 6-3, 6-4 Women's singles: Gayatri Rajesh Menon (KL) bt 7-Pratibha Prasad Narayan (KA) 6-1, 7-5.

UI9 WOMEN'S T20 WC QUALIFIER

Thailand, Malaysia register clinical wins over Qatar, Bhutan

Kuala Lumpur | Agencies

Malaysia notched up the first win of their campaign in the Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup Asia Qualifier, defeating Qatar by 27 runs while Thailand had a massive 130-run victory over Bhutan on day two of the qualifying event.

Malaysia captain Elsa Hunter scored a crucial 42 which propelled the hosts to reach 115/7. Then backed by tight fielding and economic spells, they and managed to restrict Qatar to only 88/3. After winning the toss and opting to bowl, Qatar started off well with the ball as Sarriyah Siddiqui dismissed Nurr Rahman and Dhanusi Muhunan for ducks, both bowled in the second over.

After Elsa's dismissal in the 16th over, Musfirah ensured her side finished with 115/7 as she struck four boundaries in an unbeaten innings of 24. For Qatar, Hiya Ladani and Tafaful El Nour picked two wickets apiece.



In response, Qatar openers, captain Saachi Dhadwal and Shruti Rana batted cautiously to bring up a 51-run partnership for the first wicket. However, once they were both run-out, two overs apart, the Qatar batters lost momentum as their chase eventually fizzled out managing only 88/3 in 20 overs.

Later, Banthida Leephatthana's unbeaten knock of 73 helped Thailand reach 182/3. It was followed by Nanthitha Boonsukham's 3/19, playing a huge part in Bhutan being restricted to 52/8.

After winning the toss and opting

to bat, Thailand captain, Thipatcha Putthawong, was dismissed by Chado Om in the ninth over. But a 78-run stand for the third wicket between Banthida and Phannita Maya, who scored a 29-ball 40, ensured Thailand finished with a strong total of 182/3.

In reply, Bhutan's chase never really gathered momentum, losing wickets at regular intervals. They lost their openers for ducks in the opening over. 0/2 became 12/5 in the ninth over in the face of increasing run rate as Nanthitha ran through the middle-order.



Bollywood celebrities make heads turn at IIFA rocks 2022

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Following the pandemic pause, IIFA is back with a bang. On June 3, the International Indian Film Academy announced the winners in nine technical categories. The night was memorable for Vicky Kaushal's starred film 'Sardar Udham Singh,' which took home three awards in the categories of Cinematography, Editing, and Special Effects. Following closely behind was Sara Ali Khan's 'Atrangi Re,' which received two awards, one for the choreography of the song 'Chaka Chak' and the other for the background soundtrack. 'Shershaah' and 'Thappad' both received one prize for Screenplay and Dialogue.

The IIFA Awards' grand finale will take place on June 4, 2022, and will be hosted by Salman Khan, Riteish Deshmukh, and Maniesh Paul, according to the IIFA's official website.



MAJOR: A HEARTWARMING ODE TO MAJOR SANDEEP UNNIKRISHNAN'S VALOUR AND SACRIFICES



BY AAKRUTI BAGLA

Director: Sashi Kiran Tikka
Producer: Mahesh Babu
Cast: Adivi Sesh, Saiee Manjrekar, Sobhita Dhulipala, Prakash Raj, Revathi
Runtime: 150 minutes
Rating: 3/5

Story: Major endeavours to regale us with the tale of Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan from his early days as a kid who dreamed of nothing else other than joining the Indian Army to how he quickly rose and gained the admiration of both his superiors through acts of extreme valour to how he finally gave it his all on the ill-fated 26/11 Mumbai attacks, despite being at the post of training officer.

Review: One thing when bringing to life the story of a soldier, or an attack is, the events are already known, and yet managing to hold viewers attention and interest through the proceedings is what poses as a challenge to filmmaker. In case of major, it is an authentic biopic but struggles to translate as a compelling watch.

From the beginning, director Sashi Kiran Tikka has made it clear that the



film showcases various aspects of Sandeep Unnikrishnan's life. He and Adivi Sesh, who apart from acting have also worked on the screenplay of the film, have well-researched work before transferring the vision on the big screen. Without resorting to forced patriotism, they let the

emotions flow naturally in the film. On the flip-side, they spend a little too much time in building up the drama, which tends to slow down the pace of the narrative leaving you a bit dry as you eagerly wait for the action to begin. Honestly, the storytelling couldn't

engage a person beyond a point with dialogues lacking precision and conviction. It's the last 30 minutes of the film, that leaves everyone moist-eyed. When it comes to cinematography, it worked well during the action sequences. However, full marks for the background score that helped enhance the thrill of these sequences.

Coming to music, Oh Isha fails to have a recall value.

Talking about performances, Adivi Sesh as Major Sandeep carries the film on his shoulder. Be it the flamboyant college-going boy to a valiant soldier, who is ready to sacrifice himself for the sake to protect people, the way he taps on to emotions is commendable.

However, his chemistry with Saiee Manjrekar is delightful, albeit in limited screen time, makes sure she shines in her part.

Shobhita Dhulipala's character, however seems like just an addition, as it is not sketched out well.

Apart from Adivi Sesh, it's Revathi and Prakash Raj, who as Sandeep's parents steal the show. The whole tale is narrated from their vision. The two have done justice to their parts.

On the whole, Despite a long runtime, Major manages to hold your attention as it attempts to instil patriotism, without being jingoistic. However, it's Adivi Sesh's brilliant act that makes it worth a watch.



Yami Gautam on her first wedding anniversary

Team Absolute | Mumbai

365 days of happiness have passed for actress Yami Gautam and her husband, Director Aditya Dhar as the couple celebrates their first wedding anniversary today.

And, on this special occasion, Yami Gautam shared a special video comprising of unseen moments from her wedding day. Alone with the video, she also penned a heartfelt note for her hubby.

Sharing the video she captioned, "For all you do, for who you are, I will be forever grateful you are in my life :)

Happy 1st Anniversary!" For the uninitiated, Yami and Aditya had tied the knot in an intimate ceremony last year and had made the big announcement with a beautiful pic

"I will be forever grateful you are in my life"

from their D-Day. Aditya Dhar made his directorial debut with Uri: The Surgical Strike. The starred Yami Gautam alongside Vicky Kaushal. On the work front, Yami Gautam has films like LOST and Oh My God 2 in her kitty.

SAMRAAT PRITHVIRAJ: AN INTRIGUING SAGA OF BRAVERY



BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Rating: 3/5
Directed by: Dr. Chandraprakash Dwivedi
Produced by: Aditya Chopra
Runtime: 2 hours 15 minutes
Cast: Akshay Kumar (Prithviraj), Manushi Chhillar (Sanyogita), Sanjay Dutt (Kaka Kanha), Sonu Sood (Chand Vardai), Varun Buddhadev (Young Prithviraj), Manav Vij (Muhammad of Ghor), Ashutosh Rana (Jayachandra)

Synopsis: 'Samraat Prithviraj' is the tale of Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan, who fought bravely to protect India from the ruthless invader Muhammad of Ghor.

Story: The film begins in the current day, with Muhammad Ghori kidnapping Samraat Prithviraj, and then takes the audience on a flashback to show the narrative of Samraat and how he ended up in Muhammad Ghori's cage.

The film is broken into two sections, each having a separate yet intertwined story. The film's first half includes a battle situation and then moves on to Samraat Prithviraj Chauhan's personal life and his marriage to Rani Sanyogita. The filmmaker attempted to depict some romantic connection between the leads in the second portion of the film but failed to capture the spirit of being a periodic drama.

It is the film's conclusion that gives you the impression that you are watching the life of a wonderful and



heroic king of our country. Which was very needed. The movie's battle sequence was good, but the audience has seen far more fantastic bat-

tle zone scenes previously.

Songs: Speaking of songs from the film. The title track did manage to send chills down the spine of the

crowd. Aside from that, the songs stand out for the audience but do not seem appropriate for a historical picture.

Performance: Sanjay Dutt had an outstanding performance, and his punch lines were spot on. With his aura, he managed to give us the impression of a warrior. Talking about the character of Chandra Vardai, performed by Sonu Sood, turns out to be a fantastic part since Sonu's low pitch and method of delivering lines forced the audience to accept him as the Kavi.

Coming the two main leads of the film i.e Akshay Kumar (Prithviraj) and Manushi Chhillar (Sanyogita). Akshay Kumar has given a lot to the character and did try to provide justice to the role. A larger than life and more heroic portrayal have given the Khiladi a wider scope to perform. Manushi Chhillar makes a confident debut and has a promising screen presence too. She does well in the powerful Jauhar sequence too.

When it comes to chemistry, the two manage to give off a strong royal but lovely couple vibe.

Technical aspects: In terms of technical aspects, the film succeeds to captivate you with the Johar scene, but it appears that the battlefield scene might have been more dramatic. Overall, the editing was clean, with no unnecessary pans or close-ups.

Without a question, Dr Chandraprakash Dwivedi is a master of his craft, and this film does not disappoint the audience when it comes to direction.

Final Verdict: We as Indians have studied a lot about the history of the country when the British invaded it, but there is a gap before that time, and this film provides some excellent historical fact checks. This makes the film worth watching.

KARTIK AARYAN TESTS COVID POSITIVE



Mumbai: The COVID-19 outbreak appears to have returned to the country, with the number of cases growing by the day. A few Bollywood celebs got infected with the virus in recent days.

Recently, BB 2 actor Kartik Aaryan tested covid positive. Sharing the news with his fans and followers, Kartik wrote a witty caption. Sharing a picture, he captioned, "Sab kuch itna Positive chal raha tha, Covid se raha Nahi Gaya??".

As soon as he shared the news, his fans wished for his speedy recovery. On the work front, Kartik Aaryan is currently basking in the success of Bhoor Bhulaiyaa 2, which paved its way to the 100 crore club.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Jacqueline Fernandez