

absolute india

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Six nations show interest in Tejas LCA; Malaysia to procure 18: Govt

The government told the Parliament on Friday that Malaysia is procuring 18 Tejas jets while the US, Argentina, Australia, Egypt, Indonesia and Philippines too have shown interest to procure the light combat aircraft (LCA).



class aircraft.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The government told the Parliament on Friday that Malaysia is procuring 18 Tejas jets while the US, Argentina, Australia, Egypt, Indonesia and Philippines too have shown interest to procure the light combat aircraft (LCA). The government said, "Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a defence PSU under the Ministry of Defence, responded to a request for information received from Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) in February 2019 for LCA

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt said: "Subsequently in October 2021, HAL responded to request for proposal issued against tender released by the Royal Malaysian Air Force for 18 Fighter Lead In Trainer - Light Combat Aircraft (FLIT-LCA) and offered the LCA Tejas twin seater variant." The Government has taken several policy initiatives in the past few years and brought in reforms to encourage indigenous design, development and manufacturing of defence equipment in the country, thereby expanding produc-

tion. These initiatives, inter-alia, include: * According to priority to procurement of capital items from domestic sources under the Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020. * The announcement of 18 major defence platforms for industry-led design development in March 2022 * Notification of three 'Positive Indigenisation Lists' of total 310 items of services and two 'Positive Indigenisation Lists' of 2,958 items of the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timelines indicated against them.

INDIA, CHINA HOLD MILITARY TALKS TO DISCUSS AIRSPACE VIOLATIONS, PROVOCATIONS BY CHINESE AIR FORCE

India and China held a special round of military talks on Tuesday at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point in eastern Ladakh to discuss airspace violations and provocations by the Chinese side in that region over the past 45 days. The talks were held after the Indian Air Force countered Chinese attempts to provoke in the eastern Ladakh region by violating airspace and confidence-building measurement lines, according to which both sides have to fly fighter jets within 10 km of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).



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Government sources told IANS: "During the military talks, the Indian side strongly objected to Chinese flight activities for over a month near the eastern Ladakh sector and asked them to refrain from such provocative activities." The talks also came at a time when China is having strained relations with several countries, including the US, over a high-profile US leader's visit to Taiwan and the firing of ballistic missiles in the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone. The talks between the two sides included air force officials from both sides along with representatives of the army. The Indian Air Force was

represented by Air Commodore Amit Sharma from the Operations Branch, while an officer of an equivalent rank from the Air Force of the People's Liberation Army came for the discussion. Sources said the Indian Army was represented by a Major General-rank officer under the Fire and Fury Corps led by Lt Gen A Sengupta. The Chinese have been complaining about the Indian Air Force upgrading its capability in Tibet to detect Chinese Air Force aircraft operating within the territory they control. The confrontation between the two air forces began on 25 June when a

PLAAF J-11 fighter aircraft flew very close to a point of friction in eastern Ladakh at around 4 p.m. and was picked up by both men on the ground as well as by radars. Chinese activities in front of the Chumar sector continued for over a month and the Indian Air Force retaliated strongly by scouting its fighter jets, including Mirage 2000 and MiG-29, from its forward positions near the Ladakh region. Sources said that China did not expect such a strong response from the Indian Air Force which was ready to face any possible misadventure from the PLAAF. They said that during this time the Indian Air Force is also taking precautions to ensure that there is no escalation on the ground and at the same time their air movements are also monitored. India and China have held 16 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks to reduce the tension which began after China tried to change the status quo on the LAC in 2020. So far, representatives of the ITBP and the Ministry of External Affairs are involved in the talks led by the Commander of the Fire and Fury Corps from the Indian side. Both sides have been successful in resolving the three friction points in eastern Ladakh and are holding discussions to find solutions for the Hot Springs area as well.



CONGRESS STAGE MASSIVE PROTEST AGAINST INFLATION, UNEMPLOYMENT: KEY POINTS

New Delhi: Several Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, wore black-coloured outfits to mark their protest against the central government over issues like price rise and unemployment. The protesting MPs of the opposition party raised slogans against the government demanding that the GST hike on essential items be withdrawn, with party chief Sonia Gandhi standing with the women MPs holding a banner outside gate number 1 of Parliament. The protesters were stopped by the Delhi Police and not allowed to proceed towards the Rashtrapati Bhawan. Sonia Gandhi did not take part in the march. The other MPs were detained by police at Vijay Chowk. Rahul Gandhi, senior Congress leaders K C Venugopal, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Gaurav Gogoi were among the 64 MPs detained and taken away from Vijay Chowk in a police bus. Priyanka Gandhi who staged a sit-in protest outside the AICC headquarters was forcibly put in a vehicle by police and taken away.

Related stories on Nation page

Loan EMIs to rise as RBI increases repo rate by 50 bps

The EMIs on the loan will rise as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday hiked the repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent to contain inflation.

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The EMIs on the loan will rise as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday hiked the repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent to contain inflation. Several banks have already raised their borrowing rates and some will again increase their rates after this hike by the central bank. "For any financial institution including NBFCs Cash in the Inventory. All NBFC must borrow money from the market and then lend to customers. Difference between borrowing cost and lending income is the profit for NBFC. With increase in borrowing cost NBFC has to increase the lending cost to maintain profitability. Usually interest rates on loans are variable and are linked to Repo cost directly or indirectly. Hence when the Repo rate is changed by the government, NBFC changes the lending rate. Eventually, this increase in lending rate translates to the increase in EMI as the duration of the loan remains constant," said Anshu Agarwal, Finance Head (India) of Branch International. Whenever the central bank increases the repo rate it is worrisome for existing and upcoming borrowers as their EMIs and interest rises. According to the RBI norms, banks are required to link the interest rates of loans with an external benchmark, which is gener-

ally the RBI's repo rate. Meanwhile, the bank deposit rates are also likely to increase, bringing some relief to the common man. After the rate hike by the central bank, the timing of taking the loan is crucial for home loan borrowers as they usually borrow at floating rates. "Home loan rates are now expected to settle around 8 per cent per annum, which can put a short-term psychological dent on the demand for the mid and affordable housing segment, but we won't see that continuing for long," said Amit Goyal, CEO, India Sotheby's International Realty. The monetary policy committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unanimously voted to increase the policy repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent. Consequently, the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate adjusted to 5.15 per cent and Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate adjusted to 5.65 per cent. This is the third consecutive rate hike by the central bank in this year after a 40 basis points hike in May and 50 basis points in June. With Friday's hike, the RBI has increased the rate by 140 basis points since May this year. The central bank has retained its projection for GDP at 7.2 per cent, with Q1 at 16.2 per cent, Q2 at 6.2 per cent, Q3 at 4.1 per cent, and Q4 at 4.0 per cent, with risks broadly balanced. Real GDP growth for Q1FY24 is projected at 6.7 per cent.

DURING SESSION, MPS DO NOT ENJOY ANY IMMUNITY FROM ARREST IN CRIMINAL CASES: VENKAIHA NAIDU

Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu on Friday clarified that Members of Parliament do not enjoy any immunity from arrest in criminal cases during the session. Naidu also said that the members cannot avoid summons issued by law enforcement agencies. Naidu made this remark in response to the Congress members saying that the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge has been insulted as he was summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning on Thursday during the working hours of the House.



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V-P POLLS: TRS DECLARES SUPPORT TO MARGARET ALVA

Hyderabad: The Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) on Friday decided to support Margaret Alva, the combined candidate of opposition parties for the post of the Vice President of India. TRS president and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu took the decision to back Alva. TRS parliamentary party leader K. Keshava Rao said all 16 MPs of the party will vote for the opposition candidate. The vice presidential election is scheduled to be held on August 6 and the results are likely to be announced the same day. Alva, a Congress leader and former governor of Rajasthan, is locked in a straight fight against Jagdeep Dhankhar, the candidate of the BJP-led NDA. TRS also supported Yashwanth Sinha, the combined candidate of the opposition parties, in the Presidential elections held last month. Sinha was defeated by NDA's Droupadi Murmu.

PM Modi to chair NITI Aayog's 7th Governing Council meeting

New Delhi | Agencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the seventh meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog on Sunday (August 7). The meeting will be at Rashtrapati Bhawan Cultural Centre here. The agenda of the meeting, inter-alia, includes crop diversification and achieving self-sufficiency in oilseeds and pulses and agri-communities; implementation of the National Education Policy-school education; implementation of the National Education Policy-higher education; and urban governance. In a statement, NITI Aayog said that as India commemorates 75 years of Independence, there is a reinforced need for the states to be agile, resilient and self-reliant and move towards 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' in a spirit of cooperative federalism. "In the drive towards building a steady, sustainable and inclusive India, the Seventh Governing Council meeting of NITI Aayog will be held on August and will pave the way for synergies towards a new era



of collaboration and cooperation between the Centre and States/ Union Territories," the NITI Aayog said. As part of preparations for the meeting, the National Conference of Chief Secretaries held in Dharamsala in June 2022 which was the culmination of the six month long rigorous exercise by the Centre and states. The conference was chaired by the Prime Minister and attended by the Chief Secretaries of all states and UTs, along with senior

officials of the Central and state governments. "The 7th Governing Council Meeting will endeavour to finalise a roadmap and outcome oriented action plan on each of the above themes," it said. This would be the first in-person meeting of the Governing Council since July 2019. "It is particularly important as we enter Amrit Kaal against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and in light of India hosting the G20 Presidency and summit

next year. The meeting would also lay emphasis on the importance of the Presidency for India for the federal system and the role that states can play in highlighting their progress at the G-20 Platform," the statement said. NITI Aayog's Governing Council is the premier body tasked with evolving a shared vision of national priorities and strategies with the active involvement of states and union territories. The Governing Council presents a platform to discuss inter-sectoral, inter-departmental and federal issues. The NITI Aayog Governing Council comprises the Prime Minister of India, Chief Ministers of all the states and union territories with legislature, Lieutenant Governors of other UTs; ex-Officio Members, Vice Chairman NITI Aayog, full-time members NITI Aayog; and Union Ministers as Special Invitees. It provides one of the most important forums for deliberations between the Centre and states and identify key strategies for cohesive action with a whole-of-government approach.

GOVT TO TABLE ANTI-MARITIME PIRACY BILL IN LS



New Delhi: The Centre on Friday listed the "The Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill, 2019, and Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar will move the Bill in the Lok Sabha to make special provisions for repression of piracy on the high seas and to provide for punishment for the offence of piracy and for matters connected therewith. Apart from this many private member Bills have been listed, including the population control Bill to be introduced by BJP MP Ravi Kishan. Both the Houses of Parliament on Thursday witnessed protests by the opposition members over the alleged misuse of investigating agencies by the government against political opponents. Opposition members led by the Congress in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha protested against the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids and summons against the Opposition leaders. The Lok Sabha proceedings were first adjourned until 2 p.m. and then for the day after the opposition members continued loud sloganeering over the misuse of the ED against political rivals.



SONIA, RAHUL DID NOT COOPERATE IN ED PROBE PRIOR TO PARLIAMENT SESSION: PRALHAD JOSHI

Retaliating to the statement of Rajya Sabha Opposition leader Mallikarjun Kharge, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mines and Coal, Pralhad Joshi on Friday said that Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi did not cooperate in the probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Bengaluru | Agencies

Retaliating to the statement of Rajya Sabha Opposition leader Mallikarjun Kharge, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mines and Coal, Pralhad Joshi on Friday said that Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi did not cooperate in the probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Kharge stated earlier that how can they participate in the parliamentary debates if the ED takes up investigation during the parliament session. Pralhad Joshi questioned whether Congress leaders extended their support when Sonia and Rahul Gandhi were called by the ED for investigation when there was no session?

Joshi said that the intention of the Congress is there should not be any probe at all. Sonia and Rahul Gandhi approached the High Court, Supreme Court and Tribunal seek-



ing a stay on the probe by the ED but they did not get a stay. When the Supreme Court had refused to stay the investigations, can the ED stop

the probe against them, he asked. Joshi said Kharge is the CEO of Young Indian, which has a major role to play in illegal money trans-

fers. In this backdrop, Kharge was summoned by the ED.

Since Mallikarjun Kharge is in public life he must cooperate with the investigating agencies. Kharge, who questions how he can be given summons during the parliament session, should come forward and inform what is the cooperation he has given for the smooth functioning of parliament? Whenever ED summons are given to Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, Congress leaders have disrupted the parliament session, Pralhad Joshi stated. "We need not learn lessons from those who imposed Emergency on the nation. When the Congress was formed democratic values were overlooked," he said.

Today all the courts have rejected the pleas of the Congress. The party is not showing faith and trust in the judiciary. Is this not an anti-democratic move? Joshi said on his social media.

Delhi Police release all Congress MPs after six hours of detention

Delhi Police have released all the Congress Parliamentarians who were detained earlier on Friday during Congress' protest march in the national capital.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Police have released all the Congress Parliamentarians who were detained earlier on Friday during Congress' protest march in the national capital. The Congress MPs were released after being detained for almost six hours for protesting peacefully and democratically against price rise, unemployment and GST, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said.

As many as 65 Congress lawmakers, including Rahul Gandhi, were detained from Vijay Chowk, close to the Parliament. The Congress had announced a nationwide protest on Friday against the policies of the Central government which have allegedly led to rise in unemployment and inflation in the country.

Wearing black clothes, the MPs, under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, tried to take out a march from the Parliament House to the Rashtrapati Bhawan. However, as they moved forward, the police stopped them midway near Vijay Chowk.



The police tried to convince Rahul Gandhi for a while, but as he refused to stop, they detained him and took him on a bus to the Kingsway police camp.

While speaking to mediapersons before getting detained, Rahul Gandhi accused the Delhi Police of manhandling the Parliamentarians. "We are standing here on the issues of price rise and unemployment. We wanted to move forward but the police did not allow us," he said.

When asked about MPs being 'manhandled', Rahul Gandhi said, "That is fine. I'm happy to be manhandled. Our job is to resist these forces, our job is to make sure that Indian democracy is protected, our job is to raise issues of the people like price rise and unemployment and we are only doing that."

'Go to high court', SC on plea against permission given to Sikhs to carry kirpan in domestic flights

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday declined to entertain a PIL by Hindu Sena challenging the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security's decision to allow Sikh passengers to carry kirpan on domestic flights.

A bench comprising Justices S. Abdul Nazeer and J.K. Maheshwari told the petitioner organisation to move the concerned high court. "You go to the High Court. Dismissed, with liberty to approach the High Court", said the bench. The petition was filed by an organisation named Hindu Sena challenging the

exemption granted to the Sikh community by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security.

The petitioner challenged the order issued by Bureau of Civil Aviation Security on March 4, 2022 which stated that "kirpan" may be carried by only by a Sikh passenger in domestic flights provided the length of its blade does not exceed 15.24 cms (6 inches) and the total length does not exceed 22.86 cms (9 inches).

The plea said: "The liberty granted to the Sikh passengers/ employees/ stakeholders vide the said order appears to be absolute without any consideration for

the safety and security of the fellow passengers and employees as stated order does not provide any provision to ascertain that whether the person carrying kirpan in the high security areas like airport and aircraft is an actual Sikh or an imposter with intention to misuse the above liberty."

The plea contended that the freedom given to Sikh passengers is arbitrary and violation of Article 14 and Article 15 with respect to the discrimination made on the basis of religion, as any non-Sikh person is not allowed to carry any object that could be potential threat to the co-passengers.

RBI to allow cross-border bill payments, bring credit info cos under Ombudsman scheme: Guv

Mumbai | Agencies

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will allow the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) to process cross-border inbound bill payments that will help senior citizens in India while their wards are overseas, said Governor Shaktikanta Das. The BBPS, an interoperable platform for standardised bill payments, has transformed the bill payment experience for users in India.

The Governor, who had announcing a policy rate hike of 50 basis points (bps) to 5.40 per cent, said: "It is now proposed to enable BBPS to accept cross-border inward bill payments. This will enable Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to undertake bill payments for utility, educa-

tion and other such payments on behalf of their families in India. This will greatly benefit the senior citizens in particular." Over 20,000 billers are part of the system, and more than eight crore transactions are processed on a monthly basis. Das also said the RBI will soon come out with comprehensive guidelines on outsourcing of activities by commercial banks, regional rural banks (RRB), housing finance companies and others.

According to him, the central bank will come out with a draft Master Direction on Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services for comments from stakeholders. According to the RBI, the scope of these directions is being expanded to also include

RRBs, Local Area Banks (LABs), All India Financial Institutions, Credit Information Companies, and non-scheduled Payments Banks.

Welcoming the RBI's move Sugandh Saxena, CEO at Fintech Association for Consumer Empowerment (FACE), said: "In the last few years, the fintech lending ecosystem has expanded in scale and complexities. It needs clear and precise contours of engagement, stitching together various layers and interfaces, some of which 'outsourced'." It is only pertinent that the regulatory framework for outsourcing and market conduct moves with market dynamics and risks to allow innovation, better customer protection and outcomes, and synergic partnerships within sound governance and opera-

tional framework, Saxena added.

In order to leverage the potential of Standalone Primary Dealers, the RBI will allow them to offer all foreign exchange market-making facilities as currently permitted to Category-I Authorised Dealers, subject to prudential guidelines.

This measure will provide customers with a wider set of market makers to manage their foreign currency risk. This will also increase the breadth of the forex market in India. The SPDs will be permitted to undertake transactions in the offshore Rupee Overnight Indexed Swap (OIS) market with non-residents and other market makers.

This measure will supplement a similar measure announced in February this year for the banks.

Victims entitled to compensation only after conviction under SC/ST Act: Allahabad HC

▶ THE LUCKNOW BENCH OF THE ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT HAS RULED THAT VICTIMS UNDER THE SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBES (PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES) ACT ARE ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION ONLY ON CONVICTION OF THE ACCUSED AND NOT MERELY ON FILING OF FIR OR SUBMISSION OF THE CHARGE SHEET IN THE COURT.

Lucknow | Agencies

The Lucknow bench of the Allahabad high court has ruled that victims under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act are entitled to compensation only on conviction of the accused and not merely on filing of FIR or submission of the

charge sheet in the court.

The high court also ordered to send a copy of the order to the chief secretary, additional chief secretary (Home) and additional chief secretary (social welfare department) of the state government for necessary compliance. Expressing concern over the misuse of the SC/ST Act, a single judge bench of Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh observed, "The Court is noticing this trend every day in large number of cases that after receiving compensation from the state government the complainant enters into compromise with the accused for quashing of the proceedings."

"A petition is filed under Section 482 CrPC to quash the proceedings on the basis of compromise arrived at between the parties," said the court.

The judge said, "This court is of the view that taxpayers' money is being misused in this process. It would be appropriate to disburse the compensation only on conviction of the accused and not on filing of the FIR and submission of the charge sheet."

The high court added that in cases where the complainant had entered into a compromise with

the accused for quashing of the proceedings and proceedings are quashed by this court against the accused in exercise of its power under section 482 CrPC, the state (government) is free to realise the compensation back from the alleged victim.

The complainant, who is a member of the Schedule Caste community, had lodged an FIR against the accused Israr Ahmad and others (petitioners in this case) at the Nasirabad police station in Rae Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh in 2019.

The investigating officer filed the charge sheet on February 2, 2019 in the court of special judge, SC/ST Act, Rae Bareilly. The state government had also awarded compensation of Rs 75,000 to the victim.

However, during proceedings in trial court in Rae Bareilly district after filing of the charge sheet, the victim and the accused entered into a compromise for quashing of proceedings. The high court also observed that the offence against the petitioners is trivial in nature except offence under "section 3(1) (da) and (dha) of SC/ST Act". The court allowed the petitioner to withdraw charges against the accused and stop proceedings in the court of special SC/ST judge, Rae Bareilly.

SP, Cong to launch special campaigns from Aug 9

Lucknow | Agencies

The Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Congress will launch special campaigns from August 9 to mark 75 years of India's Independence.

SP national president Akhilesh Yadav will launch 'Tricolour on every home' campaign from August 9 to August 15 from a village in Kannauj. "He will distribute Khadi Tricolour to the families in the village in Tirwa tehsil of the district under the party's campaign 'Har Ghar Fehrey Rashtradwaj Tiranga (National flag to hoist on every house)', the party stated in a press release.

With the distribution of the Khadi Tricolour to people of the village, the national president of the SP will make an

appeal to all the citizens in the state to hoist the flag on their homes on August 15. The Congress, on the other hand, will organise 'Azadi Ki Gaurav Yatras' covering a distance of 75 kilometres in every Lok Sabha constituency from August 9.

A state level programme will be organised in the state capital on August 15.

"The Congress will hold Gaurav Yatras in all the 80 Lok Sabha constituencies of the state from August 9. They will cover a distance of 75 kilometres in each Lok Sabha constituency and will pass through all the 403 Assembly constituencies," said Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) spokesman Ashok Singh.

Akhilesh Yadav, on the other hand, will also meet the

families of freedom fighters in the area and will felicitate them. He will also impress upon the people that it was during the SP regime that villages got concrete roads and schools, water filters and several other facilities that have been ruined under the BJP government. The Congress Gaurav Yatras, meanwhile, are being organised to mark 75 years of India's Independence and in response to 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme of the Union government.

The Congress proposes to launch and end the Gaurav Yatras at a place of cultural and historical importance in the state. The Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) has sent its observers and senior office-bearers to each district to make preparations for the Gaurav Yatras.

TN DALIT TRIPLE MURDER CASE: 27 SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT

Chennai: A Special Court in Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga on Friday imposed life sentence on 27 convicts in the Kachanatham triple murder case.

The triple murder took place on May 28, 2018, when an armed gang from a dominant community attacked some people indiscriminately in the Kachanatham village in Sivaganga district. The three persons from the Scheduled Caste community, who were murdered, were identified as K. Arumugam, A. Shanmuganathan, and V. Chandrashekar. The three were hacked to death following a dispute relating to presenting temple honours at Kachanatham. The Special Court for the exclusive trial of cases under the SC/ST (PoA) Act in Sivaganga pronounced the sentence. The Special Court judge, Muthukumararan had convicted the 27 accused on August 1.

A total of 33 men of a dominant community, including four juveniles were chargesheeted in the case and one died during the trial. The special court judge had heard the convicts and the family members of the victims on August 3 through video conferencing on the sentence to be given to the convicts. The Madurai bench of the Madras High Court while rejecting the bail plea of some of the accused in 2019 had stated that the brutal manner in which a group of men from the dominant community had murdered people from Scheduled Castes was a grim reminder of the ugly face of caste inequality in Sivaganga district and that it had a telling effect on the peace and tranquility in the village.

Thousands take to streets in Nagaland demanding early solution to Naga political issue

Thousands of Nagas under the banner of Nagaland People's Action Committee (NPAC) hit the streets of Nagaland on Friday demanding a speedy settlement to the decades old Naga political issue.

Dimapur (Nagaland) | Agencies

August 5 (IANS) Thousands of Nagas under the banner of Nagaland People's Action Committee (NPAC) hit the streets of Nagaland on Friday demanding a speedy settlement to the decades old Naga political issue. After the massive rally in which thousands of men and women participated holding banners in Nagaland's commercial hub Dimapur, the NPAC sent a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding early solutions to the "Naga political issue without further delay".

The memorandum, sent through Nagaland Governor Jagdish Mukhi, said that Naga people are in the 25th year of the political negotiations between the government of India and the Naga negotiators, which began in 1997, and the unending political process has adversely affected the lives of each individual and family in the state. "It has taken a huge toll on the entire system of governance. The unresolved political issue has heralded in an unimaginable cycle of corruption at all levels, crippling public health care, education and overall infrastructure developments, which are in shambles for obvious reasons to say the least.

"The unresolved Naga issue has produced



countless scoundrels and thieves and in the name of political issues, threats and intimidations have stifled the growth of a perceived Naga society, which you (PM) assured would be a vibrant one," the memorandum read.

The NPAC told the Prime Minister that as the economic wellbeing of everyday Naga families has completely collapsed in the absence of an equitable welfare formula and governance save on paper, the consequences are frightening to say the least.

"The ultimate victims being the brilliantly educated, unemployed, school dropouts and all those whose futures are now ruined.

Entrepreneurship and asset creation are critical components in a society like ours. Government projects are siphoned off brazenly through percentage cuts and shares. Private businesses are grossly extorted by armed groups," read the memorandum, signed by six senior NPAC leaders. Various Naga organisations and civil society groups either participated or supported the much publicised rally.

The memorandum said that without a political settlement, the NPAC foresees thousands of futureless fresh, youthful, highly-qualified angry men and women taking up guns to challenge those stifling their growth and progress.

"Your (PM) promise to the Nagas has not been fulfilled yet. Prime minister Sir, is it not a betrayal to our people, considering that negotiations with Naga groups have officially concluded," the NPAC asked.

The Naga organisation said that the ceasefire and the political negotiations under its peaceful atmosphere are all but a means to an end.

"We expect the government of India to appreciate the patience of the citizens of Nagaland shown in all these 25 years because people yearn for genuine peace in the region, which can be brought in by political solution alone," the memorandum read.

The NPAC said that in 2018, when the civil societies and all political parties, including the BJP, unequivocally demanded for solution before elections, the BJP breached the trust of the people and filed nominations with the slogan "Election for Solution", against the will and wishes of the people which is still fresh in their memory. The next Assembly elections in Nagaland, expected to be held in February next year, is considered crucial in view of the ongoing Naga peace talks between the Central government and the Naga groups, especially the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah).



WOMEN ELECTED TO PANCHAYAT POSTS DEPRIVED OF TAKING OATH

During the last assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh earlier this year, a slogan - "Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakti Hoon", had become popular, especially among the women. That time, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's political catchphrase was acknowledged and was used in Madhya Pradesh too.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

During the last assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh earlier this year, a slogan - "Ladki Hoon, Lad Sakti Hoon", had become popular, especially among the women. That time, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's political catchphrase was acknowledged and was used in Madhya Pradesh too.



in-laws take the oath in place of the constitutionally elected representatives. This happened in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district where husbands, brothers-in-law, fathers were seen taking oath as panchayat members in place of the elected women.

However, a video of an oath taking ceremony at a village in Madhya Pradesh revealed that though the women got elected by the people, they could not even take their oath of office. In the rural areas, it is an undeniable fact that even though the women get elected with mandatory reservation under the Constitution, it is their male relatives (not in all cases) who operate the levers of power directly or indirectly.

But what if the elected women are deprived of even taking oath and their male relatives like husband and

in-laws take the oath in place of the constitutionally elected representatives. This happened in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district where husbands, brothers-in-law, fathers were seen taking oath as panchayat members in place of the elected women.

In a video which surfaced on social media, as many as seven men sporting a tilak on their foreheads can be seen taking the oath, pledging equal-

ity and rights for all. IANS was informed that 21 members were elected (one sarpanch and 20 panches), out of which 10 members were women. The panchayat election in Madhya Pradesh concluded two weeks back. However, during the oath taking ceremony held a couple of days back, only three out of the 10 women were present at the swearing-in. The oath

for the rest was taken by male members in the family. Another example of mockery of the Panchayat Raj system was reported in Damod district, where a newly elected sarpanch's husband took the oath of office. The swearing-in ceremony was conducted by a block level government official. After the video went viral, the district administration swung into action and ordered an enquiry into the matter. "Panchayat officials hurriedly administered the oath in the Panchayat Bhavan late in the night by calling the women sarpanch and Panch. An inquiry has been ordered into the matter," said an officer in Sagar district. Such incidents are being reported despite the Centre and state governments running several programmes in the name of 'Women Empowerment'. Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) can also be found empowering the women to make them capable of deciding for themselves.

All the residents of the state should participate in the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence: CM

Chief Minister received information about the activities conducted in the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the 75 years of independence should be celebrated with the basic mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas (Everyone's development with everyone's faith, cooperation and effort) under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. All the residents of the state should participate in the Amrit Mahotsav of independence. Public participation should be ensured in the programme of 15th August Independence Day from district to panchayat and ward level. Chouhan was addressing a review meeting at the residence office regarding the activities conducted in the Amrit Mahotsav of Azadi.

It was informed in the meeting that a series of programmes were started from March 12, 2021 by preparing a calendar for the Amrit Mahotsav of independence in the state. On this day, various programmes related to Amrit Mahotsav started simultaneously at 407 urban bodies and



23 archaeological sites in the state and more than 2800 activities have been conducted so far.

Principal Secretary Culture Sheo Shekhar Shukla informed that offline and online activities and programmes have been conducted to make the new generation aware of the information related to the contribution of the known, unknown revolutionaries, martyrs, warriors, female freedom fighters and public heroes of the state in the freedom and their valour.

Activities such as lectures, research seminars, painting workshops and film-making were organised on the birth anniversary and martyrdom day of many Jan Nayaks (public heroes) including Rani Avantibai, Rani Durgavati, Rani Laxmibai, Taty Tope,

Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad, Shankarshah-Ragunath Shah and Raja Saryu Prasad. In this sequence, Mahatma Gandhi Samman on Gandhi Jayanti and Ram-Rahim Bhajan Sandhya and Adi Vidrohi theatrical celebrations were held.

For the first time, programmes full of patriotism were held in Bhopal with the collaboration of the Army, along with the Madhya Pradesh Police and NCC cadets. Seminars and competitions were organised by the Department of Higher Education focused on "Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat" (One India-Great India). In the meeting, a short film focusing on the activities of the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence was screened by various departments.

CM plants Banyan, Neem and Moulshree saplings

NCC cadet and mountaineer Jyoti Ratre also planted saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan along with NCC cadet and mountaineer Jyoti Ratre planted Neem, Banyan and Moulshree saplings in the Smart City Garden at Shyamala Hills.

Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, NCC cadets of IEC University Bhopal, Sarvshri Abhishek Kumar Singh, Jitendra Prakash Shrivastava, Nitesh Kushwaha, Gaurav Yadav and Kumari Jhilmil Kushwaha planted saplings. University's Dean Student Welfare Dr. Renu Yadav and Prof. Sonu Lal were present. Various community development activities are conducted by NCC cadets along with plantation, cleanliness. Along with mountaineer Jyoti Ratre, Mumtaz Khan also planted saplings. Smt. Ratre is the most senior woman in the country to climb Mount Elbrus, the highest peak in the continent of Europe. She has also unfurled the tricolour on Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak of the continent



of Africa.

Importance of plants

Banyan has religious and medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Consumption of its decoction boosts the immunity. Rich in antibiotic elements, Neem is known as the ultimate medicine. Moulshree is a medicinal tree, it has been used in Ayurveda for centuries.

LEOPARD ELECTROCUTED IN SANJAY DUBRI TIGER RESERVE

Bhopal: A leopard was electrocuted to death in Madhya Pradesh's Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve, according to wildlife officials. The officials said the leopard was found dead on Friday within the inner circle of the reserve located in Sidhi district.

"The animal had died hours before the carcass was spotted on Friday morning. Death was due to electrocution. Locals may have also played a part, we are finding out the details," one of the officials said.

Established in 1975, the Tiger Reserve comprises the Sanjay Dubri National Park and the Dubri Wildlife Sanctuary, both of which cover an area more than 831 sq.km. In June, two leopards were electrocuted at a wildlife zone in Satna district.

MP minister hints at sealing National Herald building in Bhopal

A MINISTER IN THE BJP-LED MADHYA PRADESH GOVERNMENT HINTED ON THURSDAY THAT A NATIONAL HERALD BUILDING IN BHOPAL CAN COME UNDER THE SCANNER OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A minister in the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government hinted on Thursday that a National Herald building in Bhopal can come under the scanner of the state government.

The remark came a day after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) sealed the office of Young Indian Pvt Ltd located in the Herald House in



the national capital in connection with its probe into a money laundering case. Minister of Housing and Urban Development in the Madhya Pradesh government, Bhupendra Singh, told mediapersons here that the building, which used to be the office of National Herald newspaper, has been converted into a business complex. A case in this issue is pending in the Bhopal district court, which is being closely monitored by the state government, he said.

"We have given direction for a probe, and if needed we will seal the complex," Singh said.

As per reports, around 1.14 acre of land was allotted to National Herald on lease for a period of 30 years for building its office. However, the newspaper stopped its operations in 1992.

After the expiry of the said lease in 2011, the administration moved to take over the possession of the building, only to find that it has been converted into a commercial complex. When the procedures to get the plot vacated got underway, many buyers came forward and the issue reached the court, as per reports.

Kishore Kumar's birth anniversary celebrated as 'Gaurav Divas' in Khandwa

EVERY YEAR ON AUGUST 4, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE VISIT MADHYA PRADESH'S KHANDWA DISTRICT TO PAY HOMAGE TO ONE OF INDIA'S BEST PLAYBACK SINGER AND ACTOR ABHAS KUMAR GANGULY AKA KISHORE KUMAR AT HIS BIRTHPLACE.



ancestral house, which is now highly dilapidated condition and also offer 'milk-jalebi' at his memorial.

But, this year, there was more enthusiasm for both people of Khandwa and visitors as the birth anniversary was celebrated as 'Gaurav Divas' by the district administration. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had, in January, announced an initiative to organise 'Gaurav Divas' of each village, town,

and city in the state. And accordingly, the district administration, along with people of the city, had decided to celebrate Khandwa's 'Gaurav Divas' on August 4, in respect to Kishore Kumar, who was born there in 1929.

The celebration had already began a day before his birth anniversary and cultural and dance programmes organised at different places by various associations. While at some

places, school students portrayed pictures of Kishore Kumar, people danced on his romantic songs at a Jumba dance programme. As the celebration of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' has already began across the country, people found the occasion to play Kishore Kumar's patriotic songs.

"A slogan writing competition was organised, in which all the participants (students) wrote Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Kishore Kumar's patriotic songs and slogans focused on the great man of Khandwa," said a school teacher in Khandwa.

People of Khandwa said that whenever Kishore Kumar used to come to his birthplace, he used to eat jalebi with milk. It is also said that soon before his death on October 13, 1987, the singer had used to say that he will go Khandwa and will eat jalebi and milk, but this remained an unfulfilled wish.

CM will interact with street vendors and hand cart pushers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will soon interact with street vendors and hand cart pushers in order to have continuous dialogue with different sections of the society. Family members of hand cart pushers will also participate in this programme to be held at the CM's residence. Chief Minister Chouhan discussed with senior officials regarding the nature of the programme. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Principal Secretary Public Relations Ravghendra Kumar Singh, Secretary to Chief Minister M Selvendran, Commissioner Tribal Affairs Sanjeev Singh and officers were present.

Chouhan said that citizens have enthusiastically participated in Panchayats of differ-

ent sections. In the CM residence, the conferences of representatives of voluntary organisations including women, farmers, workers, weavers, students, leather craftsmen, fishermen, woodworkers, sportspersons, artists have been fruitful.

Schemes for the welfare of these sections were prepared and implemented which benefited lakhs of beneficiaries. In this sequence, informal dialogue with different sections will also be done. First of all, hand cart pushers and street vendors will be invited and interaction with them will take place. Along with the presentation of cultural programme and singing of bhajans by the children of the invited representatives, their opinion regarding welfare schemes will be obtained. Discussions will also be held

with the beneficiaries regarding their work area, education system of children and government programmes. Other necessary decisions may be taken as per the suggestions received. There will also be a conference of the people of the Kol tribe of the state. Chouhan will interact with the people of Kol tribe in the conference. CM instructed the Tribal Affairs Department for necessary preparations regarding the conference.

Chouhan said that in some districts of the state, Kol tribes live. To improve their health and nutrition level and to boost their economic condition, the State Government has constituted the Kol Vikas Pradhikaran. Necessary steps will also be taken after consultations in the conference to solve other problems of the Kol tribe.

Father chops off son's hand for refusing to give him bike keys

A man has died after his father and uncle allegedly thrashed him and even chopped off his hand for refusing to give him the keys to his motorcycle. The accused surrendered to the police along with the hand and murder weapon and was arrested under Indian Penal Code's Section 302 (murder)

Team Absolute | Damoh

A man has died after his father and uncle allegedly thrashed him and even chopped off his hand for refusing to give him the keys to his motorcycle. The victim was identified as Santosh, a resident of Bobai.

According to Damoh police superintendent D R Tenivar, Moti Kacchi (52), the father of the victim attacked Santosh for refusing to give him the keys of his motorcycle. "Moti Kacchi surrendered to the police and was arrested under Indian Penal Code's Section 302 (mur-

der)," said Tenivar. "...Moti asked for the keys of the bike but Santosh refused to give them. This angered the father. He and his brother, Ram Kishan, thrashed Santosh, who kept arguing with him. Moti picked up an axe lying nearby and attacked the son. He chopped his left hand," said Tenivar.

The police official also added that the victim's wife rushed him to the hospital where he was referred to Jabalpur and succumbed to his injuries on the way. Moti Kacchi went to the Babai police station with the hand and the axe.

World's Largest Floating Solar Plant Set To Be Built In Madhya Pradesh

Floating Solar Project on Narmada, which is to be built on the backwaters of the Omkareshwar Dam, will be one of only 10 floating solar plants in the world.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The world's largest floating solar project is set to be built on river Narmada as the Madhya Pradesh government signed a contract for the first phase of the project on Thursday.

Floating Solar Project on Narmada, which is to be built on the backwaters of the Omkareshwar Dam, will be one of only 10 floating solar plants in the world. The 600

MW-capacity infrastructure will be the world's largest solar project to be built on water.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that by 2027 "the renewable energy potential of Madhya Pradesh will be 20,000 megawatts." "The state government is on the path of making Madhya Pradesh the lungs of India along with the heart of India. Madhya Pradesh will make every possible contribution towards fulfilling all the

commitments of India and the Pancharmit Mantra given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Glasgow Conference for Climate Change," Shivraj Singh Chouhan said.

The Chief Minister added that since no land is needed for the project, people would not be displaced. "Due to the installation of solar panels on the surface of the water, the water will not evaporate as steam. With this, 60 to 70 per cent of

water will be saved. This is equal to the drinking water of Bhopal residents for 124 days," he added.

Furthermore, installation of the plant would reduce algae growth and the water will remain drinkable, Chouhan said. The government claims emission of 12 lakh metric tonnes of carbon-dioxide will also be prevented through the project which is "equivalent to planting one crore 52 lakh trees".



EDITOR'S SPECS

Freebies: Sop or welfare

Steps to limit freebies or to discourage populism should come through Parliament. A general concern over 'freebies' pushing the economy to ruin or unviable pre-election promises adversely affecting informed decision-making by voters seems reasonable. However, few will disagree that what constitutes 'freebies' and what are legitimate welfare measures to protect the vulnerable sections are essentially political questions for which a court of law may have no answer. In this backdrop, the Supreme Court's decision to form a body of stakeholders to examine the issue raises the question whether the legislature can be bypassed on such a far-reaching exercise. The Chief Justice of India, NV Ramana, heading a Bench hearing a petition filed in public interest against the distribution or promise of 'freebies' ahead of elections, has made it clear that the Court is not going to issue guidelines, but only ensure that suggestions are taken from stakeholders such as the NITI Aayog, Finance Commission, Law Commission, RBI and political parties. All these institutions, he has said, can submit a report to the Election Commission of India (ECI) and Government. A suggestion that Parliament could discuss this issue was met with scepticism by the Bench, which felt that no party would want a debate on this, as all of them support such sops. The Bench also disfavoured the ECI preparing a 'model manifesto' as it would be an empty formality. The Court's concern over populist measures seems to resonate with the Government too, as the Solicitor-General submitted that these distorted the voter's informed decision-making and that unregulated populism may lead to an economic disaster. It had, however, directed the ECI to frame guidelines to regulate the content of manifestos. The ECI subsequently included in its Model Code of Conduct a stipulation that parties should avoid promises "that vitiate the purity of the election process or exert undue influence on the voters". It added that only promises which were possible to be fulfilled should be made and that manifestos should contain the rationale for a promised welfare measure and indicate the means of funding it. Any further step, such as distinguishing welfare measures from populist sops and pre-election inducements, or adding to the obligations of fiscal responsibility and fiscal prudence ought to come from the legislature. That politicians invariably back 'freebies' should be no reason to bypass Parliament.

'Main hoon jhum jhum Jhumroo': Kishore Kumar's forgotten onscreen talent

Known primarily for his gifted, effortless, and vibrant singing, he was actually a complete entertainment package in Hindi films -- being also an accomplished actor, lyricist, composer, producer, director, screenwriter -- and both on and off screen, its biggest eccentric.

From "Khabab ho tum ya koi haqeeqat" to "Pal pal dil ke paas", "Zindagi ke safar mein maqam" to "Khaikhe paan Banaraswala", and "Khalte hain gul yahan" to "Kya yehi pyar hai", Kishore Kumar's mellifluous voice still reverberates for stars from Dev Anand to Dharmendra, Rajesh Khanna to Amitabh Bachchan, and Shashi Kapoor to Sanjay Dutt, in a range of emotions, moods and situations.

However, it goes on to eclipse his own onscreen prowess, where he could essay madcap antics of young romantic leads to restrained and sensitive essaying of more complex and nuanced characters.

Everyone has their own range of favourite songs from Kishore Kumar, born on this day (August 4) in 1929, but if you ask about his film roles, what comes usually to mind is "Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi" (1958) where he starred with his elder brothers Ashok and Anup, or his over-the-top depiction of a pan-chewing music 'ustad' cum-love relationship consultant in "Padosan" (1968).

But there was much more to him as an actor, as he demonstrated a flair for essaying a wide variety of roles, held his own against the likes of Dilip Kumar, Meena Kumari ("Naya Andaz", 1956), and even Jayalalitha (in "Man-Mauji", 1962) and went on to inspire future generations.

While he has nearly 3,000 songs (including a duet where he sings the female side in falsetto) from 1,200 odd films, he also went on to act in about 90 films between 1946 and 1982. Why he is not as famous for them is that most of these came before 1970 or bombed at the box

office. And why he didn't do more films is rooted in his own whimsies. Kishore Kumar was notorious for asking his servants to ward off film-makers, biting their hand as they paid him his fees, or not turning up for work. In one case, where a director obtained a decree from the court directing him to turn up for work, he only did what he was expressly told to do. You can imagine how that would have turned out.

Let's take a look at a few of Kishore Kumar's roles from films known or forgotten, successful or disappearing without trace:

"Naukri" (1954) - The Bimal Roy film sought to depict the dreams of Indian youth in the first decade of Independence. As Rattan, who dreams of a steady job, so he can put up his widowed mother in a proper house and get his sick sister treated, Kishore Kumar is in turns hopeful, distraught (where his appointment letter is burnt by his girlfriend's father), heartbroken (as he finds the promised job is gone/he is too late for the appointment/a good turn backfires), putting a masterly performance as an aspirational everyman youth.

"New Delhi" (1956) - This was also another look at the new India, through the prism of its wide diversity - and with some contemporary resonances. Kishore Kumar plays Punjabi youth Anand who comes to the national capital but is unable to find lodging due to the landlords/landladies' propensity for somebody from their own region. He impersonates a Tamilian but the problem starts when he falls in love with Janki (Vyjayanthimala). And what happens when their parents get into the act?

"Musafir" (1957) - The directorial debut of Hrishikesh Mukherjee, the story is told through the medium of a house which hosts three sets of tenants, one after the other - and a mysterious violinist is a con-



necting link. While the first is a newly eloped and married couple (Suchitra Sen and Shekhar), the second is a family comprising Nazir Hussain, his widowed daughter-in-law (Nirupa Roy) and younger son (Kishore Kumar). While our hero is adept at keeping a light atmosphere, he is frustrated at not being able to find a job, which leads to words with his father and finally, a suicide bid. All, however, ends happily. The third episode with new tenants reveals the mystery of the violinist - it is Dilip Kumar, and a bittersweet ending follows.

"Dilli Ka Thug" (1958) - This was another vehicle for Kishore Kumar to display his zany histrionics. Persuaded by his mother to get a proper job, Kishore Kumar Sharma (our hero) goes to Bombay and falls in love with Asha (Nutan). However, her uncle running a factory making spurious medicines, has had a malefic influence on his life and now seeks to target him. Mayhem ensues but a diligent police inspector (Iftekhar) is on the job. The film's songs include "C A T Cat, Cat Mane Billi, R A T Rat," and "Hum To Mohabbat Karega".

"Apna Haath Jagannath" (1960) - Akin to "Naukri", this stresses the dignity of labour with Kishore Kumar playing Madan with a rare blend of tomfoolery, sensitivity and empathy. He is a fun-loving student on whom his parents have already staked much but see their hopes dashed as he can't get a job. The usual mixture of comedy, romance

and pathos follow before a happy ending for all.

"Half Ticket" (1962) - This has Kishore Kumar playing (yet another) indolent son of a millionaire but storming out of house after a spat. Short of money, he hits up on the expedient of impersonating a minor to get concession on his railway ticket but gets ensnared in the machinations of a suave diamond smuggler (Pran). The rest of the film deals with how he gets out of this sticky situation. "Cheel cheel chilla ke kajri sunaye", with Kishore as the 'child' and "Aake seedhi lagi dil pe", picturised on Pran and Kishore in drag, and featuring him singing both the male and female parts is the highlight.

"Door Gagan Ki Chaaon Mein" (1964) - In his directorial debut, Kishore Kumar is a soldier who returns home to find that his family has been killed in a fire and the only survivor is his son (played by real-life son Amit) who has become mute due to the trauma. It is a moving tale of a father-son bonding, but with the usual happy ending.

"Mr X in Bombay" (1964) - One of Indian cinema's earliest and accomplished sci-fi as well an example of some inspired acting from everyone from hero to villain, it has Kishore as stodgy Banarsi poet Sudarshan who goes in for a western makeover after coming to

Bombay and falling in love. But then all mayhem breaks loose when his love interest's loony scientist father invents an invisibility serum, Sudarshan drinks it, and a villain is out to get his hands on the formula. "Mere Mehboob Qayamat Hogi" is a highlight.

"Pyar Kiye Jaa" (1966) - This madcap film, based on a southern film, is best known for that comic set-piece scene between Mehmood and Om Prakash, but what gets overlooked is how Kishore Kumar impersonates his friend's (Shashi Kapoor) father to advance his suit with the rich prospective father-in-law (Om Prakash). Confusion arises when our hero learns that Om Prakash is also the father of his love interest, and his father, a childhood friend of Om Prakash, drops in too. Kishore's performance was replicated by Govinda in "Haseena Man Jayegi" (1999), though in his own way.

"Do Dooni Char" (1968) - Little remains known about this romantic comedy, except that it was based on Shakepeare's "Comedy of Errors" and one of the first film-writing ventures of Gulzar, but it allows Kishore Kumar to indulge in his penchant for inspired and quirky song, as well as sing onscreen one of his best songs - "Hawaon pe likh do, hawaon ke naam/Hum anjan pardesion ka salaam."

international

CHINA SENDS WARSHIPS, JETS CLOSE TO TAIWAN AS TENSIONS ESCALATE

Taipei | Agencies

Taiwan's Defence Ministry on Friday said that Chinese warships and aircraft conducted military drills in waters near the island, as tensions escalated in the region following US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit earlier this week.

In a statement, the Ministry said that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces crossed the median line -- the halfway point between the island and mainland China -- in a move it called a "highly provocative act", reports CNN.

The line has previously been an informal but largely respected border of control between Beijing and Taipei. Taiwan's military responded



with radio warnings and put air patrol forces, naval ships and shore-based missile systems on alert, the Ministry added.

On Friday, Taiwan's Premier Su Tseng-chang said the island represented "freedom and democracy", and that "the evil neighbour next door flexed its muscles on

our doorstep and arbitrarily sabotaged (one of) the busiest waterways in the world with military exercises".

The skies and waters around Taiwan have become a focal point as Beijing ramps up tensions not only with Taiwan, but with neighbouring Japan, which lodged a

formal protest with China after five projectiles landed in Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The missiles were among a number launched by Beijing Thursday, some of which flew over Taiwan, as Pelosi made her way to Tokyo where she met Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Friday, CNN reported.

China has previously fired missiles into waters surrounding Taiwan, a democratic island of 24 million that the Chinese Communist Party regards as its territory, despite having never controlled it, most notably during the Taiwan Strait Crisis in the 1990s. But missiles flying over the island marked a significant escalation, with US officials warning there may be more to come.

'Russian action jeopardising Ukrainian nuclear power plant'

Action by Russian forces is likely jeopardising security and safety at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in south-eastern Ukraine, the UK's Ministry of Defence reported on Friday based on information from the British intelligence services.

London/Kiev | Agencies

Action by Russian forces is likely jeopardising security and safety at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in south-eastern Ukraine, the UK's Ministry of Defence reported on Friday based on information from the British intelligence services.

Following five months of occupation, Russia's intentions regarding the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant remain unclear, dpa news agency quoted the Ministry as saying. "However, the actions they have undertaken at the facility have likely undermined the security and safety of the plant's normal operations." Russian forces had used artillery units based in areas near the power station to target Ukrainian territory on the west bank of the Dnipro river, the report



said. It added that the Russians had used the area around the plant, in particular the adjacent city of Enerhodar, to rest their forces, "utilising the protected status of the nuclear power plant to reduce the risk to their equipment and personnel from overnight Ukrainian attacks". On March 4, the nuclear and thermal power stations were both captured by Russian forces. The plant continues to be operated by Ukrainian staff, under Russian control. On Wednesday, IAEA chief Rafael Grossi expressed grave concerns about the physical integrity of the plant, whether all necessary repairs and maintenance were being done, and the security of nuclear material.

ERDOGAN, PUTIN TO MEET FOR TALKS IN SOCHI

Ankara: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin are scheduled to meet on Friday in the seaside resort of Sochi. Turkey's planned military incursion to attack a Kurdish militia in northern Syria will top the agenda among other regional issues, dpa news agency reported citing Ankara's state broadcaster TRT as saying.

Moscow had recently advised against such an offensive. Ankara considers the US-backed Syrian Kurdish militia the People's Defence Units (YPG) a terrorist group and suspects it is linked to domestic insurgents.

A Turkish offensive in Syria's north has been on hold since 2019 following two ceasefire deals brokered by the US and Russia. The two leaders will also discuss the war in Ukraine and a grain corridor deal, TRT added.

Turkey and the UN recently brokered the deal between Kiev and Moscow to resume grain exports from three Ukrainian ports.

According to the Kremlin, on the agenda is also the potential sale of unmanned combat drones from NATO member Turkey to Russia.

Shortly after the start of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, Erdogan said he would not rule out arms deals with Russia.

Turkey maintains close ties with both Ukraine and Russia and sees itself as a mediator between the two neighbours.

France experiencing worst drought ever: PM

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne has activated an inter-ministerial crisis team, saying on Friday that her country was experiencing the worst drought ever recorded.

Paris: French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne has activated an inter-ministerial crisis team, saying on Friday that her country was experiencing the worst drought ever recorded.

"The current exceptional drought is depriving many communities of water and is a tragedy for our farmers, our ecosystems and biodiversity," Borne wrote in a statement. The lack of rain is being aggravated by successive heat waves, Borne continued, which on the one hand increase evaporation, but also the demand for water, dpa news agency reported.

The situation could continue over the next two weeks and even become more worrying, she added.

In France, large parts of the mainland are now suffering from drought.

Depending on the severity, different restrictions on water apply, including on irrigation.

According to local media, some municipalities were temporarily without water supply. Borne called on the population to use water sparingly.

Amid China-Taiwan tension, Nepal's foreign minister to visit China

In the midst of rising tension between China and Taiwan after the visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Khadka is visiting China from August 9-11, Nepal's Foreign Ministry announced on Friday.

Kathmandu | Agencies

In the midst of rising tension between China and Taiwan after the visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Khadka is visiting China from August 9-11, Nepal's Foreign Ministry announced on Friday.

At the invitation of Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi, Dr Khadka is visiting China from August 9 to 11, the ministry said. The two Ministers will hold bilateral talks, leading their

respective delegations on August 10 in Qingdao, China.

Wang will host a banquet in honour of Khadka and the members of the delegation, the statement added.

The visit is taking place days after the Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Hou Yanqi, issued a statement in Kathmandu over Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, calling it a serious violation of the one-China principle and hailing Nepal's commitment to one-China policy.

"We believe that Nepal will continue to abide by the one-



China principle and understand and support China's legitimate and justified position and work together with China to defend each other's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity."

"China highly appreciates

Nepal's longstanding commitment to the one-China principle and resolute opposition to 'Taiwan Independence.' It is also the political foundation of China-Nepal relations. We believe that the government of

Nepal and its people will continue to abide by the one-China principle and understand and support China's legitimate and justified position and work together with China to defend each other's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity," the envoy added.

After announcing the visit, Nepal's Foreign Ministry said that it is closely following the evolving situation in Taiwan Strait.

"We are closely following the latest developments in Taiwan. We are committed to the one-China policy. Since Nepal is a peace-loving country, we stand for world peace," said Sewa Lamsal, Foreign Ministry spokesperson, on Friday at a regular press briefing. "Both Nepal and China support each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence."



Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray back as 'Saamana Group' Editor

Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray has come back as the Chief Editor of the party newspapers -- the multi-edition Marathi 'Saamana' and the Hindi language 'Dopahar Ka Saamana' -- here on Friday.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray has come back as the Chief Editor of the party newspapers -- the multi-edition Marathi 'Saamana' and the Hindi language 'Dopahar Ka Saamana' -- here on Friday.

Thackeray replaces his wife Rashmi who was named as the Editor around 32 months ago when he took over as Maharashtra Chief Minister.

The development came five days after the Enforcement Directorate arrested Sena MP and Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut in an alleged money-laundering case.

Raut, who has been the Executive Editor of 'Saamana' continues in the same post, as per the latest printline of Friday's edition.

The broadsheet 'Saamana' was founded in January 1988 when its Founder-Editor was the late Sena supremo Balasaheb Thackeray, while the tabloid 'Dopahar Ka Saamana' was launched in February 1993, through the Prabodhan Prakashan Pvt. Ltd.

The two newspapers were launched as the Sena nursed a grouse of getting



'biased' and 'inadequate' coverage in the local, regional or the national media and sought to present its viewpoint on various issues, and Balasaheb Thackeray helmed both the publications till his passing away in 2012.

Thackeray was named as the Group Editor but he stepped down in favour of his wife after he became the Chief Minister in November 2019, and

resigned in June 2022.

From inception, the 'Saamana Group' is noted for its fiery writings, oft taking controversial stand on several issues and remains in the limelight for its headlines and hard-hitting edits or special columns, and top political leaders of most political parties make it a point to scan through both the newspapers regularly.

'SHIKSHA MANDALA INDIA'S BIGGEST EDUCATION SCAM' ACTOR GULSHAN DEVAIAH VOICES OPINION ON SCAMS IN INDIA

Mumbai: Actor Gulshan Devaiah, who is awaiting the release of his web show, 'Shiksha Mandala India's Biggest Education Scam', has come out strongly against the recent scams that have been making headlines in the national landscape, of late.

The actor minced no words while speaking about the recent teacher recruitment scam in West Bengal and news of huge amounts of cash recovery from a medical institute clerk in Madhya Pradesh. Gulshan also revealed how he himself has been into the profession of teaching for a short while.

Talking about his past, Gulshan said, "They say teaching is the most noble of all professions and having been a teacher myself, for a brief period in my life, I truly believe in that ideal."

Further elucidating on the coincidence of the story of 'Shiksha Mandala' and drawing a parallel to what's happening in reality, he mentioned, "The story of Shiksha Mandala is about an education scam that brings to light the motives of certain unscrupulous people and their network of scoundrels, who conjure up scams for their personal power and profit, in turn ruining the life of many talented, honest and hardworking youth of this nation."

"It's no exaggeration to say that a lot of such scams have been happening around us & we may have even heard of one in the news recently", he added.

The actor feels that the current generation should take the responsibility of creating an education system that operates on merit and is clean of any sort of corruption. "Education can be a business but it cannot be a corrupt business," he added.

'Shiksha Mandala India's Biggest Education Scam' is directed by Syed Ahmad Afzal and features Gauhar Khan, Gulshan Devaiah and Pavan Malhotra in lead roles.

MAHA: CONGRESS LEADERS DETAINED DURING PROTEST NEAR RAJ BHAVAN



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Scores of Congress leaders and workers were detained after they attempted to stage protests outside the Raj Bhavan here on Friday to highlight the issues of inflation and unemployment. Led by Congress state President Nana Patole and city chief Bhai Jagtap, hundreds of leaders and activists carrying banners and posters and raising anti-government slogans, were stopped by a large posse of police near Vidhan Bhavan at Nariman Point as they marched towards the gubernatorial residence in Malabar Hill. "We are protesting democratically, peacefully and were going to Raj Bhavan to lodge our protest against the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government. The people are suffering under high prices and runaway inflation, the growing unemployment among the youth, the harassment due to the Goods & Services Tax, and related issue,"

said Patole. Besides Patole and Jagtap, the party's top brass including Congress Legislature Party chief Balasaheb Thorat, former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan, Chandrakant Handore, Varsha Gaikwad were detained, taken forcibly to waiting police vans and whisked them off to the local police station.

Playing the police action, Thorat said that in a democracy, "we have the right to protest" but the current BJP government is "trying to silence us".

"Even before Independence, we had the right to protest and we shall continue to raise our voice against the hardships borne by the common masses," declared Thorat. The police also stopped vehicles sporting Congress flags and attempting to reach Raj Bhavan from different parts of Mumbai and the state as part of the all-India agitation, besides demonstrations carried out in other major cities in Maharashtra.

Indices rise marginally after one-day gap, Sensex up 89 points

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Benchmark indices rose marginally on Friday and ended the week on a positive note after falling for one day on Thursday. At close, Sensex ended up 89.13 points or 0.15 per cent at 58,387.93, while Nifty ended 15.50 points or 0.09 per cent higher at 17,397.50.

Nearly 1,862 shares advanced, 1,490 shares declined and 157 shares remained unchanged on Friday. The IT and Telecom index gained the most on the BSE, while IT and FMCG added to the gains on the NSE.

Ultratech Cement, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Infosys and Wipro were among the top gainers on the Sensex on Friday.

"Despite the rate hike being on the higher side of the expectations, the market welcomed the RBI's move of 50 basis point hike with rising bond yields. Even though metal prices are softening, the RBI decided to keep FY23 inflation targets unchanged at 6.7 per cent, which is above the tolerance level.

"However, given that Q3 and Q4 inflation is anticipated to be between 4 per cent and 4.1 per cent, the market is hopeful for the future," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI on Friday unanimously voted to increase the policy repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent.

It was the third consecutive rate hike by the central bank this year after a 40 basis points hike in May and 50 basis points increase in June. With Friday's hike, the RBI has increased rate by 140 basis points since May this year.

The central bank has retained its GDP projection at 7.2 per cent, with Q1 at 16.2 per cent, Q2 at 6.2 per cent, Q3 at 4.1 per cent, and Q4 at 4 per cent, with risks broadly balanced.

Real GDP growth for Q1FY24 is projected at 6.7 per cent.

On the inflation front, projection for 2022-23 remains unchanged at 6.7 per cent, with Q2 at 7.1 per cent, Q3 at 6.4 per cent and Q4 at 5.8 per cent, with risks evenly balanced.

CPI inflation for Q1FY24 is projected at 5 per cent.

Apart from the domestic equity market, other Asian markets also ended in green on Friday. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.87 per cent, while European shares slipped marginally on Friday but remained higher.

MMRCL to SC: No tree cutting in Aarey, only some branches & bushes removed

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (MMRCL) on Friday told the Supreme Court that no tree cutting has been carried out in Aarey forest in Mumbai, rather some weeds and branches were removed.



Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (MMRCL) on Friday told the Supreme Court that no tree cutting has been carried out in Aarey forest in Mumbai, rather some weeds and branches were removed.

Senior advocate Chander Uday Singh, representing the petitioners, contended before a bench headed by Justice U.U. Lalit that tree cutting has been resumed in the Aarey forest region for the metro car shed project, despite the status quo orders. The

bench, also comprising Justices S. Ravindra Bhat and Aniruddha Bose, noted that matter needs to be heard in detail. "What we will do is, we will order the status quo," noted the bench. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing MMRCL, submitted that no tree cutting was going on in the area, and after the status quo order was passed by the top court in 2019, no tree was cut. He

added that there were bushes, weeds, and shrubs, which have grown in the area, and they were being removed by the concerned authority. Mehta emphasized that only trimming of certain branches were carried out citing the affidavit filed by MMRCL in the matter. Mehta said, "If public interest litigations are filed with misleading allegations, it will leave a bad taste." The bench replied that there

are benefits of having PILs. During the hearing, justice Lalit pointed out that he was an amicus curiae in the TN Godavarma Thirumalpalad case and asked if there was any conflict of interest in his hearing of the matter. Mehta said he does not see any conflict. Justice Lalit said, "Can't hear this Aarey matter. I have not heard any forest matter for the past eight years (as SC judge)... The bench said that in view of this stand taken by the MMRCL, there is no requirement for any interim order to be passed in the matter, and took on record MMRCL response that no trees have been cut since the top court's status quo order in 2019. The matter is scheduled for further hearing next week. The apex court had taken suo motu cognisance of the protests against the cutting of trees in the Aarey car shed plot in 2019. It had ordered status quo on October 7, 2019, after Mehta gave an undertaking that no fresh felling of trees would be done till the next date of hearing. The status quo order had been extended from time to time.

Madhubala's sister to take legal action against makers of late actress' biopic

Mumbai | Agencies

A biopic on late iconic actress Madhubala and her family is in development. The star's youngest sister Madhur Brij Bhushan says she is "unhappy about some unnecessary nuisance being created."

Madhur's company, Madhubala Ventures Private Limited too is preparing to co-produce a biopic along with a top studio. She says: "I have come to know that certain individual/s are up to some mischief when it comes to a film / series etc. on my sister's life without any permission from me. I request them not to indulge in any such adventure, else, I will leave no stone unturned vis-a-vis taking the sternest possible legal action."

At the same time, Madhur also reveals that she, her team members as well as her lawyers 'have decided to initiate certain legal procedures against some indi-



viduals, firms who have indulged in an unlawful exploitation of Madhubala's life story rights." She has requested actors, producers and talents to not be a part of projects related to Madhubala that have not been authorised. She says: "I request that no actor, studio, producer or any talent should partner on any project which isn't clearly authorised by me because that will be a transgression on my family's legal and emotional rights." "Time and again, I am requesting

against unlawful exploitation of my sister's life story rights because ideally, I wouldn't want to take the legal route against anyone, especially since my sisters and I are old now, and are senior citizens. But, if need be, I won't back off from safeguarding - legally - what's rightfully ours." Bhushan aims to give the most beautiful tribute to her sister.

"We all feel that it's high time we tell Madhubala's beautiful story to the entire world. She started working as a child and then went on to become the "Venus" of Indian cinema. "It's an extremely emotional occasion for me and my entire family. My team and I want to come up with a really beautiful, sensitive film with some of the best talents from the film industry. We need all the good wishes," she says. The statement comes after Bollywood producer Tutu Sharma took up the challenge of creating a film on Madhubala's life.

Sensex rises more than 150 points; Nifty rises above 17,427 after RBI hikes 50 bps repo rate

The benchmark indices rose during the afternoon trade on Friday, after falling marginally the previous day as 50 basis points rate hike by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was in line with the market expectations and inflows from foreign investors.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The benchmark indices rose during the afternoon trade on Friday, after falling marginally the previous day as 50 basis points rate hike by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was in line with the market expectations and inflows from foreign investors.

By 1 p.m., Sensex was trading up 175.73 points or 0.30 per cent at 58,475.53, and Nifty was trading 45.75 points or 0.26 per cent higher at 17,427.75. Ultratech Cement,

ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, among others were major gainers of the Sensex during the afternoon trade.

"Markets were expecting a rate hike between 35-50 bps, so the RBI hike of 50 bps is on the higher side of the expectations. The RBI emphasized that it remains committed to the withdrawal of the liquidity to contain the inflation. However, the Governor did not mention that the signs of moderation in inflation are emerging in form of ease in metals and food commodities and infla-

tion is expected to be within the tolerance limit at 5.8 per cent by Q4FY23," said Ritika Chhabra, Economic and Quant Analyst, Prabhudas Lilladher. The RBI in its bi-monthly monetary policy has increased repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent to contain inflation.

Consequently, the standing deposit facility rate adjusted to 5.25 per cent and marginal standing facility and the bank rate adjusted to 5.65 per cent. The central bank has retained GDP and inflation forecast at 7.2 per cent

and 6.7 per cent, respectively, for the current financial year. "With inflation expected to remain above the upper threshold in Q2 and Q3, the MPC stressed that sustained high inflation could destabilise inflation expectations and harm growth in the medium term. The MPC, therefore, judged that further calibrated withdrawal of monetary accommodation is warranted to keep inflation expectations anchored and contain the second-round effects," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

ED files chargesheet in Yes Bank-DHFL case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday filed a chargesheet running over 90 pages in connection with a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) pertaining to the Yes Bank-DHFL scam before a special PMLA court.

The ED had initiated a probe against Rana Kapoor, former CEO and MD of Yes Bank, and Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan, promoters of DHFL, on the basis of an FIR registered under the Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act by the CBI. It is alleged that Rana

Kapoor had entered into a criminal conspiracy with Kapil Wadhawan and others for extending financial assistance to DHFL by Yes Bank in lieu of substantial undue benefits to himself and his family members through the companies held by them.

Kapoor through Yes Bank got Rs 3,700 crore invested in the short-term non-convertible debentures of DHFL and Rs 283 crore in Masala Bonds of DHFL. Simultaneous to this investment made by Yes Bank in DHFL, Kapil Wadhawan through DHFL paid a kickback of Rs 600 crore, in the garb of loan, to one of Rana Kapoor's beneficially owned companies, namely DOIT Urban



Ventures (India) Pvt Ltd. "The investigation further revealed that immediately after the said transfer of funds to the tune of Rs 3,983 crore by Yes Bank to DHFL, loans were sanctioned to

Radius Group of Sanjay Chhabria and funds were sanctioned to the tune of Rs 2,317 crore as loan from DHFL in the name of development of his project 'Avenue 54' at Santacruz,

Mumbai. Sanjay Chhabria then diverted the same without using it for the declared purpose," the ED said. The agency also learnt that Chhabria further connived with Avinash Bhosale and diverted the funds to his various beneficially owned companies.

Apart from this, Bhosale had connived with Wadhawan and received Rs 71.82 crore from DHFL in the garb of providing certain services to DHFL and other entities.

"However, the said so called services have never been provided and the same was utilised by Bhosale for his beneficial use," the ED said.

BENCHMARK BOND YIELD RISES 9 BASIS BPS POST RBI HIKES REPO RATE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The yield on benchmark government bond yields rose sharply by 9 basis points in the morning trade after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced an increase of the repo rate by 50 basis points.

The yield on 6.54 per cent-2032 benchmark government bonds were trading at 7.2434 per cent by 11.50 a.m., as compared to 7.16 per cent close on Thursday.

"While the RBI has not changed its GDP/inflation projections or its stance, it increased repo rates by 50 bps as CPI has been above the RBI comfort level for months. The RBI also wants to make sure that inflationary expectations are not entrenched. Yields went up by 15 bps on the 10 year segment. It is difficult to predict, especially about the future. We at TRUST ME do not feel that it is the end of rate hiking cycle," said Sandeep

Bagla, CEO, Trust Mutual Funds.

The RBI in its bi-monthly monetary policy has increased repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.40 per cent to contain inflation. Consequently, the standing deposit facility rate adjusted to 5.25 per cent and marginal standing facility and the bank rate adjusted to 5.65 per cent. The central bank has retained GDP and inflation forecasts at 7.2 per cent and 6.7 per cent, respectively, for the current financial year. Today, the RBI is scheduled to auction 4 government securities worth Rs 33,000 crore. The securities which are going to auction include 6.69 per cent-2024, 7.10 per cent-2029, 6.54 per cent-2032, and 6.95 per cent-2061. Whereas, the result of underwriting auction for these bonds showed that the commission cut-off rate for 6.69 per cent-2024 is set at 80 paise, 7.10 per cent-2029 at 38 paise, 6.54 per cent-2032 at 86 paise, and 1.44 for 6.95 per cent-2061.



LASHANA LYNCH TO PLAY BOB MARLEY'S WIFE IN HIS BIOPIC

Los Angeles | Agencies

British actress Lashana Lynch, who is known for her work in "No Time To Die", has been tapped to play Bob Marley's wife, Rita, in the untitled Bob Marley biopic.

Her fellow British actor, Kingsley Ben-Adir, will be seen portraying the legendary Reggae singer with King Richard director Reinaldo Marcus Green helming the project, reports 'Deadline'.

Similar to the casting of Bob, a large net was cast when it came to

finding the right person to play Rita including looking to find someone with Jamaican descent.

According to 'Deadline,' following several tests including chemistry reads with Ben-Adir, Lynch not only won over execs but also Rita and the Marley family, who all gave their blessing to the casting.

'Deadline' further states that Rita, Ziggy and Cedella Marley will produce on behalf of Tuff Gong. Robert Teitel will also produce. Script has been penned by Green and Zach Baylin.

Lynch was recently seen in Marvel's "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness". Next up for her is Sony's "The Woman King", which is already drawing award season buzz as well as Netflix's "Matilda" adaptation where she plays Ms. Honey.



James Franco to take guns as Fidel Castro in 'Alina of Cuba'

Los Angeles | Agencies

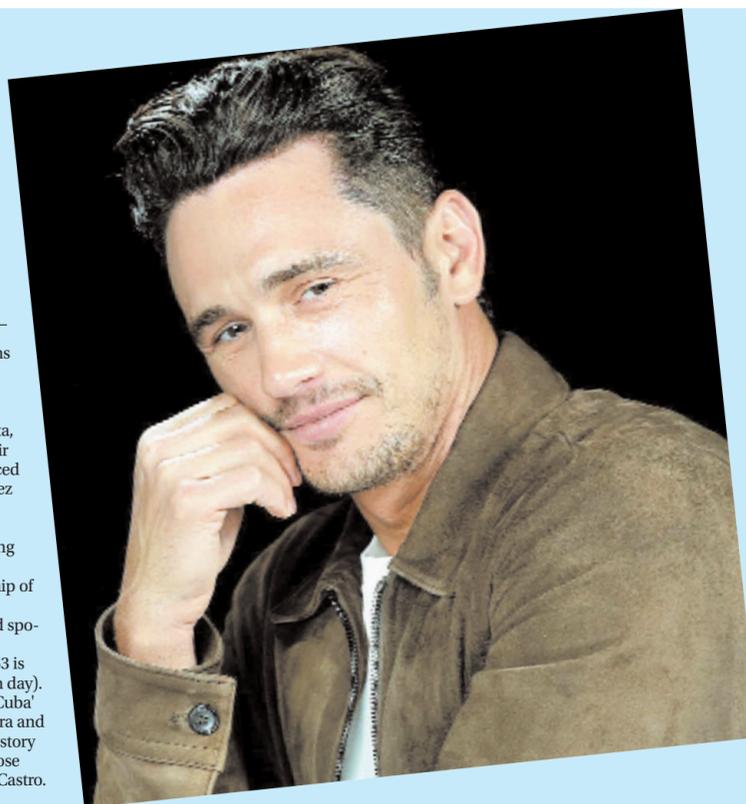
'127 Hours' star James Franco is set to take his fans back in time as he has been signed to play the role of Cuban revolutionary turned politician Fidel Castro in Miguel Bardem's 'Alina of Cuba'.

Actress Mia Maestro will play Natalia "Naty" Revuelta, the Cuban-born socialite he has a passionate love affair with, reports 'Deadline'. They join previously announced actress Ana Villafane who is portraying Alina Fernandez aka Castro's Daughter.

Fidel Castro is one of the most prominent figures in world history. He led the armed Cuban revolution along with his fellow revolutionaries of the 26th of July Movement and its allies against the military dictatorship of Cuban President Fulgencio Batista.

The revolution, which began in July 1953, continued sporadically until the rebels finally ousted Batista on 31 December 1958, replacing his government. 26 July 1953 is celebrated in Cuba as Dia de la Revolucion (revolution day).

According to 'Deadline,' the screenplay of 'Alina of Cuba' has been written by Oscar-nominated scribe Jose Rivera and Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz. It follows the true-life story of Cuban exile turned social advocate, Fernandez, whose birth was the result of the tryst between Revuelta and Castro.



Keanu Reeves to star in 'Devil in the White City' adaptation

Los Angeles | Agencies

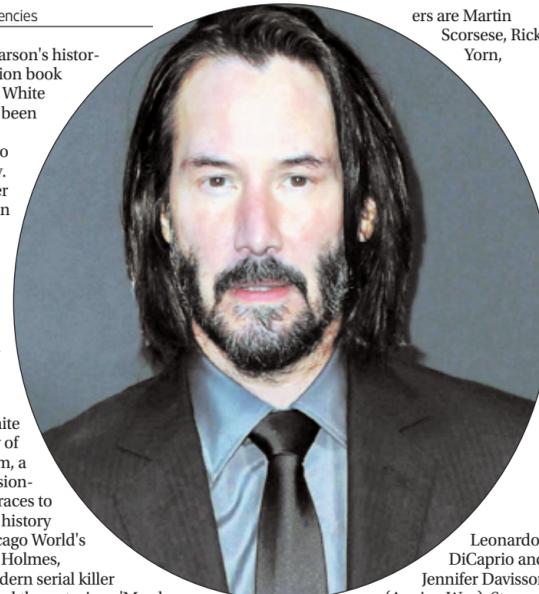
Author Erik Larson's historical non-fiction book 'Devil in the White City' that has long been in the dungeon of adaptation, is set to see the light of day.

In an even better development, 'John Wick' superstar Keanu Reeves will star in the screen adaptation, which will be a limited series, reports 'Deadline'. He will also serve as an executive producer.

'Devil in the White City' tells the story of Daniel H. Burnham, a demanding but visionary architect who races to make his mark on history with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and Dr. H. H. Holmes, America's first modern serial killer and the man behind the notorious 'Murder Castle' built in the Fair's shadow. The series will mark Reeves' first major US TV role.

According to 'Deadline,' streaming platform Hulu announced the limited series order for the drama. The eight-episode series is targeted for a 2024 launch, with production not expected to commence until next year.

'Deadline' further states executive produc-



ers are Martin Scorsese, Rick Yorn,

Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Davison

(Appian Way), Stacey Sher, Sam Shaw, Lila Byock, Todd Field, Mark Lafferty. Shaw is writing and will serve as showrunner. Field will direct. The project has been in various stages of development since DiCaprio bought the film rights to the book in 2010 and previously set it up as a feature at Paramount with Scorsese to direct.

Lady Gaga confirms 'Joker: Folie A Deux' casting

Los Angeles | Agencies

As the makers of 'Jokers' announced its sequel set for 2024 release, speculations were rife that actress-singer Lady Gaga would essay the role of the clown prince's partner in crime Harley Quinn. But now, the 'Hold My Hand' hitmaker has confirmed her casting in the film by posting a musical teaser to social media. The sequel, officially titled 'Joker: Folie A Deux,' will star Gaga opposite Joaquin Phoenix, returning to the role of Joker after winning the Oscar for best actor thanks to his performance in the 2019 first instalment, reports 'Variety'.

The teaser is set to "Cheek to Cheek," which Gaga has famously covered in her music career alongside Tony Bennett. Director Todd Phillips posted the screenplay's cover on Instagram back on June 7, revealing the 'Folie A Deux' subtitle. According to 'Variety,' the phrase refers to a shared delusional disorder, and Joker's only real companion - other than Batman, anyway - has been Harley, a character first created for 'Batman: The Animated Series' in the early 1990s. The teaser, however, does not outright confirm Gaga is playing Harley.

Phillips' original 2019 film 'Joker' became a box office phenomenon grossing just over \$1 billion worldwide to become the highest-grossing R-rated movie in history. Phoenix won the Oscar for his performance as did Hildur Guonadottir for original score. 'Joker: Folie A Deux' will drop in theatres on October 4, 2024.



KATY PERRY ISSUES PUBLIC APOLOGY TO KIM KARDASHIAN

Los Angeles | Agencies

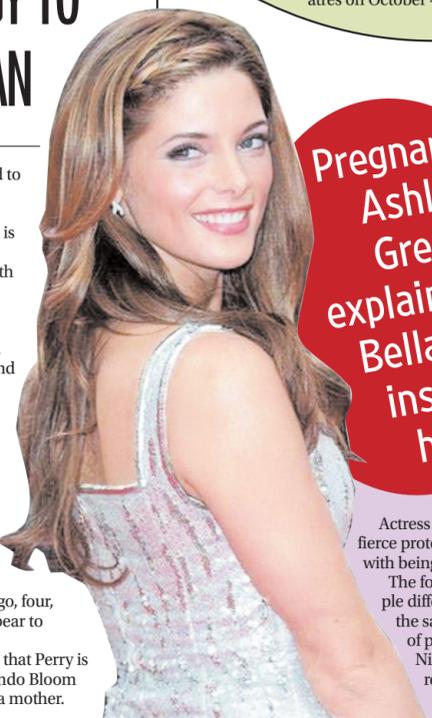
Popstar Katy Perry has apologised to reality TV personality Kim Kardashian over a social media post. The 37-year-old pop singer, who is engaged to Hollywood actor Orlando Bloom and has two-year-old DASH with him, was playing a game of MASH on TikTok.

In the video, she was randomly assigned a type of house, a type of car, amount of children she would have and her lover. As for the lover, she was determined to be Pete Davidson, 28, who has been dating the 41-year-old reality TV megastar since October 2021, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In the caption of the post, Perry wrote: "No offence @Kim Kardashian and Orlando?"

"The Kardashians' star seemingly has yet to see Katy's post. The ex-wife of Kanye West, with whom she shares children North, nine, Saint, six, Chicago, four, and three-year-old Psalm, did not appear to respond to the post publicly.

Meanwhile, it was recently claimed that Perry is keen to have more children with Orlando Bloom because she is "obsessed" with being a mother.



Pregnant Ashley Greene explains how Bella Swan inspires her

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Twilight' star Ashley Greene is "taking motherhood advice" from Kristen Stewart's character Bella Swan. The Alice Cullen depicter in the vampire saga is expecting her first baby with husband Paul Khoury and she claims that she has been inspired by the "fierce protectiveness" of her on-screen sister-in-law played by Kristen Stewart, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Actress said: "The one thing I'll take from Bella and her relationship with Renesmee is kind of the fierce protectiveness and loyalty that she has to this child. I think that is something that innately comes with being a mother, for sure!"

The former 'Rogue' star also explained that expecting a baby has left her able to "connect" with people differently. She noted that she and fellow 'Twilight' alum Nikki Reed, who played Rosalie Hale in the saga and has a five-year-old daughter Bodhi with Ian Somerhalder, are able to "align" on a lot of parental things. "Being pregnant allows you to connect with people in a very different way. Nikki and I align on a lot of things, so that has been a really nice kind of re-development of a relationship," she revealed to InStyle. Ashley first announced that she and TV star Paul were expecting their first child together back in March.



Irina Shayk

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



CWG 2022: WRESTLER DEEPAK PUNIA WINS INDO-PAK BOUT, BAGS THIRD GOLD FOR INDIA

Birmingham | Agencies

World Junior champion and World Championship silver medallist Deepak Punia bagged India's third gold in wrestling at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Friday, outwitting Pakistan's Inam Malik in the final of the men's freestyle 86kg.

Deepak Punia won the bout 3-0 on points to claim his first gold medal in Commonwealth Games.

It was a bout between wrestlers from arch-rivals India and Pakistan but it did not live up to that hype as Punia imposed himself on his opponent early and did not give him many chances.

Scoring chances were few as the Pakistani wrestler was totally defensive and his movements too were a bit restricted. He had his left leg strapped at the knee and looked to keep it away from any attack.



Deepak took lead in the first period itself as he brought down Malik just outside the bout zone. The Pakistani wrestler was also penalised a point for passivity, giving Punia a 2-0 lead at the end of first period.

Punia did try to infuse some life into the bout in the end period as he tried a few tactics but the Pakistani wrestler kept his nerves and defended well. In the second period, Punia claimed another point as the bout ended.

Gukesh, the 'Rajinikanth' of Indian chess, wins 7th game in a row!

A 7/7 in the Chess Olympiad for any Grandmaster (GM) is not a small feat and if that was achieved by a 16-year-old GM, then it is even more commendable.

Chennai | Agencies

A 7/7 in the Chess Olympiad for any Grandmaster (GM) is not a small feat and if that was achieved by a 16-year-old GM, then it is even more commendable.

The 16-year-old boy is GM D. Gukesh, one of the world's youngest to get the coveted GM title. And yes! There is



certainly a Rajinikanth, the Tamil movie hero known for many stupendous feats on the silver screen, in him.

Gukesh's father is D. Rajinikanth is an ear, nose and throat surgeon. Moreover, Gukesh's favourite chess players are America's first World Chess Champion late

Bobby Fischer and India's first World Chess Champion V. Anand. Playing on the top board of India-2 team,

Gukesh has won all his seven games at the ongoing chess Olympiad and has scalped even GM Alexei Shirov. "Gukesh is a calm boy. He is more of a positional player

who calculates a lot and has a very high strategic sense," GM Vishnu Prasanna, the coach of India's latest chess sensation, had told IANS.

According to Rajinikanth, his son Gukesh breathes and eats chess and spends several hours before a computer reading and analysing games and also listens to spiritual music. Well, the actor Rajinikanth had also said his political philosophy will be spiritual politics.

It is a different matter that the actor backtracked from getting into Tamil Nadu politics.

On Friday Gukesh with an ELO rating of 2,684 (live rating of over 2,700) defeated Cuban GM Albornoz Cabrera Carlos Daniel with an ELO rating of 2,566.

CWG 2022: India hope to cross England hurdle in semifinals in their quest for medal

Ahead of the Indian team's departure to Birmingham for women's T20 cricket event in 2022 Commonwealth Games, words from Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur were all about the chance of winning a medal, especially gold, at Edgbaston.

Birmingham | Agencies

Ahead of the Indian team's departure to Birmingham for women's T20 cricket event in 2022 Commonwealth Games, words from Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur were all about the chance of winning a medal, especially gold, at Edgbaston.

Come Saturday, and India's quest for winning the elusive yellow metal could gain a big push if they cross the hurdle named England in the first semifinal. For Harmanpreet and her side, the chance to get the gold medal has the opportunity to come true in the upcoming weekend. A gold or even a podium finish has the potential to inject another wave of supporters towards women's cricket, considering how winning a medal in a global sporting event is an obsession in



India.

In India's campaign till now, there have been positives all around despite the heartbreaking three-wicket loss to Australia from a position of strength. Harmanpreet took the lead in attacking with the bat against Australia, which was carried forward by Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma against Pakistan. Against Barbados, where they were reduced to 92-4, Jemimah Rodrigues (56 not out) and Deepti Sharma (34 not out) delivered the goods with the bat. With the ball, pacer Renuka Thakur has smashed her way to picking two four-wicket hauls and becoming the current leading wicket-taker in the competition. Experienced all-rounder Sneha Rana's first match in the multi-

nation event saw her stifle Pakistan's run flow and with support from Deepti and Radha Yadav, India's spin department is doing a steady job.

But one of India's weak links in the recent past has been the inability to win big matches. Like, in the ODI World Cup this year, they were unable to defeat Australia, England, New Zealand and South Africa (by the barest of margins).

Moreover, England have been a team which has snapped India's road to glory in the past, be it in ODI World Cup final in 2017 or in semifinals of T20 World Cup in 2018.

Despite the absence of regular captain Heather Knight, England have a formidable look as they topped Group B, compared to India's second

place finish in Group A.

Teenager Alice Capsey has been at her attacking best at number three while veteran pacer Katherine Brunt has chipped in with both bat and more importantly, with the ball. Left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone, young pacers Issy Wong and Freya Kemp have been delightful to watch.

One hopes that India, with a 'killing attitude', hope to erase the differences of the past which have led them to be second best in the matches which mattered a lot and continue their quest for a gold medal.

Squads

England: Maia Bouchier, Katherine Brunt, Alice Capsey, Kate Cross, Freya Davies, Sophia Dunkley, Sophie Ecclestone, Sarah Glenn, Amy Jones (wicketkeeper), Freya Kemp, Nat Sciver (vice-captain), Bryony Smith, Issy Wong and Danni Wyatt

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (captain), Smriti Mandhana (vice-captain), Shafali Verma, S. Meghana, Taniya Sapna Bhatia (wicket-keeper), Yastika Bhatia (wicket-keeper), Deepti Sharma, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Renuka Thakur, Jemimah Rodrigues, Radha Yadav, Harleen Deol and Sneha Rana.

Dom Sibley, Dan Lawrence named in England Lions squad for tour match against South Africa

Canterbury (Kent) | Agencies

Batters Dom Sibley and Dan Lawrence on Friday were named in a 13-man England Lions, to be captained by Sam Billings, for the four-day tour match against South Africa in a four-day match at The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, Canterbury, starting from August 9.

England Men's Assistant Coach Paul Collingwood has been appointed Head Coach for the match. Sibley last played Test cricket for England in the second Test against India at Lord's last year. But he has scored 625 runs in 11 matches for his county side Warwickshire in the ongoing County Championship.

Lawrence, on the other hand, has not featured for England in Test cricket since the tour of West Indies earlier this year. A hamstring injury has troubled him in County Championship, where he had made 318 runs in eight matches for his side Essex.

Apart from Billings, Sibley and Lawrence, Ben Duckett, Keaton Jennings, Craig Overton, Ollie Robinson are the other Test cricketers in the squad for the tour match. With England set to tour Pakistan and New Zealand, the tour match gives these players a chance to push their cases for the overseas Test tours.

"We are delighted that the Lions will have a competitive fixture against the South African tourists. The squad strongly represents some of the country's current, next best and future England players. For some players, this game will be important preparation going into the Test series."

"These matches for the Lions are pivotal as we try to build the depth of players that can further enhance the way the Test team have been playing this summer. It is a reward for players who have scored runs and taken



wickets this season in the LV= Insurance County Championship campaign and have caught our eye in how they've gone about their business," said Mo Bobat, ECB Performance Director.

The tour match is clashing directly with many matches in The Hundred, meaning that teams will have to play without many of their players. "I would also like to thank The Hundred teams and respective Head Coaches who have enabled the eight players who are playing in the competition the opportunity to play for the Lions. We are grateful for their support," concluded Bobat.

England Lions squad versus South Africa: Sam Billings (Captain), Harry Brook, Sam Cook, Sam Conners, Ben Duckett, Will Jacks, Keaton Jennings, Dan Lawrence, Craig Overton, Liam Patterson-White, James Rew, Ollie Robinson and Dom Sibley

Coach S Murali stands vindicated as son Sreeshankar bags Commonwealth Games silver

Birmingham | Agencies

I know him from the minute I took him from Dr. Suma Natarajan at 1.20 am in Kuppuswamy Naidu hospital in Coimbatore. They were telling him that he needs another coach," responds S Murali in a rhetorical manner when reminded of the days when he and his son, long jumper M Sreeshankar were under the spotlight before and during the Tokyo Olympics as his son had a poor outing at the Olympics.

"He is my son, I am with 365 days 24x7 with him. Other coaches will come, give coaching and go. But I will always remain with him," said Murali, who has faced criticism for hanging on to his talented son and preventing him from becoming a medal prospect by training under a big star. Sreeshankar too was comfortable with his father's ways of training and wanted to continue.

Murali's faith in his coaching and his son's ability to grasp and excel was repaid when M Sreeshankar won the silver medal in the long



jump in the 2022 Commonwealth Games here on Thursday.

Murali has coached Sreeshankar since he started jumping and brought him to a level that he broke the national record and became a medal contender at international events.

Murali said he had to take a long leave of absence from his work and accompanied his son to international competitions.

"Ever since I was dropped from the national camp last year, I had to take around 260-days of leave and lost around Rs 12 lakh in salary and emoluments.

Commonwealth silver under his belt, Sreeshankar sets his sights on World Championships, Paris Olympics

Birmingham | Agencies

Winning the silver medal in the long jump at the 2022 Commonwealth Games not only redeemed Indian star Murali Sreeshankar after his Tokyo Olympic debacle, but it also strengthened his resolve to pursue his ultimate aim -- win a medal at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

One of the few Indian jumpers that have consistently crossed the 8-metre mark and also holds the national record at 8.36 metres, the 23-year-old Sreeshankar had a poor outing in Tokyo failing to make it to the final an effort well below his personal best.

On Thursday, Sreeshankar claimed a historic maiden silver medal, in slightly chilly and windy conditions, for an Indian long jumper in the Commonwealth Games bettering the bronze medal that Suresh Babu had bagged in 1978 at Edmonton, Canada. It was also the biggest medal of Sreeshankar's career that redeemed him and made



for all the setbacks he has suffered in recent times. Now that he has won his first medal on the global stage, Sreeshankar is raring to go and wants to target next year's World Championships and the 2024 Olympics after that.

Sreeshankar agreed that it was the biggest day of his life. "To be honest, yes, because this is my first ever global medal. I have been waiting for a medal for a very long time. I have been seventh at World Indoor, seventh at world outdoors, sixth in world juniors, fourth at the asian indoors and sixth in the

Asian Games, so every time six, seventh, sixth, seventh, and fourth. So really happy with winning the silver medal, representing my country at the Commonwealth Games," said Sreeshankar. "I missed out on CWG 2018 because of the surgery I had. I am really happy with the silver medal I won. The competition was really very tough, both of us were tied at 8.08. I am happy that could win the silver medal," he added. The 23-year-old jumper said the conditions were tough and he was not at his hundred percent during the competition. "Today, it was very windy, it was like tailwind whereas when during the qualifying round, it was a headwind. It was also very cold and in the first few jumps I could not get my rhythm going," he said. Sreeshankar said now that he has won the silver medal, his immediate aim is to do well in the Monaco Grand Prix that he will be participating in a few days. "The next big target is the World Championships next year and of course, the ultimate aim is the Paris Olympics in 2024," said the jumper from Kerala.

After 'shattering' Sri Lanka Test exclusion, Maxwell hopeful of berth for India series next year

Melbourne | Agencies

Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell is hopeful he will be in contention for a place in the Test squad for the Border-Gavaskar series in India early next year, though he said he was extremely disappointed at not getting a chance to play in the two-Test series against Sri Lanka in Galle recently.

Despite emerging as Australia's leading run-getter in the ODI series in Sri Lanka, he missed out on a Test berth chiefly because Travis Head was declared fit ahead of the first game and in the second match the ground staff at Galle prepared a good batting pitch.

But Maxwell, who said he was "shattered" by missing out on a Test recall in Sri Lanka, is confident he remains seriously in contention for the four-Test series in India in 2023. The charismatic all-rounder has not played a Test since 2017, but with the appointment of Andrew McDonald as chief coach, he is back in the red-ball frame for the



first time in five years. "I was shattered when I got told (of not getting selected for the Test vs Sri Lanka)," Maxwell told ESPNcricinfo while playing in the Hundred in England.

"It wasn't that I thought they made the wrong call, I was just genuinely disappointed. I loved being a part of it (Tests), and I loved the thought of playing again. Even not thinking about Test cricket for a couple of years, I felt like I was ready again. I loved working with the coaches and coming up with new tactics to deal with difficult spin bowling.

I'm glad Heady (Travis Head) got through his fitness test because I'd have hated to be in because of an injury to one of your players. Unfortunately, they changed the conditions. If it was the same conditions for both Tests, I probably would have played. But they made a slightly better wicket, and the selectors made the right call," added Maxwell.

"I tried not to get too excited or get my hopes up too much because I know, having been in that situation so many times and been on the wrong side of it, the ups and downs of selection and the 50-50 calls...but yeah, I allowed myself to get a little bit too excited." Maxwell revealed he was concentrating on targeted training sessions on spinning wickets at Victoria's Junction Oval to help him with his preparations for the gruelling India Test series next year.

"Last year I had a pre-season at Junction Oval, where we would use the same pitches, maybe four or five net sessions in a row and by the fifth net session they were basically India. And it was awesome. They were the best net sessions I had."

SC order paves way for induction of former players in AIFF administration

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court has directed the All India Football Federation (AIFF) to elect an executive committee by September so that an elected body can, as per the requirement of international football federation (FIFA) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC), host the Under-17 Women's World Cup, which India is scheduled to host in October this year.

An elected executive committee is also necessary for the national football team to participate in FIFA and AFC events. While passing the order on August 3, the apex court made two key observa-



tions -- firstly, the inclusion of eminent footballers in the AIFF management by directing the general body to be formed by 36 state association members and 36 players, both male and female, and secondly that the elections should be held in accordance with the National Sports Code and Article 26 of the draft constitution, which provides for a fixed tenure and age limit of the office-bearers. The order provides an

opportunity to pump in fresh blood in the AIFF administration. Former players like Kalyan Chaubey, Bhairav Bhatia, I.M. Vijayan and administrators like Saji Prabhakaran of Delhi Football Association, Manvendra Singh of Rajasthan Football Association, and N.A. Haris of Karnataka State Football Association can now contest the upcoming elections of the federation if they wish to.

Kalyan Chaubey, former India goalkeeper and a party in the case, welcomed the decision by saying that he has been fighting for the cause of footballers for long and now his views have been vindicated.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Katrina Kaif made headlines because of her Instagram account. It was not, however, because of a photo or video she shared on the social networking app. She became the buzz of the town after briefly changing her Instagram name to Camedia Moderatez. Everyone is wondering if this was a PR stunt or if her account was hacked.

Katrina, who will be featured in the upcoming film Phone Bhoot, has a sizable fan base on social media. On Aug 4, the actress posted photos on Instagram of herself dressed in floral clothes. But she quickly alarmed her fans when she changed her identity on the photo-sharing app to

KATRINA KAIF'S social media account hacked

Camedia Moderatez. Some assumed it was a publicity hoax, while others suspected the actress's account had been hacked.

Katrina Kaif's team was approached by a news portal about the name change. They said that there was a technological error that caused her name to appear as Camedia Moderatez. A Twitter user posted an image of Katrina's Instagram username with the caption, "Camedia Moderatez, who? Don't tell me Katrina's account is being hacked. #KatrinaKaif." Others speculated that this may be a publicity stunt for a future film. On the work front, Katrina Kaif will be next seen in Phone Bhoot.

Ali Fazal and Richa Chaddha to take the plunge in September 2022

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Richa Chaddha and Ali Fazal have been dating each other for a while now and they are going strong with their relationship. And while the couple continues to be head over heels in love with each other, they are set to take their relationship to next level. While they were expected to tie the knot in April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made them postpone their wedding plans. Ever since then, there have been speculations about Richa and Ali's wedding.

And now, as per the recent update, the love birds will be tying the knot in September 2022. According to a report, the duo will have two ceremonies, one in Mumbai while the other will be held in Delhi. On the work front, Ali was last seen in 'Death On The Nile' starring Gal Gadot, Tom Bateman and more. The film was released in February 2022. Richa, on the other hand, will be reprising her role of Bholi Punjabian in 'Fukrey 3'. She has also been doing a couple of web series in recent days.



AAMIR KHAN REVEALS SGPC MEMBERS BEING TOUCHED BY THE DEPICTION OF SARDAR'S CHARACTER IN HIS UPCOMING FILM



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Aamir Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan starrer Laal Singh Chaddha is one of the most anticipated releases of 2022. Film is an adaptation of Tom Hanks starrer Forrest Gump. It is directed by Advait Chandan and set for release on August 11, 2022.

The film is only a few days away from its global release and the makers are going out and out to keep the audience in anticipation of wanting more from the film.

As the plotline of the upcoming Aamir Khan film is based in Punjab, the actor showed the film to the members of the SGPC.

Talking about the same, he says "I was very touched with the reaction of the members of the SGPC. I am so glad that our film touched their hearts so deeply". This film is based in Punjab and Aamir Khan is playing the character of a Sardar, the makers wanted to get every single detail right. So, before starting the shoot the makers had showed the script of film to the members of SGPC. Now that the film is ready, they screened it for the members of SGPC who loved the film.

For the unversed, this film also stars Mona Singh and Chaitanya Akkineni in pivotal roles.

Kumar Sanu's daughter Shanon K pays tribute to her father



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Veteran singer Kumar Sanu's daughter Shanon K has paid tribute to her father with a reprised version of his song 'Pehla Pehla Pyar'. Speaking about the song, Kumar Sanu said: "When Shannon called me for permission to remake my old song, I was a little apprehensive of the idea because I knew audiences will have a lot of expectations from this song. "Shannon is an extremely talented artist and has a unique voice, so I wanted to push her to experiment and wanted her to try my style for this song. But she went beyond my expectations and her versatile voice adds an intense emotion and expresses delicate and vulnerable shadings in the song."

Sanu said that she has created an identity in the west and it gives him immense joy to see her do the same in her motherland too.

The song is releasing on August 5 across digital plat-

forms by Sony Music.

The music video was shot in Los Angeles keeping the visuals simple to tone with the mood of the song so people can focus on the song more than the video.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Madalsa Sharma

Upasana Singh sues Miss Universe Harnaaz



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular actress and excellent comedian Upasana Singh has worked in numerous TV shows over the years. Her character of 'Bua' that she played in the show Comedy Nights with Kapil, became quite popular and she is still remembered for that role.

The actress recently grabbed attention after she sued Miss Universe Harnaaz Sandhu, accusing her of not honouring an agreement signed for the promotion of a Punjabi movie.

Upasana Singh filed a civil suit in the Chandigarh district court, seeking damages for the alleged breach of contract.

Upasana also claimed that she signed Harnaaz for Bai Ji Kuttange much before she was crowned Miss Universe 2021. As per Upasana, Harnaaz was supposed to give 25 days for the promotion of her Punjabi movie but she has not been replying to her messages or emails. She also claimed that the film was initially postponed because Harnaaz could not promote it and now that it is releasing on August 19, the Miss Universe is again unavailable. We have been trying to contact Harnaaz. I told her to give me 5 days instead of 25 for the film's promotion. But she refused for the same, Upasana said in Punjabi while interacting with the media personnel outside the court. "I gave her a chance when she wasn't the Miss Universe but a struggler. I had put all my hard-earned money into this film. This is not a small movie," she added. Meanwhile, apart from Harnaaz, Bai Ji Kuttange also stars Dev Kharoud and Gurpreet Ghuggi and is directed by Smeep Kang. Apart from producing the film, Upasana Singh has also acted in it.