

absolute india



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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHOPAL AND NEW DELHI

NATION >02
Media has right to criticise but must highlight positive...



HOLLYWOOD > 06
JLo's famous derriere almost made her quit showbiz...



SPORTS > 07
India thrash South Africa by 48 runs, stay alive in series...

CABINET CLEARS 'AGNIPATH' SCHEME FOR RECRUITMENT OF YOUTH IN ARMED FORCES

IPL MEDIA RIGHTS

To Strengthen the Strength

▶ IT IS ENVISAGED THAT AVERAGE AGE PROFILE OF INDIAN ARMED FORCES WOULD COME DOWN BY ABOUT FOUR-FIVE YEARS BY IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SCHEME AND THE NATION STANDS TO IMMENSELY BENEFIT BY INFUSION OF HIGHLY INSPIRED YOUTH.

▶ THE BENEFITS OF A SHORT MILITARY SERVICE TO THE NATION, SOCIETY AND THE YOUTH OF THE NATION ARE IMMENSE. THIS INCLUDES INCULCATION OF PATRIOTISM, TEAM WORK, ENHANCEMENT OF PHYSICAL FITNESS, INGRAINED LOYALTY FOR THE COUNTRY AND AVAILABILITY OF TRAINED PERSONNEL TO BOOST NATIONAL SECURITY IN TIMES OF EXTERNAL THREATS, INTERNAL THREATS AND NATURAL DISASTERS.

▶ THIS IS A MAJOR DEFENCE POLICY REFORM INTRODUCED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO USHER IN A NEW ERA IN THE HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY OF THE THREE SERVICES. THE POLICY, WHICH COMES INTO IMMEDIATE EFFECT, WILL HEREAFTER GOVERN THE ENROLMENT FOR THE THREE SERVICES.



VIEWS DIFFER AMONG EX-ARMY OFFICERS ON SCHEME

New Delhi: The retired Army men expressed different opinions about the scheme and the short-term involvement of the youth in the armed forces. Major General (retd) P.K. Saighal felt that recruiting youth through the Agnipath model for three to four years is not right for the forces. "A person takes around six to seven years to become a complete soldier. But these youth will be out of job before that," Saighal said. Major General (retd) Ashok Kumar said, "The Agnipath scheme is important and useful for both the armed forces and the nation. The forces will get younger candidates, bringing down the average age of the units from around 32 years at present to 26 years."

Indian youngsters will get an opportunity to serve in armed forces. The scheme will lead to a much more youthful and technically adept war

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SCHEME

- 'Agniveers' will be offered a salary package of Rs 4.76 lakh in the first year which goes up to Rs 6.92 lakh in the fourth and final year.
- The 'Seva Nidhi' will be exempted from Income Tax. There shall be no entitlement to gratuity and pensionary benefits. 'Agniveers' will be provided non-contributory Life Insurance Cover of Rs 48 lakh for the duration of their engagement period in the Indian Armed Forces.
- The skills gained by each 'Agniveer' will be recognised in a certificate to form part of his unique resume. Moreover, the 'Seva Nidhi' of approximately Rs 11.71 lakh.
- The individuals, selected for enrolment in the Armed Forces as regular cadre, would be required to serve for a further engagement period of minimum 15 years and would be governed by the existing terms and conditions of service of Junior Commissioned Officers/Other Ranks in Indian Army and their equivalent in Indian Navy and Indian Air Force and that of Non-Combatant enrolled in the Indian Air Force, as amended from time-to-time.
- Enrolment will be based on 'All India All Class' basis and the eligible age will be in range from 17.5 to 21 years. 'Agniveers' will meet the medical eligibility conditions laid down for enrolment in the armed forces as applicable to respective categories/trades. The educational qualification for 'Agniveers' will remain in vogue for enrollment in various categories like for entry into General Duty (GD) soldier, the educational qualification is Class 10.

fighting force by ensuring a fine balance between youthful and experienced personnel in the Armed Forces. Also, it will bring a transformative reform of recruitment policy of the Armed Forces and provide a unique opportunity to the youth to serve the country and contribute to nation building.

BCCI gets richer by Rs 48,390 cr after e-auction; Disney Star retains TV rights, Viacom18 bags digital

▶ DISNEY STAR RETAINED TV RIGHTS (PACKAGE A) FOR 23,575 CRORE WHILE VIACOM18 BAGGED THE DIGITAL PROPERTY FOR 23,758 CR (PACKAGE B & C). VIACOM 18 ALSO GOT THE RIGHTS FOR AUS, SA, UK REGIONS IN PACKAGE D WHILE TIMES GOT THE MENA AND US.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) earned Rs 48,390 crore after selling the Indian Premier League (IPL) media rights for the 2023-2027 cycle at the conclusion of three-day e-auction on Tuesday, during which Disney Star retained TV rights while Viacom18 bagged the digital property for the Indian sub-continent. After the end of e-auction, BCCI secretary Jay Shah informed about the winners of different packages and the respective amount for bagging the rights. Shah also thanked all the

bidders for showing interest in securing the IPL media rights, adding that the board will utilise the revenue generated from the cash-rich league to strengthen our domestic cricket structure. "The BCCI will utilize the revenue generated from IPL to strengthen our domestic cricket structure starting from grassroots, to boost infrastructure and spruce up facilities across India and enrich the overall cricket-watching experience. "Now, it's time for our state associations, IPL Franchises to work together with the IPL

to enhance the fan experience and ensure that our biggest stakeholder 'the cricket fan' is well looked after and enjoys high quality cricket in world-class facilities," he added. Notably, Star India-Disney had earlier bought the IPL media rights for 2018-22 cycle, with a winning bid of Rs 16,347.50 crore for both TV and digital in September 2017. Prior to that, Sony Pictures Network had the TV media rights for a period of 10 years since the inception of the tournament with a bid of Rs 8200 crore.

NO GODS BEFORE PARENTS: KARNATAKA HC

Bengaluru | Agencies

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday quoting 'Manusmriti', made an observation that there are no gods before parents and one can not pay them back. The bench made the remark while looking into the habeas corpus petition. "There are parents who sacrificed everything for their children. There are children who have given up everything for their par-

ents," the court further stated. The father of a 19-year-old engineering student had filed a petition, stating his daughter is missing. The father also pleaded with the court to hand over the custody of his daughter to him. The daughter, an engineering student, has married a driver. The bench after making these remarks dismissed the habeas corpus petition filed by the father underlining that the daughter is not a minor, and she has the right of choice.

WHO may declare monkeypox a global health emergency

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The World Health Organization (WHO) is likely to declare monkeypox, which has so far affected 2,821 people in both endemic and non-endemic countries, a global health emergency, according to media reports. The highest level of warning by the global health body currently applies only to the Covid-19 pandemic, polio and Ebola. The UN health agency will convene an emergency committee meeting next week to assess whether the recent monkeypox outbreak warrants a public health emergency. About eight African countries, including Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo and Liberia, where monkeypox is endemic, reported 1,536 suspected cases and 59 confirmed cases.



While no deaths have been reported to date from the non-endemic countries, the endemic African countries have recorded 72 deaths from monkeypox from January till June 8. According to WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, it is high time to step up the response because the virus is behaving unusually. They noted that although monkeypox is not as trans-

missible or dangerous as Covid, there needs to be clearer guidance as to how a person infected by monkeypox should be isolated, more explicit advice on how to protect people who are at risk, and improved testing and contact tracing. The WHO has also issued new guidelines on monkeypox vaccination, which includes recommendations on use of (smallpox) vaccines for monkeypox.

Ex-judges, advocates write to CJ on 'bulldozer action' in UP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A group of former Supreme Court and High Court judges along with senior advocates on Tuesday wrote a petition letter to the Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana to take suo motu cognizance against recent demolition drives in Uttar Pradesh in the aftermath of 'Prophet remarks row'. The letter, signed by 12 former judges including former Supreme Court Judges -- Justice B. Sudarshan Reddy, Justice V. Gopala Gowda, Justice A.K. Ganguly, and senior lawyers, has urged the Court to stop the "deteriorating law and order situation" in the state. Recent remarks made by certain BJP spokespersons (since suspended from the office) on Prophet Mohammed have resulted in protests in multiple parts of the country and particularly in Uttar Pradesh. Instead of giving protesters an opportunity of being heard and engage in peaceful protests, the Uttar Pradesh administration appears to have sanctioned taking violent action against such individuals, the letter stated. Such a brutal clampdown by a ruling administration is an unacceptable subversion of the rule of law and a violation of the



rights of citizens, and makes a mockery of the Constitution and fundamental rights guaranteed by the state. "... we urge the Supreme Court to take immediate suo motu action to arrest the deteriorating law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh, specifically involving the high-handedness of the police and state authorities, and the brutal clampdown on the fundamental rights of citizens. We hope and trust the Supreme Court will rise to the occasion and not let the citizens and the Constitution down at this critical juncture," the letter urged.

RAHUL SUMMONED AGAIN BY ED FOR 3RD ROUND OF QUESTIONING, TODAY

New Delhi:

After the second round of questioning in connection with the National Herald matter on Tuesday, the Enforcement Directorate summoned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to join the investigation for the third consecutive day on Wednesday. Gandhi will have to appear again before the ED on Wednesday when a three-member team will question him. On Monday, his questioning had ended at about 9 p.m. but he reportedly wanted to correct a few things in his statements and due to this, he had to wait for more hours at ED headquarters. On Monday, Gandhi was questioned by agency officials for several hours. He was given a lunch break after three hours, and went to meet his mother, and Congress President Sonia Gandhi, who is undergoing treatment at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital. After this, he returned to the ED's headquarters where he was again questioned till late in the night. Gandhi was questioned about a few transactions made by Kolkata-based Dotex Merchandise Pvt Ltd.



RAJASTHAN PETROL PUMPS GO DRY FROM PAUCITY OF FUEL SUPPLIES

Jaipur | Agencies

Petrol and diesel crisis has hit Rajasthan hard with around 2,000 petrol pumps across the state, including 100 in Jaipur, have gone dry. According to petroleum dealers, BPCL and HPCL have restricted the fuel supply and are providing only 33 per cent oil of the total demand which is triggering the fuel crisis. Private oil companies like Reliance and Essar have already stopped the sales at their pumps. Eventually the load has come on the petrol pumps of



other oil companies. Officials said that the situation prevailing in Rajasthan right now is not expected to improve for the next three-four days. Due to this shortage, while the common man is troubled, important segments like agriculture and industrial production are also being affected.

Change procurement pattern for water, food, energy security: Study

"We consider two scenarios, one 'Irrigation Zero' i.e., rainfed agriculture, and two, 'Irrigation Capped' i.e., irrigated agriculture. Using the optimisation model with these two scenarios and recent crop procurement prices (or the Minimum Support Price), we identify which crops should be grown and procured by the government from each district to meet food security and nutritional needs while accounting climate variability over the last century. The integral consideration of district-level crop choice and productivity, climate variability, and economics provides an effective contribution to national policy goals that goes beyond prior related work," researchers Naresh Devineni, Perven Shama, and Upmanu Lall from City University of New York and Columbia University said.



Nivedita Khandekar | New Delhi

India can shift geographies where crops are procured from and grown and meet its procurement targets on average without irrigation while increasing net farm income and arresting groundwater

depletion, a new study published in Nature suggests. Most of India's current procurement for both wheat and rice come from certain states and especially in northwest India, the states of Punjab and Haryana have witnessed drastic fall in groundwater levels due to excess extraction for the two crops. The study 'Solving groundwater depletion in India while achieving food security', published on Monday, identified specific changes in the Indian government's procurement and distribution system as a primary solution lever. The study provides a novel hydro-economic analysis suggesting possible entry points in designing the Indian government's food procurement system. It considers the maximisation of net national farm income by allocating acreage per district for 12 major crops, accounting for weather/climate variations, regional crop

productivity and cultivation cost, annual procurement targets and prices for each crop, and spatially specified limits on groundwater use. Averaging over the 109-years' climate scenario provided the average annual contributions to the net revenue function and to the constraints. The researchers used only the kharif season for crops and irrigation in their analyses but used annual values for the procurement targets and nutrition. "The nutritional value derived from the new national PDS production meets or exceeds the recommended intake and is greater than the current nutritional intake. The caveat is that it does require the government to procure more pulses and oilseeds than it currently does," the study said. Accounting for the historical climate variations, the study said, climate change projections for the 21st century continue to be somewhat uncertain.



MEDIA HAS RIGHT TO CRITICISE BUT MUST HIGHLIGHT POSITIVE NEWS: MODI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Prime Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the work of the media and newspapers is to deliver news and educate the masses if there are any lapses in society and the government.

"It is their duty to bring such shortcomings to the fore... But, as much as the media has the right to criticise, it also has an equally important responsibility to bring positive news to the fore," Modi exhorted.

He was speaking at the bicentennial celebrations of 'Mumbai Samachar' -- a Gujarati daily, published from Mumbai continuously for the past 200 years and now ranking among the 50 oldest newspapers in the world.

In this context, Modi lauded the manner in which journalists worked like 'karmayogis' during the past 2 years of the Corona pandemic which will be remembered forever.

"The positive contribution of India's media helped India a lot in



dealing with this biggest crisis of 100 years. He also lauded the media's role in promoting initiatives like digital payment and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan," said Modi. The Prime Minister said that this

country has a rich tradition that is carried forward through the medium of debates and discussions.

"For thousands of years, we have conducted healthy debate, healthy criticism and right reasoning as a

part of the social system. We have open and healthy discussions on very difficult social topics. This has been the practice of India, which we have to strengthen," he said.

In his address, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray expressed amazement that a Gujarati language newspaper could be published for a staggering two centuries in a state where Marathi is the main language of the masses.

"This is the beauty of Mumbai which has assimilated all languages and cultures which thrive here... we also know the challenges and travails of running a newspaper," said Thackeray, lauding 'Mumbai Samachar' for its contributions to the city, state, nation and the overall media, and vowing to start reading it from "tomorrow".

On the occasion, Modi released a commemorative India Post stamp on the two-century old paper, which the city's Gujarati-speaking communities comprising Gujaratis, Jains, Dawoodi Bohras, Khojas, Memons and others, swear by.

Ranchi Police makes public names of accused involved in June 10 violence

RANCHI | Agencies

Cracking down on those involved in the violence that took place in Ranchi last Friday (June 10), the police have put up their hoardings with the photographs, their names and addresses at major intersections of the city.

The step was taken on the instructions of Governor Ramesh Bais. On Monday, the Governor had summoned senior officers of the state including DGP Neeraj Sinha and expressed strong displeasure over the incident.

The Governor had asked the DGP to identify the miscreants and put their photographs in public places so that common citizens can give information about them. Ranchi Police has taken prompt action within 24 hours of this instruction.

The hoardings and posters put up at major intersections of the city have pictures of more than three dozen mis-



creants along with their names and addresses. These include the names of Chhotu, Charka, Bichha, Shad, Tagla, Aamir from Hindpiri, Qurban Chowk resident Captain, and Sirajul of Lakdi Pul Gali etc. The pictures of all these accused were captured in CCTV, video and drone cameras during stone-pelting and vandalism on the main road on Friday afternoon. People have been appealed to inform the police about them. The police have so far arrested 15 people in con-

nection with incidents of violence while more than 40 people have been questioned. Seven of those arrested are currently undergoing treatment at RIMS. Police have also taken preventive action under Section 107 against 155 people living in six police station areas of Ranchi. A total of 26 FIRs have been registered so far in this case, in which more than 50 people have been named. Apart from this, more than 1,000 unknown people have been made accused.

What happened to 2 crore jobs promise, Tejashwi asks PM

PATNA | Agencies

In wake of the Centre announcing 10 lakh government jobs in next one and half years, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to explain what happened to his promise of 2 crore jobs per year made in the run-up to the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

"Narendra Modi had made a written promise to provide 2 crore regular jobs per year. In the last 8 years, this government has not fulfilled its promise. Now, the Prime Minister is verbally extending a job promise of just 10 lakh in the next one and half months," the Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly said. "I must say that the comparative analysis of their 'Baaten' (talks), 'Vaade' (promises), 'Jumle' (gimmicks), 'Bhashans' (speeches) and 'Traade' (intention) is needed. There is no limit to their lies. The double engine government of Narendra Modi is claiming to provide 10 lakh jobs in one and half years and the Bihar government during the 2020 Assembly election promised



to give 19 lakh jobs. The 10 lakh jobs of the Centre is part of the 19 lakh jobs of the Bihar government or not?" he asked.

Tejashwi Yadav also asked the Modi government to clarify whether these would be regular or contract basis jobs and also clarify about taking fee for the examination or not.

MONSOON REACHES GUJARAT, LIGHT TO MODERATE RAINS LIKELY: IMD

Ahmedabad: Monsoon has arrived in Gujarat and light to moderate rains are likely across the state in the next five days, the IMD said on Monday.

Giving information about the rainfall in the state in the last 24 hours, Patel said that from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain has been recorded in two talukas of two districts in the state. So far the highest rain has been recorded in Nadiad of Kheda district, that is 7 mm.

An Agriculture Department official said said that the planting of kharif crops in the current year is estimated at 2,53,029 lakh hectares by June 13, as against 2,18,554 lakh hectares last year, or an i

Delhi sees Covid cases cross 1,000 mark, 2 fresh deaths

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi on Tuesday reported over 82 per cent single-day rise in Covid cases, at 1,118 against 614 recorded on the previous day, while there were two more deaths, as per the government health bulletin.

Meanwhile, the Covid positivity rate has slightly dropped to 6.50 per cent, while the number of active cases has also risen to 3,177.

With 500 patients recovering in the last 24 hours, the total number of recoveries has gone to 18,85,130. The number of patients being treated in home isolation stands at 1,910.

With new Covid cases, the total caseload of the city has jumped to 19,14,530 while the death toll is now 26,223. The number of Covid containment zones stand at 190 in the city. A total of 17,210 new tests -- 10,636



RT-PCR and 6,574 Rapid Antigen - were conducted in the last 24 hours, taking the total to 3,87,77,060 while 24,047 vaccines were administered - 2,491 first doses, 7,108 second doses,

and 14,448 precaution doses. The total number of cumulative beneficiaries vaccinated so far stands at 3,45,28,975, according to the health bulletin.

4 killed in landslides as heavy rains bring flooded Guwahati to standstill

GUWAHATI | Agencies

At least four people were killed in a landslide in Guwahati on Tuesday as the incessant rains since Monday night flooded the city, officials said on Tuesday.

Guwahati Deputy Commissioner Pallav Gopal Jha said that four construction workers were killed when huge landslides buried them on a hillside in Nijarapar in Boraogon area of the city.

"Huge mudslide triggered by incessant rains fell on a house where the victims were sleeping early on Tuesday," the official said.

With the death of four people, the death toll in



this year's pre-monsoon and monsoon flood and landslides has risen to 42 in Assam. State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) officials said that landslides have been reported from six other

places in the commercial city and the outskirts including Kharghuli, Hengerabari, Kamakhya, Silpukhuri and Chandmari Colony, but there was no report of casualties yet but dam-

aged several properties.

Nonstop heavy rains since Monday night caused knee-deep and waist-deep water on all major roads and human habitations across the city.

A large number of vehicles, including school buses, were stranded on the flooded roads creating massive traffic jams.

The flood waters have also entered hundreds of houses in the city. The Flood water also inundated Zoo Road, R.G. Baruah Road, GS Road, Nabin Nagar, Anil Nagar, Hatigaon, Ganeshguri, Hedayetpur, MLA quarters in Dispur, Lachit Nagar, Tarun Nagar, Jyotikuchi, Ghoramara, VIP Road, Rajgarh Road, Jorabat and Chatribari.

FIVE KILLED AS TRUCK RAMS INTO AUTO IN BIHAR

Patna: Five persons died and five others injured after a speeding truck ramed into an auto-rickshaw in Bihar's Bhagalpur district.

The victims on board the auto-rickshaw were on their way to attend a marriage function in Narayanpur village.

When it reached Bihpur village under Jhandapur police station, the truck hit the auto-rickshaw head-on.

The impact of the accident was such that the auto was tossed in the air and landed around 25 metres away. The five victims died on the spot. "We have registered an FIR under rash and negligent driving amounting to death against an unknown driver. The truck driver managed to run away from the spot. Investigation is on to nab the accused," said an officer of Jhandapur police station.

Bengal passes bill to replace gov with minister as visitor of pvt varsities

KOLKATA | Agencies

A Bill to replace the state governor with the Education Minister as the Visitor of private universities was passed on the floor of the West Bengal assembly on Tuesday afternoon.

The Bill was passed by a simple voice vote on the floor of the House as the BJP legislators staged a walkout. Soon after state Education Minister Bratya Basu rose to explain the state government's logic behind passing the Bill, the BJP legislators started protesting.

Basu asked them to occupy their seats. But they kept on protesting and shouting 'shame, shame' slogans and then staged a walkout.

On Monday only, a bill to replace governor with the Chief Minister as chancellor in the 31 state universities



under the West Bengal education department was passed in the House. The state government also proposes to pass another Bill where state universities under departments other

than education like health, agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries sciences will also get the chief minister as the chancellor replacing governor.

TWO ASSOCIATES OF LAWRENCE BISHNOI, GOLDY BRAR HELD

Chandigarh: In a major breakthrough, Punjab Police on Tuesday arrested two members, each belonging to Lawrence Bishnoi gang and Canada-based gangster Goldy Brar.

SSP Mohali, Vivek Sheel Soni said, the two accused identified as Gagandeep Singh alias Gaagi and Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi are residents of Dabbwali in Sirsa district of Haryana. He said they had been arrested from near Mohali. Two 32 calibre pistols have been recovered from them along with eight cartridges and a Scorpio vehicle car.

Soni said the duo was in regular touch with Godly Brar through gangster Manpreet Singh alias Manna, who provided Toyota Corolla car to assassinate for killing Sidhu Moosewala. Recently, Manpreet Singh was arrested in the murder case of Moosewala.

Both the arrested accused were working on the directions of Brar and indulged in illegal weapons smuggling from border area of Punjab and Rajasthan and further deliver it to the shooters.



2 terrorists killed after encounter breaks out in Srinagar

Two LeT terrorists were killed and a policeman was injured after a late night encounter broke out between terrorists and security forces at Bemina in Central Kashmir's Srinagar district, officials said.



Srinaga | Agencies

Two terrorists of proscribed terror outfit LeT neutralised by Srinagar Police in a swift encounter in Bemina area of Srinagar. One policeman also received minor injury,"

Jammu and Kashmir Police quoting Inspector General Police Kashmir zone Vijay Kumar tweeted. The encounter started after security forces got a tip off about the presence of terrorists in that area. There have been a series of anti-terror opera-

tions in Kashmir over the last few months in which many terrorists and their commanders have been eliminated. Most of the operations have been jointly conducted by the police and the army on the basis of specific intelligence inputs.

OVER ONE LAKH DEVOTEES VISIT PURI ON 'SNAN PURNIMA'

Bhubaneswar: Over one lakh devotees, including few from foreign countries, visited Puri on Tuesday to have 'darshan' of Lord Jagannath and his siblings on the auspicious occasion of 'Snan Purnima'.

Beating the heatwave and humidity, the devotees gathered before the Lions Gate of the Jagannath Temple to get a glimpse of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

As public were allowed to witness the Snan Yatra after two years, a large number of devotees visited Puri on Tuesday. All arrangements were made for a smooth 'darshan', said Puri Collector. As per the schedule, the servitors escorted the deities in the ceremonial 'Pahandi' from Garbhagruha to the 'Snan Mandap' (bathing altar) early in the morning. The bathing altar is situated near Ananda Bazar inside the temple complex, which can be viewed by the people from outside the temple.

Prophet row: Rally in support of Nupur Sharma sparks tension in Hyderabad's Bowenpally



Hyderabad | Agencies

A rally taken out by some persons in support of suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma in Bowenpally area in Hyderabad sparked tension, sources said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred in Hasmathpet locality late on Monday night when some persons took out candle light rally to express solidarity with Sharma, who was suspended by the BJP on June 5 after her blasphemous

remarks triggered an outrage from Muslim nations.

The participants who carried placards raised slogans in support of the suspended leader. On noticing this, another group raised an objection and raised counter-slogans. Both the groups engaged in confrontation, triggering tension.

Timely intervention by the police averted the situation from turning ugly. Following the incident, police intensified patrolling and deployed additional force in the area



PM UNVEILS INDIA'S FIRST UNDERGROUND MUSEUM OF REVOLUTIONARIES AT RAJ BHAVAN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi threw open the country's first underground museum, 'Gallery of Revolutionaries' - 'Revolution Saga' - at the Maharashtra Raj Bhavan, here on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that knowingly or unknowingly, we limit India's Independence to a few incidents, where the struggle involved the 'tapasya' (penance) of countless people and the collective impact of many instances at the local level was national. "The means were different but the resolution was the same, the Prime Minister added. He noted that irrespective of social, family, or ideological roles, the place of the movement, whether within the country or abroad, the goal was one - complete independence of India," said Modi.

The Prime Minister recalled the multi-hued contribution of stalwarts like Vasudev Balwant Phadke, Damodar Hari Chapekar and Vishnu Hari Chapekar (Chapekar



Brothers), Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bhikaji Rustom Cama (Madam Cama), etc.

He pointed out that the Indian Freedom struggle spanned locally as well as globally, and "this spirit from local to global is the basis of our 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', citing the examples of Gadar Party, Azad Hind Fauj of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and India House of Shyamji Krishna Varma.

Frowning at the "indifference toward unsung heroes continued for a very long time" the Prime

Minister lamented how the great freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma's remains waited for so long to reach India till he (Modi) himself brought them back to India a few years ago. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said that just 3 months ago, the President had inaugurated the Darbar Hall of Raj Bhavan and today, the Prime Minister has come to unveil the Gallery of Revolutionaries.

"The inauguration of the Kranti Gatha is not only a coincidence but

a great moment to celebrate the 75th Year of Indian Independence. The question arises whether we could have enjoyed this freedom if it had not been for the supreme sacrifices, the sufferings of the freedom fighters. We have secured Freedom by fighting for it, and now we must cherish it," said Thackeray.

Present on the occasion were Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court Dipankar Datta, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and other prominent dignitaries.

The Gallery of Revolutionaries has come up in a pre-World War I British-era bunker discovered by the then Maharashtra Governor C. Vidyasagar Rao in 2016.

With 13 big and small chambers, adequate lighting and other facilities, it was earlier used by the British rulers as a secret storage depot for arms and ammunition.

It was decided to conserve and renovate the subterranean bunker in 2019 and convert it into a first of its kind museum dedicated to revolutionaries and freedom fighters of Maharashtra.

Sushant 2nd death anniv: Cong slams BJP, CBI for probe delays

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As a family, fans and Bollywood personalities remembered Sushant Singh Rajput on his 2nd death anniversary on Tuesday, the Maharashtra Congress again slammed the delays in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe.

Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant said here it has been two years now since the unfortunate demise of Rajput, 675 days since the CBI started investigations and 615 days since an AIIMS panel ruled out murder.

"The question still remains as to when will the CBI declare the final conclusion? The dirty politics of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) using someone's tragedy for settling political scores is abhorrent," said Sawant.

He said all still remember how the BJP used Rajput's death as an opportunity to defame the Maha Vikas Aghadi government of Maharashtra and the Mumbai Police, which is "very sad for India's democracy".

Earlier, social media platforms were flooded with messages in memoriam to Rajput who was found dead on June 14, 2020 at his rental Bandra flat. Many also demanded justice for the late actor who acted in Bollywood films like "M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story" (2016), "Kedarnath" (2018), "Chhichhore" (2019), etc.

Rajput is survived by his father Krishna Kishore Singh, sisters Nitu Singh, Meetu



Singh, Priyanka Singh and Shweta Singh-Kirti. "2 years Of Injustice To Sushant - Hello Dear SSRians! The TL for tomorrow for the whole day is 2 years Of Injustice To Sushant," tweeted sister Priyanka Singh.

"It has been 2 years since you left your mortal abode, Bhai, but you have become immortal because of the values you stood for," remembered Shweta Singh-Kirti in a tweet. "Kindness, compassion and love for all were your virtues. You wanted to do so much for so many. We shall continue to model after your wonderful virtues and ideals in your honour. Bhai, you have changed the world for the better and will continue to do so even in your absence," she added.

Shakti Kapoor's son gets bail in drugs case

Bengaluru | Agencies

Bollywood actor and assistant director Siddhanth Kapoor, who was held on charges of consuming drugs, was released on bail, but was subjected to questioning on Tuesday.

The actor and the four others who were arrested were released on station bail late on Monday. "They will appear before police as and when called", a police official said.

The son of actor Shakti Kapoor and brother of Shraddha Kapoor, detained by police on Sunday night at a five-star hotel on MG Road during an alleged rave party, was questioned by police.



"Only Siddhanth is questioned; others will come one by one," the official said. The five accused have been booked under section 20A and 22B of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

The police had uncovered drug abuse in a section of the Kannada film industry in 2020. They had then arrested actors Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjanaa Galrani and former minister late Jeevaraj Alva's son Aditya Alva.

Thane police website hacked, message seeks 'apology to all Muslims'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Several Indian websites have been hacked in the last few days and these attacks seemed to have originated in Indonesia and Malaysia, said a senior official of state police in Mumbai.

The Thane police's website was restored by afternoon, he said, adding that a First Information Report has been registered against unidentified persons under the Information Technology Act and other relevant provisions. The message that popped up on the compromised portal on Tuesday morning said 'Hacked by one hat cyber team'.

"Hello Indian Government, Hello everyone. Again and again you make trouble with the problem of the Islamic Religion....Hurry up and apologize to Muslims all over the world!! We don't stand still when our apostle is insulted," it added.

The police noticed it around 8.30 am, following which cyber teams of Thane police worked for over six hours and restored the site, said an official. The



hacking seemed to have taken place around 4 am, he said.

Maharashtra Cyber Additional Director General of Police Madhukar Pandey said they have informed CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team), the nodal agency of the Indian government for dealing with cyber threats, and the National Informatics Centre (NIC) about "the defacement incident." "We are also coordinating

with the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre," Pandey said. After the "recent incidents of communal nature" that took place in various places in the country, some hacker groups had given a call to hack and deface Indian websites, he said.

Controversy had erupted recently when BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma (now suspended by the party) allegedly made derogatory remarks about Prophet Mohammad. While the BJP and Indian government condemned the remarks, it led to strong reactions from many Muslim countries, and violent protests inside India.

As per ADG Pandey, preliminary investigation suggested that hackers from Malaysia and Indonesia were behind the defacement of websites. Several Indian websites were attacked in the last three days, following which all government organizations as well as the NIC have been advised to examine the vulnerabilities in their websites and plug the loopholes, another official said.

Sharad Pawar out of Presidential race?

A day before the big, fat opposition meeting in Delhi to forge a consensus for a common candidate for the July Presidential polls, NCP chief Sharad Pawar seems to be out of the race with his party, NCP, questioning if the opposition has the required numbers to win.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chhagan Bhujbal, senior NCP leader, said in Mumbai that there is no doubt that if Sharad Pawar becomes the President, every Marathi's chest will swell with pride. "But the question is: Do we have the required numbers?" A news channel quoted him as saying.

Earlier, sources in the NCP had said that Pawar himself has indicated that he is not in the race to become the President. However, sources added that the NCP chief has not explicitly said anything on the issue.

Meanwhile, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said on Tuesday that Pawar has refused to be the opposition parties' nominee for the presidential election. Pawar met Yechury, CPI general secretary D



Raja, and NCP leaders Praful Patel and P C Chacko in Delhi and conveyed to them his decision to not contest the election.

"I have been informed that Pawar will not be the opposition face for the presidential polls, other names are under consideration," said

Yechury. Opposition sources said Pawar was not keen to enter a battle that he is destined to lose at this point in his political career.

The statement comes after Congress expressed support for Pawar as the joint opposition candidate for the upcoming presidential elections. The party has conveyed its support to Sharad Pawar to its allies wherever the party is in the government.

Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge met Sharad Pawar last Thursday, with a message from party chief Sonia Gandhi. The two leaders met in Mumbai. AAP leader Sanjay Singh also reportedly called the NCP supremo on Sunday.

An NCP leader said that Pawar will enable a dialogue among the opposition parties to ensure unity between them.

Mumbai logs 1,118 Covid-19 cases, no new death

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On Monday, Mumbai recorded 1,118 new Covid-19 cases and zero death. The number of active tally increased to 11,331, informs the local civic body.

"Out of the 1,118 new cases, 1,046 were asymptomatic and 72 symptomatic patients were admitted to hospitals and of them, six were put on oxygen support," BMC official said.

There have been around 38 per cent decrease in the number of cases from the previous day. Mumbai's tally of Covid-19 cases increased to 10,81,865, while the death toll remained constant at 19,573.

According to the BMC bulletin, 676 patients recovered from respiratory illness in the



last 24 hours. "Mumbai's growth rate of the infection stood at 0.144 per cent between June 6 and 12. The positivity rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, stood at 11.61 per cent," the BMC

were carried out in Mumbai, taking their overall tally of test done to 1,72,99,943.

On Sunday, 15,922 swab samples were tested in the city. The bulletin said out of 24,877 hospital beds earmarked for coronavirus patients in the city, only 478 beds are currently occupied.

As per the data provided by BMC, 9,622 Covid-19 tests, the lowest since June 6,

MAHA GUV'S HOME-CUM-OFFICE 'JAL BHUSHAN' INAUGURATED



Mumbai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the swank new 'Jal Bhushan', the official residence-cum-office of the Maharashtra Governor, in the Raj Bhavan premises at Malabar Hill, here on Tuesday. With a history of over 200 years, it traces its roots to the then Governor of Bombay, Mounstuart Elphinstone, who built a small bungalow called 'Pretty Cottage' at this location between 1820-1825 where the modern-day 'Jal Bhushan' now stands. Since the relocation of the Arabian Sea-facing Government House at Malabar Hill in 1885, it has served as the residence of the British Governors of the erstwhile Bombay State, then the Governor of Bombay post-Independence and then the Maharashtra Governor after the state's formation in 1960. Since the old structure was found to be unsafe, it was decided to construct a new building for which President R.N. Kovind laid the foundation stone in August 2019, and the newly-built imposing building retains the salient heritage features of the earlier architecture.

MVA wonders if 'genuine freedom-fighters' ignored in Raj Bhavan's museum

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

A fresh row has erupted in the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) over the country's first underground Gallery of Revolutionaries, to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Raj Bhavan here, on Tuesday afternoon.

The MVA allies - Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress have expressed apprehensions whether the Raj Bhavan is willy-nilly being used to 'further the Bharatiya Janata Party-Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh agenda of rewriting Indian history'.

Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant accused the RSS of trying to undermine the mainstream non-violence freedom struggle and reinvent history of the Independence movement 'to showcase it through a right-wing prism' as it (RSS) was not a part of the freedom movement.

"Mainstream freedom struggle doesn't seem to have a place in this museum although the Indian National Congress (INC) was founded

in Mumbai in December 1885. Many sacrificed their lives during the movement. There were a large number of Martyrs even in the Quit India Movement of 1942, launched by Mahatma Gandhi from Mumbai," Sawant pointed out.

He questioned, whether the contributions of stalwarts like S.A. Dange, Babu Genu Said, or Azimullah Khan and other prominent personalities - whose names do not figure in the initial statement released by Raj Bhavan - are duly acknowledged in the Gallery of Revolutionaries or not.

Shiv Sena's former face Kishore Tiwari - accorded a MoS status - said from what is known about the new museum so far, it "seems to push forth the RSS-right wing agenda" of re-drafting



a prestigious gallery, it should faithfully feature "the names and contributions of all 'genuine' freedom fighters" who dedicated their lives to the cause of freeing India.

"From information made available by the Governor's secretariat, such names of 'genuine freedom fighters' are missing. Makes one wonder whether Raj Bhavan is being misused to further the agenda of RSS which had no role in the Freedom Movement, and why the BJP is keeping quiet," said Tapase sharply.

Sawant pointed out how the 1857 Uprising was a united fight of the Hindus and Muslims against the British Empire's might which was admitted even by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.

In the first phase, the museum features rebels like Vasudev Balwant Phadke, Damodar Hari Chapekar and Vishnu Hari Chapekar (Chapekar

Brothers), Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Savarkar Brothers - Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (Veer Savarkar) and Ganesh Damodar Savarkar (Babarao Savarkar), Anant Laxman Kanhere, Vishnu Ganesh Pingale, Vasudev Balwant Gogate, Krantiguru Lahuji Raghaji Salve, Bhikaji Rustom Cama (Madam Cama), Shivran H. Rajguru, the country's first armed fighter organisation 'Abhinav Bharat', 'Patri Sarkar', etc.

There will be hundreds of others, known and unknown, who will figure at the museum in later phases, depicting the entire 'Revolution Saga' of 90 years, from the First War of Independence in 1857 to India's Freedom in 1947, assured Raj Bhavan officials. The PM will unveil the subterranean 'Kranti Gatha' (Revolution Saga) at the Gallery of Revolutionaries in Raj Bhavan this afternoon in the presence of Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Bombay High Court Chief Justice Dipankar Datta, other ministers and top officials.



EDITOR'S SPECS

G-23 leaders not supporting Congress' 'satyagrah'

Having been ignored for the Rajya Sabha, former leader of the opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad and former Deputy leader Anand Sharma maintained a distance from the 'Satyagrah' called by the Congress party against ED which has been questioning Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case. While Azad's office said that he is unwell, Sharma is in Delhi, his office confirmed. Congress MP Manish Tewari, another leader of the G-23 group who did not participate in the party's satyagrah, is suffering from Covid. He last tweeted on June 13 but did not mention the issue of "satyagrah". The other missing persons are Sandeep Dikshit, while Shashi Tharoor is reportedly abroad. But some of the G-23 leaders made their presence felt at the protest site like Mukul Wasnik, who has been elected to the Rajya Sabha recently. On Monday and Tuesday, the two chief ministers of the party -- Ashok Gehlot and Bhupesh Baghel staged protests but Azad being a senior member in the Congress Working Committee was missing and neither Azad nor Anand Sharma issued any statement on social media. Sharma last tweeted that he is concerned about the health of party president Sonia Gandhi who is suffering from Covid-19. During the protest, Delhi Police detained several Congress leaders for trying to march towards the ED office. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel staged protest outside AICC headquarters. While sitting at the dharna, Baghel lambasted the BJP government for misusing investigative agencies and suppressing the voice of the opposition.

THE CRYPTO SAGA UNFOLDS

Satish Reddy

PART 1

There is no dearth of issues in the financial world with sharply dividing opinions. Please welcome the new entrant, Cryptocurrencies, rapidly emerging as the most prominent bell weather of the global economy. For decades, market pundits have kept a hawk-eye out on four asset classes-- Stock & bond indices, Oil, Gold and Currencies. It has taken centuries, geographies, discoveries, inventions, complex supply chains, millions of jobs and hundreds of global financial institutions to build these markets, which are today valued in trillions. Suddenly, the world sees this new kid (read asset) on the block, built with a software code, authored by a mysterious and untraceable soul (Satoshi Nakamoto) driving their century old markets. Very few people understand cryptocurrencies. Even fewer have actually transacted in one. But today everyone has an opinion on it. Globally speaking, the jury is still out on whether cryptos are a virtual digital asset or a digital currency. Even the most advanced economies are still to develop regulations or find a regulator for this industry. Leading financial doyens, for one, Warren Buffet, has gone on record to say that cryptocurrencies are not a productive asset and he wouldn't buy the whole of bitcoin even for \$25. European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde has said that crypto-currencies are "based on nothing" and should be regulated to steer people away from speculating on them with their life savings. On the other side of aisle, there is this huge momentum built by global icons like Elon Musk (Dogecoin), Snoop Dogg (Rapper) and LeBron James (US Basketball player), Mark Cuban (billionaire investor & Shark Tank icon) and Gwyneth Paltrow (film actress), who has been the face of Bitcoin since 2017. And of course, its not endorsements alone. Knowing that you could buy a Tesla with Dogecoin or shop for a meal at Burger King or Subway, or that Wikimedia Foundation accepts donations in crypto, makes one feel that Cryptos are well on their way of running alongside fiat currencies as a peer-to-peer electronic cash system. While one should not dare to forecast whether and how soon this could be a reality, the ongoing meltdown, more commonly being called crypto-winter (but not death), has shaken the faith of most. It all began with the meltdown of



Luna and TerraUSD, also called stablecoin, which meant that it was always supposed to be worth \$1. However, Luna tokens, once worth more than \$100, kept falling till they were below a penny. Within few days, wealth of US\$ 60 billion had vanished. At one point in time, TerraUSD holders were offered yields of 20 per cent. Elsewhere, Coinbase Global Inc, a crypto exchange, which had made a grand debut on the stock exchange in April 2021 has seen its stock price shrink by 80 per cent, wiping out \$51 billion. Incidentally, Coinbase describes itself as a distributed company; all employees (reportedly, over 3700 in 2021) operate via remote work and the company lacks a physical headquarters. It is the largest cryptocurrency exchange in the US by trading volume. The Wall Street Journal has eloquently summed up the ongoing rout by reporting an evaporation of some \$1.5 trillion from cryptocurrency markets in the past six months. That is more than 50 per cent of their value and effectively sets the stage for its biggest survival test yet. Bitcoin, the most well-known of cryptos (almost a synonym for crypto-currencies), had peaked at \$67,802 in November 2021 and is currently trading at \$28,350, having lost over 60 per cent of its peak value. Ether, the other big boy on the block, is currently trading at \$1,501, having fallen from its height of \$4,865. It is not to be forgotten that Ether's journey began at 42 cents, some five years ago. PART 2 The fact that in this market environment Bitcoin, Ether and some others are holding out, one can unmistakably predict that these instruments very much here to stay. We will

probably witness a major industry shakeout, where 90 per cent of the players are going to disappear, with associated pains for investors. This lesson portends to be very meaningful for regulators, look at crypto as akin to a security or scrip (certainly not a currency) and quickly build a regulatory framework. US laws impose elaborate regulations and detailed disclosure requirements on issuers and intermediaries that sell securities, stocks and bonds. SEC law also creates serious criminal and pecuniary liabilities on anyone who skirts the statute. Cryptocurrency platforms have managed to sidestep SEC regulators in US arguing that the tokens are commodities, like gold, which have no federal regulator (instead under Futures & Commodity Trade Commission). The regulatory gap has allowed ponzi schemes to proliferate, as bad actors rush to skim from the hype generated by the new asset class. The Indian government has, in fact, emerged as a global thought leader by legislating that cryptocurrencies, including non-fungible tokens, are a "virtual digital asset" (Section 2(47A) of the Income Tax Act). India has taken a definitive stand by classifying crypto as an asset in face of an opinion of regarding them as a "digital currency". With nearly 40 crypto exchanges in India, already organised into an industry association called the Blockchain & Cryptoassets Council, this was a timely move. While the definition pretty much becomes the building block for other regulations, namely, taxation under GST and appointment of a regulatory agency, we are still

to see definitive statements emerging from the Ministry of Finance. Considering the imperatives and need for investor protection, one sees a clear path for bringing intermediaries under regulation by SEBI. With some regulatory improvisation, there should also be some cross-controls by RBI, in order to match the rapid innovation taking place by re-packaging crypto into exotic financial instruments in the market. There is a compelling case for countering a repeat of the Lunar & TerraUSD type of debacle. Regulations as are applied for financial institutions like licensing and SLRs, can minimise risks for investors. Post the amendment under income tax law, the crypto industry is anxiously anticipating legal clarity under GST for crypto currencies. Since India has taken the stance of defining cryptos as a "virtual digital asset", it logically follows that all associated services, whether those of intermediaries or even crypto-miners, are financial ancillary services, liable to GST of 18 per cent. The oft heard debate that whether the entire value of crypto-coins will be taxed, seems quite improbable from the position taken by the lawmakers so far. In another article published by Bloomberg on May 13, it was reported that tax and financial crimes officials from the UK, US, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands, a group known as the J5, met in London to share intelligence and to identify sources of cross-border illegal crypto activity. The officials specifically focused on emerging trends in decentralized finance and nonfungible tokens, or NFTs and had identified a billion dollar Ponzi scheme. The report goes on to add that the ease with which crypto transactions can cross international borders has necessitated closer collaboration between countries. It also said that the US IRS has pivoted to making crypto one of the agency's top enforcement priorities. India cannot afford any compromise on all these fronts. Cryptocurrencies and trading in virtual digital assets has to be brought within the ambit of FEMA and all intermediaries mandated to maintain full KYC records. India's message should be loud and clear, we welcome the innovation and technology, but this isn't a playground for fraud. (Satish Reddy is a former Commissioner (Customs & GST) and presently founding partner of SKR Tax & Technology Consultants LLP)

international

NEW MASS GRAVE DISCOVERED IN KIEV REGION

Kiev | Agencies
A new mass grave was discovered in Kiev region with seven bodies of civilians who were shot dead, the police said. Following the discovery of the grave on Monday, Andrii Niebytov, Chief of the National Police of Kiev region, said the "seven civilians were tortured and then brutally shot in the head by the Russians", reports Ukrayinska Pravda. "Many victims had their hands tied and had been shot in the knees. We are currently working to identify the people killed," he added. The grave is near the village of Myrotske in Bucha district where Russian troops were stationed, according to the police chief. This is the latest discovery of a mass grave after several



others were found after the war began on February 24. On April 29, President Volodymyr Zelensky announced that a massive mass grave was discovered in the Kiev region with 900 bodies in an area which was occupied by the Russian forces in March. On April 23, Bucha Mayor Anatolii Fedoruk had announced that 412 civilians

killed by the Russian military had been found in mass graves in the town, about 31 km from Kiev city. Investigators have so far found some 1,100 bodies in mass graves across the Kiev region. At least three mass graves have also been found on the outskirts of Mariupol city, containing the bodies thousands of civilians.

'US REPORTS ABOUT 88,000 WEEKLY CHILD COVID-19 CASES'

Los Angeles: About 88,000 child Covid-19 cases were reported across the US in the week ending June 9, according to the latest report released by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Children's Hospital Association. Over 13.5 million children have tested positive for Covid-19 since the onset of the pandemic in the country, and nearly 395,000 of these cases have been added in the past four weeks, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the report. About 5.6 million child Covid-19 cases have been added in 2022, said the report, which was released on Monday. Child cases are far higher than the same time around mid-June one year ago, according to the report. There is an urgent need to collect more age-specific data to assess the severity of illness related to new variants as well as potential longer-term effects, said the AAP. "It is important to recognise there are immediate effects of the pandemic on children's health, but importantly we need to identify and address the long-lasting impacts on the physical, mental, and social well-being of this generation of children and youth," it said.



Every bridge leading to key Ukrainian city destroyed

Kiev | Agencies
A top official has said that every bridge leading to the key Ukrainian city of Severodonetsk, where fierce battles are currently raging, has been destroyed. In a social media post on Monday, Luhansk Governor Serhiy Haidai said all three bridges into Severodonetsk were destroyed and the residents remaining in the city were being forced to survive in "extremely difficult conditions", the BBC reported. For several weeks now, Severodonetsk has witnessed fierce battles as Russia is now concentrating on capturing the entire eastern part of Ukraine. Taking Severodonetsk and the nearby city of Lysychansk would give Moscow control of the entire Luhansk region, much of which is already controlled by Russian-backed



separatists. Haidai further said that delivering supplies and evacuating civilians was now impossible as the city has been effectively cut off. Citing reports, the BBC said that 70 per cent of Severodonetsk is now under Russian control. Earlier, President Volodymyr Zelensky had said

that Ukrainian troops in the city were fighting Russian forces for "literally every metre". Also on Monday, Eduard Basurin, a military representative of the pro-Russian self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, told reporters that Ukrainian troops remaining in Severodonetsk must "surrender or die".

GUTERRES CALLS FOR END TO RACISM, DISCRIMINATION

United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for efforts to eliminate racism and discrimination. "Over the next 100 days and beyond, let us work to safeguard the human rights of all people and build peaceful and inclusive societies," the UN chief said in his message for the 100-day countdown to the International Day of Peace, which falls on September 21 annually. "Together, we can realise the vision of a world free of racism and racial discrimination." The UN chief stressed that the world body calls on all people to lay down weapons and reaffirm their commitment to living in harmony with one another every year on September 21, reports Xinhua news agency. This shared aspiration "is more pressing than ever", said the Secretary-General. This year's theme for the peace day is "End racism. Build peace".



India inks vision document with Vietnam, to give \$500mn defence Line of Credit

Team Absolute | New Delhi
Planning to broadbase the "scope and scale" of its defence ties with Vietnam by 2030, India has inked a vision document with the Southeast Asian country. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held bilateral talks with Vietnam's Minister of National Defence General Phan Van Giang in Hanoi. Wide-ranging discussions on effective and practical initiatives to further expand bilateral defence engagements and regional and global issues were held between the two sides. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Mutual Logistics Support was also inked. In these times of increasing cooperative engagements between the defence forces of the two countries, this is a major step towards simplifying proce-



dures for mutually beneficial logistic support and is the first such major agreement which Vietnam has signed with any country.

"Had an excellent meeting with General Phan Van Giang, the Defence Minister of Vietnam. We renewed interactions on expanding bilateral cooperation.

Our close Defence and Security cooperation is an important factor of stability in the Indo-Pacific region," Singh had tweeted. During the meeting, both Ministers also agreed for early finalisation of \$500 million Defence Line of Credit extended to Vietnam. Implementation of the projects will add substantially to Vietnam's defence capabilities and further Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Make in India and Make for the World. Singh, during his three-day visit, also announced gifting two simulators and monetary grant towards setting up of Language and IT Lab at Air Force Officers Training School for capacity building of Vietnamese Armed Forces. India and Vietnam have shared a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) since 2016 and defence cooperation is a key pillar of this partnership.

5 soldiers killed in Yemen despite truce

Sanaa | Agencies
The government in Yemen announced that five soldiers were killed and 15 others injured by the Houthi militia despite the ongoing UN-brokered truce in the war-torn nation. According to a statement released by the Defence Ministry, "the Houthi militia committed 185 breaches of the truce brokered by the UN during the past 72 hours in various areas of Yemen", reports Xinhua news agency. The statement said that the Houthi breaches included attacking the sites of the government forces with shells and rockets as well as using explosive-laden drones. Earlier on Monday, a large explosion caused by a Houthi-fired ballistic missile rocked the government-controlled oil-rich province of

Marib. No official comment has been issued by the local authorities, but media reports indicate that no one has been injured as a result of the explosion so far. The warring parties in Yemen have started to observe a nationwide ceasefire since April 2. Although the truce has been broadly kept, there are frequent accusations of breaches traded between the internationally recognized government and the Houthi group. Yemen has been mired in a civil war since late 2014 when the Iran-backed Houthi militia seized control of several northern provinces and forced the Saudi-backed government out of Sanaa. The war has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced 4 million, and pushed the country to the brink of famine.



BJP ANNOUNCES 13 MAYORAL CANDIDATES IN MP, NO DECISION ON 3 SEATS

The party has fielded Malti Rai against the Congress' Vibha Patel for Bhopal which is reserved for OBC (woman).

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The BJP in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday announced candidates for mayor elections in 13 out of 16 Municipal Corporations, while the state leadership is yet to reach a consensus on three candidates for Indore, Gwalior and Ratlam.

The announcement of the mayoral candidates was made by the state BJP president V.D. Sharma at the party headquarters in Bhopal on Tuesday. Sharma said that the party will announce the remaining three mayoral candidates soon.

The other mayoral candidates of the BJP are:

Mitendra Jamdar (Jabalpur), Mukesh Tatwal (Ujjain), Sangeeta Tiwari (Sagar), Prabhodh Vyas (Reva), Meena Jatav (Morena), Yogesh Tamrakar (Satna), Jyoti Dikshit (Katni), Chandra Prakash Vishvakarma (Singrauli), Amrita Yadav (Khandwa), Madhuri Patel (Burhanpur), Anant Dhurve (Chhindwara) and Geeta Agrawal from Devas.



Out of 13 names announced so far, the party has fielded as many as seven women and no Muslim. Patel is state president of the MP Congress women wing.

The names were announced after three days of brainstorming by the party's core committee members including Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, union ministers Jyotiraditya Scindia, Narendra Singh Tomar, state BJP in-charge Murlidhar Rao and state BJP president V.D. Sharma.

Sources told reporter that the core committee of the state leadership was stuck on the name of mayoral candidate from Gwalior Municipal Corporation because both the union ministers Scindia and Tomar are pushing for their loyalists. If sources are to be believed, Chouhan had also discussed this issue with Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a meeting in New Delhi on Monday. The Congress has already released the names of its mayoral

candidates for 15 out of 16 Municipal Corporations.

Elections to the 16 municipal corporations in Madhya Pradesh comprising 884 wards will be held in two phases - on July 6 and July 13. The counting of votes will be held on July 17 and July 18.

The filing of nominations has already started from June 11 and the last date is June 18. The last date for the withdrawal of nominations is June 22.

Three MLAs including one each from SP, BSP join BJP



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Three sitting MLAs, including an Independent, joined the BJP in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday. Of them, one is from Samajwadi Party (SP) and another from Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).

Three legislators who joined the saffron party are -- BSP MLA from Bhind - Sanjeev Kushwaha, the only MLA from SP in Madhya Pradesh assembly - Rajesh Shukla (Bijawar in Chhatrapur district) and an Independent MLA from Susner in Agar Malwa.

With this, the BJP's strength in the state assembly has increased to 130 from 127. It came just a day before

the Election Commission of India (ECI) is to release notification for election for the 16th President. The last date for nomination is June 29, while the polls are to be held on July 18.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, state BJP president V.D. Sharma and the state in-charge Murlidhar Rao welcomed the three MLAs at the party headquarters in Bhopal on Tuesday. Notably, the development came a day after Chouhan met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Monday.

Briefing the press on this occasion, Chouhan said that these three MLAs have been in touch with him since assembly poll results in 2018.

"These MLAs have always stood in support of the BJP, but I had said that the BJP is not going to form the government after the 2018 poll results. But, now I welcome all three MLAs in the BJP family," Chouhan said.

Independent legislator Rana Vikram Singh, who had supported the Congress' 18 months government in the state, said that he was willing to join the BJP soon after the results were announced. "But, the situation was not in BJP's favour then. Now, I am happy that the BJP gave this opportunity to me to work for the people." At present, in the 230-member assembly, the Congress has 96 legislators, BJP has 127, BSP has 2 and SP one.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan plants Banyan, Tecoma and Neem saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Banyan, Tecoma and Neem saplings with the students of the National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of Pandit Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism and Communication in Smart City Park at Shyamla Hills. Shramdaan along with plantation was offered. CM Chouhan was apprised about tree plantation and other social activities conducted by the students. He also called on the students to play an active role in environmental protection.



The Banyan sapling planted today is also called Vat tree or Badh. With its quality to cure numerous diseases, Banyan tree also holds huge religious significance. Abounding in antibiotic elements, neem is known for its medicinal qualities. Tecoma is known for its bright yellow and fragrant flowers. Tecoma is a small tree of the shrub group, reaching a height of up to 8 meters. It is planted in yards and gardens for decoration.

medicinal qualities. Tecoma is known for its bright yellow and fragrant flowers. Tecoma is a small tree of the shrub group, reaching a height of up to 8 meters. It is planted in yards and gardens for decoration.

NO CULPRIT FOR CRIME AGAINST WOMEN WILL GO SCOT-FREE

CM Chouhan give directives to Collector and ACP

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan after planting saplings in Smart Garden today received information from Collector Bhopal Avinash Lavania and Additional Police Commissioner Bhopal Sachin Atulkar regarding the action taken against the culprits committing crimes against women. CM Chouhan directed to suppress crime with utmost priority. There should be regular review of identified crimes as well as crimes against women. Criminal elements involve children by making them addicts and setting them on the path of lawlessness. In a recent incident, a notorious miscreant involved two teenagers with him for carrying out a crime. In such cases the culprit should never be spared. Collector Bhopal apprised that Badshah Baig, the criminal who attacked the woman with a paper cutter has been booked under NSA.

Pizza company's female employee thrashed in Indore

Team Absolute | Indore

In Indore, a business city of Madhya Pradesh, female employees of a pizza company beat up one of their companions due to a mutual dispute. The video of this beating is also going viral on social media. The incident is said to be three days old. Police registered a case against the accused women. The matter is being told of Dwarkapuri area. Nandini Yadav, who works in the food company Domino's here, has filed a complaint alleging assault by Pinky and three female companions, in which a case has been registered against the four under various sections.



Nandini alleges that she was going to her work on Saturday, when Pinky stopped and beat her three other female colleagues. She fell on the ground, she kept asking people for help, there were many people on the spot but no one came forward to rescue and

help. A video of the same assault is going viral on social media, in which four girls are beating a girl by beating her. Indore Police Commissioner Hari Narayan Chari Mishra has told IANS that all the five girls work in Domino's company and they have a mutual dispute. That is why this incident happened. Police have registered a case and took action.

Sale and use of single use plastic items banned from July 1

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Under the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021, the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single-use plastic items will be prohibited from July 1. These include ear-buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice cream sticks, decorative items of polystyrene (thermocool), cup-plates, glasses, forks, spoons, knives, straws, trays, wrapping films for packaging of sweets, boxes, invitation cards, cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners and stirrers of less

than 100 microns thickness will not be allowed to be used.

The thickness of plastic carry bags was increased from 50 microns to 75 microns with effect from September 30, 2021, which will be 120 microns with effect from 31 December 2022. Polystyrene and expanded polystyrene are being banned along with all types of single-use plastics, which are less useful but high littering.

All the states and union territories have been instructed by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to prepare a detailed action plan and implement it.

Online application for free admission in private schools from June 15

Last date June 30, lottery for admission on July 5, 2022. Priority to children orphaned during Corona period in online lottery

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Online applications can be made from June 15 for free admission in the first class of private schools in the session 2022-23, in the Right to Education Act. The last date for online application is June 30. Format of online application is available on RTE portal www.educationportal.mp.gov.in/Rte Portal. Applicants will be selected on July 5 through online lottery for free admission in private schools as per eligibility. This year, children orphaned due to the death of a parent/guardian from Covid-19 will be given priority in the online lottery under the Chief

Minister's Covid-19 Child Welfare Scheme. While releasing the time-table, Director State Education Center Dhanaraju S, gave detailed instructions to all district collectors and other officers, which are available on the RTE portal. Any one document related to eligibility will have to be uploaded along with the form through online process. After the online application, the applicant will have to get the documents verified by the authorized Verifying Officer in the school with the respective cluster center by July 1, 2022. The verification of the category / residence area through which the applicant has sought admission, will be done with the original certificate of that category and residence

proof. With document verification before the lottery, the problem of cancellation of admission will not arise in case of error or lack of documents after allotment of the school to the applicants.

If any problem or difficulty arises while applying online, the BRC office of the concerned block can also be contacted. After the lottery process, the information about the allotted seat will be provided to the applicant through SMS on his registered mobile number. List of online Lotteries will also be available on the RTE portal. Along with this, the information about school allotment will also be available on the notice board of BRC office. If any applicant has any

problem in receiving or submitting the application form or needs information about schools where seats are vacant, then RTE Portal, Office of District Education Officer, District Project Office of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or Block Resource Center office can be contacted.

The minimum age for admission in Nursery, KG-1 and KG-2 classes has been fixed at 3 to 5 years, for admission in Class-I, the minimum age has been fixed from 5 years to 7 years. The age of the applicant will be calculated as on June 16, 2022. Only the date mentioned in the birth certificate will be required to be entered in the online application.

HC seeks MP govt's reply on compensation against demolition drive after violence in Khargone

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh High Court has sought the state government's response to a petition seeking compensation for the demolition of a house demolished in Khargone after communal violence. The court has granted the government two weeks' time to submit its reply.

Hearing a petition filed by Jahid Ali, a resident of Khargone and owner of a tent house business, Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh HC also stayed on further action on the property till the next date of hearing.

The petitioner has alleged that part of his house was demolished in April after clashes broke out between two groups after some miscreants pelted stones on a Ram Navmi procession.

"The petitioner is the legal owner of his property and paying taxes of the same. The administration has demolished part of the property without issuing any notice to him and without giving any opportunity to him, which is in violation of principles of natural justice," the petitioner's lawyer MM Bohra said. Advocate Akash Sharma, representing the state government, sought for two weeks'



time to file a reply in the matter.

"Learned counsel for the respondents prays for and is granted two weeks' time for seeking instructions in the matter and for filing the reply," said Justice Verma. "Till next date of hearing, status-quo with respect to the property in question shall be main-

tained by the parties." Subsequent to the communal clashes, more than 60 FIRs were registered and 170 people were booked. The state administration had also demolished over 50 houses, shops and buildings.

Notably, a house built under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) was also bull-

dozed during the drive.

The state administration had carried out a demolition drive under - 'Madhya Pradesh Damage to Public and Private Property Act-2021' enabling recovery against damaged properties during the violence, protest, rally by individual or groups within 15 days.

Former MP finance minister's son resigns from BJP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Days after BJP president J.P. Nadda made it clear that the saffron party is against 'parivarwad' (dynasty politics) and will stick to this principle even at the cost of losing seats, Siddharth Malaiya, son of former Madhya Pradesh finance minister Jayant Malaiya, resigned from the party on Monday.

Siddharth Malaiya said he took the decision because he could not work for the people of his home district Damoh for the last one-and-a-half years because of his suspension from the party.

He also said that he failed to convince the state leadership against his suspension from the post of district president.

"For long, I was wishing to end this indecision, as I wasn't able to speak for the public and party workers as I am serving suspension. I decided to quit and perhaps the party also wanted me to take a decisive step," Siddharth



Malaiya said during a press briefing in Damoh on Monday.

Siddharth Malaiya and some other party office-bearers were suspended after the Damoh bypolls in which the BJP had lost to Congress' Ajay Tandon. His father Jayant Malaiya was also handed a show-cause notice by the party seeking explanation as to why the Malaiya family wasn't with the party completely. Siddharth Malaiya also turned down speculations that he would be joining the Congress, AAP or any other party, saying he has some ideology and would move ahead with the same in future as independent. He made it clear that he will be contesting the 2023 Assembly polls.



JLo's famous derriere almost made her quit showbiz

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress-singer Jennifer Lopez came close to quitting showbiz after being mocked over her curvy buttocks.

Pointing out that she was propelled to fame at a time when the celebrity body ideal was super-skinny, the 'Booty' singer stated not fitting the mould contributed to pushing her to the verge of giving up her dreams.

just like, 'I think I'm just going to quit.' I had to really figure out who I was. And believe in that and not believe in anything else," she said.

"When I started working, the beauty ideal was very thin, blonde, tall, not a lot of curves. I grew up around women with curves so it was nothing I was ever ashamed of." "It was hard, when you think people think you're a joke - like a punchline," the 52-year-old, who shares 14-year-old twins Max and Emme Muniz with ex-husband Marc Anthony, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"But it wound up affecting things in a way that I never intended."

Lopez added in her new documentary 'Halftime', which premieres on Tuesday, June 14 on Netflix, that her fiancé Ben Affleck was shocked at the body scrutiny she was under, but she said she expected it as she was a female Latina. Affleck could be seen on the film saying about Lopez, who was dubbed "Jenny from the Block" and "JLo", "I said to her once, 'Doesn't this bother you?' And she said, 'I'm Latina, I'm a woman, I expected this.'"

Los Angeles | Agencies

The Joaquin Phoenix-starrer 'Joker 2' - a sequel to the runaway 2019 hit film -- will be a musical for which singer Lady Gaga is in early talks. She will be seen portraying Harley Quinn - Joker's love interest and partner in madness, in the film, reports 'Variety'.

Speculation that Harley Quinn would appear in the movie first bubbled to the surface after Phillips posted the cover of the screenplay to Instagram on June 7. 'Variety' states that the subtitle for the film, 'Folie A Deux', refers to a shared delusional disorder, and Joker's only real companion -- other than Batman, anyway -- has been Quinn, a character first created for 'Batman: The Animated Series' in the early 1990s. Making 'Joker 2' a musical is another bold stroke by director Todd Phillips, who struck gold -- at the box office (with \$1 billion in worldwide grosses) and the Oscars (with 12 nominations and two wins) -- when he reframed the Dark Knight's number one villain as a loner anti-hero. Joaquin Phoenix won best actor for his performance as Joker, aka Arthur Fleck; he's also expected to reprise his performance, though his deal is not settled yet.

According to 'Variety', all other details about 'Folie A Deux' remain under wraps, so it's unclear whether Gaga would also contribute any music to the project, but it's a safe bet that it's at least on the table.

'JOKER 2': LADY GAGA IN EARLY NEGOTIATIONS TO PLAY HARLEY QUINN

JOHN CENA FINDS A FRIEND IN A TEENAGE UKRAINIAN REFUGEE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor and WWE legend John Cena enjoyed a "pretty darn special" afternoon with teenage Ukrainian refugee Misha Rohozyn, who has Down's Syndrome, after learning his mother had told him they were leaving their home in Mariupol following the invasion in Russia.

Cena was moved when he heard the story of Misha and his mother, who had told her son they were going to find the 'Blockers' actor when they had to leave their home in Mariupol following the invasion in Russia, so used his time off during a working trip to Europe to pay the 19-year-old a visit in his new home just outside of Amsterdam.

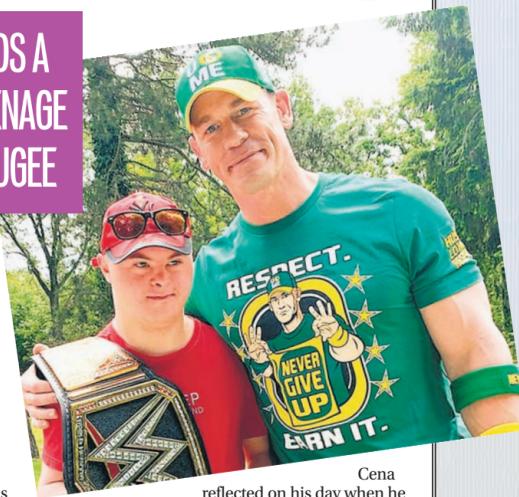
In an emotional video shared by the WWE on YouTube, Cena said: "When I read about Misha's story, it reached out to me not just Misha but the story of Misha's mom as well. I had three days off

from work, right at the time I read this story, and I'm an hour away by air, so that turned into 'We're going'.

"That means spending an afternoon building blocks and eating cake, that's a special afternoon when it comes to the new friends I was able to meet, How special is today? Yeah. Pretty darn special."

The 'Peacemaker' star was moved by his visit.

He said: "Misha's ability to embrace resistance, that's extraordinary. Those words never give up, we've all thought about those in our lives, they're very powerful. I think Misha's a great example - Misha's mom - they're two great examples of how persistence can lead to joy, even though the toughest of times."



Cena reflected on his day when he said goodbye to Misha and his mother.

He hugged the teenager and told him through a translator: "This was a wonderful adventure, in which I got to meet a wonderful new friend. Thank you for giving me strength."

He then hugged Misha's mother, who cried and said: "Thank you, thank you, John. You have a big heart."

Hugh Jackman tests positive for Covid, day after his Tony Awards performance

Los Angeles | Agencies

One day after performing "The Music Man" at the 2022 Tony Awards ceremony, nominee and Hollywood star Hugh Jackman has announced that he has tested positive for Covid. "I wanted you guys to hear it from me first that unfortunately this morning I have frustratingly tested positive for COVID again," Jackman says in a video posted on his Twitter account. "My incredible stand-by, Max Clayton, is gonna go on for me."

At the Tonys, Jackman performed 'Seventy-Six Trombones' with the cast of the current revival which he leads with Sutton Foster, reports 'Variety'. According to 'Variety', he was also nominated for best actor in a musical, which he lost to Myles Frost for his performance in 'MJ', and sat maskless in the front row during the ceremony. According to an email sent to all Tony Award attendees prior to the show, all guests of the ceremony were required to present proof of vaccination and a negative PCR Covid test taken within 48 hours of the start of the ceremony. Masks were optional for attendees who sat in the orchestra, and required in the mezzanine as well as the Radio City Music Hall lobby, restrooms and common rooms.

'The Music Man', like many other Broadway productions, requires performers to regularly test for the virus. Jackman previously tested positive for Covid during preview performances of 'The Music Man' in December, two months before the show officially opened.



JUSTIN LIN SET TO DIRECT 'ONE PUNCH MAN' FILM ADAPTATION

Los Angeles | Agencies



Filmmaker Justin Lin is attached to direct an upcoming film adaptation of the popular manga 'One Punch Man'.

Lin will direct the film based on a script from 'Venom' and 'Jumanji: The Next Level' screenwriters Scott Rosenberg and Jeff Pinkner. Sony Pictures is backing the film, and Lin will produce alongside Avi and Ari Arad of Arad Productions, reports 'Variety'. 'One Punch Man' will be Lin's first project following the announcement this April that he exited directing 'Fast X', the latest film in the 'Fast and Furious' franchise. He'd previously directed four films for the franchise, starting with 2006's 'Tokyo Drift', and also helmed the 2018 film 'Star Trek Beyond'. Created by Japanese artist ONE as a webcomic in 2009, 'One Punch Man' focuses on Saitama, an average, unemployed man who trains to become a superhero, and develops the ability to defeat any opponent -- no matter how powerful -- with a single punch.

Kylie Jenner talks about experiencing 'tons' of pain 4 months after giving birth

Los Angeles | Agencies

Reality TV star Kylie Jenner treated her Instagram followers to another update on her postpartum transformation, sharing a picture of her hitting the gym. "No days off!" the mom of two wrote alongside a mirror selfie of her posing in a matching brown sports bra and spandex set, reports aceshowbiz.com. In another post on Instagram Story, she got candid about struggling with knee and back pain after giving birth to her son four months ago. The Kylie Cosmetics founder shared alongside a picture of her on a treadmill, "4 months postpartum. I have been dealing w tons of back & knee pain this time so it slows down my workouts but I am on a mission to get strong again." Prior to this, Kylie took to her Instagram Story to talk about her weight gain and subsequent weight loss following her second pregnancy. "Gained 60 lbs again this pregnancy," the TV star wrote alongside a black-and-white shot of herself walking on a treadmill before noting that she had lost 40 lbs. She also added that she is "just trying to be healthy and patient."

Kylie and Travis Scott (II) welcomed their second child, a boy, in February. The new bundle of joy joins the pair's firstborn, 4-year-old daughter Stormi Webster. Kylie previously introduced her son as Wolf Webster, though she announced in the following month that her son would no longer go by that name.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Anya Taylor-Joy



INDIA QUALIFY FOR AFC ASIAN CUP 2023 FOR 2ND SUCCESSIVE TIME

Kolkata | Agencies

India have qualified for the AFC Asian Cup 2023, following Palestine's 4-0 win over Philippines in a Group B match on Tuesday.

This is the first time that India have qualified for two successive editions of the Asian Cup.

Ahead of their final game against group toppers Hong Kong, Sunil Chhetri-led team is placed 2nd in Group D. Both teams are on six points but Hong Kong are above India based on goal difference.

The final qualifying round saw 24 teams vie for the 11 remaining spots. The sides were divided into six groups of four teams each with the eventual six group winners and five best runner-ups qualifying for next year's Asian Cup.

The All India Football Association confirmed the



country's qualification on social media.

"HERE WE COME; As Palestine defeat Philippines in Group B, the #BlueTigers have now secured back-to-back qualifications for the @afcasiacup," AIFC said.

Drawn in Group D, India, beat Cambodia 2-0 in the opening match and earned a

hard-fought 2-1 over Afghanistan in their second outing. The new host country for AFC Asian Cup 2023 is yet to be finalised after China gave up its hosting rights due to the COVID-19 situation in the country. The quadrennial event is scheduled to be held from June 16 to July 16, next year.

3RD T20I

India thrash South Africa by 48 runs, stay alive in series

Visakhapatnam | Agencies

Harshal Patel's impressive bowling (4/25) helped India (179/5) thrash South Africa by 48 runs in the third T20I and stay alive in the five-match series at the Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy stadium, here on Tuesday.

Quickfire fifties by Rituraj Gaikwad (57 off 35) and Ishan Kishan (54 off 35) propelled India to 179/5 in 20 overs. Apart from Gaikwad and Kishan, Hardik Pandya (31 not out off 21) gave final flourish to Indian innings, after being invited to bat first.

On the other hand, Dwaine Pretorius (2/29) was most successful bowler for Proteas while Keshav



Brief scores:

India 179/5 in 20 Overs (Rituraj Gaikwad 57, Ishan Kishan 54; Dwaine Pretorius 2/29) won to South Africa 131/10 in 19.1 Overs (Heinrich Klaasen 29, Reeza Hendricks 23; Harshal Patel 4/25) by 48 runs.

Maharaj (1/24), Kagiso Rabada (1/31) and Tabraiz Shamsi (1/36) also chipped in with one wicket each.

In reply, four Proteas batters - Reeza Hendricks (23), Dwaine Pretorius (20), Heinrich Klaasen (29), Wayne Parnell (22 not out) got starts but couldn't convert them to big innings.

Indian bowlers kept picking wickets at regular intervals and eventually bowled out South Africa for 131/10 in 19.1 overs, winning by 48 runs.

After Harshal, Yuzvendra Chahal (3/20) was India's most successful bowler while Axar Patel (1/28) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1/21) also contributed well with the ball.

Australia make it to fifth consecutive FIFA World Cup with win over world No. 22 Peru

Doha (Qatar) | Agencies

The Australia men's football team, with a world ranking of 42, secured qualification for a fifth consecutive FIFA World Cup on Tuesday, recording a historic 5-4 win over world No. 22 Peru, in a dramatic penalty shootout at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium here.

A strong team display, along with the heroics of the substitute goalkeeper Andrew Redmayne, helped seal Australia's spot in the quadrennial showpiece, set to commence in November this year. Australia join reigning world champions France, Tunisia, and Denmark in Group D.

An emotional Australia head coach Graham Arnold



termed the triumph as a milestone moment for football in the country and one that will sit alongside the achievements of the Socceroos' World Cup and qualifying squads from 1974, 2006, 2010, 2014, and 2018.

The intercontinental play-off marked the culmination of a qualifying campaign that

spanned more than 1,000 days for the Socceroos.

They were on track to qualify automatically as one of the top two teams in Group B of the third round of Asian Football Confederation (AFC) qualifying but a three-game winless streak left Arnold's side third behind Saudi Arabia and Japan.

Australia beat the United Arab Emirates 2-1 earlier in June to set up the clash with Peru.

Goalkeeper Andrew Redmayne, who was substituted on for the shootout, was the hero, saving Peru's spot-kick from Alex Valera to secure a 5-4 victory for the Socceroos. "I'm no hero. I just played my role like everyone else did tonight," Redmayne, who was sent on for captain Mathew Ryan after 120 scoreless minutes, said after the match. "Not even the 11 on the pitch, it was much more than that, it is a team effort."

The victory is a major boost for coach Arnold, who was under intense pressure and likely would have been ousted if the Socceroos failed to qualify.

TRENT BRIDGE'S UNIQUE GIFT TO TEST CRICKET; NO ENTRY FEE FOR FINAL DAY OF ENG-NZ GAME

Nottingham: Trent Bridge on Tuesday set a great precedent to enhance the popularity of Test cricket by making entry free for the final day of the second Test between England and New Zealand on Tuesday.

The high price of tickets at Lord's for the first Test, which England won by five wickets, reportedly deterred thousands of spectators from coming to the ground and prompted cricket greats like Michael Vaughan to come down heavily on the authorities.

However on Monday, the stadium management made entry free prompting Vaughan to tweet, "Well done @TrentBridge... Free entry for everyone for tomorrow's play.. #ENGVNZ."

An hour before the start of the final day of the thrilling second Test, Trent Bridge issued a statement saying the stadium had reached its capacity. "Following our decision to make tickets for Day 5 of England versus New Zealand fixture free of charge, we can confirm that we have now reached our capacity."

"The demand for seats has been remarkable. And to those who were unable to secure them on this occasion, you have our apologies," said the stadium management.

Ranji Trophy semifinals

Himanshu Mantri and Yashasvi Jaiswal knocks highlight Day 1

Bengaluru | Agencies

Himanshu Mantri's maiden first-class century bailed Madhya Pradesh out from a precarious situation of 97 for 4 while Yashasvi Jaiswal rode his luck to make second successive first-class ton to help Mumbai reach 260 for 5 on the first day of the Ranji Trophy semifinals here on Tuesday.

Elected to bat, Madhya Pradesh lost some early wickets but Mantri and Akshat Raghuvanshi made a 123-run partnership before the latter was trapped leg before by Akash Deep on 63.

At the end of the day's play, Madhya Pradesh were 271/6 with Mantri 134 not out and Puneet Dey in the middle.

In another match, Uttar Pradesh elected to bowl and dented Mumbai early with the dismissal of Prithvi Shaw.

However as the day progressed the conditions became easier for batting and Jaiswal made three half-century stands with Suved Parkar, Sarfaraz Khan and Hardik Tamore en route to his century. After reaching his milestone, Jaiswal immediately got out when he tried to guide a leg-side delivery from Karan Sharma.

Mulani and Tamore saw through the last half an hour of play safely and went to stumps unbeaten on 10 and 51 respectively.

Brief scores:

Madhya Pradesh 271/6 (Himanshu Mantri 134 not out, Akshat Raghuvanshi 61; Mukesh Kumar 2-45, Akash Deep 2-55) vs Bengal

Brief scores:

Mumbai 260/5 (Yashasvi Jaiswal 100, Hardik Tamore 51; Yash Dayal 2-35, Karan Sharma 2-39) vs Uttar Pradesh

Indonesia Open: PV Sindhu, Sai Praneeth knocked out in first round

Jakarta (Indonesia) | Agencies

Top Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and B Sai Praneeth were knocked out in the first round of Indonesia Open 2022 BWF Super1000 tournament after losing their respective singles matches at the Istora Stadium, here on Tuesday. Sindhu, the world No 7 in the latest badminton rankings, lost 14-21, 18-21 to China's He Bing Jiao, who improved her head-to-head record to 10-8 against the former world champion.

World No 9 Jiao started the match better and raced to a 9-2 lead as Sindhu seemed slow off the blocks in the opening exchanges. However, the Indian shuttler, who had defeated Jiao to win the Tokyo Olympics bronze medal last year,



came back into the contest and managed to reduce the deficit to 14-12 after prevailing in some closely-fought rallies. The fightback, though, came a bit too late as Jiao upped the ante and won the first game 21-14. The change of sides in the second game brought Sindhu little joy as Jiao, once again, dominated the early exchanges and took a four-point advantage at the break. The 26-year old Sindhu tried

hard to get back into the match after the restart and while she did come up with some scorching winners, a bunch of unforced errors cost her as the Chinese shuttler wrapped up the match in 47 minutes. Notably, Sindhu was the only Indian women's singles player at the Indonesia Open.

In the men's singles, B Sai Praneeth, the world No. 19, was also shown the door early by Denmark's Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus. The world No 21 Dane made easy work of Praneeth in the opening game before overcoming a much sterner challenge in the second. Vittinghus won the match 21-16, 21-19 in 45 minutes.

Other Indian shuttlers -- Kidambi Srikanth and Lakshya Sen will start their campaign on Wednesday.

Olympic champion tennis player Monica Puig retires

San Juan (Puerto Rico) | Agencies

Rio Olympic Games gold medalist in tennis Monica Puig has announced her retirement from tennis, citing injuries as the main reason for her decision.

Puig hit a career-high ranking at No.27 on the WTA Tour in 2016 and won her sole title on the red clay in Strasbourg in 2014.

The highlight of Puig's career came in her history-making run to Olympic gold at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. At age 22, Puig became Puerto Rico's first Olympic gold medalist with a stunning performance, which included wins against three major champions in Garbine Muguruza of Spain,



Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic and Angelique Kerber of Germany in the gold medal match, according to wtatennis.com.

"It's not a goodbye, but see you soon," Puig wrote in her retirement message on Instagram.

"Over the past 28 years of my life, tennis has been my constant. It has given me some of the most thrilling and memorable experiences I could have ever asked for. But, sometimes, good things come to an end. Today, I announce my retirement from tennis. After a tough 3 year fight with injuries and 4 surgeries, my body had enough.

Puig conceded that while the Olympic gold made her a celebrity, it also had a downside.

SA skipper Sune Luus rises seven spots in ICC bowler rankings after Ireland showing

Dubai | Agencies

South Africa captain Sune Luus has been rewarded for her excellent recent form by making giant strides on the latest ICC Women's ODI bowler and all-rounder rankings. Luus impressed with figures of 3/16 against Ireland in the opening match of the three-game ODI series last week and that saw the 26-year-old jump sharply on the bowler and all-rounder rankings.

The South Africa skipper rose seven spots to 39th overall on the bowler rankings, while she also jumped two places to equal 13th on the all-rounder list.

Team-mate Shabnim Ismail also took three wickets in that match against Ireland, but the veteran still remains in second place behind England spinner Sophie Ecclestone on the rankings for bowlers.

There wasn't much change in the ODI batting rankings, although the failure by Laura Wolvaardt against Ireland saw the South Africa opener drop one spot to fifth behind Australia's Alyssa Healy. Her place in the top four was taken by Australia captain Meg Lanning, meaning the reigning ICC Women's Cricket World Cup champions now have three of the top four ODI batters in the world. A pair of South Africans made the biggest move on the latest T20I rankings for bowlers, with pacer Tumi Sekhukhune and spinner



Nonkululeko Mlaba rising to career-best ratings following the three-game series against Ireland. Sekhukhune picked up three wickets in the

final game and a total of eight scalps for the series and was rewarded by jumping two places to 25th on the bowler rankings.

Dinesh Karthik deserves all the accolades for his heroics, says Kapil Dev

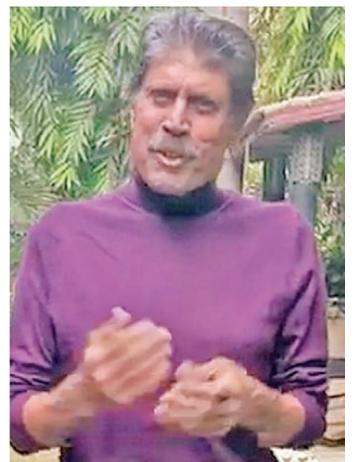
Team Absolute | New Delhi

Legendary Kapil Dev lavished praise on wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik for his remarkable comeback in Indian team, saying the swashbuckling batter deserves all the accolades for his heroics during the Indian Premier League and in the ongoing T20I series against South Africa.

Karthik was not part of team India in T20Is since February 2019. But scintillating performances as a specialist finisher for Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in IPL 2022, amassing 330 runs at a strike rate of 183.33, paved the path for a comeback into the national team after three years.

Karthik scored unbeaten 30 runs off 21 balls in the second T20I match against South Africa. The 37-year-old turned back the block and slammed 21 runs off the last five balls he faced in the match.

"This time he has performed so well that he has forced the selectors to think that 'look, you can't ignore me'. Rishabh Pant is a youngster, he has plenty of crickets. Dinesh Karthik has experience and performance, which is why I would say that no praise is enough for him," Kapil Dev told Uncut.



Head coach Rahul Dravid too had hinted at Karthik continuing to play the specialist finisher role, he did at RCB, for the Indian team.



Rhea Chakraborty shares emotional post on Sushant's second death anniversary

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On Sushant Singh Rajput's second death anniversary on Tuesday (14 June), actress Rhea Chakraborty, who was in a relationship with the late actor, has shared a string of throwback pictures and penned an emotional note.

Rhea posted a motley of pictures with Sushant on Instagram. In the throwback images, the late actor and Rhea are seen spending some happy times together. She captioned the image: "Miss you every day" along with a heart emoji.

The 29-year-old actress was arrested and spent a month in Mumbai's Byculla jail in September 2020. On the work front, Rhea was last seen in the Amitabh Bachchan-starrer 'Chehre'.

Sushant died by suicide or something else!! it is still not clear for most of his fans. This was an unbearable incident for his fans as well as for his family. His last film 'Dil Bechara' was released posthumously on a streaming platform., Mumbai in June 2020, aged 34. His last film 'Dil Bechara' was released posthumously on a streaming platform.



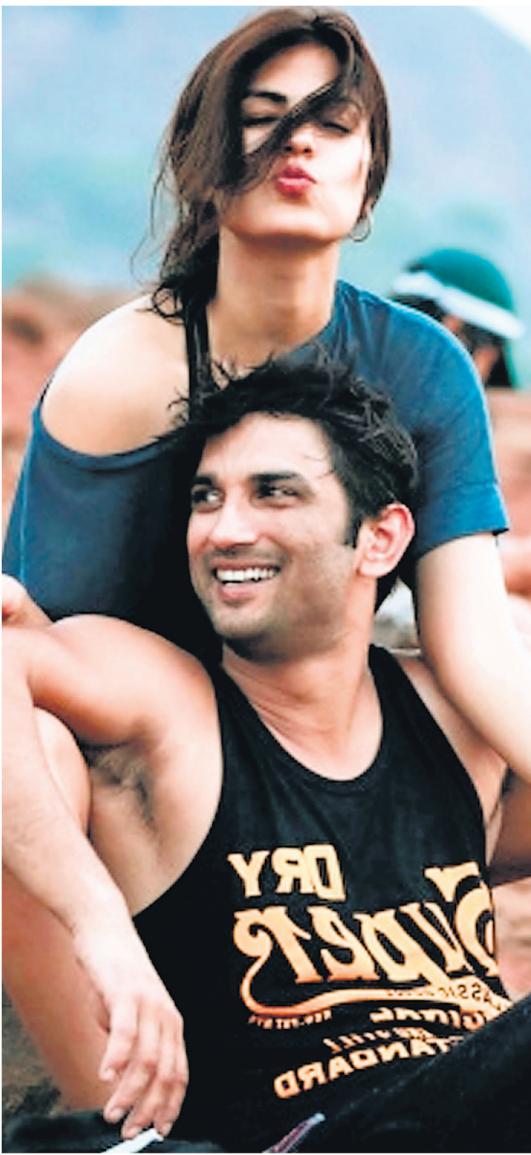
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Veteran actor Anupam Kher has wished his actress-wife Kirron Kher on her 70th birthday with a special message. He said that he wishes their son Sikander gets married soon. Anupam posted a string of pictures of the couple posing together. Alongside the image, he wrote: "Happy Birthday dearest #Kirron! May God give you all the happiness in the world. May you have a long, healthy & peaceful life!"

Anupam Kher's b'day wish for wife Kirron: May Sikander get married soon

"May your life be full of laughter. You are God's special person! May you continue to serve the people of Chandigarh for many years. May @sikandarkher get married soon.. Love & prayers

always!" Kirron, who is also a politician, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer in 2021. She is seen as one of the judges on reality show 'India's Got Talent'.



Kiara Advani clocks 8 years in the showbiz

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Kiara Advani, who stepped in the world of Bollywood in 2014 with Fugly, has never ceased to entertain us.

The actress recently clocked eight years in the industry. The actress celebrated the special day with her team members, fan clubs and team Jugjugg Jeeyo. Kiara shared a video on her social media handle giving a glimpse of the special moments from the celebration and penned a heartfelt note. The actress wrote, "June 13th! the day I stepped into this magical world of filmmaking. 8 years and counting... my rainbows not my thunderstorms.. My heart is filled with gratitude

My day began with my wonderful team surprising me with a super warm virtual interaction with my fanclubs and ended with @Varundvn who turned work into a celebration reminding me why I chose to be a part of this chaotic yet magnetic industry! I maybe 8 years old today but I have a lifetime of entertaining left to do! #waitforit... I promise to make you proud! After she shared the post, her Kabir ingi co-star Shahid Kapoor and Jugjugg Jeeyo co-star Varun Dhavan congratulated the actress. On the work front, the actress is currently basking in the success of Bhooh Bhalaiyaa 2. She is gearing up for Jugjugg Jeeyo alongside Varun Dhavan, Anil Kapoor and Neetu Singh. She also has Govinda Mera Naam and RC 15 in her pipeline.



AAMIR CELEBRATES MOM'S BIRTHDAY WITH EX-WIFE KIRAN RAO AND SON AZAD

Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan celebrated his mother Zeenat Hussain's birthday in the most special way possible. On Monday, Aamir's mother celebrated her birthday with several close ones including his ex-wife Kiran Rao and his youngest son Azad. In a video, Aamir is seen sitting next to Kiran Rao and Azad. Several family members and close friends are in attendance. Aamir is closest to his mom and shares a great bond with her. She is also one of the honest critics of his work and projects. Her advice plays a vital role in his life. Not only is Zeenat Hussain the first person to watch his films, but she is also the person who gives the first clap for all of his passion projects.

Recently, Aamir along with Azad personally went to buy a gift for his mother's birthday.

LYDIAN NADHASWARAM'S FIRST INDEPENDENT JAZZ ALBUM

Chennai | Agencies

Young musician Lydian Nadhaswaram, who wowed the world and the country with his amazing music skills, is looking to make a mark in the global arena with his first independent Jazz album titled 'Chromatic Grammatic'. The album comprises 12 songs and has leading musicians across the globe playing Lydian's compositions. Lydian, who made India proud by winning the CBS talent show, The World's Best, in 2019, explained the reason for coming up with such an album. "At present, Jazz music is slowly diminishing in the global music arena. There are very few Jazz musicians in India and the numbers continue to reduce. This attempt will hopefully give a new spur of life to embrace Jazz," Lydian, who is also Ilayaraja's first and only student, said. Lydian said that this album will also be available on international platforms and later submitted to various award festivals. "The launch event will be held on June 21, which happens to be the World Music Day," he added.



DIRECTOR RAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY'S NEXT FILM ALSO SET IN RAJASTHAN

After making his mark as a debutant with the Netflix film 'Thar', director Raj Singh Chaudhary is gearing up for his next project that is also set in Rajasthan. The director shared how he is so fascinated about shooting in the unexplored locations of Rajasthan in his upcoming project and that the landscape of Rajasthan that he started to explore for 'Thar' made him fall for the place. Raj said, "The script of my next is set in Rajasthan, but a side that no one has seen yet and will be shot at unexplored locations. The story is set in today's time. The scripting is currently in process and once it's locked, the next process will follow soon." He went on adding, "It's going to be a visual spectacle and will be very different from 'Thar' but it will again be shot in Rajasthan, never seen before. It's an exciting, pulsating, on-the-edge kind of genre."



Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Baaki Baatein Peene Baad' hitmaker Arjun Kanungo is set to roll out his debut studio album 'Industry' which will feature the Indian rendition of Vaultboy's

'Everything Sucks'. This version is specifically made for India with lyrics in Hindi written by Arjun and Dhruv Yogii, while featuring parts of the original song by Vaultboy.

'Industry', an eclectic mix of tracks, ventures into a deeper, more intense side to Arjun's music, and is touted to be a breakaway from Arjun's mainstream avatar. Talking about the album, Arjun

Kanungo said in a statement, "I'm really excited about this album because every track on it is distinct and unique. I am so stoked to bring the ambitious Indian rendition of 'Everything Sucks' on home turf. The original track has over 100 million plays on Spotify and it feels huge to represent and reimagine this American pop hit."

Arjun will soon drop 'Everything Sucks' along with two other tracks from the album this week including 'Foto' where he has collaborated with 'Bajre Da Sita' famed singer Rashmeet Kaur and 'Ishq Samundar' featuring KING.

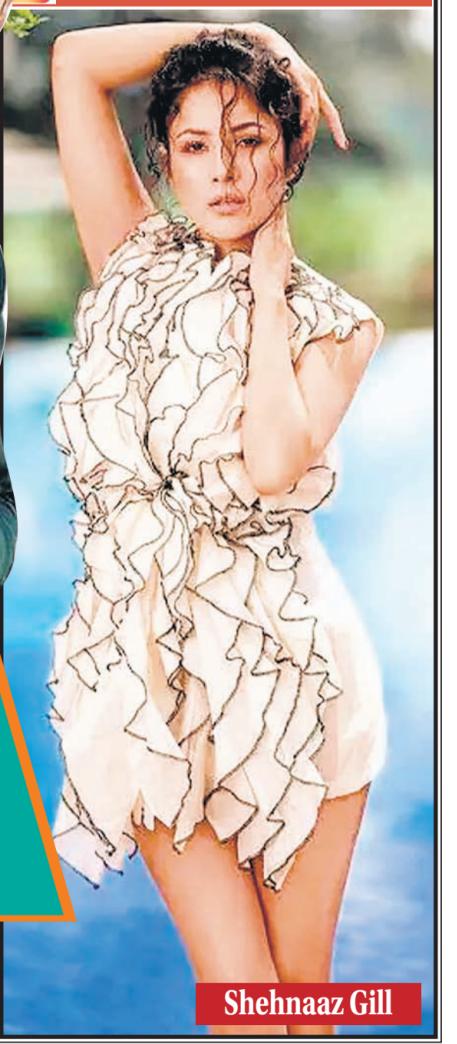
While 'Foto' is an unconventional track with desi influence, 'Ishq Samundar' is the album version of King and Arjun's pop trance track which will first release on MTV Unwind.

Adding to his statement, Kanungo further said, "With this album, music enthusiasts can expect different sounds and flavours from Bollywood pop with 'Foto' to pop trance with 'Ishq Samundar'. It's going to be a crazy week and I can't wait to see how people react to it."

The songs from the album are set to hit the airwaves this week.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Shehnaaz Gill