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RETAIL INFLATION (CPI-C) RECORDS SPIKE IN LAST 5 YEARS

The Retail Inflation Rate (percentage) in the year 2017-18 was 3.59 which jumped to 6.77 in October (provisional). The data showed that the inflation rate increased gradually over the years from 3.41 in the year 2018-19 to 4.77 in 2019-20, to 6.16 in 2020-21, but in the year 2021-22 it came down to 5.51, Minister of State for Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary told the Lok Sabha in a written reply.

FALLS TO 10-MONTH LOW OF 5.88% IN OCTOBER

New Delhi: India's retail inflation, measured through consumer price index (CPI), fell to 5.88 per cent in November from 6.77 per cent recorded in October.

Retail inflation meanwhile, has come down below the RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent for the first time in the last 10 months.

It was dragged down by food inflation, which was down as prices of fruits and vegetables as well as those of meat and fish fell during November, compared to October.

Separately, the factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), contracted 4 per cent in October, according to official data released.



RBI'S REPORT ON INFLATION CONTROL CAN'T BE MADE PUBLIC: UNION MINISTER

New Delhi: The Central government cannot make the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) report on the reasons for the failure to control the inflation as the RBI Act does not provide for this, the Parliament was told on Monday.

Responding to a question from Lok Sabha Member Jayadev Galla on whether the RBI had submitted its report on the reasons for not controlling the inflation at six per cent and whether the government would make the report public, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary confirmed that the central bank has submitted a report as mandated under Section 452N of the RBI Act and Regulation 7 of RBI Monetary Policy Committee and Monetary Policy process Regulations, 2016.

(sunflower). Further, the onset of heat waves and uneven rainfall in the later part of the monsoon season has led to crop damage and a rise in vegetable prices. Recently, the inflation rate has come down to 6.77 per cent in October 2022," he said.

The minister also said that the price situation of major essential commodities is monitored by the government on a

regular basis and corrective action is taken from time to time.

Several supply-side measures have been taken by the government to address inflation and to ensure that the poor do not have to bear the extra financial burden.

"These include inter alia, reduction in excise duty by Rs 8 per litre on petrol and Rs 6 per litre on diesel on May 21, 2022,

NOT WAIVED OFF LOANS TO BIG COMPANIES: SITHARAMAN



New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday clarified in the Parliament

that the government has not waived off loans availed by big companies. Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha by CPI member K. Subbarayan, who sought to know whether the government will waive off education loans of poor students who are pursuing higher education, just as the "government has written off several lakhs of crores rupees for the big companies", Sitharaman said that "we have not waived off the loans availed by big companies".

"Write-off is something different from waiving-off. We should understand this. We have not written off to anyone. This is one point. Secondly, if there are NPAs and such NPAs are written off, on the basis of their securities submitted with the banks, we are collecting back those amounts from those companies," she said.

prohibition of export of wheat products under HS Code 1101, imposition of export duty on rice, reduction in import duties and cess on pulses, rationalisation of tariffs and imposition of stock limits on edible oils and oil seeds, maintenance of buffer stock for onion and pulses, the inclusion of soya meal as an essential commodity in the schedule of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and imposition of a stock limit on soya meal," said the reply.



INDIAN, CHINESE TROOPS SUFFER MINOR INJURIES IN BORDER CLASH ON DEC 9

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chinese troops approached the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh last week, but Indian troops firmly contested their way, leading to a clash between the two, sources said on Monday. Although no loss of life or major injuries were reported but both some Indian and Chinese troops received some minor injuries during this clash, a source said.

It is the first physical clash between the two armies since August 2020 in eastern Ladakh. There was another incident in October 2021 at Yangtse, 35 km northeast of Tawang, where the Chinese attempt to get access to the top of 17,000 feet peak was thwarted and the area is now under snow and will remain so till March.

Top sources confirmed that a clash occurred between the two sides along the disputed section of the Line of

Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 at Yangtse.

Soon after the clash, troops of both India and China immediately were disengaged from the area.

According to the sources, the face-off in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh was the first incident of clashes between Indian and Chinese troops since the confrontation at eastern Ladakh. There has been face-offs in this area in the past too.

Earlier this month China had also objected to the Indo-US joint military exercise at Auli in Uttarakhand. India had, however, dismissed China's objection, saying it did not give a veto to third countries on these issues.

Hitting back at China, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had said the joint exercises with the US in Auli has nothing to do with the 1993 and 1996 agreements with China.

BHUPENDRA PATEL TAKES OATH AS GUJARAT CM FOR SECOND TIME

Gandhinagar: Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and his 16 members of cabinet took oath on Monday in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries. Patel has been sworn in as Chief Minister for the second time. It is smallest cabinet with 17 members including Chief Minister himself. According to the Sarkaria Commission, Chief Minister has prerogative to have cabinet of 25 ministers and so there is a possibility that sooner or later cabinet will be expanded. Some districts and community have yet not got representation in the cabinet.



No development, if you don't vote for me, K'taka BJP MLA tells Muslims in viral video

Bengaluru | Agencies

A video of BJP Karnataka MLA I. Preetham Gowda telling Muslims that if they don't vote him in the upcoming Assembly elections, he won't take up any development activity for them has gone viral on social media. The remarks have drawn sharp criticism from the people. In the video, MLA Preetham Gowda, the MLA from Hassan, while addressing a gathering in Hassan city's Muslim-dominated Srinagar locality was heard saying he had treated people of all communities as brothers in the last four years. He went on to say that if Muslims came to his home, he would offer them coffee but not ensure development and won't do anything they need.

"I will continue to treat you equally as brothers. But, you did not vote for me in the 2018 assembly elections and municipal elections. You did not vote for BJP in parliamentary elections. I will not do more than to ensure proper water, road and drainage facilities," Pritham Gowda said.



Pritam Gowda maintained that he was just asking for wages for the labor he had put in to ensure developmental activities for Muslims. Referring to the crowd, he said: "You are all daily wage workers. You will get angry if your wages are not paid. Don't you think even after getting work from me, if you don't vote, I will get upset? Pritham Gowda won from Hassan city in 2018 giving a rude shock to JD-S. Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda hails from Hassan and entire district politics is dominated by Gowda family.

Bogtui carnage: Main accused dies 'mysteriously' in CBI custody

Kolkata | Agencies

In a major embarrassment for the CBI, the prime accused behind the massacre at Bogtui village in West Bengal's Birbhum district on March 21 this year, died in CBI custody on Monday evening at the central agency's camp at Rampurhat in the same district.

Nine persons were killed in the carnage.

Lalan Sheikh was arrested on late December 3 this year by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) sleuths after over an eight month hunt. Sources said that his body was being sent from the CBI camp to Rampurhat sub-divisional hospital. However, the reasons for his



death are yet to be known.

The Bogtui massacre is perceived as a revenge killing over the murder of local Trinamool Congress leader, Vadu Sheikh in the same evening.

Lalan Sheikh was the right-hand man of Vadu

Sheikh and soon after the latter's murder, he assembled his associates and launched a late-night attack on the Bogtui village with bombs and inflammable items.

He was absconding since then and the CBI sleuths

had been conducting marathon searches to track him since the central agency took up the parallel investigation into both Vadu Sheikh's murder as well as the Bogtui carnage, as per an order of the Calcutta High Court. The court had observed that the two events were inter-linked.

Now confusion has started on who will be conducting the mysterious death of Lalan Sheikh. Will the probe be conducted by the CBI only or will the district police concerned will take over the investigation? This question that is floating around in the political circles. Already political mudslinging started over the death of Lalan Sheikh in CBI custody.

HIMACHAL LAWMAKERS TO PAY FULL TARIFF IN GOVT GUEST HOUSES

Shimla: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Monday, his first day in office, announced that all lawmakers and their family members would have to pay the same room tariffs in Himachal Bhawans, Sadan and other state guest houses as is being charged from the public.

He said that the government would provide top priority for redressal of public grievances.

The Chief Minister also said his government would work towards ensuring transparency in governance.

BHARAT JODO YATRA: MONDAY DEDICATED TO SHOWCASE WOMEN POWER

Jaipur | Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra was dedicated to women power on Monday. In Sawai Madhopur, women walked with Rahul Gandhi.

Thousands of women including Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi along with her daughter and Mahila Congress president Neta D'Souza participated in the padyatra from Tejaji Maharaj Temple to Pipalwada. During this, Kalbelia dancer Padma Shri Gulabo Sapera also gave her dance presentation.

Moving through the morning session, Rahul Gandhi mainly interacted with two groups. The first interaction was with representatives of the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti. They told Rahul Gandhi about the shortcomings of the new education policy of the central government. They said that the government is centralising education whereas it should be further decentralised.

The second conversation was with the people of



the eunuch community of Kota. They told him that the Rajasthan government has released a budget of Rs 10 crores for the upliftment of the transgender community. Arrangements should be made to ensure that this money reaches the community in the right way. Along with this, the schemes run by the

government for the upliftment of eunuchs should be better publicised to make them reach the people.

At 11 a.m., Congress MP and the party's communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh addressed a press conference along with women public representatives and party officials. He said that after Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, today only women are walking with Rahul Gandhi to demonstrate women power in Rajasthan.

Mamta Bhupesh, Minister of Women and Child Development in the state government, said that inflation affects women the hardest. The Bharat Jodo Yatra is to raise a voice against inflation. That's why women are walking step by step with Rahul Gandhi. Rajasthan State Commission for Women president Rehana Riaz said that today a large number of women walked with Rahul Gandhi to raise their voice against communalism and unemployment.

Mahila Congress chief Neta D'Souza said that by giving 35 per cent reservation in panchayats, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi empowered women

politically.

MLA Divya Maderna said that after Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, only women in Rajasthan have been given a chance to walk in the yatra, it shows that Rahul Gandhi wants to empower them politically. I am myself a product of Rahul Gandhi's thinking who gave me a ticket and gave me an opportunity to serve as a MLA, she added.

Baran district chief Urmila Jain Bhaya and Rachna Samleti, sarpanch of Samleti gram panchayat in Dausa district, said that if Rajiv Gandhi had not provided for reservation in panchayats, she would not have been able to join electoral politics.

In response to a question during the press conference, Jairam Ramesh said that Rajiv Gandhi gave one-third reservation to women in panchayats. When Manmohan Singh was in government, the Congress party got the Women's Reservation Bill passed in the Rajya Sabha. That bill is still lying in the Lok Sabha. The Modi government has completed 8 years but they haven't tried to pass it yet.



MINING BARON JANARDHANA REDDY LIKELY TO LAUNCH NEW PARTY, K'TAKA BJP WORRIED

Bengaluru | Agencies

The ruling BJP in Karnataka is worried over the former BJP leader and mining baron, Gali Janardhana Reddy being all set to launch his new party ahead of the Assembly polls in the state.

Sources close to Janardhana Reddy said that he had already decided to launch a new party called 'Kalyana Rajya Pragathi Paksha'. They also said that he was leaving for New Delhi to get his party registered with the Election Commission.

The saffron party, which once groomed Reddy brothers, had been maintaining a distance for some time. Mining baron Janardhana Reddy was jailed in 2018 and restrictions were imposed upon his entry to his home district, Ballari.

Reddy and his brothers have been unhappy with their treatment by the saffron party and have made this clear many times. Recently Reddy had gone to New Delhi and attempted to share his displeasure to the BJP central leaders.



The BJP has made B. Sriramulu as the Minister for Transport after shunting him out as the Health Minister. The party has not made any

concrete promise regarding the positions and future of Janardhana Reddy in the state politics. Now, with Janardhana Reddy all set

to launch his new party, BJP Karnataka unit is worried and leaders have requested the high command to somehow talk to him and pacify him.

The BJP insiders said that if Janardhana Reddy launches his party, the BJP's chances of winning in at least 20 Assembly seats would be seriously affected.

Reddy's daughter's grand marriage ceremony in Bengaluru at the time when the central BJP had imposed the note ban in 2016 had embarrassed the party. Sources close to Janardhana Reddy said that he is all set for second innings in politics.

Snubbed by the BJP, Reddy has already shifted to Gangavathi in Koppal district and started working for his comeback from there leaving the ruling BJP worried. Revenue Minister R. Ashok had maintained that Reddy won't launch a new party. However, though Reddy has not made any official statement in this regard, preparations are clearly suggesting that he is serious about his political move.

'You have to face the consequences'

SC to Sisodia on quashing defamation proceedings by Assam CM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to entertain a plea by Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, seeking to quash defamation proceedings against him initiated by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at a local court in Assam.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Abhay S. Oka told senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, representing Sisodia: "If you reduce public debate to this level, you have to face the consequences."

"Without paying heed to what country was facing, you make such statements," it said.

Singhvi contended that his client nowhere said any money was taken. However, the apex court declined to grant any relief to Sisodia and added that he should have given an unconditional apology, then perhaps the situation would have been different. Singhvi emphasized that the petitioner had never said

any money was taken.

Senior advocate Ranjit Kumar appeared for Assam CM and Assam's Additional Advocate General Nalin Kohli appeared for the state government. After the bench showed its disinclination to entertain the plea, Sisodia withdrew it. The Gauhati High Court dismissed Sisodia's petition seeking quashing of the defamation case filed by Sarma over allegations of corruption levelled against him by Sisodia.

The Assam CM had filed a criminal defamation case against Sisodia for making "baseless" corruption allegations against him in connection with the supply of PPE kits at higher than market rates to the National Health Mission (NHM) authorities during the first wave of the Covid pandemic.

Sisodia had claimed that Sarma, the state Health Minister in 2020, had given the supply orders to the firm of his wife. Sarma has denied these allegations.

Dimple Yadav takes oath as Lok Sabha MP, seeks Sonia's blessings

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Dimple Yadav, wife of former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav and daughter-in-law of late Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav, took oath as MP in Lok Sabha on Monday.

She was accompanied by her husband Akhilesh Yadav, when she arrived in the morning to take oath.

In a heart-warming gesture, Dimple Yadav touched former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi's feet after taking oath as MP in Lok Sabha. She had won the Lok Sabha by-election from Mainpuri last week, defeating BJP's Raghuraj Singh Shukla by more than 2.8 lakh votes. This will be her third term as Lok Sabha MP. She has been a member of



of the lower house twice from Kannauj. The by-election was necessitated after the demise

of Mulayam Singh Yadav, who passed away on October 10 this year.

DRONE CARRIES MEDICINES TO ARUNACHAL'S REMOTE AREAS

Itanagar | Agencies

After Meghalaya, drone-based services were launched in Arunachal Pradesh on Monday to deliver medicines and other healthcare essentials in the remote, mountainous and far-flung areas to save time and costs, officials said.

Gurugram-based TechEagle has developed the drone-based services and launched it in collaboration with the Arunachal Pradesh government and World Economic Forum.

The operations have been started to enable "Medicines from the Sky" for the remote areas of Lower Subansiri District. The project was flagged off by Arunachal Pradesh Health and Family Welfare Minister Alo Libang.

Officials said that the drone took off from Ziro Valley and transported the cargo (medicine) to Chambang, covering an aerial distance of 31 km, in just 21 minutes. The drone took off from Ziro Valley with a payload of 1.5



kg, carrying Diclofenac tablets and Adrenaline Injection, and on its return flight from Chambang to Ziro Valley, the drone carried blood samples for testing. Apparently, the time taken by a vehicle to travel between Ziro Valley to Chambang by road takes around 8 hours. TechEagle's

indigenously developed drone delivery solution transported the items around 24 times faster compared to ground transportation, a statement said. It said that the project is aimed at improving the lives of people as they have to trek for reaching particular remotest parts of the state.

For the project, TechEagle's state-of-the-art drone delivery solution will ensure regular and consistent transportation of life-saving drugs and other emergency healthcare items to save and improve the lives of people residing in the hard-to-reach areas of the state.

TN TO HAVE MORE RAIN IN NEXT FEW DAYS: IMD



Chennai | Agencies

With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) indicating a low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal from Tuesday, rain is likely to continue in Tamil Nadu till December 15.

Owing to the effect of an upper air cyclonic circulation, rain is to continue in Tamil Nadu on Monday and Tuesday. Schools in Kancheepuram district and a few

areas in Tiruvallur remain closed due to heavy rainfall.

The IMD predicted that the rain was expected to taper in the next few days. However P. Senthamarai Kannan, Director of, Area Cyclonic Warning Centre, Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) said that by Tuesday the remnants of Cyclone 'Mandous' will emerge in the Arabian sea.

The RMC in a statement said that the upper air circulation persisted over north interior Tamil

Nadu and adjoining South Interior Karnataka and the northern parts of Kerala and this extends up to 5.8 km above the sea level.

The weather department also predicted widespread and isolated heavy rain over Andaman Nicobar on Thursday and Friday.

The skies were likely to be cloudy over Chennai and adjoining areas on Monday and light to moderate rain was expected in many places.

ONE KILLED, 35 INJURED IN ROAD ACCIDENT IN BIHAR'S KAIMUR

Patna: One person was killed and 35 others injured after a tourist bus crashed with a speeding truck in Bihar's Kaimur district on Monday morning, officials said.

The accident took place at Chilibili village under Kundra police station on Kolkata-Delhi NH 19. The deceased was identified as the bus driver. He died on the spot. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) official Rameshwar Ram said: "The bus was plying on the wrong side and rammed head on with a speeding truck coming from the opposite direction." "We have rescued the injured passengers of the bus and admitted them to Primary Health Center (PHC) Kundra. The driver of the bus was trapped in the cabin and died," he added.

"One of the injured people, Anita Das, informed us that they were travelling from Kolkata and going to Agra to see the Taj Mahal. Their next stop was Ayodhya. The bus has taken a brief halt at a roadside eatery for morning tea.

Member of int'l cartel held with gold worth Rs 46 lakh in Lucknow

Lucknow | Agencies

A member of an international cartel was arrested by the Gomti Nagar police after the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) detained him up on a tip off from Amausi airport soon after he landed from Guwahati.

The accused is Sunny Dilip Lal Sharma alias Manav Govind.

While he had secured an identity in the name of Manav Govind to smuggle gold this time, it was revealed that he had been using six different identities.

The DRI team recovered 862 grams of gold worth Rs 46 lakh from him. He was later handed over to the Gomti Nagar police.

Police said that during interrogation, it surfaced that Sharma originally hailed from Ulhasnagar in Maharashtra and was a part of an international syndicate.

"He was given the responsibility of carrying a foreign origin gold that was sneaked in from Myanmar via Imphal and then by a gang member to Guwahati from where he had to deliver the consignment to Delhi. But soon after landing at Amausi airport he was intercepted by DRI," the police said.

The police further added that he was given



a commission for the task and his bank accounts are being scrutinised. "Sharma had smuggled the gold six-seven times in the past and used different names as his identity," said the police.

He further disclosed that he worked for a gang which is working on an international level and several like him are members in the gang. In the past he had visited countries like Nepal, Dubai, Qatar in connection with gold smuggling. The police recovered five Aadhaar Cards from him.

SHO, Gomti Nagar, D.C. Mishra said that they will be interrogating the accused to seek information about his other gang members.

'CREMATE US TOGETHER' SAYS SUICIDE NOTE OF LOVERS IN UP



Aurriaya: The bodies of a 17-year-old girl and a 22-year-old man were found hanging in a room close to a water pump house in Murcha village in Aurriaya district.

A suicide note recovered from the tube well room requested their family members not to separate them after their death, and perform their last rites together. They said in the suicide note that they were taking the extreme step on their own and no one should be held responsible for it.

Shivam Kumar, a polytechnic student, was in love with his neighbour, but their families were against the relationship. The two were upset due to the opposition by their families. Circle officer Bidhuna, M P Singh said the bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination and action would be taken after receiving the report.

"We have recovered a suicide note from the spot in which both of them pleaded that they should

Over 1,100 militants surrender in Assam's Hailakandi district

Guwahati | Agencies

At least 1,179 militants of two insurgent groups, the Bru Liberation Army Union (BLAU) and the United Democratic Liberation Army (UDLA), have laid down their arms on Monday in Assam's Hailakandi district, officials said.

These two militant groups were active along the Assam-Mizoram border in southern Assam's three districts -- Cachar, Karimganj, and Hailakandi.

According to a senior police officer, the militants laid down all their firearms, including AK-47s, M-16 rifles, as well as over 400 cartridges.

He further said that 634 members of the BRAU, led by Rajesh Charki, and 545 UDLF-BV militants, headed by Dhanyaram Reang, surrendered at a function held in the Katilechera area of Hailakandi district.

"The peace process with these two groups started in 2017 but there were some differences. Now that could be resolved, and the militants came out for negotiation. Their rehabilitation



process will soon materialise," the police officer added.

The arms laying programme of these two militant groups was attended by Assam Assembly Speaker Biswajit Daimary and state Minister Pijush Hazarika.

Daimary said that the state government will address the concerns of the surrendered militants and provide them funds for development.

Meanwhile, Hazarika mentioned that the militant groups were formed earlier because of the lack of development in the region, and the present

government is fully committed to meeting their genuine demands.

BRAU leader Charki said that they are happy with the situation now, but he reminded everyone of their primary demand for an autonomous economic council for the Reang community.

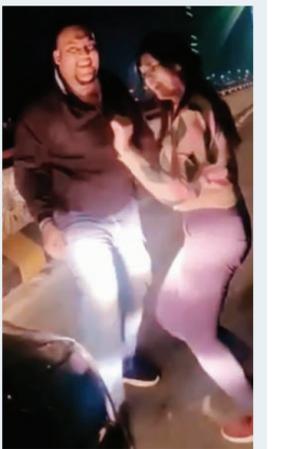
As per the police, both militant groups were active in the 1990s along the Assam-Mizoram border, particularly in the Hailakandi district. They were alleged to have been involved in murder, extortion, kidnapping, and other illegal activities.

TWO GIRLS AMONG THREE HELD FOR DANCING ON ELEVATED ROAD

Ghaziabad: The Ghaziabad police on Monday arrested three persons, including two girls, for allegedly dancing on an elevated road in the city.

The police swung into action after a video of the incident went viral on social media two days ago. In the video, two girls and a young man could be seen dancing on several songs at night after parking their car on the road and cutting a cake on its bonnet. Taking action for parking the car on the elevated road and having a birthday party, the police have also seized the vehicle and issued a challan of Rs 10,000.

According to information received from the police, the Wagon R car with a Delhi number was in the name of Vikas Srivastava. The police arrested the person who danced in the first video. After this, people started raising questions about the one-sided action of the police on social media. The police then arrested both the girls also.





MUMBAI TO BREATHE MORE OF POLLUTED AIR IN COMING TIMES, WARNS STUDY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In yet another red-flag, experts have warned that Mumbai could experience more days with 'poor' and 'very poor' air quality during winter in the coming years, as was witnessed during November-December, here on Monday.

A temporary silver lining could be in the form of Cyclone 'Mandous' aftermath with wind speed picking up over Mumbai that could result in a dip in pollutants in the coming days.

In the past 40 days from November 1 - December 10, Mumbai had 22 days of 'poor' category for air quality and for four days (December 5-8) it was in the 'very poor' range.

During the same period in 2021, the number of 'poor' days was only six with no 'very poor' air days indicating a sharp decline in 2022.

Last year, during the period there were 18 days when PM-2.5 was within the permissible limits but in 2022 there was only one day when PM-2.5 was in the permissible range.

In 2022, the 18 'poor' and four 'very poor' air quality days the worst-affected were Malad, Chembur and



Mazagaon, while Borivali, Navi Mumbai and Worli recorded the cleanest air during the period (November 1 - December 10).

Mumbai's fresh air continues to be smothered by the transport sector (30 per cent), biofuels or residential emissions (20), industries (18), wind-blown dust (15) and the rest (17) related to weather factors including sea-salt, as per SAFAR study.

Waatavaran Foundation's founder Bhagwan Kesbhat said that the Maharashtra government and municipal authorities must develop a

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) that can set in motion a series of emergency measures whenever the air quality hits a certain threshold, besides health advisories and controlling pollution at the sources. Convenor of Awaaz Foundation Sumaira Abdulali said the BMC has failed to issue health advisories through social media as was done during the Covid-19 pandemic so people can take precautions to safeguard their health on an individual and institutional level.

Anjal Prakash of Indian School of

Business said that the city's air quality has dipped due to the prevailing global meteorological conditions called the El Nino Southern Oscillation with an abnormal warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean that disrupts global atmospheric circulation and in turn influences temperatures and precipitation.

Dr. Harshal R. Salve of AIIMS urged that regional issues pertaining to poor air quality must be met with regional answers, plus quick-fixes like using N95 masks and putting out open fires, etc.

Anil Deshmukh bailed out after 13 months, still to be in prison for 10 days

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted conditional bail to former Maharashtra minister Anil Deshmukh after he spent nearly 13 months in jail custody in alleged corruption case lodged by the CBI.

However, after Additional Solicitor-General Anil Singh, appearing for the CBI, sought a stay on the order as it plans to move the Supreme Court, the high court said the bail order would be effective after 10 days.

Justice M. S. Karnik, who had reserved his order on Dec. 8, pronounced the verdict, allowing Deshmukh bail on a Rs 100,000 bond.

Last month, the high court had granted him bail in the ED money-laundering case, but the CBI Special Court had



rejected his bail plea, which Deshmukh challenged in the high court. Strongly arguing against the bail, Singh contended that merely because Deshmukh secured bail in a money-laundering offence did not automatically entitle

him to bail in the CBI corruption case also, as corruption took place at the highest level in the government, and pointed out that the SC has said money-laundering is a stand-alone offence to be decided on its own merits.

Shah Rukh Khan visits Vaishno Devi temple before 'Pathaan' song launch

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A video of superstar Shah Rukh Khan visiting the Vaishno Devi temple to seek blessings ahead of the release of his song 'Besharam Rang' from 'Pathaan' has gone viral.

A video of Shah Rukh Khan making his way late at night to the temple surrounded by police officials is doing the rounds on social media. He made sure that people do not recognise him and chose an all black outfit. According to reports, SRK performed puja.

Directed by Siddharth Anand, 'Pathaan' also stars Deepika Padukone and John Abraham. The spy thriller



revolves around RAW agent Pathaan. It will also see a cameo by superstar Salman Khan. Shah Rukh even performed Umrah in Mecca after he finished the shooting

schedule of his film 'Dunki' in Saudi Arabia. Directed by Rajkumar Hirani, 'Dunki' marks the first collaboration between Shah Rukh and the director.

Nora Fatehi files defamation lawsuit against Jacqueline Fernandez

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Nora Fatehi has filed a defamation case against actress Jacqueline Fernandez, alleging that the latter made defamatory allegations against her for malicious reasons.

According to Fatehi, Fernandez sought to criminally defame her in order to destroy her career to further her own interests, since they are both working in the same industry and have similar backgrounds, amongst other reasons.

On December 2, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had questioned Fatehi regarding common Sukesh Chandrashekhar's Rs 200 crore money laundering case.



Both Fernandez and Fatehi had recorded their statement as witness in the case. Earlier, fixed deposits worth Rs 7.2

crore belonging to Fernandez were attached by the ED, which termed these gifts and properties as proceeds of crime received by the actresses.

In February, the ED filed its first supplementary prosecution complaint against Chandrashekhar's aide Pinky Irani, who introduced him to Bollywood actresses.

It had been alleged in the charge sheet that Irani used to choose costly gifts for Fernandez and later used to drop it at her house after the payments were made by Chandrashekhar.

In December last year the ED filed the first charge sheet in this matter before the court of Additional Sessions Judge Praveen Singh.

Chandrashekhar has spent around Rs 20 crore on different models and Bollywood celebs. A few had, however, refused to take gifts from him.

Maha Governor to Amit Shah -- 'Can't dream of slur to any icon'

Mumbai: The beleaguered Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah explaining his position vis-a-vis the political storm raging in the state, and asserting that he "can't dream of any slur on icons".

Addressing him as 'Respected Shri Amitbhai ji' in the two-page letter in Hindi dated December 6, the Governor has drawn attention to his recent speech, and contended that certain small portions from that address were separated to criticise him.

Koshyari said he had cited instances of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose who were inspiring icons when "we were students", and the modern day students also want to know the current era personalities who could be their 'ideals'.

"In that context I had given the examples of personalities like Dr B. R. Ambedkar to (Union Minister) Nitin Gadkari.... It also implied that students could even take (the late President) Dr APJ Abdul Kalam or (nuclear scientist) Dr Homi Bhabha as their idols". If someone considers Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has raised India's status in the world as an "ideal", it doesn't mean disre-



spect to the earlier 'Maha Purush'... It's not even a subject of comparison," Koshyari said.

In an indirect swipe at his bete-noire, the Shiv Sena (UBT) President Uddhav Thackeray but without naming him, the 80-year-old Governor said that during the Covid-19 pandemic, "when many 'big-big people' were not stepping out of their homes, at my age, I had gone on a pilgrimage on foot to places like Shivneri, Singhgad, Raigad, and Pratapgad".

As far as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is con-

cerned, he is the pride of not only Maharashtra but the whole country and Koshyari recalled his trip to the birthplace of Shivaji's mother, Mata Jijibai in Sindhkhed, becoming the first Governor in over 30 years to go there, and that too walking. "Respected Amitbhaiji, you will recall that in 2016, I had expressed a desire not to contest elections in 2019, and keep away from all political offices. At that time the honourable PM-ji and yourself had expressed your affection and faith in a humble worker like me due to which I accepted the post of Maharashtra Governor," the Governor said.

Koshyari added that all the dignitaries are aware that if he commits any error he never hesitates to express regrets or apologise for his remarks.

"I cannot even dream of insulting the great people like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Maharana Pratap or Shri Guru Gobind Singh who made sacrifices during the Mughal era... I appeal to you that in the current situation, please take the trouble to provide appropriate guidance," the Governor urged.

However, the Governor's letter failed to impress leaders of the Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT), Nationalist Congress Party and others who remain firm that Koshyari should be shunted out of the state.

Shiv Sena (Shinde) MLA's aide gets interim bail in Money Laundering case

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted interim bail to an aide of Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde faction) MLA Pratap Sarnaik in a money laundering case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The ED case is linked to a probe against the Tops Group security service provider company, its promoters and others in connection with alleged financial irregularities in providing security guards for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) projects.

A single bench of Justice M S Karnik granted interim bail to MLA Sarnaik's aide Amit Chandole, who was also a promoter of the security firm, and M Sasidharan, its former managing director. The duo had approached the high court after a special PMLA court rejected their bail plea. Chandole and Sasidharan had sought release from prison in the light of the Supreme Court ruling that a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) cannot continue if there is no prior First Information Report registered by another agency. As per the PMLA provisions, a prior 'scheduled offence' is a requisite for the ED to initiate action against a



person.

Chandole was arrested in November 2020, while Mr Sasidharan had been arrested a few months earlier. The probe agency had registered its complaint on the basis of a case registered by the Mumbai police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW). However, the EOW in January 2022 had filed a closure report before a magistrate's court citing that there was no evidence of crime, which the court had accepted in September. The special judge had rejected their pleas on the ground that the 90-day period for the Mumbai police to file an appeal against the closure of the case was not yet over.

WOMAN DIES BY SUICIDE; HUSBAND, FATHER-IN-LAW ARRESTED

Thane: Police have arrested the husband and the father-in-law of a 24-year-old housewife from Kalyan in Thane district of Maharashtra for abetting her suicide, an official said on Monday. A case was registered against the husband of the woman and her in-laws under section 306 (Abetment of suicide) of the Indian Penal Code after she hanged herself at her house in Kalyan on Sunday, police said.

The accused used to harass the woman over petty things and beat her. Unable to bear the harassment, she hanged herself at their house in Kalyan on Sunday noon, as per the First Information Report.

Nirbhaya fund used for Eknath Shinde MLAs' security? Row in Maharashtra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Allegations that cars bought by Mumbai Police under the Nirbhaya fund for fighting crimes against women were used in the security detail of MLAs and MPs of Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena faction have triggered a massive row in Maharashtra. A state minister today hit out at what he called false allegations. "There is no need for an audit. Ever since this government took over, the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition keeps making false allegations," said Mangal Prabhat Lodha, a BJP leader and state Women and Child Development Minister.

According to an exclusive report in the Indian Express, cars bought by the police in June using the Nirbhaya Fund were used in the Y-plus security given to the MLAs and MPs of team Shinde who staged a coup against Uddhav Thackeray and split the party, enabling a new Eknath Shinde-BJP government. The Nirbhaya Fund has been given to states by the Centre since 2013 for schemes related to women's safety. The opposition has asked for an audit of the Nirbhaya fund on team Shinde's watch. "If they want an audit then we want one too. We want to know what the MVA (Maha Vikas Aghadi) government utilized the Nirbhaya fund in their two-and-a-half years. It is easy to fling allegations," Minister Lodha countered.



The MVA comprising former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena faction, the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) - has slammed the Eknath Shinde-BJP government, questioning whether security for MLAs takes precedence over protecting women.

Press Trust of India quoted a police officer as saying that after the cars were bought in June, they were distributed to all police stations, cyber, traffic, and coastal police units in July. The Mumbai Police bought 220 Boloros, 35 Ertigas, 313 Pulsar motorcycles and 200 Activa two-wheelers using Rs 30

crore it had received under the fund set up under the name of the 23-year-old Delhi gangrape victim whose death in 2012 triggered nationwide outrage and major changes to law. "Of these vehicles, 47 Boloros were requisitioned from several police stations by the Motor Transport Department of the Mumbai Police following an order from the VIP Security section of the state police stating that they are required for use as an escort vehicle for MPs and MLAs of the Shinde faction to provide Y-Plus security cover to them," said the officer. Seventeen cars were returned to police stations after the requirement was over, the officer said, adding, "But 30 Boloros are yet to be returned, which has impacted the police patrolling in the jurisdiction of respective police stations." Slamming the state government, Maharashtra Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant said, "Is the security of ruling MLAs more important than protecting women from abuse? It is appalling and outrageous to see the Nirbhaya Fund, which is meant for the Nirbhayas of Maharashtra being used for the security of MLAs."

Uddhav Thackeray's Sena threatened protests if the cars were not returned "within seven days". "This is nothing but embezzlement of government funds. The funds being provided by the Centre for a purpose are being used for private security," said Sena spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Priyanka Chaturvedi.

2 SCHOOL STUDENTS DEAD AS BUS RETURNING FROM PICNIC OVERTURNS NEAR MUMBAI

Mumbai: At least two school students died and several were injured as the bus carrying them overturned near Mumbai last evening. The students of a coaching class were returning from a picnic when the accident occurred in Khopoli in Raigad district.

Visuals from the accident site and a hospital showed students with injuries on their hands and heads. The bus, carrying 48 students of Class 10 and two teachers of the coaching institute at Mumbai's Chembur, was returning from Lonavala. It overturned on the Old Mumbai-Pune highway around 8 pm while descending the hills. Two students died in the accident while other passengers too suffered injuries. The injured students were rushed to different hospitals in Lonavala, Khopoli, and other nearby areas.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Now, BJP on mission
Karnataka

Buoyed by the success at Gujarat Assembly polls as well as taking a message of caution from the outcome of Himachal Pradesh, the BJP is now focusing on the 2023 Assembly elections in Karnataka. To repeat the feat in Karnataka, the saffron party is planning to bring Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the state three to four times in January and February. Union Minister for Coal, Mining and Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi has announced that PM Modi will inaugurate the prestigious IIT-Dharwad in January first week. IIT-Dharwad is dubbed as the dream project of the north Karnataka region. The BJP leaders are also set to invite PM Modi for a massive farmers' convention which would be held in Belagavi to appeal to the voters of north and Kalyana Karnataka regions. The prime minister will also inaugurate the airshow which will be held in Bengaluru in February. The ruling BJP has been challenged by the Hindu activists in the state. Sri Rama Sena Founder Pramod Muthalik has announced that he will ensure the defeat of BJP in the upcoming Assembly elections. On the other hand, Hindu Mahasabha has also pitched against the ruling party and was saying that the BJP was only doing lip service to Hindutva with its main objective of capturing power. Sri Rama Sena and Hindu Mahasabha have always been loyal and staunch supporters of the BJP in the coastal and north Karnataka region. With these parties pitching in against the BJP, it has become a cause of worry for the saffron party. These parties are capable of causing damage to the party in the coastal region, which is regarded as the bastion of BJP. In this background, BJP leaders have told the high command that PM Modi's presence and speeches are expected to make a turnaround for the party.

AS INDIA ENTERS ELECTIONS MODE, BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES REMAIN IGNORED

Deepika Bhan

With the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections and a few bypolls completed, the latest round of voting may be over for the time being, but the wait for more is not going to be long.

In 2023, 10 states are going to vote. The country will be in election mode throughout the year. The north-eastern states of Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland are likely to go to vote in March; the polls in Karnataka could be in May; and elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram are slated for December 2023.

Jammu and Kashmir, which has been under President's Rule since 2018, is also scheduled to return to electoral democracy, although the likely date is still not clear. Year 2023 will be the semi-final for the ultimate thriller of the 2024 general elections.

The country seems perpetually to be in the election mode. The hyperactivism of various political parties and the crusading 'movements' by their support groups ensure that the real issues of the people never get to be on top of the agenda of our politicians. Rhetoric is on the centrestage and everything gets politicised.

The next two years are not going to be any different. Politics will take over the national agenda. There will be yatras, rallies, a lot of mud-slinging, sting operations, raids and arrests, high drama, allegations and counter-allegations, and everything possible that can weaken the opponent.

The competition is cut-throat and the fight is for that ultimate vote. The election is the only time in five years that makes common people feel all-powerful. The journey to the poll booth is the time when voters feel like they are truly the rulers of the land. Only in this case the 'ruler' becomes insignificant soon after votes are counted and the results are in. It is now the turn of someone else to become the 'king'.

How many times do we, the voters, see our local MP or MLA, or even the area corporator? Are they easy to approach after they occupy their seats of power? Does their victory in any way help change anything for us, the voters?

The answers to the hypothetical questions may equally be hyperbolic, but to be in denial



is like being a slave to the situation. The fact is that the basic problems of the people -- rising prices, growing unemployment, law and order issues, unequal availability of food, water, sanitation, health, education, housing, and so on -- continue to be around.

Religious persecution in 21st-century India is a fact as hundreds of thousands have been uprooted in Kashmir and forced to take refuge in other parts of the country. Farmers in many places are in distress.

The land available for farming is decreasing and lakhs of young people in villages are forced to migrate to cities and towns for jobs. The overall job scenario is not encouraging with lay-offs continuing in companies.

The prices of essential food items such as vegetables, edible oil, milk, fruits and pulses, and even wearables like clothes, seem to be just spiralling out of control. Rs 100 seems to be like Rs 10, and even beggars frown upon coins as alms. But then these are not on the agenda of any political party. These are everyday concerns of common people who fret and fume and curse all, but their despair fails to

register. The recently concluded Gujarat Assembly elections, conducted in two phases on December 1 and 5, witnessed a voter turnout of 64.30 per cent. It was 4 per cent less than the last Assembly elections in the state in 2017, when the turnout was 68 per cent across both phases. For the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the turnout was just a little above 50 per cent.

Some pundits were quick to point out that the low enthusiasm was a show of the voters' disenchantment with political parties. But then the Himachal Pradesh election recorded a 75.6 per cent turnout, which was higher than the 2017 figure of 75.57 per cent, then also an all-time record. The Himachal turnout silenced those who touted the 'low enthusiasm' theory.

In a month from now, the 2023 election season will begin in earnest, and politicians of all hues will be busy raking up issues that affect and overwhelm people's emotions, but fail to make their lives any better.

It doesn't really matter,

because working on emotions is what creates waves. Price rise, unemployment and security issues don't stir the people as much. The voter's psyche has been very well worked upon by strategists and analysts.

Voters do not let their judgement be influenced by day-to-day problems they face; their decision at the polling booth is determined by the emotional quotient worked upon by the political strategists and influencers on the basis of caste, community and religion.

This is how elections have been run in the past and the pattern is not likely to change in the future.

Gujarat decided and so did Himachal Pradesh. And now nine are in the pipeline, to be followed by the big one in 2024. As the festival of elections continues, the wheels of the country continue to move at their own pace, despite all the odds. The excitement for the upcoming elections has already started to build up.

international

Sikh youth shot dead in latest homicide killing in Canada

Toronto | Agencies

The death of 24-year-old Sanraj Singh due to gunshot wounds in Alberta province comes latest in the series of Sikh killings in Canada.

Police said they responded to reports of gunshots in the area of 51 Street and 13 Avenue of Edmonton, capital of Alberta, at approximately 8:40 p.m. on December 3. Upon arrival, they located a male sitting in a vehicle in medical distress.

Singh was given CPR by the police until paramedics arrived and declared him dead.

The Edmonton Medical Examiner on December 7 completed an autopsy on the deceased, and identified him as Sanraj Singh, 24. "The cause of death was gunshot wounds, and the manner of death is homicide," an Edmonton Police statement said.

Homicide investigators have released images of a vehicle of interest that was seen leaving the area at the time of the homicide. They are requesting anyone with information about the vehicle or shooting to contact them.

Canada has been rocked by a spate of Sikh killings in the months starting November. Harpreet Kaur, a 40-year-old Sikh woman died on December 7 after being stabbed multiple times at her home in Surrey, British



Columbia. The incident came just two days after 21-year-old Pawanpreet Kaur, another Canadian-Sikh woman, was shot dead outside a gas station in Mississauga on December 3. Last month, 18-year-old Sikh teen Mehakpreet Sethi was stabbed to death at the parking lot of a high school in Surrey.

The national homicide rate in Canada rose by three per cent in 2021, according to Statistics Canada with police services reporting 788 homicides in the country.

"These incidents have a significant impact, not only on the family and friends of the victim, but the entire community," Sgt Timothy Pierotti of the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team had told the media after Harpreet Kaur's killing.

Afghan forces fire rockets into Pak territory killing six civilians

Quetta | Agencies

At least six civilians were killed while over two dozen sustained injuries when Afghan forces fired rockets into the Pakistani territory from across the Chaman border on Sunday evening, in a major escalation in tensions between the two neighbours since Taliban's return to power in Kabul, local media reported. The rockets landed in Killi Sheikh Lal Muhammad, a senior administration official told The Express Tribune on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. Rocket attacks from the Afghan side left six civilians dead and dozens of others injured.

The military also confirmed the incident, "Afghan Border Forces opened unprovoked and indiscriminate fire of heavy weapons including artillery/mortar onto the civilian population in Chaman, Balochistan causing Shahadat of 6 civilians with another 17 individuals being injured," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.



The ISPR said in a statement that the Pakistani forces gave a measured response to the aggression to avoid any civilian casualties. "Pakistani border troops have given befitting albeit measured response against the unprovoked aggression, but avoided targeting innocent civilians in the area," read the statement, Express Tribune reported.

The media wing of the military further said that Pakistan had approached the Afghan authorities in Kabul to highlight the severity of the

situation and demanded strict action to obviate any such recurrence of the incident in future. Initially the casualties were taken to the Chaman Civil Hospital, where an emergency had been declared. "We have received six bodies," Dr Malik Achakzai, the medical superintendent of the civil hospital said. However, he gave a higher number of the injured, saying 30 people were brought to the hospital for treatment. Residents of Killi Sheikh Lal Muhammad said that the rocket firing started all of a sudden

and that those landed very close to their homes. "We were sitting inside the house when a rocket landed near our house," a local resident, Nizamuddin, said. He added one of his cousins was martyred in the attack. The Pakistan-Afghanistan border Chaman, which was closed for eight days last month and reopened on November 21, had again been closed in the aftermath of the latest aggression, Express Tribune reported. The latest incident came at a time when the relationship between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban government are already tense because of resurgence of terrorist attacks. Pakistan says the interim government was not taking action against the banned Tareekh-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its affiliates, Express Tribune reported.

Since the Taliban's return to power, Pakistan has seen 51% more attacks. On November 28, the TTP ended a ceasefire with Pakistan and resumed attacks. Last week the head of Pakistan diplomatic mission in Kabul narrowly survived an assassination attempt.

POLICE DISCOVER 27 DEAD BODIES OF FOREIGNERS IN ZAMBIAN CAPITAL

Lusaka: Police in Lusaka, the Zambian capital, has discovered 27 dead bodies of suspected foreigners dumped by unknown people, police said.

The bodies of suspected Ethiopians were discovered in the early hours of Sunday in the Ngwewere area on the outskirts of the Zambian capital after the police were alerted by members of the public.

Danny Mwale, the Deputy Police Public Relations Officer, said in a statement that police have since launched an investigation into the matter while all the 27 bodies have been deposited in the mortuary at the University Teaching Hospital, Xinhua news agency reported. The police spokesperson added that apart from the 27 dead bodies, one surviving foreigner was found gasping for life and is currently receiving medical attention at the hospital. The statement did not provide further details regarding the incident.

Ukrainian Prez holds talks with French, Turkish leaders

Kiev | Agencies

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said that he had separate conversations with French President Emmanuel Macron and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Zelensky tweeted on Sunday that he discussed with Macron "the implementation of our ten-step peace formula, cooperation on defense and energy stability" of Ukraine, Xinhua news agency reported. In the conversation with Erdogan over the phone, Zelensky thanked Turkey for "sheltering Ukrainian children and providing hundreds of generators for our cities". Zelensky and Erdogan also discussed the "Grain for Ukraine" programme and the possible expansion of the Black Sea Grain export deal. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told his



Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky that Turkey continued to work towards meeting the humanitarian needs of the Ukrainian people in the "difficult winter months". "The grain corridor could be expanded to include different food products and other commodities," said Erdogan. He also expressed hope for "approaching a solution" to the issue of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine. Turkey has been evaluating the contributions that can be made for the implementation of the peace plan announced by Zelensky at the G20 Summit, the Turkish President told his Ukrainian counterpart. Turkish first lady Emine Erdogan was closely involved with the group of 1,033 people consisting of Ukrainian orphan children and their companions hosted in the Turkish capital Ankara, he added.

5 killed in flats explosion on Britain's island of Jersey

London | Agencies

Police has confirmed that five people were killed following an explosion and fire at a block of flats on the British Channel island of Jersey on Saturday.

"The number of Islanders confirmed to have been killed in the blast is now 5. There are a number of residents, we're working on the assumption of 4, that are unaccounted for," the States of Jersey Police tweeted on Sunday.

The police said in a tweet hours earlier that the search and rescue operation has been moved to "a recovery operation," hinting that there won't be any more survivors, Xinhua news agency reported.

A blast levelled a three-story block of flats located near the harbour in the island's capital St Helier in the early hours of Saturday morning.



There hasn't been an official cause for the blast, but Robin Smith, Chief Officer of Jersey police, said a gas leak "seems likely".

Paul Brown, head of Jersey's Fire and Rescue Service, told a press conference on Sunday that the fire service had been called to the building on Friday evening and carried out investigations after residents reported smelling gas. The blast took place hours later.



CONGRESS LEADER'S 'BE READY TO KILL PM MODI' REMARK STIRS ROW, FIR FILED

Senior Congress leader and former minister in Madhya Pradesh, Raja Pateria, has triggered a massive controversy with his statement "be ready to kill PM Modi if you want to save the constitution".

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Pateria later tried to clarify his statement, claiming that by "killing" he meant "to defeat". However, the state BJP unit launched a scathing attack on the Congress, saying that "this was the real face of the Congress". An FIR has been registered against Pateria, state home minister Narottam Mishra told the media later Monday. "Such statements show that today's Congress is not Mahatma Gandhi's Congress. It's the Congress of Italy that is afflicted with a Mussolini mindset," Mishra said. Along with several party leaders, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the comments exposed the Congress's real sentiment. "PM Modi lives in the hearts of the people, he is the centre of the admiration and faith of the entire country. Congress people can't face the PM in the electoral battle, and one Congress leader talks about his murder. This is the height of jealousy. This is excess hatred. Congress's real sentiments have been revealed, but such things won't be tolerated," Chouhan added.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan-led government has ordered a police case against Pateria. The BJP leaders called it an "unpardonable crime". In the viral remarks, Pateria addresses what appears to be a gathering of party workers, wherein he tells them: "Modi will end elections,

Modi will divide India on the basis of religion, caste, language; the lives of Dalits, tribals, and minorities are in danger. If the constitution is to be saved, then be ready to kill Modi." Later in the same video, the Congress leader claims the word "murder" in his speech means defeat.

He said he follows Mahatma Gandhi's ideology of non-violence, and that he meant it was necessary to defeat PM Modi electorally to protect minorities. The video has emerged from Pawai town in Madhya Pradesh's Panna district, sources told reporter.

Woman cop posed as college student for 3 months to crack ragging case

Team Absolute | Bhopal

She would be in college daily, bag on shoulder, and would be seen chatting with friends, spending time in the canteen, "bunking" class, like any student. Only, she wasn't. She was an undercover cop gathering evidence on ragging on campus. Shalini Chouhan, a 24-year-old constable with Madhya Pradesh police, played a key role in the recent crackdown against ragging at the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College in Indore. Over three months, she identified 11 senior students allegedly involved in the brutal ragging of first-year students. The seniors have been suspended from the college and the hostel for three months. Qazi said that they had received anonymous complaints from students about ragging. The complaints alleged that first-year students were made to perform vulgar acts, such as pretending to have sex with pillows. But the complainants did not come forward or name the accused, possibly fearing harassment, the officer said. "We went to check on the campus, but the students



were so scared that they did not come forward once they saw us in uniform. We tried to track down the contact numbers of the complainants, but the helpline's policy did not allow that," added the officer. "So we went back to good old ground-level policing. Shalini and other constables were asked to spend time on and around the campus in plain clothes, chat with students at the canteen and tea stalls nearby. As they started speaking to junior students, they came to know of the horrifying experience they were going through. This is how we got witnesses and cracked the case," said Qazi. The policeman told NDTV that this was an

"entirely new experience" for her. "I would go to college everyday disguised as a student. I spoke to students at the canteen. I would talk about myself, and gradually they started opening up and confiding in me," she said. Asked if the students ever doubted her, she said, "Sometimes they would ask questions, but I would evade them and change the topic. The canteen would be crowded, and they did not give much thought," she said. She said she would carry a bag with books and dress up like a college student during her undercover visits to the campus. "I would ensure that I looked like a student," she said.

Those who commit heinous crimes have no right to live in a civilized society: CM

Life imprisonment for the accused and 20 years for the care-taker in the rape of innocent girl child

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has welcomed the decision of the court awarding life imprisonment to the accused driver and 20 years imprisonment to the aaya (care-taker) in the case of rape of an innocent girl child in a private school bus in Bhopal on September 8. The CM has congratulated the Bhopal Police and the administration for taking prompt action in this matter and presenting the facts and evidence before the court. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the persons who commit such heinous crimes have no right to live in a civilized society. The CM said that there is no place for such criminals



on the soil of Madhya Pradesh. Our government is determined to give harshest punishment to such monsters. The Chief Minister has also thanked all those people including the police and administration, who contributed and participated in ensuring justice to the innocent.

Stunts on moving vehicle, Accused booked after video goes viral

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A video of a known criminal performing stunts on his car along with his gang on the roads of Bhopal has gone viral on social media. Zubair Maulana can be seen standing on top of his moving jeep and dancing while his gang cheers him on. The video was captured on Friday night after the gang was returning home after celebrating another goon, Sunny Malik's birthday in Gandhinagar. The gang then circulated the video on social media. The 1-minute long video, which was shot by Maulana's close aide from a car, was shared several times on social media. In the clip, the gang is seen driving multiple cars next to each other as loud music plays in the background. Maulana, stands on top of his jeep with his arms stretched out while several others standing inside the vehicle cheer and dance. A car can be seen driving backwards in front of his jeep. The goon recording the video is also heard repeatedly telling the men to dance more. At one point, one of the men who is hanging from the door of the jeep also tries to put his leg on the car driving next to him.



Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra has responded to the video. "The clip is being inspected and a case will be filed soon. This is Madhya Pradesh. Nobody can do this and spread terror here. Zubair should know this," he said, referencing the song, "Duniya Di Tha Tha

Tha" being played by the gang. According to the police, there are 65 cases registered against Zubair Maulana, out of which 44 cases concern serious offences. Maulana has in the past attacked police officials and escaped arrest several times.

Property dealer kicks Doctor, Teacher couple in Indore road rage

Team Absolute | Bhopal

An elderly couple was thrashed by a property dealer in a road rage incident in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. A CCTV footage of the incident shows the property dealer, Dharmendra Kushwaha, hitting the man and his kicking his wife to the ground. The man is a paediatrician and his wife a teacher. The police said their cars had scraped by while passing. It was not a major accident in any way, they said. The CCTV footage of the incident that happened a week ago has been shared widely on social media now. It shows the doctor talking the property dealer, who starts throwing punches. The doctor's wife then



comes out of the car to stop the assault, but she too is kicked in the stomach. She is seen falling on the road on her back. The couple later told the police no one came to help them and people just passed by. "The couple was assaulted after a minor collision

between the car after which the police registered a case against the broker, Dharmendra Kushwaha, on the basis of the video footage," Indore police officer Sampat Upadhyay said. "A case has been filed. Action will be taken," he said. The accused is on the run and the police are looking for him.

DRIVER FLEES WITH 4,000 EGGS MEANT FOR AIR FORCE IN GWALIOR

Gwalior: The driver of an auto rickshaw transporting 4,000 eggs to the Indian Air Force mess in Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh has allegedly fled with the consignment, a police official said on Monday. The vehicle went missing soon after it left for the IAF mess, following which the supplier filed a complaint with Morar police station on Sunday evening, said Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Rajesh Dandotiya. "The supplier has said he was loading vegetables in another vehicle when the auto rickshaw driver fled with the eggs. A theft case has been registered and efforts are on to nab the accused," he said.

Chief Minister Chouhan planted saplings of Neem, Kachnar and Ashoka

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Neem, Kachnar and Ashoka in the Smart City Garden. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Niti Prashant Khare of Bhopal's Adverse Foundation, Kachnar and Sidhi's social worker Poonam Soni planted neem saplings on their birthdays. Foundation's Adarsh Verma, Jeevan Lal Sharma and Sanidhya Jain also planted saplings. The foundation conducts activities to provide education facilities to needy children and career guidance to the youth. Amit Soni, Yuvraj



Soni, Aditya Raj Soni and Pawan Soni, who came from Sidhi, also participated in the plantation.

Bharatiya Bhasha Diwas Celebrated in Sant Hirdaram Girls College

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On 12th December, 2022, Monday, Language Department of Sant Hirdaram Girls College, Bhopal celebrated Bharatiya Bhasha Diwas to mark the Jayanti of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati. The objective behind organizing this day was to strengthen language harmony and to develop an environment conducive to learning more and more Indian languages. Dr Dalima Parwani, Principal congratulated on Bharatiya Bhasha Diwas and shared four mantras of life, viz., energy, personality, emotions and vocabulary. She urged the students to learn more and more languages and insisted them to thorough themselves with one language so that they can automatically learn the second language. She further added that will power is a vital asset which is necessary as it gives us the strength to overcome fears. The program commenced with the speech of Pragya Gupta who highlighted on the life and works of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati. Then an English play was performed by the

members of Literary Committee which was based on Superhero. Priyanshi Makhija delivered a poem written by Mahakavi Bharati. An Essay writing competition was also the part of the celebration. The students have written the essay on the topic My Language, My Signature. Another activity Read-a-thon was also organized. The students were provided the book on Draupadi Murmu and Chacha Chaudhary where the task was to read as much pages and then write the input. The concluding remarks were shared by Dr Gunjan Shukla, Vice Principal where she said that language is a way to sustain in a multi-cultural country and it is important to have command on language. The program was coordinated by Dr Neha Gupta, Head, Department of Language and comperring and vote of thanks of thanks was proposed by one of the members of Literary Committee, Shema Mehfooz.



Convergence-Good Governance Samagam for positive social impacts on 13th December

Chief Minister Chouhan will interact with the participants

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Convergence for positive social impacts - Good Governance Samagam will be held at Rabindra Bhawan on December 13, in which 1323 participants from various organizations will participate. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will interact with the participants at 4 pm. In the Samagam, discussions will be held on ensuring participation with the stakeholders for the development of the state and identification and assessment of policy challenges at the district level. The Samagam will

promote knowledge sharing, research and development partnerships with various educational institutions, think tank foundations etc. For effective solutions to grassroots challenges based on the experiences of young professionals working in the state. The conference is being organized by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis. Vice President of the Institute Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi will inaugurate the Samagam at 10 am. From 10:30 am to 11:30 am, ground level experiences will be shared by fellows of CM Fellow,

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and Gandhi Fellowship. After this M.D. MPSEDC Abhijit Agarwal will address. From 12 to 12:30 pm, the ACEO of the institute Mr. Lokesh Sharma will hold a dialogue on 'CM Youth Internship Program-Chief Minister Jan Seva Mitra'. From 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm, fellows of NSS, Jan Abhiyan Parishad and other NGOs will share their ground level experiences. Prof. on 'Social Development through Convergence' at the grassroots level from 2:15 to 3 pm. Sachin Chaturvedi, Vice President, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy

Analysis, Dr. Jitendra Jamdar, Vice President, Madhya Pradesh Public Campaign Council, Shailendra Sharma, Chairman Madhya Pradesh Skill Development and Employment Generation Board and Sangeeta Mangain CTM Piramal Foundation will discuss. The ACEO of the institute Lokesh Sharma will operate. Shirish Joshi CBO ONDC will address on 'Participatory Governance and Collaborative Digital Platform for Future Digital Economy' from 3:30 to 4 pm. The Chief Minister will interact with the participants in the concluding session.



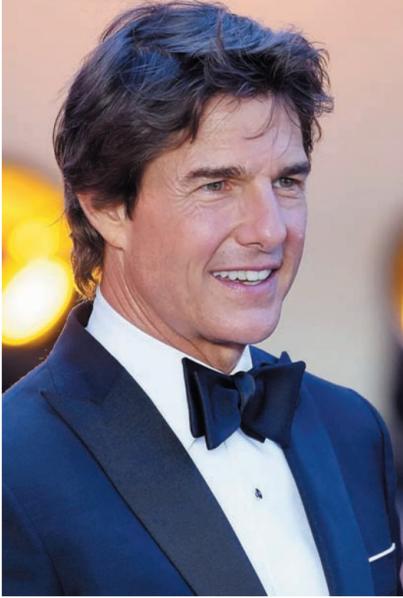
Tom Cruise swore at sobbing Emily Blunt on a movie set

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Emily Blunt has claimed her co-star Tom Cruise swore at while she was crying on the set of the action film. The actress was tearing up due to the exhaustion that came with wearing a heavy robotic costume.

She even injured her ribs due to the design of the outfit, reports. Now, Emily claimed that Tom was stumped on what to do as she became emotional, so he opted to swear at her for some harsh motivation. "We had to wear these enormous suits, which I think would've been great if we had CG'd them but we wanted to do it in a tactile way," she said. "When you hear the word tactile you think that sounds nice and cosy; there was nothing cosy about these suits. It was like 85lb (38 kg), it was so heavy." She mentioned during the course of 'Smartless' podcast, "The first time I put it on I started to cry and (Tom) didn't know what to do. He just stared at me and was like 'I know, I know', I was like 'Tom I'm not sure how I'm going to get through this shoot' and just started to cry." She told Tom that she was feeling "panicky" about shooting in the costumes. Emily added: "He just stared at me for a long time, not knowing what to do, and he goes 'come on, stop being such a p***y, OK?'"

Thankfully, the act of tough love worked for her and she ended up laughing it off and shooting the scene. Emily also had to have a male stunt double fill in for some scenes as the outfit was extremely heavy. While filming, she got injured and hurt both her ribs and collarbones. Eight years on, Emily said they are "still dodgy".



Kit Harington teases Jon Snow spinoff series

Los Angeles | Agencies

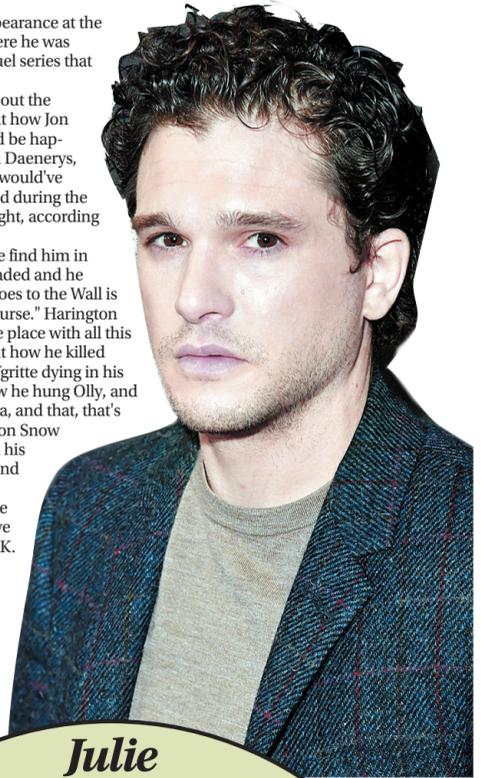
Hollywood star Kit Harington made an appearance at the 'Game of Thrones' convention in LA, where he was inevitably asked about the Jon Snow sequel series that was announced earlier this year.

Although Harington couldn't say much about the development of the show, he did talk about how Jon Snow ended in the series and what could be happening to him after his character killed Daenerys, reports. "I think if you asked him, he would've felt he got off lightly," Harington said during the panel at the convention Sunday night, according to the reports.

"At the end of the show when we find him in that cell, he's preparing to be beheaded and he wants to be. He's done. The fact he goes to the Wall is the greatest gift and also the greatest curse." Harington continued, "He's gotta go back up to the place with all this history and live out his life thinking about how he killed Dany, and live out his life thinking about Ygritte dying in his arms, and live out his life thinking about how he hung Olly, and live out his life thinking about all of this trauma, and that, that's interesting." Without directly talking about the Jon Snow spinoff, Harington mentioned what state of mind his character was in at the end of Game of Thrones and indirectly teased the spinoff series.

"So I think where we leave him at the end of the show, there's always this feeling of like... I think we wanted some kind of little smile that things are OK. He's not OK," he added.

Earlier this year, George R.R. Martin revealed that it was Harington that came up with the idea of continuing Snow's storyline in a new series. "Yes, it was Kit Harington (sic) who brought the idea to us," Martin wrote in his blog back in June of this year. "I cannot tell you the names of the writers/showrunners, since that has not been cleared for release yet... but Kit brought them in too, his own team, and they are terrific."



Julie Andrews said that she might not participate in the new film

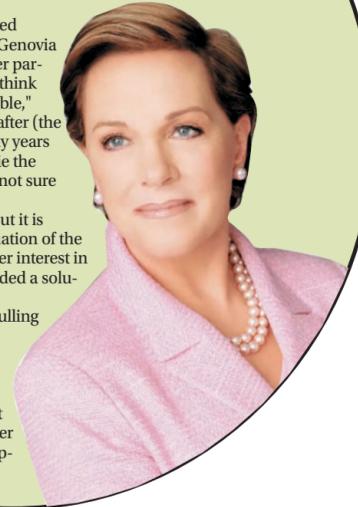
Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Julie Andrews, who played Clarisse Renaldi, the Queen regent of Genovia in 'The Princess Diaries 3', said that her participation in the new film might not happen. "I think we know that it's probably not going to be possible," Andrews said. "It was talked about very shortly after (the second sequel) came out, but it's now how many years since then? And I am that much older and Annie the princess, or queen, is so much older. And I am not sure where it would float or run," reports.

Details of the third film are not yet known but it is understood that the story would be a continuation of the past. Earlier this year Hathaway expressed her interest in making another Princess Diaries and provided a solution to having Andrews return as well.

"I would more than entertain it, I'm pulling for it," she said.

"If there's any way to get Julie Andrews involved, I think we would make it work. We would go to where she was and put a green screen behind her and just make it happen."



Britney Spears wants to be left alone and sob

Los Angeles | Agencies

Britney Spears wants to be left alone and sob. The singer has slammed an unnamed fast food employee as she took to Instagram on Saturday following a visit to a franchise of the burger joint chain, Jack in the Box.

The "Toxic" singer took issue with a drive-thru attendant as they offered her pity after noticing she'd been "crying" in her car just seconds before she pulled up to the window, reports. Britney, was left irritated by their reassurance that everything was "gonna be okay" despite them having no knowledge of her situation. As the fast food worker isn't a member of Britney's family, she suggested that he was being invasive, saying: "He doesn't KNOW ME and I sure as hell didn't know his a**." Britney admitted that it was her first time going to the fast food restaurant and her excitement at trying something new. She said: "Well I forgot to eat yesterday ... I saw Jack in The Box ... I've never ate there a day in my f***ing life ... I was like HOLY S*** and when I saw that big sign of pictures of the food. Normally I hate looking at food but it's TIMING !!! Holy hog heavens I got a cookies and cream milkshake with a double cheeseburger."

It seemed to be all going well until Britney confessed that she had been crying and thought it had gone unnoticed. She said: "Well ... I had been crying in the car ... but nobody could tell, only me ... my face still looked normal. I was fine, but then there he was this big man at the f***ing window ... he gave me PITY !!! IT'S GONNA BE OK !!! ... WTF DID HE JUST SAY ??? He doesn't KNOW ME and I sure as hell didn't know his a** ... so why did he say that ??? It's all gonna be ok !!! I was offended. F*** you stupid man at Jack in The Box. You don't know me ... you're not my blood so go f*** yourself."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood superstar Susan Sarandon casually confirmed her sexuality during her appearance on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon this week.

The actress and gay icon casually confirmed her own bisexuality when making a joke about cats and dogs earlier this week on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon, reports.

During the chat, Fallon pointed out that the superstar had brought her dogs out on a previous appearance she had made on the show. Susan then informed the host that unfortunately her dogs had died a year before.

She said: "My little creatures all passed away. I can't talk about it because I still get upset. It was about a year ago. I was feeling sad... and I said, I can't get another dog. I just can't, you know? And (my son) said, 'Well, then get cats.' And I'm bi, soa"

Fallon took the chance to probe further, asking the star: "So you mean you like dogs and cats?"

The actress made a tongue in cheek comment saying: "I'm fluid, I'm very fluid where animals are concerned."

SUSAN SARANDON CONFIRMS HER GENDER AS BISEXUAL

True to her word, Susan now owns a cat called Ida and she has described the animal as a 'b***h' as well as 'the saddest looking cat ever'.

In an effort to help cheer up her cat, Susan went on to get two more - although she insists that this didn't work in upping her cat's spirits.

Fallon took the chance to joke that with her growing family of cats Susan had become a "cat lady".

This isn't the first time Susan has mentioned her sexuality isn't heterosexual, with past comments she's made in the public eye teasing her interest in men and women.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Florence Pugh



INDIAN U18 GIRLS TEAM WINS SILVER AT ASIA RUGBY SEVENS

Kathmandu| India's U-18 girls' team won the silver medal after losing to UAE 26-5 in the final at the recently concluded Asia Rugby Sevens held here.

UAE is the only team to have beaten India as they registered comprehensive victories against Thailand, Nepal and Malaysia in the previous rounds. This equals their record performance of winning the silver medal at the previous edition held in 2021.

"It's been a gratifying and rewarding 12 months for Rugby India. We now have gained silver in the u18s at the end of 2021, silver in the u20 this in Uzbekistan, silver in the women's this year in Jakarta and now with this silver it makes us 4 silvers in a row," said Rahul Bose, presi-



dent, Rugby India.

The boys' team finished fourth in their first ever outing at a tournament of this stature. India qualified by a whisker for the semifinals where they were outplayed by UAE 36-0 to pit them

against Malaysia for the bronze medal match. The bronze medal match was won by Malaysia with a score of 36-5 to nudge India out of the podium but puts them on the map as strong contenders on the Asia level.

Guinness World record holder Sufiya Sufi to attempt 'The Fastest Run Across Qatar'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ultra-distance runner Sufiya Sufi is synonymous with taking challenges that go beyond human limits. After completing the Tribute Run this year where she paid tribute to the Indian Army with her Siachen to Kargil expedition, Sufiya is now set for her next and first international expedition, 'Run Across Qatar' -- south to north.

With the 'Run Across Qatar' challenge, the Under Armour athlete will attempt to clock the Fastest Known Time to run across the nation as well as raise awareness towards leading a healthy lifestyle.

The 2-day expedition will begin at Abu Samra on January 7, 2023, followed by Doha and conclude at Al Ruwais, on January 8, 2023. Covering 210+ kms on the expedition, Sufiya will pass through the difficulties of running in a completely new environment, battling through dry climatic conditions, aiming to



break the previous world record by covering the distance in under 30 hours.

Commenting on her upcoming run, Sufiya Sufi 'Runner' said, "To circumnavigate the world on foot is my dream expedition and I am preparing myself to accomplish that. I continue to work towards pushing my endurance limits and encouraging more people to take up running. Through my upcoming expedition 'The Run Across Qatar' I am looking forward to entering the record books for the 4th time as well as raising awareness on leading a healthy lifestyle. With a great team of coaches and Under Armour alongside me, I'm confident of powering through this challenge in record time."

In 2018, Sufiya took up running to break away from her aviation job, to relax and de-stress. Since then, she has entered the Guinness Book of Records three times and has set several benchmarks for ultrarunning in India.

ENG VS PAK TEST SERIES

BEN STOKES ACCEPTS LUCK FACTOR PLAYING ITS PART IN WIN



After the match ended, England captain Ben Stokes admitted there was a luck factor in day fo'r's play which played its part in their running toward victory.

"Take a look at the conditions, it was a tricky wicket for slower bowling. We were fortunate that with the cracks opening up our seamers became effective."

"Jimmy (James Anderson), Robbo (Ollie Robinson) and Woody (Mark Wood) put in a seriously good effort, so hats off to the lads. The way they bowled throughout the game, they looked a huge threat."

"When it came down to the wire, I had three guys to turn to. They bowled short spells and always seemed to pick up a wicket when needed," said Stokes at the post-match presentation ceremony.

"Different conditions and a different game. Things happened quickly this week compared to last week. Going down to the wire again, a good game to be a part of. It was pleasing the way we stuck at the task of going out and putting them under pressure even if conditions aren't in our favour," added Stokes.

England earn historic victory over Pakistan

Multan | Agencies

England earned a historic Test series victory in Pakistan after tearaway pacer Mark Wood took the tourists to a tense 26-run win in the second Test here on Monday.

Resuming from 198/4 on day four, Pakistan appeared on course to chase down a tricky 355 as Saud Shakeel (94) and Mohammad Nawaz (45) took the hosts to 290/5 through their 80-run partnership for the sixth wicket, only for Wood to swing the momentum back in England's favour by taking out both set batters in leg-side strangles just before lunch.

From there onwards, the Pakistan batting order suffered a collapse despite some resistance from Agha Salman (20 not out) and debutant Abrar Ahmed (17). Eventually, Pakistan were all out for 328 in 102.1 overs, giving England a Test series victory in Pakistan since the 2000/01 tour, after having registered a thrilling last-session in the first Test at Rawalpindi on their return to the country after 17 years.

The close loss at Multan means Pakistan suffered their second successive series



defeat at home, after losing 1-0 to Australia in a three-match series in March this year. Wood finished with figures of 4/65 in 21 overs with Ollie Robinson (2/23) and James Anderson (2/44) being impressive in another England victory.

From there, the result was a foregone conclusion as England now aim for a rare series sweep in Pakistan when the third and final Test at Karachi takes place from December 17-21.

Brief Scores: England 281 and 275 beat Pakistan 202 and 328 all out in 102.1 overs (Saud Shakeel 94, Imam-ul-Haq 60, Mark Wood 4/65) by 26 runs.

IND VS AUS WOMEN'S T20

Had to try hit the boundary, rather than hitting a six: Mandhana

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After 40 overs of second women's T20 between India and Australia, both teams had finished on 187 each.

But in the post-match press conference, she admitted to being blank over approaching the Super Over, which India were featuring in for the first time in T20s and that her mind opened up when young Richa Ghosh smacked the first ball of Super Over to long-on for six off debutant Heather Graham.

"I have played few Super Overs when I was there in Maharashtra and in little bit of Big Bash, where I had played a few Super Overs. I was pretty blank. I did not think that I would have to do this. When Richa (Ghosh) hit that first six, I was excited and I am not a very out-there person, who people can understand what is going on in my head, but that six was so massive that I was like, 'wow!'"

"After she got out, me and Harman (captain Harmanpreet



Kaur) spoke about it and we knew that we could not afford to lose wickets. So, we just had to try and hit the boundary, rather than hitting a six. Because, this is a different rule as compared to the Big Bash, where all ten could bat."

"But here it was different. If we would have got out, our innings would have ended there. So, we had

to be a bit smart and try and hit boundaries. I had actually aimed at a boundary but it went for a six. I was just really, really blank."

With the five-match series levelled at 1-1, Smriti insisted the team is trying to adapt themselves in getting close matches in their favour, something she feels will be a huge confidence booster.

IND vs BAN Test Series: K.L Rahul promises "aggressive cricket" from India

Chattogram | Agencies

From Wednesday, India will be back in red-ball cricket when they face Bangladesh in the first of two Tests at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in the hope to grab much-needed ICC World Test Championship points and boost their chances of reaching the final in June next year.

The two Tests between India and Bangladesh are a part of the ICC World Test Championship cycle, where India are currently placed fourth with 52.08 percentage points. With them needing to win Tests against Bangladesh and Australia, stand-in captain K.L Rahul has promised that India will play aggressive cricket in the upcoming series against the Shakib Al Hasan-led side. "There is a World Test championship (final) qualification so we will also have to be aggressive as well. We know where we stand and what we need to do to qualify for the final. Each day, each session we will have to assess what is required for the team in that particular moment and try to give our best and enjoy each day of Test cricket." "We won't go in with any set mindset. There is a history of a certain venue. You look at the



numbers and you take certain pointers from that. At least for us we will go there and try to be aggressive and brave, try and get a result."

"The game is played over five days so it is important to break it down into smaller targets and assess how the game goes. In every session, the demands would be different but one thing is sure that you are going to see a lot of aggressive cricket from our side," said Rahul in a pre-series press conference.

FIFA WORLD CUP

WC dream was beautiful while it lasted: Ronaldo on Portugal's exit

Doha (Qatar) | Agencies

Cristiano Ronaldo has appeared to acknowledge that his dream of winning the World Cup with Portugal is over after the team's elimination from football's showpiece tournament in Qatar.

Portugal was denied a berth in the semifinals after they suffered a 1-0 quarterfinal loss to Morocco in Doha on Saturday. "Winning a World Cup for Portugal was the biggest and most ambitious dream of my career," Ronaldo said in an Instagram post on Sunday. "Fortunately, I won many titles of international dimension, including for Portugal, but putting the name of our country on the highest level in the world was my biggest dream." The defeat to Morocco was almost certainly the Ronaldo's last appearance in football's showpiece tournament. The former Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus star cut a distraught figure as he walked off the pitch in tears immediately



after the final whistle. "I fought for it. I fought hard for this dream," said Ronaldo, who is

currently without a club after leaving Manchester United by mutual consent in November. "I've scored in five World Cups over 16 years, always alongside great players and supported by millions of Portuguese people, I gave my all. I left everything on the pitch. I never turned my back on the fight and I never gave up on that dream."

"Unfortunately, yesterday the dream ended. I just want everyone to know that much has been said, much has been written, much has been speculated, but my dedication to Portugal has not changed for an instant. I was always one more person fighting for everyone's goal and I would never turn my back on my teammates and my country."

"For now, there's not much more to say. Thank you, Portugal. Thank you, Qatar. The dream was beautiful while it lasted...Now, I hope that time can offer the best advice and allow everyone to draw their own conclusions."

U-16 Women's Hockey League: Sports Authority of India 'A' to meet Pritam Siwach foundation in final

Team Absolute | Lucknow

Sports Authority of India 'A' and Pritam Siwach Sports Promotion Foundation recorded victories in their respective semifinal matches on Monday and will meet on Wednesday for the title in the Khelo India U-16 Women's Hockey League 2022 (Final Phase).

In the first semifinal of the day, Kajal scored four goals as Sports Authority of India 'A' defeated Sports Authority of India 'B' 7-0. Kajal found the mark in the 7th, 9th, 10th and 28th minutes of the match. Sonali Ekka (33', 41') and Lalbiakiami (54') also scored for their team.

In the second semifinal, Pritam Siwach Sports Promotion Foundation defeated Har Hockey Academy in a nail-biter. Har Hockey Academy captain Pooja



(32') slotted in a penalty corner early in the second half but Pritam Siwach Sports Promotion Foundation's Ravina (51') scored a

late goal to force a penalty shoot-out. Pritam Siwach Sports Promotion Foundation won the shoot-out 3-1 with Manjinder, Khushi, and Sakshi scoring for them while only Pooja from Har Hockey Academy converted her penalty.

Meanwhile, Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High-Performance Centre and Ghumanhera Riser's Academy also picked up wins to set up a 5th-place tie between them.

In a close encounter, Ghumanhera Riser's Academy recorded a narrow 1-0 victory over Salute Hockey Academy. Durga (7') scored an early goal to put her team on the scoresheet and they held on to this slender lead till the end of the match to set up their 5th-place match against Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High-Performance Centre.

HAZLEWOOD TO MISS AS AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCE 14-PLAYER SQUAD FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Brisbane | Agencies

Australia will be without a key bowler for the first Test against South Africa as selectors revealed a 14-player squad for the opening game of the series against the Proteas.

Veteran pacer Josh Hazlewood is still battling a side strain and has been ruled out of the clash that begins on Saturday at The Gabba, although selectors are hopeful that skipper Pat Cummins will shake off his quad concern and be passed fit.

Hazlewood and Cummins missed Australia's comprehensive 419-run victory over the West Indies in Adelaide, with fellow pacers Scott Boland and Michael Neser performing well in their absence.

While Hazlewood is still struggling to shake his side injury, Cummins is close to returning according to chief selector George Bailey.

The three-match series against South Africa looms as a crucial one for both teams as they chase a place at next year's ICC World Test Championship final at The Oval. Australia squad for first Test v South Africa:



Pat Cummins (c), Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Marcus Harris, Travis Head, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Lance Morris, Michael Neser, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, David Warner.



I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PASSIONATE ABOUT ACTING: KAVERI PRIYAM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Kaveri Priyam, who gained a lot of appreciation for playing a negative character in the show 'Yeh Rishtey Hain Pyaar Ke', has now bagged the lead role in the show 'Dil Diyan Gallaan'. She talked about not getting typecast and how tough it was for her to get a break in the industry.

She said: "I got my recognition and a breakthrough in my career through a character which was a grey shaded character. But over a period of time I learned that actors easily get typecast on TV than on any other platforms. I didn't let this thought linger in my mind, rather I believed in the fact that if you can show the range in you as an actor, things will work out for you some day."

"I believe if someone can play a grey shaded character well, then positive roles are much easier. But the whole point is about the way you want to be projected," she added. She recalled how tough it was for her to get her first project: "I would say, everything is a part of the journey. If you are passionate about your career and keep your eye on the aim, then the journey becomes a lot easier. I have always been passionate about acting and when I got the opportunity I started giving auditions."

She continued to say about her initial years of struggle, saying: "I gave a number of auditions, even got rejected in many, but I considered that as a process of learning and struggle. Of course it took me some time to get my big project in 2018; this journey was difficult but enriching at the same time." When asked, if she was always passionate about acting, the actress said: "Absolutely, acting was always there on my mind. I was a very creative child, but at the same time I came from an academically affluent family. My parents did have certain academic expectations from me, and I did well at it too."



VIKRANT MASSEY WRAPS UP HIS UPCOMING FILM'S SHOOTING

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker-producer Vidhu Vinod Chopra's next directorial '12th Fail' wrapped up its shooting on Monday. The film, headlined by Vikrant Massey, is the first film to be shot in Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar, the hub of Hindi medium UPSC preparations.

The film is inspired by real-life events and tells the story of aspiring IAS and IPS students. The film, which has been shot in Chambal, Agra, Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar, Mussoorie, and Mumbai, started rolling cameras in October in various real locations and came back to Mumbai after 2 months. Talking about the film, Vikrant Massey said, "My experience on this film was phenomenal, probably the best experience I ever had. It is one of the most special stories that I am a part of and also one of the most challenging parts that I had to play. Working with Vidhu Vinod Chopra was literally coming-of-age for me. One thing that I want to say is that the entire journey of the character was very personal for me, in the last 2 months of filming I have lived 6 to 8 months of my life."

The decision to shoot at real life locations was a conscious decision taken by Vidhu in order to do justice to the film and its script.



Karanvir Sharma says his mother is his 'lady luck'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Rabb Se Hai Dua' actor Karanvir Sharma is seen as Haider in the show, who is very close to his mother and the actor shared that in real life too he is very close to his mother and she is his 'lady luck'.

He said: "Just like my character in the show, I am really close to my mother in real life as well. She is my go-to person for everything, including personal and professional advice. My mother has been my pillar of strength since the beginning of my career. She has been there for me in all my ups and downs of life, be it professional or personal, hence the credit for who and where I am today, goes to my mother."

"People say that lady luck really works like a miracle in every man's life, and I believe for me, it will always be my mother above everyone else," he adds.

While talking about his mother, he added that one woman he would like to date is his mother.

"So, the woman I would like to take on a date is my mother. She is one of the reasons I said a 'Yes' to the show, 'Rabb Se Hai Dua', and it truly makes me happy to see how proud she is of me and everything that I have achieved this far," he added.



Shriya Pilgaonkar glams up to play a sex worker in a series

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shriya Pilgaonkar, who had two OTT releases this year, 'Guilty Minds' and 'The Broken News', is gearing up for another, 'Taaza Khabar' in which she will be essaying the role of a sex worker called 'Madhu'. Talking about her character, Shriya said, "I am thrilled to be a part of Taaza Khabar where I got to showcase a completely different look that I haven't donned before and also in terms of building a character, this was a new experience for me, which was so much fun." She mentioned that the new show will present a different side of her as an actress.

She added, "Since I have recently been seen as a lawyer in Guilty Minds and a news reporter in The Broken News, I'm excited to be seen as a sex worker in this comedy-drama genre with Bhuvan Bam. It was fun to experiment with my look and performance. My character Madhu, is sassy and has a whole lot of spunk. Can't wait to share her with you!" Besides 'Taaza Khabar', Shriya is also currently shooting for her two upcoming films, details of which are under wraps.



I SALUTE ALL THESE MOTHERS WHO ARE SUPERWOMEN: ADITI DEV SHARMA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Gangaa' actress Aditi Dev Sharma is currently seen playing the role of a mother Katha juggling between multiple jobs for the treatment of her son, Aarav suffering from blood cancer in 'Katha Ankahee'. The actress is herself a mother to a 3-year-old child and thus she says that she relates to her character in the show.

Aditi shares: "When I was narrated the story, I felt Katha's pain deep down in my heart. Being a mother myself, I could relate with Katha's frantic need for money to save her child. For a mother, her child is the most precious and they can do anything for them. Such is the case with Katha who can go above and beyond to ensure her child's well-being. I try to bring alive the similar bond with my reel son Aarav to show a mother's endless love and care. I also understand what it takes to raise a child." The 'Silsila Badalte Rishton Ka' actress adds further that it is never easy to be a single mother and taking complete care and responsibility of a child without any help.

"It is not easy being a single mother who works and takes care of her child, especially when they need extra care. I salute all these mothers who are superwomen just like Katha, who is tender and soft for her child yet strong while facing life with a smile. She is broken but will not give up and will fight it out till the very end for her son," she adds.

"The upcoming track will see a mother's plight to keep her son alive as Katha knocks every door possible to arrange for funds; but to what extent she will go will make for an interesting watch. It is a challenging part, but I am glad to be playing it and I know that Katha's character as a mother will instantly find a connection with all," Aditi concludes.

Uorfi Javed all set to make a comeback in a dating reality show

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Social media influencer and TV actress Uorfi Javed, who recently left the dating reality show 'Splitsvilla X4' being the mischief maker, is all set to make an entry again along with an ex-'Roadies' contestant. After many names that were speculated to be a mischief maker including Sakshi Shrivastava, Sakshi Dwivedi, and Aagaz Akhtar, Uorfi was announced as the mischief maker by the host Arjun Bijlani. While leaving the show, she talked about her journey and called it fulfilling. She said: "It was strange I created so much confusion, and fought among all the connections and still no one can recognise me." Her connection on the show, Kashish Thakur, whom she called a 'playboy', and 'boring', was also seen getting emotional and Uorfi told him that they will be friends forever. Now, as per the sources close to the show, Uorfi will be back and it will be interesting to see her game and connections. Hosted by Arjun Bijlani and Sunny Leone, the dating-based reality show 'Splitsvilla X4'.



Shehnaaz Kaur Gill