

absolute india

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'Can't fold hands and sit because it's an economic policy', SC on DeMo

► UNDER THE RBI ACT, RBI'S CENTRAL BOARD HAS TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CENTRE REGARDING DEMONETISATION OF NOTES OR FOR ANY SERIES OF BANK NOTES OF ANY DENOMINATION TO CEASE TO BE LEGAL TENDER.
► THE TOP COURT WAS HEARING PETITIONS CHALLENGING THE CENTRE'S DECISION TO DEMONETISE CURRENCY NOTES OF RS 500 AND RS 1,000 IN 2016.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday, while hearing petitions challenging the Centre's demonetisation move in 2016, said that it cannot fold its hands and sit because it is an economic policy.

Senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, representing the Reserve Bank of India, submitted before the bench that the objective of the demonetisation policy was to curb black money and fake currencies, adding that not a single bank suffered losses.

Gupta submitted that there is no challenge to the decision on constitutional grounds, and therefore, the proportionality principle should only be applied to the extent, which the Attorney General's note also suggested that there should be a nexus between the objective and the method. He added that beyond that it will be against the run of play, as far as economic policy decisions are concerned, and being an economic policy measure, the court will not review the decision.

Justice Nagarathna said the court will not go into the merits of the decision to implement demonetisation, but it can always go into the manner it was taken, and the two things are totally different. In the daylong hear-



“Just because it is an economic policy, the court cannot fold its hands and sit. Merits of the decision, it is for the government to decide in its wisdom as it knows what is best for the people, but while taking that decision, what was the material on record, or the relevant considerations...”

Justice Nagarathna

ing, the RBI's counsel informed the bench that ample opportunities were given to people to exchange their notes. Senior advocate P. Chidambaram, representing a petitioner, said the government should confidently defend the decision and also the decision-making process, adding that it should place those documents before the court. Chidambaram submitted that the RBI

'NOBODY SHOULD GO TO SLEEP EMPTY STOMACH IS OUR CULTURE'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to ensure that food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) reach the last person.

The bench noted that nobody should go to sleep empty stomach is our culture. The top court was hearing a matter connected with the plight of migrant workers during the Covid pandemic.

Emphasising that it's government's duty to ensure food grains under NFSA reach the last person, the bench said, "We are not saying that Centre is not doing anything, the Union of India has ensured food grains to people during Covid. At the same time, we have to see it continues." The bench directed the Centre to submit a fresh chart with the number of migrant and unorganised sector workers registered on eShram portal. After hearing arguments, the bench scheduled the matter for further hearing on December 8.

Governor must be fully-aware of the

'TO WHAT EXTENT OUR MORALITY HAS GONE DOWN NOW!'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said on Tuesday "to what extent our morality has gone down now!" while directing the listing of a plea next year by Goa Congress leader Girish Chodankar challenging the Bombay High Court order, which junked a plea seeking disqualification of 12 members of the Goa Legislative Assembly for defecting from Congress and Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP) to the BJP in 2019.

A counsel, representing the petitioner, urged the bench to adjourn the matter, as his senior was in another court.

The bench queried, "since the next election has already taken place, has this not become infructuous?"

When the matter was called for hearing after 3.30 p.m., the petitioner's counsel requested the court to schedule the matter for hearing on Wednesday, adding that this is an important matter.

Justice Shah said: "To what extent our morality has gone down now!" The bench scheduled the matter for hearing next year, so that it can consider the legal questions.

fact that in 1946 and 1978, the central bank opposed demonetisation and resorted to plenary power of the legislature. During the hearing, the apex court also inquired into the number of members present in the RBI's Central Board meeting, which decided to make the recommendation regarding demonetisation in 2016.

Gupta agreed to provide the necessary information.

AFTER AIIMS AND SAFDARJUNG, ICMR FACES 6,000 HACKING ATTEMPTS



Team Absolute | New Delhi

After India's two premier health institutes - All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Safdarjung hospital, the top health research institute Indian Council of Medical Research has faced the cyber attack and hacking attempts.

According to a source, the website of ICMR faced 6000 attempts of cyber attack on November 30, after a week of ransomware attack on AIIMS. As per the information, the hacking attempts were made from an IP address of Hong Kong.

However, the attempts made to hack the ICMR website was not successful and the server was not affected and was running smoothly. The attackers were being blocked and the NIC team prevented the hacking attempts of ICMR website.

An official from the ICMR on the condition of anonymity said that the site is being hosted at National Informatics Centre (NIC) Data Centre and the firewall is being updated regularly by the agency. Our website did-

AIIMS'S MAIN BUILDING SERVER RESUMES PARTIALLY

New Delhi: The server facilities at the main building of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here resumed partially on Tuesday, two weeks after being hit by a ransomware attack.

An official said that some online and offline registrations, both new and follow-up, were made at the new Rajkumari Amrita Kaur (RAK) OPD on Tuesday. However, the facilities have not been made fully operational yet and it will take some more days to return to completely online registration, said the official, adding that all the computers have been scanned and antivirus has been uploaded for safety.

After the AIIMS server went down, the hospital had issued fresh guidelines for manual admission. The fresh standard operating procedures (SOPs) said that admission, discharge or transfer of patients will be done manually at the hospital till the time e-Hospital is down.

As per the fresh SOPs, in case of no Unique Health Identification (UHID), the contact number should be considered as the patient's identification number.

n't go down even for a single time on that day that means the attacks were prevented by the NIC. The ICMR website is safe and running properly.

RUPEE HAS DONE RELATIVELY WELL, SAYS WORLD BANK ECONOMIST

New Delhi: The rupee has done relatively better in 2022 compared to other emerging markets, World Bank economist Dhruv Sharma said on Tuesday.

In the last one year, the rupee has depreciated by around 10 per cent and though it may sound like a huge figure, compared to other emerging economies, India has not done badly, said Sharma on the occasion of the release of World Bank's India Development Update, which upgraded GDP growth to 6.9 per cent from the earlier 6.5 per cent.

Continuous hike of key rates by the US Fed has led to the strengthening of dollar at the rupee's expense.

In the last one month, the rupee has hit a low of 83 against the dollar and has been hovering in the range of 82.

Ashish Mishra to face trial in murder of Lakhimpur Kheri farmers

Lakhimpur Kheri | Agencies

Ashish Mishra, son of Union minister Ajay Mishra, will now be tried for the murder of four farmers and a journalist during a protest in Lakhimpur Kheri last year against the now-repealed farm laws. A court in Lakhimpur Kheri framed charges against him and the other accused on Tuesday and announced that the trial will begin on December 16. This comes a day after the court rejected Mishra's discharge petition. The police charge sheet has accused Mishra of murder.

It is alleged that he was in an SUV that ran over four farmers and a journalist during a protest march in Lakhimpur Kheri on October 3 last year. Ashish Mishra



was arrested days after the farmers' deaths, following an intervention by the Supreme Court. The Allahabad High Court granted him bail in February, raising questions on the police investigation. On April 18 this year, the Supreme Court cancelled the bail granted to Ashish Mishra and asked him to surrender within a week.

CYBERABAD POLICE BUST SEX RACKET, RESCUE OVER 14,000 VICTIMS

Hyderabad | Agencies

The Cyberabad Police on Tuesday claimed to have busted a major sex racket with the arrest of 17 persons, and rescued over 14,000 victims, including some from foreign countries. Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Ravindra said the racket was being operated online from Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The accused were procuring women from different places across India, posting ads on websites, contacting the customers through call centres and WhatsApp, facilitating the customers to reach the victims in different hotels, Oyo rooms, and collecting money for this organised prostitution racket.

A total of 14,190 victims were involved in prostitution. Fifty per cent of the victims were from West Bengal, 20 per cent from Karnataka, and 15 per cent from Maharashtra. Three per cent victims were from countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Russia.

The call centres were operated from Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad, and the main mode of communication was WhatsApp groups. The accused have been booked under Section 370 (buying or disposing of any person as a slave) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act at four police stations in Cyberabad.

Mumbai Police bust another porn films racket; one nabbed, 3 absconding

Mumbai: Mumbai Police have busted another sleaze films racket from Charkop area of Kandivali west and arrested one person, while three others are on the run, officials said here on Tuesday. The complaint lodged by a 29-year-old model and wannabe actress, who claimed that she was forced to strip nude under the guide of 'bold' scenes for a web series. When she refused to comply, the producer-director Yasmin Khan, and her associates Aniruddh Jangde, Amit Paswan, and one Aditya, threatened to file a defamation case against her. The complainant has done small

ads and had posted her details on social media seeking professional or acting assignments and landed up with one film-maker Rahul Pandey. Pandey offered her a role with a condition that it will entail 'bold scenes', she was reluctant though later agreed for Rs 50,000. Apparently scared by the threats, she did their bidding instructions and was paid hardly 20 per cent of the promised amount. A few days later, a friend informed the girl of her purported 'porn' video on a social media site after which she decided to complain to the Charkop Police Station.

Tripura party demands 'Tipraland' state for tribals

New Delhi/Agartala:

Tripura's influential tribal-based party -- Tipraha Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance (TIPRA), which organised a two-day sit-in demonstrations at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, on Tuesday demanded elevation of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTADC) into "Greater Tipraland State". The tribal based party submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding upgradation of the TTAADC to a "Greater Tipraland State" under article 2 and 3 of the Constitution for the protection of demography and rights of the tribals. Tribals constitute one-third of Tripura's four million population. The TIPRA led by party supremo and former royal scion Pradyot Bikram Manikya Deb Barman spearheading the agitations for 'Greater Tipraland' since last year, when the party wrested the power of the TTAADC defeating the BJP, CPI-M and the Congress.



Violence, harassment at work affect nearly 23% of people globally: ILO

► THE MOST COMMON REASONS GIVEN FOR NON-DISCLOSURE WERE "WASTE OF TIME" AND "FEAR FOR THEIR REPUTATION". THE SURVEY FOUND, ADDING THAT WOMEN WERE MORE LIKELY TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES THAN MEN (60.7 PER CENT COMPARED TO 50.1 PER CENT).

► GLOBALLY, 17.9 PER CENT OF EMPLOYED MEN AND WOMEN SAID THEY HAD EXPERIENCED PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN THEIR WORKING LIFE, AND 8.5 PER CENT HAD FACED PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT, WITH MORE MEN THAN WOMEN EXPERIENCING THIS.

► ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY, 6.3 PER CENT OF THE RESPONDENTS REPORTED FACING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT, WITH WOMEN BEING PARTICULARLY EXPOSED.

The survey, titled 'Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work: A global first survey', published on Monday, found that only half of victims worldwide had disclosed their experiences to someone else, and often only after they had suffered more than one form of violence and harassment, reports Xinhua news agency.

Geneva | Agencies

More than one in five people (almost 23 per cent) in employment worldwide have experienced violence and harassment at work, whether physical, psychological or sexual, according to a recent survey conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its partners. The groups that the survey found most likely to be affected by different types of violence and harassment included youth, migrant workers, and salaried women and men.

Young women were twice as likely as young men to have faced sexual violence and harassment,



and migrant women were almost twice as likely as non-migrant women to report sexual violence

and harassment. More than three out of five victims said they had experienced violence and harass-

ment at work multiple times, and for the majority, the most recent incident took place within the last five years. The ILO recommends that countries extend and update mechanisms to effectively prevent and manage violence and harassment in the world of work, increase awareness in this regard, and at the same time enhance the capacity of institutions at all levels to deliver effective prevention, remediation and support, to build people's trust in justice and ensure victims are supported.

The survey is based on interviews conducted in 2021 with nearly 75,000 employed individuals aged 15 years or older in 121 countries and territories.



NO OF UNICORNS DROP TO 85 IN INDIA AS VALUATIONS ERODE AMID GLOBAL TURMOIL

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The number of unicorns (with the \$1 billion valuation and above) in India has dropped to 85 from more than 100 just a couple of months ago, as most startups have shed a significant share of their valuations while investors stay back amid the prevailing global economic turmoil.

According to data compiled by Finbold, the US has the highest number of unicorns at 704 while China comes a distant second with 243 unicorns (as of November this year).

Despite the general market conditions, several regions are leading in the number of unicorns or private companies valued at least \$1 billion.

"The United Kingdom ranks fourth with 56, while Germany ranks fifth with 36 unicorns. Indeed, the US has at least double the number of unicorns compared to both China and India combined," according to the report.

In May this year, India welcomed its 100th unicorn, which was Bengaluru-based neobank platform Open that raised fresh funds as part of its Series D round, taking its valuation to \$1 billion.



Indian startups raised more than \$42 billion across 1,583 deals in 2021 and the country saw 42 unicorns last year, taking the number to 86.

In the first half of 2022, India added 14 new unicorns, according to the Hurun Global Unicorn Index 2022, as the funding winter hit the startup ecosystem which has only gone worse with thousands of employees being asked to go.

The startup ecosystem's funding winter could last another 12 to 18

months. Only two startups in India, Shiprocket and OneCard, attained unicorn status (valuation \$1 billion and above) in the July-September period, mirroring a global trend in decline in the number of new unicorns, a PwC India report showed.

According to the Finbold report, Elon Musk's space company SpaceX ranks top in the US with a valuation of \$127 billion, while payment firm Stripe ranks second at \$95 billion.

Instacart ranks third, valued at \$39 billion, followed by Databrick's \$38 billion valuation. Meanwhile, gaming company Epic Games ranks fifth at \$31.5 billion.

"The US dominance over China can be linked to the Asian country's stringent laws on the private sector. With a robust private sector led by the tech industry, the government moved to curtail the powers of such entities. In this case, there is a widespread fear of companies accelerating their growth, with venture capitalists remaining sceptical," the report mentioned.

Notably, with the \$1 billion valuation, most companies still depend on external funding while attempting to work out a profitable model.

Critics have, for instance, stated that attaining unicorn status without profitability might be considered a fad.

"It is worth noting that unicorns are now prime candidates for Initial Public Offering (IPO). However, the possibility of launching an IPO will likely depend on the state of the economy.

Notably, the stock market remains depressed, with most companies losing a big chunk of their valuations," the report said.

BJP High Command shifts focus to K'taka; swift changes likely in party

Bengaluru | Agencies

As post-poll surveys are predicting a big victory for the BJP in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh states, the party high command is now focussing on emerging stronger in Karnataka.

Karnataka is considered as the gateway for the saffron party to south India. The Assembly polls are scheduled to be held within four months in the state. The party high command is likely to make swift changes in the party in the view of its gains in the elections.

According to the party insiders, including cabinet expansion, the party would take calls on long pending issues within the party. They explain that all is set to march ahead with strong Hindutva and development plank in the polls.

The party sources claim that on the lines of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, where the party did not allow tickets to senior leaders, including a former CM, calls will be taken in Karnataka as well.

Fearing that they will be denied tickets, senior cabinet ministers and MLAs have started lobbying with their godfathers in New Delhi.

The party leaders will take calls on the post of the President of the party in the state. Present incumbent Nalin Kumar Kateel has completed the term and he is hoping to continue. Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje, National General Secretary and BJP MLA C.T. Ravi's names are doing rounds for the post. The party is expected to take a firm decision regarding the future role of BJP Central



Committee member B.S. Yediyurappa's son party Vice President B.Y. Vijayendra. Introducing 10 new faces in the state cabinet. The sources also claim that the State In-charge of BJP Arun Singh may also be changed.

The Congress party is also seeing strong chances of attaining power through internal surveys. AICC former president Sonia Gandhi came down to Karnataka and participated in Bharat Jodi Yatra in the same background. The party State President D.K. Shivakumar and Opposition leader Siddaramaiah are vying with each other to project themselves as CM candidates.

On the other hand, the JD (S) party is putting all its might to become a king maker in the formation of the next government. BJP, which had never attained a simple majority in state Assembly elections, is hoping to achieve this time, without having to indulge in operation lotus to attain power.

6-yr-old falls into borewell in MP, rescue operation underway

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A six-year-old boy fell into a borewell at a village in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district at around 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, officials said.

The local police and the administration were informed about the incident, following which a rescue operation was launched which is presently underway.

Betul District Collector Amanveer Singh Bains said a camera has been inserted into borewell to monitor the child's movement.

Provisions have been made for oxygen supply in the borewell and a tunnel is being dug parallel to the



borewell with the help of two JCB machines.

Besides the District Collector, SP Simala Prasad along with other officials are monitoring the situation. The Chief Minister's Office

informed that CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan is personally monitoring the situation and taking review form the Collector. The rescue operation was underway till the time of filing this report.

FIRE BREAKS OUT IN DELHI FACTORY

New Delhi: A fire broke out at a factory in Delhi's Jhilmil Industrial area on Tuesday evening, an official said, adding 11 fire tenders were rushed to the spot to control the blaze.

According to Atul Garg, Director of Delhi Fire Service (DFS), a call was received at around 6:22 p.m. regarding a fire at a factory in the Jhilmil area. "A total of 11 fire tenders have been rushed to the site and so far, no causality has been reported," said Garg. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained.

Delhi HC defers petitions seeking recognition of same-sex marriages

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday deferred petitions seeking recognition of same-sex marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriage Act.

The batch of petitions will be heard on April 24, 2023, the court said.

The division bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium was informed that similar petitions have been filed before the Supreme Court.

The petitioner's counsel, Saurabh Kirpal, and the Central government's counsel



informed the court about the petitions pending in the apex court seeking similar relief.

Kirpal urged the bench to give another date in the matter.

Recently, the Supreme Court had sought a response from the Centre on separate pleas by two gay couples seeking enforcement of their right to marry and a direction

to the authorities to register their marriage under the Special Marriage Act.

The High Court has up to eight petitions by several same-sex couples seeking a declaration recognising their marriages under the Special Marriage Act, the Hindu Marriage Act, and the Foreign Marriage Act pending.

Despite the apex court decriminalising consensual homosexual acts, marriages between same-sex couples are not possible, petitioner Abhijit Iyer Mitra said while seeking a declaration to recognise such marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriage Act.

HC summons Assembly Speaker over R'than Cong MLAs' resignation

Jaipur | Agencies

The Rajasthan High Court on Tuesday summoned the Assembly Speaker and the Secretary in connection with the resignations sent by the Congress MLAs on which any action is yet to be taken.

The Jaipur bench of the High Court sent notice to the Speaker and the Secretary while hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Rajendra Rathore, a BJP legislator from Churu who is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly.

Keeping in mind that the resignations of 91 Congress MLAs pending with the Speaker C.P. Joshi, Rathore had approached the court.

A bench of Justices M.M. Srivastava and Vinod Kumar Bharwani heard the PIL on Tuesday.

Rathore is representing this case. He said: "The current government has lost the confidence of the House due to the collective resignation letter



of the MLAs. Despite this, policy decisions are being taken by holding cabinet meetings. By not accepting the resignations, a situation of gross constitutional failure is being created. Legal intervention is necessary to stop this. There should be clarity on

the constitutional crisis prevailing in the state since September 25."

"The Divisional Bench has issued a notice of hearing after two weeks. Now, this matter has come under judicial review. I understand now that the appropriate decision will be

made," he added.

Now, the Speaker and Secretary of the Assembly will have to present their stand.

Till now, they have not decided on the course of action on these resignations even after the lapse of 70 days.

TN and Puducherry Bar Council suspends 9 lawyers for Job fraud, Child abduction charges

Chennai | Agencies

The Bar council of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry has suspended nine lawyers on charges of job fraud, child abduction and other illegal activities.

They will not be able to practice before any courts and tribunals till the disciplinary proceedings initiated against them are disposed. The Bar Council had taken disciplinary proceedings against the nine lawyers on charges of job racketing, child abduction and other illegal activities.

The suspended advocates are V. Nandagopalan, A. Prabhu, S. Perumal, R. Raja, A. Ramesh, P. Pon Pandiyan, S. Muthachi, Roja Ramkumar and T. Arun Pandian.

Nandagopalan was suspended following a complaint by a client that the lawyer had misappropriated a huge amount of money. Adv Raja



was suspended on a complaint that was serious in nature regarding his behaviour as a lawyer.

Adv Perumal was barred for collecting 9.1 lakh rupees from public and promising job in Anna University. He had even forged a job offer letter of Anna University, as per a complaint. Pon Pandian

, Muthachi and Ramesh were suspended on charges of accepting money and offering job at Madras High Court and Thiruvaur court.

Prabhu was suspended on charges of kidnapping a child. Roja and Arun Pandian were suspended on charges of involvement in a crime against children.

Vivek Agnihotri tenders unconditional apology to Delhi HC for tweets against Justice S Muralidhar

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri on Tuesday apologised to the high court here for his tweets against Justice S. Muralidhar, who is current Chief Justice of Orissa HC and was a former Delhi HC judge.

An affidavit to that effect was filed by Agnihotri withdrawing his statement against the judge and tendering his apology.

A division bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh deferred the hearing after recording Agnihotri's submission that he shall remain present personally in court for the hearing on March 16, 2023, to tender his apology. "We are asking him (Agnihotri) to remain present because he is the contemnor. Does he have any difficulty if he has to express remorse in person? The remorse cannot always be expressed by way of an affidavit," the bench said. Agnihotri had put out tweets alleging bias against Justice Muralidhar. Pursuant to the tweets, contempt of court proceedings were initiated against the director. Agnihotri's tweets were regarding the judge granting relief to



activist Gautam Navlakha in the Bhima Koregaon case. In September, the court had decided to proceed ex-parte against Agnihotri. Post which, he filed an affidavit expressing apology. Agnihotri had mentioned in his affidavit that he himself had deleted his tweets against the judge. However, the Amicus Curiae Senior Advocate Arvind Nigam pointed out that it could be the social media platform which deleted the tweets and not Agnihotri himself.

10 MORE STEPWELLS TO BE TAKEN UP FOR RESTORATION IN HYDERABAD

Hyderabad | Agencies

After successfully restoring 17th century stepwell at Bansilalpet, the government of Telangana plans to take up restoration of 10 more stepwells.

Arvind Kumar, special chief secretary, urban development, announced on Tuesday that they plan to take up 10 more stepwells for restoration in the next four months.

The restored stepwell in Bansilalpet area of Secunderabad was unveiled on Monday. Minister for municipal administration and urban development K.T. Rama Rao inaugurated the restored stepwell.

The state government completed restoration of the stepwell which was in dilapidated condition and filled with garbage.

The stepwell was once served drinking water needs of the locality, but later was neglected to turn into a garbage dump. The revived stepwell will prevent inundation and improve the groundwater levels.

The urban development authorities plan to turn it into a tourist attraction and a cultural centre.



After hard work of more than a one year, the stepwell was restored by various departments in partnership with organisations like Rainwater Project, Gandipet Welfare Society and the local community.

Meanwhile, restoration of Bansilalpet stepwell has been awarded for sustainable revitalization of traditional rain water harvesting at Big 5 con-

struction impact awards by the United Arab Emirates' ministry of energy and infrastructure. The restoration work involved clearing 3,900 metric tonnes of garbage and debris from the stepwell. The same was cleared with 863 truck trips. Various departments and NGOs spent Rs 10 crore on the restoration project.

As part of the project, a museum, a cafeteria and amphitheatre have come up at the site.

The award for restoration of Bansilalpet stepwell is the second major recognition for restoration initiatives in Hyderabad.

Last month, Unesco recognised the conservation of six stepwells (Baolis) at Qutb Shahi Tombs with the 2022 award of distinction. Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) restored six historic stepwells at the world's largest royal necropolis.

KTC in association with the heritage department of Telangana and Quli Qutb Shah Urban Development Authority (QQSUDA) took up restoration and it was supported by the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) and the TATA Trusts.

The project was funded by AFCP to the tune of \$112,560 and a few months ago, six restored stepwells were inaugurated.



HOME GUARD, AN IDEAL FORCE OF VOLUNTEERS COMMITTED TO SELFLESS SERVICE: GOVERNOR MANGUBHAI PATEL

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that in times of crisis, the words "Main hoon na" have a miraculous effect. Hearing these words, a new hope and faith in life arises in the afflicted person. Probably that is why nature has given man the power of speech. He said that the details and presentations of Home Guard force on civil defence, service spirit, discipline skills and disaster management establish it as an ideal force of volunteers committed to selfless service.

Governor Patel was addressing the 76th Foundation Day program of Madhya Pradesh Home Guard at Home Guard Lines today. Additional Chief Secretary Home Dr. Rajesh Rajoura and Director General of Police Sudhir Saxena were also present.

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that the success of human life lies in the service of humanity. There is no act of virtue greater than saving life. The Home Guards are fortunate that they have been chosen for this noble cause. Along with the efficiency of work, it is very important to have tolerance and sensitivity in conduct.



Governor Patel appreciated the rescue and relief work done by the force during heavy rain.

The Governor stressed the need for extensive public awareness programs regarding strict adherence to general precautions from time to time, along with practice of accident prevention and safety measures by the home

guard. Initially, Governor Patel inspected the parade and took the salute. He also inspected the demonstrations of relief and disaster management in the incidents of flood, arson, earthquake. Meritorious children of Home Guards were awarded on the Foundation Day. Director General Home Guard

Pawan Jain gave details of incidents related to civil defence, disaster management. He told that 16 thousand 798 lives were saved by the force. He said that the force was assisting the Police in the work of disaster management and civil defence. Additional Director General Shri D. P. Gupta proposed the vote of thanks.

BJP may use Hindutva card ahead of 2023 polls in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Hindutva' has undoubtedly been a key tool of polarisation in the politics of the BJP, but it had very little impact in MP, be it pre-demolition or post-demolition Babri Masjid. However, the relentless attempts at polarisation indicate that the moderate system of governance would be a thing of the past now, and the Hindutva card would come to the fore in the assembly elections in 2023.

When the Babri Masjid was demolished in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP was in power in MP. After a short interval of President's rule, elections were held in 1993 and the Sundarlal Patwa-led BJP government was voted out of power. The Digvijaya Singh-led Congress ruled the state for the next 10 years, following the rules of moderate governance.

More importantly, present Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who is a member of the right-wing (RSS), did not allow communalism to flourish in Madhya Pradesh and ruled the state with a moderate governance system. His governance gave him the image of the 'moderate face of RSS', and his liberal governance system not only ensured the longest rule of the BJP in the state but also strengthened the party. Senior journalist N. K. Singh, who has been a close observer of Madhya Pradesh's politics for around four decades, said the state had been the stronghold of the right wing for the last several decades, but the



BJP became stronger under the leadership of Chief Minister Chouhan.

He pointed out that the Digvijaya Singh-led Congress was voted out of power in 2003, not because of the Hindutva card of the BJP but because of the incompetence and growing corruption in the government. "The BJP lost the 2018 assembly polls due to incompetence and the growing corruption. The Congress wasn't strong enough to defeat the BJP because factionalism was rife among its top leaders. The BJP lost the elections because it could not handle the increasing graph of unemployment, corruption. The Congress got the benefit of anti-incumbency," Singh added.

Political observers also believe that Chouhan was forced to change his style of governance and was made to follow the Centre's agenda, but after the local bodies election outcome, he seems to have come back on his old track.

CM Chouhan congratulates the Fisheries Federation and the fishermen

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Minister for Water Resources, Fisheries Development and Fishermen's Welfare, Tuliram Silawat handed over the award symbolically to the CM, while giving information about the national award received by the Madhya Pradesh Fisheries Federation from the central government. CM Chouhan congratulated Minister and Chairman Madhya Pradesh Fisheries Federation Tuliram Silawat, Fisheries Federation, Fishermen Society and fishermen on this achievement. Principal Secretary Fisheries Kalpana Shrivastava, Managing Director of the Federation Purushottam



Dhiman, Director Bharat Singh and other officers were present. It may be mentioned here that on November 22, the National Fisheries Development Board

Hyderabad honored the Madhya Pradesh Fisheries Federation with a prize money of Rs 5 lakh and a citation at a function in the Union Territory of Daman.

MAN WHO RAPED AND MURDERED 9-YEAR-OLD NIECE SENTENCED TO DEATH BY POCSO COURT

Datiya: Special Judge of POSCO Act (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Ramajayant Mittal on Monday sentenced death penalty to the man who was accused of rape and murder of a 9-year-old girl. A fine of Rs 18,000 was also imposed in him for committing the heinous crime on May 8, 2022.

According to reports, the victim was raped by her own uncle by taking her to a nearby jungle in Goraghat. He killed her fearing she would reveal about it to her family members.

Public Prosecutor Advocate Ashish Chaturvedi that after a case was filed within 24 hours, the accused was arrested and after listening to arguments from both sides the court sentenced death to the accused under the POSCO Act.

Sudarshan Chakra Corps 'Vijay Diwas Run- 22' to be held on December 17

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In commemoration of the historic military victory over Pakistan in the 1971 War, HQ Sudarshan Chakra Corps will be organising 'Vijay Diwas Run-22' on 17 December 2022, simultaneously with Pune and fifteen other cities across the Southern Command Area of Responsibility. This mega event is aimed at strengthening the bond between the Indian Army and the masses, especially the youth. While paying homage to martyrs, the participants in 'Vijay Diwas Run 22' would also be highlighting the caliber, potential, and energy of Nation. Vijay Diwas Run-



22' will be flagged off at Bhopal on 17 December 2022 by Lt General Vipul Shinghal, SM, GOC, Sudarshan Chakra Corps. Indian Army solicits participation from everyone

including school & college students, NCC Cadets, and people from all walks of life to join this 'Vijay Diwas Run 2022' and be part of the celebrations on Vijay Diwas.

The 'Vijay Diwas Run-22' will comprise two categories; a 12.5 Km run which is open for all with separate awards for men and women and a 5 Km run for students of schools and women. There is no registration fee for the run and the Link for free Online Registration for Bhopal is open at www.runbhopal-run.com. The registrations will close on 14 Dec 22. The wholehearted and enthusiastic participation from citizens from all walks of life of the Lake City of Bhopal in the Vijay Diwas Run-22 will be an apt forum to demonstrate the patriotic fervor and commitment to Nation Building.

Police teams formed to arrest author after row over book at Indore Law College

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Police have constituted teams to arrest the author of a controversial book against whom a case was registered last week, state Home Minister Narottam Mishra said on Tuesday.

Following a complaint and protest by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the Indore police on Saturday registered an FIR against the author and the publisher of the book 'Collective Violence and Criminal Justice System', which has been taught at a government-run law college in Indore, along with its principal and a professor.

The case was registered on charges of promoting enmity between different groups and hurting religious feelings, police earlier said.

"Police teams have been formed to arrest author Dr Farhat Khan and the publisher of the controversial book... We will also write a letter to the



department concerned to withdraw the doctorate degree of Dr Farhat

Khan," Mishra told reporters in Bhopal in reply to a question.

The ABVP has alleged the book contains very objectionable content against the Hindu community and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which encourages religious fundamentalism. According to police officials, the case against Khan and others was registered under various Indian Penal Code Sections, including 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence) and 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs). On Monday, Indore's government law college principal Dr Inam-Ur-Rahman said he was assigned the post in 2019 and the controversial book was bought in 2014.

"I have nothing to do with its placement in the library. The FIR against me is unfortunate. I have been booked but not the library head," he said.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

State level orientation training-cum-conference of newly elected Sarpanches has been organized at Jamboree Ground, Bhopal on December 7 from 11 am. In this training focused on local sustainable development goals, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will give information about global resolution of local development goals to sarpanches and panchayat representatives.

Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Mahendra Singh Sisodia will preside over the programme. Special guests will be Urban Administration and Development Minister Bhupendra Singh, Medical Education Minister Vishwas Sarang, Minister of State for Panchayat and Rural Development Ramkhalavan Patel and MP Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur.

Sarpanchs of 23 thousand 12 panchayats, representatives of 52 district panchayats and 313 district panchayats will be present in this orientation training-cum-conference. The training will be given on the basis of 9 themes - poverty free and livelihood advanced pan-



chayat, healthy panchayat, child friendly panchayat, water saturated panchayat, healthy and green panchayat, infrastructure panchayat, socially safe panchayat, good governance panchayat and women friendly panchayat.

NO MOBILE PHONES IN MAHAKAL TEMPLE FROM DECEMBER 20



Indore: Visitors at the famous Mahakaleshwar Temple in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain city will not be permitted to carry their mobile phones inside the premises from December 20 for security reasons, a senior district official said.

The temple management committee headed by its chairman and district collector Ashish Singh took the decision in this regard at a meeting held on Monday. After the meeting, Singh informed that mobile phones will be prohibited inside the temple from December 20 for security reasons. Hotels and other places of lodging have been directed to put-up this information so that devotees arrive at the temple without mobile phones, the collector said.

The last holdouts of Kuno: Taking the forest out of the Sahariyas

"We were born in the forest, and we would like to die here," say the Sahariya tribal people of two villages in Sheopur district that are in the process of resettlement due to the much-talked-about cheetah project in Kuno National Park.

Team Absolute | Sheopur

Ever since the release of cheetahs brought from Namibia into the park on September 17, the State forest department has been taking steps to relocate both Bagcha, which falls under the park area, and Jahangarh, which lies in the buffer zone. Outside the buffer zone, a further 557 sq km has been newly demarcated as an eco-sensitive zone where people may continue to live but with restrictions on industries and land use.

As many as 216 families in Bagcha will be shifted to Rampura, located around 50 km away, where compensatory agricultural lands measuring not more than five acres each and places to build houses have been identified. However, things are bleak for the 70 families in Jahangarh as there is no provision to provide land for land while resettling people in the buffer zone. They will instead get a compensation of Rs 15 lakh, specifically for land pur-



chase. Confirming that the officials have visited Jahangarh multiple times to convince them, Shyamabai Janmed, a Sahariya woman, says the forest department first told them that they could shift to Raghunathpur. "But when we checked out the place, the residents there said they were not willing to part with their agricultural lands. So where will we go?"

Later, the authorities directed the villagers to Chanipura, but the fact remains that Chanipura gram sabha is yet to give its consent, which is mandatory to buy land there.

As tribal people see trees as abodes of gods, conservation of forests is a given for them. "Where there are no tribals, the forest cover is decreasing. We are the ones who protect trees. Outsiders just come and cut them down to make settlements," Mukesh Kanhai of Jahangarh says. The tribal population also conserves the region's biodiversity as they rely on local crops, wild fruits, seeds, tubers and roots to meet their nutrition needs. "The tribals are equally important for the forest as much as the forest is necessary for the tribals," says Harimohan of Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram, Sheopur. "I can predict the weather by looking at the cloud cover and wind speed. However, our future seems difficult to predict. I do not know when the officials will come to throw us out," laments Gulubai Ganpat of Jahangarh.

Ochapura Deputy Ranger Raju Barber says relocation is imperative as cheetahs need a rather large home range. The forest also has leopards and bears.

Dr. Ambedkar gave us the message of social harmony: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar gave us the message of social harmony. He made the constitution by which the country is running today. His message was to get educated and fight against injustice. We should follow his instructions.

Chief Minister Chouhan today unveiled the statue of Dr. Ambedkar at Nateran, Vidisha. He attended the Samarasta Sannalpan organ-ization there. He laid the foundation stone/performed bhoomi-pujan of development works worth Rs 350 crore from the venue itself.

Chouhan said that he will bring radical changes in the field of education in the state. In order to improve the quality of education and to provide good education to



the sons and daughters of poor and farmers, CM Rise schools are being opened in the state at a cost of billions. They have all the facilities like smart class, lab, library, play ground etc. A CM rise school is being built between 15 to 20 villages and arrangements are being made to take the children from the village to the school through buses. Free education will be given in these. CM Rise School will be built at Nateran at a cost of Rs 35 crore 93 lakh and ITI at a cost of Rs 12 crore 63 lakh. The work of ITI will be completed by December 2023 and the work of CM Rise School in 18 months.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Liquor ban: Harakiri for Nitish Kumar

In a dry state Bihar, deaths due to spurious liquor seems to be becoming a regular affair. However, rolling back the decision of liquor ban in the state may politically turn suicidal for the Nitish government and the JD(U). Every time deaths due to spurious liquor is reported in the state, leaders of opposition parties as well as intellectuals jump the gun to target the Chief Minister. With everyone -- except government officials -- claiming that liquor is easily available in the state, the question arises why a stringent law is ineffective in Bihar. One of the reasons is the ineffectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Also, on several occasions, it has been seen that the police and the excise department teams have faced stiff resistance from local people. Even, sometimes they (officials) become victims of it. Such a situation has big implications for any government. If the policies are not made according to the expectation of common people, the law will succumb and the same thing is happening with liquor prohibition law in Bihar. For Nitish Kumar, the liquor prohibition in the state has become an issue of prestige. If he rolls back the law, it would backfire his own party in the next election. The opposition leaders are aware of this fact and thus they raise the issue aggressively every time a liquor tragedy takes place in the state. Political strategist Prashant Kishor has went a step ahead to corner the Nitish government and has claimed that the state exchequer is losing Rs 20,000 crore every year (due to liquor ban) and the Nitish government has put additional burden on common people to cover the loss. The ban on liquor is also hurting the vote bank of Nitish Kumar-led JD-U as his government also imposed a ban on tari as well.

GOVT MUST NOT FORGET WHY AMBEDKAR LET ART 124 (2) BE AS IT IS

Kumar Mihir

Article 124(2) of the Constitution lays down that "Every Judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal after consultation with such of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose and shall hold office until he attains the age of sixty five years: Provided that in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of India shall always be consulted."

When this Article was being debated in the Constituent Assembly, the phrase "shall always be consulted" was discussed extensively and Dr B.R. Ambedkar had stated: "There can be no difference of opinion in the house that our Judiciary must both be independent of the Executive and must also be competent in itself. The draft article steers middle course. It does not make the President the supreme and absolute authority in the matter of making appointments. It does not also import the influence of the Legislature. The provision in the Article is that there should be consultation of persons who are ex-hypothesi well-qualified to give proper advice in matters of this sort, and my judgment is that this sort of provision may be regarded as sufficient for the moment."

In the early years of our republic, there were hardly any controversy regarding the appointment process. Between 1970 and 1980, however, questions regarding independence of our judiciary started to be raised especially in view of regular tussle between the central government and Supreme Court and the flash point came in 1980 on the issue of transfer of judges from one high court to the other, when the Supreme Court in S. P. Gupta vs Union of India (known as the First Judges case) recognised the primacy of the president and also held that the word "consultation" in Article 124 does not mean concurrence.

Justice P.N. Bhagwati however, expressed his dissatisfaction with the then existing 'mode of appointment of judges in India in which the authority to select judges has exclusively been vested 'in a single individual' (the President) whose choice 'may be incorrect or inadequate' and 'may also sometimes be imperceptibly influenced by extraneous or irrelevant considerations.

Therefore, he proposed that there must be a collegium to make recommendation to the President in regard to appointment of a Supreme Court or high court judge. The recommending authority should be more broad-based and there should be consultation with wider interests.

In 1993, a nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court in Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association vs Union of India (Second Judges Case) revisited the constitutional scheme of appointment of judges and overruled the majority view in the First Judges Case, giving primacy to President in the matter of appointment of Judges to superior courts.



It was held that the opinion given by the Chief Justice in the consultative process had to be formed taking into account the views of the two senior most judges of the Supreme Court. This would ensure that the opinion of the Chief Justice of India was not merely his individual opinion, but an opinion formed collectively by a body of men at the apex level in the judiciary.

It was also added that the Chief Justice of India is expected to take into account the views of his colleagues in the Supreme Court who are likely to be conversant with the affairs of the concerned high court.

The Chief Justice of India may also ascertain the views of one or more senior judges of that high court whose opinion, according to the Chief Justice of India, is likely to be significant in the formation of his opinion.

This was followed by a presidential reference in 1998 (Third Judges case) wherein the procedural requirement of the collegium system were laid down and the number of senior-most judges of the Supreme Court as the member of the Collegium was increased from two to four.

In 2014, the Constitution was amended by the Constitution (99th Amendment) Act 2014 and a National Judicial Appointments Commission and consequently, the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014 was enacted.

The validity of both the constitutional amendment and the Act were challenged by the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association and the Supreme Court with a 4:1 majority declared the Constitution (99th Amendment) Act 2014 and the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014

unconstitutional and void and held that the system of appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and High Court through the Collegium system will be operative.

In view of all this, the phrase "shall always be consulted" has been judicially held to mean that the consultation shall be as per the recommendations of the Collegium and in terms of Article 141 of the Constitution, the said position remains the law unless the parliament exercises its authority and changes the position.

The constant criticism of the collegium system by higher functionaries in the Government and repeated attempts to somehow throttle the recommendations of the Collegium by delaying the appointments therefore is uncalled-for, especially when the collegium system is what the existing law prescribes.

One of the major grounds on which collegium system is criticised is that the constitution does not provide for collegium at all and it is basically a system of judges appointing judges which cannot be countenanced at all. The critics, however, forget that a number of doctrines and concepts have crept in our constitution subsequently through the judgments of the Supreme Court which was made the final arbiter of the constitution by our founding fathers.

Thus, when the Supreme Court interprets and holds that "Chief Justice of India shall always be consulted" will mean that instead of one person, a collegium of the Chief Justice and 4 senior most judges shall be consulted and their recommendations shall be given primacy, there is nothing wrong with the same.

Further, the Constituent Assembly itself had debated different modes of appointment in higher judiciary prevalent in different countries and chose to adopt the existing mode being the most suitable as per the conditions prevalent in our country in order to ensure complete separation of power and independence of judiciary.

Any attempt therefore to roll back the system adopted by our founding fathers will have a direct impact on the independence of the judiciary.

Instead of criticising and adopting an adversarial approach, the executive and judiciary will have to work together to ensure adequate and diverse class representation in the collegium system and at the same time make sure that most meritorious and competent advocates are appointed in the higher judiciary on a timely basis.

Both sides will have to understand that this constant tug of war and unrestrained and uncalled-for criticism of the collegium system in this age of social media is only hampering and scandalising the judiciary which is the cornerstone of Rule of Law.

(The author is an advocate-on-record at the Supreme Court)

international

33 KILLED IN COLOMBIA LANDSLIDE

Bogota | Agencies

At least 33 people were killed due to a landslide that buried vehicles along a highway in Colombia, Interior Minister Alfonso Prada said.

The landslide that occurred on Sunday buried a bus carrying passengers from Cali to Condoto, along with a car and a motorcycle on the Pereira-Quibdo Highway in the western-central department of Risaralda, reports Xinhua news agency.

"We have identified 33 deceased people, including three minors. We have rescued nine people, four of them are currently in critical condition," Prada said on Monday.

Personnel from Colombia's Risk Management Unit, and the Transit and Transportation Directorate of the Transportation Ministry, as well as the police department and the military, rushed to rescue, he said.

In the wake of the landslide, authorities plan to declare a nationwide maximum alert to prepare for



weather-related disasters amid a cold wave that is expected to continue for several more months, said Prada.

President Gustavo Petro has ordered a National Unified Command Post to be installed in the capital Bogota by Tuesday at the latest to determine the state of the roadways

under adverse weather conditions, he said.

Risaralda Governor Victor Manuel Tamayo told reporters the highway where the accident occurred is in poor condition, complicating efforts to find survivors and retrieve the bodies of the victims.

US RECORDS 4,500 DEATHS FROM FLU THIS SEASON

Los Angeles: There have been at least 8.7 million illnesses, 78,000 hospitalisations, and 4,500 deaths from flu so far this season in the US, according to the latest estimates from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Seasonal influenza activity is high and continues to increase across the country, Xinhua news agency reported, citing the CDC.

About 20,000 hospitalisations from flu were reported in the US in the latest week ending on November 26. The number of flu hospital admissions in the week almost doubled compared with the previous week. A total of 14 pediatric flu deaths were reported so far this season in the country, according to the CDC.

N.Korea orders artillery firing to protest live-fire drills

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea's military said on Tuesday that it has ordered artillery firing into the sea in response to live-fire drills between South Korea and the US near the inter-Korean border.

The General Staff of the Korean People's Army (KPA) said it detected the South Korean military's firing of artillery from multiple rocket launchers and howitzers in frontline areas from around 9.15 a.m. following similar military actions on Monday, according to a statement carried by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

"We immediately ordered frontline artillery units to launch artillery firing into the sea to issue a strong warning," Yonhap News Agency quoted a KPA General Staff



spokesperson as saying in the KCNA statement.

The official called on the South to immediately stop "provocative" military actions.

The North appears to be referring to live-fire drills being conducted between South Korea and the US at

border units in Cheorwon County, 71 km northeast of Seoul.

The warning shots came a day after North Korea fired some 130 artillery shells into eastern and western maritime "buffer zones" to protest the allies' live-fire exercise.

6.2-MAGNITUDE QUAKE JOLTS INDONESIA, NO POTENTIAL FOR TSUNAMI

Jakarta: A 6.2-magnitude earthquake jolted Indonesia's East Java province on Tuesday, but there was no potential for a tsunami.

According to the national meteorological, climatological and geophysical agency, the earthquake occurred at 1.07 p.m. with the epicentre situated 284 km southwest of Jember Regency and at a depth of 10 km under the seabed, Xinhua news reported.

The tremors of the quake did not have the potential to trigger giant waves, it said.

Ukraine hit by 8th wave of Russian strikes

Kiev | Agencies

Ukraine has been hit by the latest barrage of Russian missiles, marking the eighth time since the strikes first began on October 10.

In his nightly video address to the nation, President Volodymyr Zelensky late Monday said that four people were killed and technicians have been working to stabilise the energy system.

According to the President, Russia launched at least 70 missiles earlier on Monday and "most of them were shot down", Ukrayinska Pravda reported. He also noted that energy companies immediately started working on restoring power and efforts were underway in Odesa, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv regions. As of Monday night, the regions of Vinnytsia, Kiev, Zhytomyr, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, Khmelnytskyi and

Cherkasy have been the hardest-hit by the power cuts, the President said, adding there were electricity outages in Moldova as well.

"This proves once again that Russia's ability to carry out such massive terrorist attacks is a threat not only to Ukraine, but to our entire region, at least... That is why stopping terror is a joint task," he said. The Ukrainian Air Force claimed that it shot down 60 missiles over the regions of Kiev, Poltava and Dnipropetrovsk.

As a result of the strikes, two infrastructure facilities in Odesa region were damaged.

Since Russia began its large-scale, co-ordinated attacks on Ukraine's power grid on October 10, around half of the country's energy infrastructure has been damaged, leaving millions of Ukrainians disconnected from electricity just as winter temperatures dropped below zero.

Flight heading to UK diverted to Prague after bomb scare on board

Prague | Agencies

An EasyJet flight bound for the UK from Poland had to be diverted to the Czech Republic due to a report of a "possible bomb" on board, according to a media report.

The low-cost British airline's flight EZY6276 was heading from Krakow to Bristol on Sunday evening but the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing so that law enforcement agencies could sweep the plane for explosives, CNN reported.

Prague Airport officials confirmed in a tweet that the plane landed safely in the capital of the Czech Republic at 10:50 p.m. local time.

"At 22:50, a diverted aircraft landed safely at Prague Airport on the Krakow-Bristol route. There was reported a possible bomb on board an aircraft," the tweet said.

"All actions to ensure the safety of passengers and all air traffic are



currently being carried out by @PoliceCZ."

The incident was also confirmed by the official Twitter page of the Czech Republic police, @PoliceCZ, in a message translated from Czech, which read: "Our bomb squad technicians are currently at the scene investigating a report of a possible explosive device."

Prague airport later said that no

dangerous object had been found on the plane, CNN reported.

EasyJet told CNN in a statement on Monday that the plane had been diverted as a "precautionary security measure".

"EasyJet can confirm that flight EZY6276 from Krakow to Bristol yesterday evening diverted to Prague purely as a precautionary security measure," the low-cost airline said.

UK UNIVERSITY HONORS INDIAN-ORIGIN WOMAN ENGINEER

London: An Indian-origin structural engineer, who designed London's tallest building - The Shard, has been awarded an honorary degree by Northumbria University in England.

Roma Agrawal, 39, was conferred the degree of Doctor of Science in recognition of her career as a leading female structural engineer, as well as for her work in striving to promote engineering, scientific and technical careers to young people and under-represented groups.

"It's a real honour and joy to receive this award from Northumbria University, a place that I hold close to my heart," Agrawal said after receiving the award.

Agrawal's first job after graduating from university was to design and build the distinctive footbridge that crosses Newcastle Central Motorway. "I often refer to the footbridge, which was my first ever engineering project, as my baby, so it means a lot to me to come back here and receive this generous recognition," the award-winning engineer, author and broadcaster, said.





Sharad Pawar warns Karnataka Chief Minister of repercussions

BORDER SKIRMISHES

BLAMING BOMMAI WHILE REFERRING TO THE ATTACKS ON VEHICLES IN THE BORDER AREAS, PAWAR CALLED FOR AN URGENT AND AMICABLE SOLUTION TO THE ISSUE BY THE CHIEF MINISTERS OF BOTH THE STATES. THE NCP SUPREMO PLAYED BOMMAI'S STATEMENTS STAKING CLAIM TO MORE VILLAGES FROM MAHARASHTRA, AND CONTINUOUSLY TALKING ON THE TICKLISH ISSUE WHICH HAS FLARED UP SENTIMENTS IN THE BOUNDARY DISTRICTS.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As stray incidents of violence were reported in some areas along the Maharashtra-Karnataka border, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar said that "an atmosphere of fear" has been created in the boundary villages owing to the statements of Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, here on Tuesday.

As per reports, stones were pelted at some trucks and private vehicles coming to Maharashtra near a toll-post in Belgaum allegedly by some activists of Kannada Rakshana Vedike, which evoked protests in this state.

In retaliation, supporters of Shiv Sena (UBT) smeared black and saffron paint on buses from Karnataka and a group of activists said they would go to the border areas soon to express solidarity with the Marathi-speaking population there.

Giving an ultimatum to Bommai, Pawar said if the disturbed situation is not brought under control within 48 hours, then he would be compelled to visit the affected areas.



"Maharashtra has maintained restraint for so long, but people will not keep quiet... if these attacks don't halt within 48 hours, we will have to take a different stand. Then the Karnataka CM will be responsible for the consequences," Pawar said.

The senior politician urged both Bommai and Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde to sit and hammer

out the issue with proper coordination to prevent the situation from escalating.

Condemning the violence in Belgaum on Tuesday, Pawar urged the Maharashtra MPs -- who are planning to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah -- to convey that if anybody attempts to take the law in their hands, then the Centre shall be blamed.

VIOLENCE IN BELAGAVI; OVER 100 DETAINED

Bengaluru: The protests by Kannada activists around the issue of border row between Maharashtra and Karnataka took a violent turn on Tuesday after trucks bearing Maharashtra registration number plates were attacked by an angry mob.

The Karnataka police took president of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, Narayana Gowda, and hundreds of workers into custody following the violence.

According to the police, the activists who had arrived from various districts across the state had hurled stones at five trucks moving towards Maharashtra.

They climbed on to the trucks and shouted slogans against Maharashtra politicians. They also plucked out the registration plates and painted the vehicles black.

The protesters climbed on police vehicles with Kannada flags and raised slogans.

The activists have planned a big procession and rally in Belagavi city and also wanted to prevent the entry of Maharashtra ministers. As Maharashtra ministers called off their visit, the police in Karnataka, prevented the Kannada activists from entering Belagavi city to maintain law and order. Belagavi city has a large number of Marathi speaking population. BJP general secretary and legislator C.T. Ravi said Maharashtra will not get an inch of land from Karnataka.



Sena (UBT) activists paint Karnataka buses with "Jai Maharashtra" in Pune



Pune | Agencies

Amid a simmering border dispute between Maharashtra and Karnataka, activists of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena faction on Tuesday sprayed black and orange paints on at least three Karnataka state transport buses in Swargate area of Pune city.

They also wrote "Jai Maharashtra" on these buses. A local leader of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) faction confirmed they painted the buses.

Workers of the Shiv Sena (UBT) faction sprayed at least two-three buses of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) with black paint. They also used an orange spray to write "Jai Maharashtra" on these buses.

"We have detained four to five people who painted the buses," a police officer said.

The border issue dates back to 1957 after the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines.

Maharashtra laid claim to Belagavi, which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency as it has a sizable Marathi-speaking population. It also laid claim to 814 Marathi-speaking villages which are currently part of Karnataka.

Belagavi district administration in Karnataka on Monday issued orders barring entry of the two Maharashtra ministers and leaders to the city. Prohibitory orders were issued under section 144 of CrPC, barring their entry, besides that of an MP, who are members of the Maharashtra High Power Committee on the Border Dispute.

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai recently sought a merger of "Kannada-speaking" areas in Maharashtra's Akalkot and Solapur and had also said some villages in Jat taluka in Sangli district wanted to join the southern state.

Maharashtra Government unconstitutional: Team Thackeray in Supreme Court

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

The Uddhav Thackeray-led faction of the Shiv Sena on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that a "completely unconstitutional government is being run" in Maharashtra.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha said it will hear a batch of petitions on the Maharashtra political crisis on January 13 as it will not be possible for the five-judge Constitution bench to sit next week, which will be for miscellaneous matters.

It said, "In next week it won't be possible to take up the matter as it will be a miscellaneous week. It will not be possible for five-judges to sit in a constitution bench during next week. We will take up the matter on January 13, 2023."

The top court made the remark after senior advocate Devadatt Kamat, appearing for the Uddhav faction said, "There is some urgency in the matter as a completely unconstitutional government is being run in the state." The bench



said that on January 13, it will take up the matter.

Kamat requested the court to at least keep the matters for directions and hearing may commence on January 13.

The bench said, "Yes, we will commence the hearing on that day." On November 1, the top court had said that it will hear the batch of pleas on the Maharashtra political crisis filed by the Shiv Sena factions

led by Thackeray and Eknath Shinde on November 29, when it is likely to issue some directions.

The five-judge bench headed by the CJI had asked both the parties to file their written submissions and a joint compilation on the issues to be adjudicated by the constitution bench.

On August 23, a three-judge bench of the top court headed by then chief justice N V Ramana had formulated several questions of law and referred to a five-judge bench the petitions filed by the factions raising several constitutional questions related to defection, merger and disqualification.

The top court had ordered the listing of petitions before the constitution bench and directed the Election Commission not to pass any orders on the Shiv Sena faction's plea that it be considered the real Shiv Sena and granted the party's poll symbol.

It had said the batch of petitions raise important constitutional issues relating to the 10th schedule of the Constitution pertaining to disqualification, power of the Speaker and Governor and judicial review.

Ex-Maha Minister Malik still possesses "Tainted Property": special Court

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik "is in continuous possession of tainted property" through a firm, owned by his family, a special court held while denying him bail last week in an alleged money laundering case linked to a land deal in which fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim and his aides were involved.

Prima facie, there was evidence to indicate that there was a "conspiracy" between Hasina Parkar (Ibrahim's sister), Salim Patel (alleged associate of Ibrahim), and Malik to grab the land owned by Munira Plumber and her mother Mariyum Goawala, said R N Rokade, special judge for cases under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The judge rejected Malik's bail plea on November 30. A detailed order was made available on Tuesday.

The Enforcement Directorate arrested Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Malik in February this year.

He is in judicial custody and currently undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Mumbai. The court in its order said, "Having regard to the statements recorded under Section 50 of the PMLA pertaining to the conspiracy for usurpation/acquisition of prime property - Goawala Compound - and the material collected during the investigation, I am inclined to hold that the applicant is in continuous possession of the tainted property



through Solidus Investments Private Limited." Solidus Investments company is owned by the family members of Malik.

The judge said considering the role attributed to the applicant (Malik) and the prima facie material placed on record, he was of the considered view that the applicant failed to "satisfy twin conditions for enlargement on bail" as per provisions of the PMLA.

The court held that "prima facie, there is evidence to indicate that there was a conspiracy" between the dead Hasina Parkar, Salim Patel, and Malik to grab the land owned by Munira Plumber and her mother Mariyum Goawala. The court further said having regard to the entire gamut of the circumstances and transactions entered into by Salim Patel and the applicant, it was of the "considered view that the Enforcement Directorate is justified in invoking provisions of the PMLA."

4 FILMED WITH SWORDS AT BIRTHDAY PARTY ARRESTED

Mumbai: Police have arrested four persons, including two builders, for allegedly wielding swords during a function in Maharashtra's Thane district, an official said on Tuesday. On December 3, a video went viral on social media wherein a person was seen cutting his birthday cake with a sword and three others wielding the weapons, the city police said in an official release. The Shil-Daighar police then carried out a probe into it and registered three different offences under relevant provisions of the Arms Act and the Indian Penal Code. The police probe team worked on various inputs and arrested the four on Monday in connection with the possession and wielding of swords, the release said.

The accused included two builders aged 35 and 40, a 38-year-old auto-rickshaw driver, and a 23-year-old local resident, the police said.

VIDYUT CELEBRATES PRE-BIRTHDAY EVENT WITH FANS WHO TATTOOED HIS NAME, CYCLED ACROSS INDIA

Mumbai: Actor Vidyut Jammwal, who is known for his kickass action and daredevil stunts, celebrated a pre-birthday event with his fans on Tuesday. The actor spent the day organising a meet and greet with his superfans at a hotel in Juhu. Talking about the event, Vidyut said, "I am ever grateful for the love and dedication I get from this family, they give me a lot of strength. I wanted to do something special for them since they have put so much faith in me. I love loving people who love me." Among the fans, 3 of them had the actor's name tattooed for his birthday and there was one who cycled all the way from Panipat just to meet the actor. The actor celebrates his birthday on December 10.

The actor mentioned, "These people got my name tattooed for my birthday and rode on a bicycle for 1600 kms to meet me, so I wanted to give back and wanted to spend some quality time with them."

Work on Dr Ambedkar's memorial in Mumbai to be completed expeditiously: CM Shinde

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday said the work to set up an international standard memorial of Dr B R Ambedkar at the Indu Mill Compound in Mumbai will be completed at the earliest. It will be a magnificent monument which the world will envy, he said.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Addressing a function after paying floral tributes to Ambedkar on his death anniversary at his memorial 'Chaityabhoomi' in Dadar area here, Shinde also said all memories and history pertaining to the architect of the Constitution will be preserved.

Apart from the CM, Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and other state leaders also paid homage to Ambedkar at 'Chaityabhoomi', located at the Shivaji Park in Dadar.

Shinde said Dr Ambedkar's memorial being built on the Indu Mill land (near Chaityabhoomi in Dadar) is a



magnificent divine monument which the "world will envy" and it will be completed at the earliest.

Ambedkar's house 'Rajgruh' in Dadar is a "historic treasure", he said. All the things related to Dr

Ambedkar there will be preserved, and the place of Dr Ambedkar's (another) memorial at Lower Parel in Mumbai will be inspected, he said. "Legends create history, but Babasaheb changed the history by instilling self-

respect among those who were living disrespectful lives," Shinde said. On the occasion, Fadnis said the message of equality, brotherhood and humanity given by Dr Ambedkar is the message of welfare of the world.

Man duped of Rs 50.68 lakh by online fraudsters



Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 28-year-old employee of a software company was allegedly duped of Rs 50.68 lakh by online fraudsters who lured him with promise of good returns in an investment scheme, police said on Tuesday.

Based on a complaint lodged by the victim, the cyber department of the police registered a case recently, an official said.

The complainant had come across an advertisement online about good investment opportunities in November 2020 and after he uploaded his mobile number on the site, he started receiving calls from the product manager of a Chennai-based company, the official said. The caller told the complainant that their company

was in the business of agricultural products and has a tie-up with a firm in Nigeria which helps them earn 15 per cent profit, he said.

The victim later got a call from another person who explained about various schemes, following which he invested Rs 1 lakh, the official said.

The complainant has claimed that he received Rs 16,000 for the first time in January 2021, and he invested Rs 40 lakh after taking a loan. By June 2022, the victim had invested Rs 76.11 lakh and received Rs 25.24 lakh, he said. When the victim sought the remaining Rs 50.86 lakh to repay the loan he had taken, he was threatened. On realising that he had been duped, the complainant approached the police, the official said.



Julia Roberts wears a gown with George Clooney's framed pictures

Los Angeles | Agencies

If you can't do what Julia Roberts did for her BFF George Clooney, are you even a BFF? 'Erin Brockovich' star Julia Roberts wore a gown covered with photos of Hollywood star George Clooney. The two have worked together in many movies like 'Ocean's Eleven', 'Ocean's Twelve', 'Money Monster' and 'Ticket to Paradise'. The 55-year-old actress made her fun fashion statement to show support for George, 61 at the Kennedy Center Honours ceremony in Washington DC. Her dress featured framed snaps of the actor throughout his career, dating from his early days as Doug Ross on ER. The actress rounded up her look with a black jacket. George won a lifetime achievement honour for his role in US cultural life. Julia appeared in the first two instalments of 'Oceans' franchise as Tess Ocean, with George playing her on-screen husband Danny Ocean. The latter character appeared in three films as part of the series.



ELIZABETH TAYLOR'S DIAMOND WAS OWNED BY EX-WIFE OF A NAZI

Los Angeles | Agencies

One of actress Elizabeth Taylor's diamonds was owned by the ex-wife of former Nazi war criminal Alfred Krupp. Actor Richard Burton, who married and divorced the actress twice, bought the Asscher-cut stone for \$305,000 in 1968, and it's now been revealed that the diamond was nicknamed the Krupp as it was once owned by Vera Krupp, the former wife of Nazi war criminal Alfred Krupp. In extracts from Kate Andersen Brower's book 'Elizabeth Taylor: The Grit and Glamour of an Icon', which is being serialised in The Times newspaper, Ward Landrigan, the head of Sotheby's jewellery department, says: "After an auction I always took my staff over to the bar next door from our New York office, and we were sitting there having a drink and it came on the radio that Elizabeth Taylor had bought the diamond. I said, 'Oh man, that's so cool!'" "About 20 minutes later someone came over from the office and said, 'Elizabeth wants the diamond now.' I said, 'Where is she?' They said, 'She's in London. Her people have booked you on a flight. Go.'" Taylor also pointed out the irony of her owning a former Nazi's diamond, after she converted to Judaism in 1959. She joked: "When it came up for auction in the late 1960s, I thought how perfect it would be if a nice Jewish girl like me were to own it." Despite the diamond's price and history, it did not impress the late Princess Margaret when she and Elizabeth met at a party in London. Margaret said: "My dear, that ring is positively vulgar." However, Taylor had the last laugh when the royal had a change of heart and wanted to try it on. The Hollywood icon replied: "Of course. Not quite so vulgar now, is it?"



ROBERT DOWNEY JR. REACTS TO QUENTIN TARANTINO'S MARVEL CRITICISM

Chadwick Boseman is Black Panther, Captain America is the star, or Thor is the star but they are not movie stars

Los Angeles | Agencies

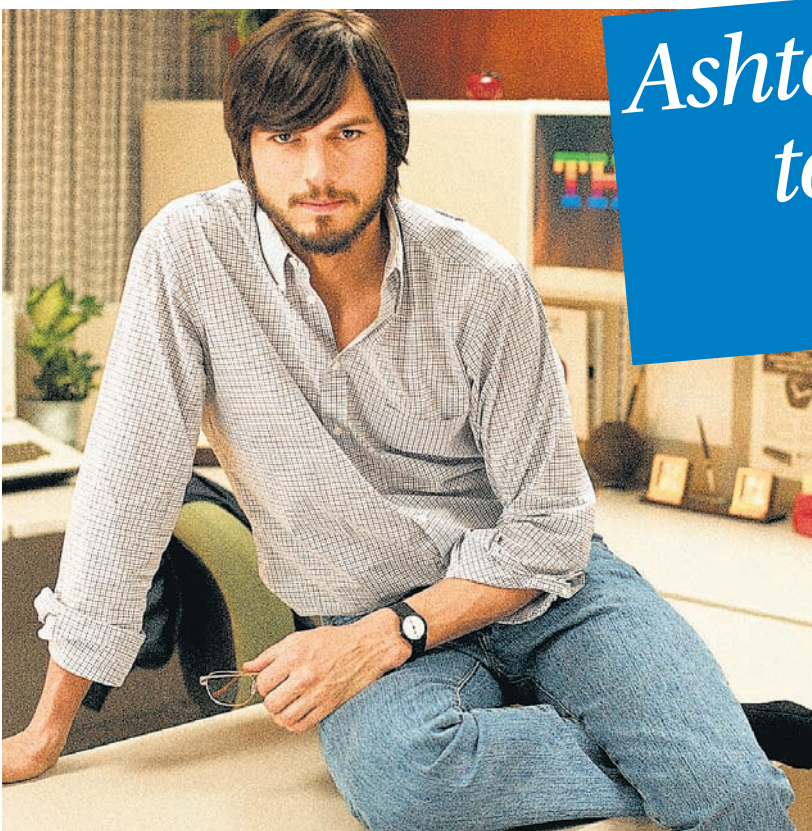
Actor Robert Downey Jr. has spoken up on the most recent attack at Marvel Cinematic Universe by filmmaker Quentin Tarantino. In an interview about the Netflix documentary about his father Robert Downey Sr., the 'Iron Man' actor fought back at Quentin Tarantino's claims that Marvel actors "are not movie stars." "I think our opinions on these matters say a lot about us. I think that we are in a time and place that I unwittingly contributed to, where IP has taken precedence over principle and personality. But it's a double-edged sword," he said. The 57-year-old further stressed that things evolved over time and one must embrace the change. Downey Jr was asked what he misses the most about being the centre of the Marvel Universe. He responded: "What I miss most? Being in the trenches with Kevin Feige throughout; the beginning with Jon Favreau, it's like a beautiful dream now; the middle, with Shane Black on 'Iron Man 3', we'd just had Exton and shot it mostly in Wilmington, NC," Downey said. "It was idyllic and subversive. And 'The End', when I realised I'd made so many close friends in the MCU cast, and the Russo Brothers helping me embrace Tony's arc." Tarantino criticised the Marvelisation of Hollywood during his appearance on '2 Bears, 1 Cave' podcast last month. "You have all these actors who have become famous playing these characters," he said. "But they're not movie stars. Right? Captain America is the star. Or Thor is the star. I mean, I'm not the first person to say that. I think that's been said a zillion times... But it's like, you know, it's these franchise characters that become a star. Pushing back on his pal and frequent collaborator's criticism, he said, "It takes an actor to be those particular characters, and the sign of movie stardom has always been, what, asses in seats? What are we talking about?" The 57-year-old added, "That's not a big controversy for me to know that apparently these actors are movie stars. Chadwick Boseman is Black Panther. You can't refute that, and he's a movie star."

Los Angeles | Agencies

Filmmaker Gil Kenan will be directing 'Ghostbusters: Afterlife' sequel with the previous cast returning. Insiders add that the 'Ghostbusters: Afterlife' ensemble that includes Paul Rudd and Carrie Coon is on board to return. "It's an absolute honour to pick up the proton pack and step behind the camera for the next chapter of the Spengler family saga," said Kenan. "I just wish I could go back to 1984 and tell the kid in the sixth row of the Mann Valley West that one day he was going to get to direct a Ghostbusters film." While not much is known about the sequel, but sources say the plan is to return to New York City and the iconic firehouse made famous in the original Ghostbusters films. It is slated for a December 2023 release. "A few years ago, my father handed me the keys to Ecto-1, and together we made 'Ghostbusters: Afterlife,'" said Reitman. "Words will never express how grateful I am to have made a film with my father by my side. It's now time to hand those keys to my creative partner and fellow Ghostbuster Gil Kenan, a brilliant director who will keep the Spengler spirit alive. I can only hope to provide him the same procedural care and support that my father showed me." After the success of 'Ghostbusters: Afterlife', Reitman and Kenan signed an overall producing deal with Sony Pictures and quickly began working on the script for the next pic. Production now is being eyed for the top of 2023, with casting underway for some new roles to be added to the ensemble. Kenana has directed such films as Monster House, City of Ember and last year's 'A Boy Called Christmas'. He earned Best Animated Feature Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for 'Monster House'.



'GHOSTBUSTERS: AFTERLIFE' SEQUEL TAPS GIL KENAN TO DIRECT



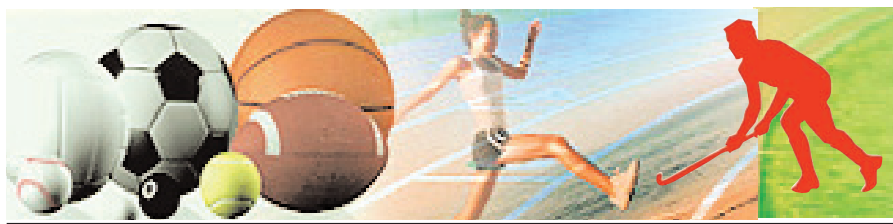
Ashton Kutcher was desperate to 'reclaim' health after suffering rare disease

Angeles | Agencies

Actor Ashton Kutcher was desperate to "reclaim his health" after losing his vision when he was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease. The star waged a year-long battle with the autoimmune disease vasculitis in 2019 which left him unable to see, hear or walk and explained that he just "woke up one day" with an array of problems. He said: "I woke up one day and was having vision issues, could hardly see. Knocked out my hearing, which threw off my equilibrium, my balance and I couldn't walk. I had vasculitis that you're very very aware. There's a standard you become accustomed to in your life, like being able to see clearly. And then suddenly you can't

see, like you have this occlusion and you can't see. And then, like, 'Why are you not f***** talking louder because I can't hear you?' You want to reclaim the health that you once had!" The 'Dude, Where's My Car?' actor, who managed to complete a marathon in New York City last month, went on to explain that he now has a mental attitude towards life since he made a full recovery which enables him to keep going. Speaking on the premiere episode of Paramount+'s new health series, 'The Checkup with Dr. David Agus', he added: "Part of it is this mental thing I have around achieving a full comeback from waking up at the hospital. I was unable to walk and I was like, wait a second, if I can go from not being able to walk to running a marathon in a three-year span, then I can let that be a part of the past and be like, 'I'm back. I'm good.'"





FIFA WORLD CUP

MOROCCO STUN SPAIN VIA PENALTIES TO REACH QUARTERFINALS



Doha | Agencies
Resilient Morocco shocked a bungling Spain 3-0 in a FIFA World Cup Round of 16 match decided via a penalty shootout here on Tuesday. With the surprising victory, Morocco became the only African and Arab nation to reach the quarterfinals in Qatar. Spanish team members and fans were devastated at the end of the shootout at the Education City Stadium in the Qatari capital when their team failed to convert even one shot from the spot -- Morocco goalkeeper Yassine Bounou saved efforts by Carlos Soler and Sergio

Busquets while Pablo Sarabia struck the post. In contrast, Abdelhamid Sabiri and Hakim Ziyech scored theirs and though Badr Benoun was thwarted by Unai Simon, Achraf Hakimi sealed a maiden entry in the World Cup quarterfinals for Morocco when he sent Spain's keeper the wrong way. Spain, the 2010 champions became another major European casualty after Belgium and Germany crashed out, with the former succumbing to Morocco in a Group stage match. Both teams took several shots at the goal during regulation time but were unable to make a dent in the score-

BRAZIL CRUISE PAST S.KOREA 4-1; SET UP LAST 8 CLASH WITH CROATIA



Mukesh Sharma | Doha: A fabulous show of football by Brazil sent South Korea packing in their FIFA World Cup 2022 Round of 16 match at the 974 Stadium in Doha on Monday. The Koreans were completely outplayed by the Brazilian side in the first half as the South Americans scored 4 goals in a span of 29 minutes. The Asian side could salvage its reputation in the second half, but just, with the help of a 76th minute goal. The match ended 4-1 with Brazil set to take on Croatia in a quarter final clash. The men in yellow began the assault on their Asian rivals when Vinicius Junior, assisted by Neymar Jr netted home in the seventh minute by a right foot shot. As a sea of yellow cheered their side incessantly in the 40,000-capacity stadium made with shipping containers, Brazil scored the second goal with the help of a penalty taken by Neymar Jr in the 13th minute. Brazil's third goal came in the 29th minute when Richarlison shot from the centre of the box to make it 3-0. He was assisted by Thiago Silva. Lucas Paqueta, assisted by Vinicius Junior, made no mistake in the 36th minute to make it 4-0 for the South American side. Several South Korean fans left the stadium in tears as their team became the last Asian side to exit from the tournament.

I-League

Real Kashmir beat Sreenidi Deccan 2-1



Srinagar | Agencies
Super-sub Ibrahim Nurudeen's brace helped Real Kashmir beat Sreenidi Deccan 2-1 in a sixth-round tie of the I-League 2022-23 at the TRC Stadium and continue their unbeaten run in the tournament, here on Tuesday. After trailing until the hour mark through Asheer Akhtar's early goal for Sreenidi Deccan, the Snow Leopards completed a sensational comeback in the final minute of the game thanks to substitute striker Nurudeen's two goals. Real Kashmir began the

first half on an attacking note. Somewhat against the run of play, Sreenidi Deccan took the lead in the 12th minute after a well-worked corner-kick taken by Faysal Shayeesteh was flicked onto the far post by the captain David Castaneda. It found Asheer Akhtar, who volleyed it into an open net. Real Kashmir pushed hard for the equaliser and went close to scoring in the 26th minute. Real Kashmir began the second half just like they ended the first one. Ibrahim Nurudeen, who had made a positive impact from the bench in his previous outing, was brought into the game

for Nuhu. At the hour mark, Real Kashmir received a penalty kick. Pulamte's shot from inside the box was handled by Sreenidi defender Awal in his attempt to block the effort. Nurudeen stepped up to take the penalty, sending Lamba the wrong way to bag the equaliser for the hosts. The drama was far from over though as Ibrahim Nurudeen won it for Real Kashmir right at the death. Wadudu sent a chipped ball for the striker in the box, who unleashed a sensational half-volley into the top corner, leaving Lamba with no chance in the Sreenidi Deccan goal.

BWF World Tour Finals

Prannoy clubbed with Olympic champion Axelsen, Naraoka, Lu in Group A

Team Absolute | New Delhi
Prannoy HS, India's lone entry into the year-ending BWF World Tour Finals 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand is keen on ending the year on a high. The World No.12, playing in his first year-end tournament, has been clubbed in Group A along with Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark, Japan's Kodai Naraoka and China's Lu Guang Zu. Prannoy, seeded third, will fancy his chances of making it to the semifinals from the group stage, which starts on Wednesday. P.V Sindhu is the lone Indian shuttler to win the prestigious season-ending championships in 2018.



World No.12 Prannoy has reinvented himself this year with some power-packed performances, which helped him regain his position in the top 15 of BWF World Rankings almost after four years. Prannoy helped the

TENNIS: SUHAS SOMA SCORES UPSET WIN TO ENTER QUARTERS AT ASIAN JUNIOR TOUR U-16

Bengaluru: Suhas Soma shunted out second seed Aditeey Singh Jadon and stormed into the quarterfinals of the Bren Asian Junior Tour 16 & Under, an event on the Asian Tennis Federation Tour, here on Tuesday. In the pre-quarterfinals here on Tuesday, the 15-year-old Suhas scored a brisk 6-2, 6-1 victory over the fancied player. In another upset victory, P. Loganathan blanked fourth seed Rahul Lokesh 6-0, 3-0 before the latter retired hurt. Meanwhile in the Girls' singles category, barring the top two seeds, the other seeds struggled to get through to the last eight with two of them succumbing to their respective lesser-known opponents. Amongst the notable upsets, Harshini Nagaraj sent home the fifth seed Sejal Gopal Bhutada with a 7-6 (6), 6-2 victory.

Peru Para-Badminton Int'l

Mandeep shocks world champion Oksana; young Nehal wins two gold medals

Team Absolute | New Delhi
Para shuttler Mandeep Kaur registered a commanding win over world champion Oksana Kozyna while Nehal Gupta claimed two gold medals as the Indian team signed off with a total of 14 medals at the Peru Para-Badminton International 2022 in Lima, Peru. Overall, India claimed six gold, one silver and seven bronze medals to end the year on a strong note. Mandeep, who lost to Oksana Kozyna in the semifinals of the World Championships in Tokyo last month, produced a dominating show to defeat and exact revenge against the Ukrainian 21-11, 21-11 in 30 minutes. Mandeep along with Kelly Edith Ari Escalante lost to senior compatriot Parul Dalsukhbhai Parmar



and Vaishali Nilesh Patel 21-17, 21-19 in the final. On the other hand,

17-year-old Gupta came out with an impressive show to clinch two gold medals in men's singles SL3 and men's doubles SL3-SL4 events, the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) informed in a release on Tuesday. There was more joy for Team India as Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan, another promising star from the Indian Para-Badminton circuit, surprised World Championships silver medalist Peru's Giuliana Poveda Flores 21-6, 21-13 in women's singles SH6 finals to wrap up the year with gold. Sivan had three bronze medals at the Worlds. Meanwhile, World Championship bronze medalist Sukant Kadam overcame Singapore's Chee Hiong Ang 21-14, 21-15 for the men's singles SL4 gold medal.

U-16 Women's Hockey League

HAR Academy, SAI, and Pritam Academy win on Day 2

Lucknow | Agencies

HAR Hockey Academy, Sports Authority of India 'A', Pritam Hockey Academy and Sports Authority of Gujarat registered victories in their respective games on the second day of Khelo India Women's Hockey League 2022 (U-16) (Final Phase) here. In Pool A, HAR Hockey Academy secured a comprehensive 11-0 victory against Gumanhera Riser's Academy in the first encounter of the day. Preeti (6', 7', 9', 36', 44') led the offence with five goals. Seema (12', 15') netted twice while Diksha (25'), Sania (33'), Aditi (41') and Anjali (52') all scored a goal each. Sports Authority of India 'A' replicated the scoreline of the first match, with Kajal (6', 9', 15', 42') scoring four goals and Tanuja (21'), Sonali Ekka (25', 34'), Binati (47', 50'), and Karuna (60')



scoring to complete an 11-goal victory over Smart Hockey Academy, Raipur.

Pritam Hockey Academy defeated Salute Hockey Academy by an 8-0 score in Pool B. Nidhi (18', 20'), Priyanka (39', 53') and Manjinder (30', 51') smashed a brace while Tamanna (35'), Riya (37') scored one goal each. The second match in Pool B had Sports Authority of Gujarat beating Bhai Bhelo Hockey Academy Bhagta by a 6-0 scoreline. The goal scorers were Bariya Ami Dhanshayanbhai (1', 53'), Taral Parvati (15'), Gamar Parvati (43') and Kodarvi Twinkle (48', 57'). The Pool A clash between Citizen Hockey XI and Anantapur Hockey Academy was forfeited in favour of Citizen Hockey XI. Similarly, the Pool B clash between Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy and Sports Authority of India 'B' was forfeited in favour of Sports Authority of India 'B'.

MAJOR BLOW TO PAKISTAN'S WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL HOPES AFTER LOSS TO ENGLAND

Rawalpindi | Agencies

Pakistan's 74-run loss to Ben Stokes' England in the opening Test here on Monday has severely jeopardised the hosts' chances of securing a World Test Championship (WTC) final berth. Pakistan were placed fifth in the ICC World Test Championship standings, but had a realistic chance of making the final because of the five home Tests against England and New Zealand. However, a below-par performance on the final day at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium saw them lose their position of strength. While England are virtually out of contention to reach the WTC final, the loss is a significant blow to Pakistan. Wins for Australia and India in their respective series' would see

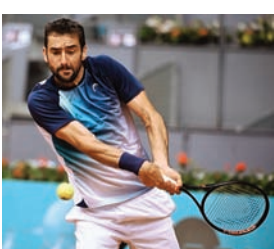


Pakistan miss out. Pakistan's loss also puts India in control to reach the WTC final given that they can now secure their place even if they lose one of the Tests against Australia at home, provided they sweep Bangladesh, reports ICC. If Australia win the remaining Test against West Indies and at least two Tests against South Africa, they would still be well placed to make the final.

Hrishikesh Kanitkar appointed batting coach of Indian women's team, Powar to join NCA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The BCCI on Tuesday appointed former player Hrishikesh Kanitkar as the new batting coach of the India women's team and he will join the side from the upcoming five-match T20I series against Australia starting December 9, with former head coach Ramesh Powar switching to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) as spin bowling coach. Kanitkar, who played two Tests and 34 ODIs for India between 1997 and 2000 and has over 10,000 first-class runs



under his belt, was part of the coaching staff under VVS Laxman on India Men's tour of New Zealand last month, with Rahul Dravid and his team opting to take a break post the T20 World Cup. The 48-year-old brings significant experience to the job, having

coached at various levels over the last seven years. He coached Goa in the Ranji Trophy and then had a productive three-year run with Tamil Nadu. He was also the coach of India's U19 team, which won the ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup this year. On the other hand, Powar moves over to men's cricket as a part of the restructured model of the BCCI. The 44-year-old will work alongside Laxman, who is the current head of cricket at the NCA after Rahul Dravid vacated the post to become India men's team's head coach.

Tata Open Maharashtra Cilic leads field alongside 16 top-100 players as 5th edition is set for kick-off

Pune | Agencies

World No.17 Marin Cilic will headline a strong singles field at the fifth edition of the Tata Open Maharashtra along with 16 other top-100 players when South Asia's only ATP 250 event returns to the opening week of the calendar and kicks off at the Balewadi Stadium here on December 31. The 2014 US Open Champion, Cilic has won this tournament twice, in 2009 and 2010, and also reached the semifinals in 2018. He would look to add another trophy to his cabinet. The last two editions of the tournament were held in the first week of February. However, now the players can gear up for the season's first Grand Slam - Australian Open, by competing in Pune. MSLTA will host the tournament, which is



sponsored by Tata Group, in association with the Government of Maharashtra. Apart from Croatia's Cilic, the singles main draw will feature five other top-50 players -- Netherlands' Botić van der Zandschulp (ranked 35), Finland's Emil Ruusuvuori (ranked 40), Argentine Sebastian Baez (ranked 43), American Jensen Brooksby (48) and Slovakia's Alex Molcan (50). The highly-competitive field also consists of 11 other top-100 players with the cut-off standing at 115 for direct entry. Zandschulp competed in all four Majors in the 2022 season, losing the Wimbledon pre-quarterfinals and the Roland Garros Round of 32 to Rafael Nadal. He also ended as a runner-up at the Munich ATP 250, his best show of the season.



I had fun playing a yesteryears actress: Anushka Sharma

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Anushka Sharma made a special appearance in 'Qala' with the song 'Ghodey Pe Sawaar'.

The actress says she did the number for the fun of it and no other reason whatsoever.

She says, "I did this song for the fun of it. No other reason whatsoever and I enjoyed

myself doing it! I had fun playing a yesteryears actress and I'm really happy to see the reactions from people for my special appearance. I wasn't expecting that people would like it so much but I'm glad that they did and are happy to see me on screen after some-time."

Set in 1930s, 'Qala' is about the tumultuous relationship between an aspiring singer

and her domineering mother. The film stars Tripti Dimri, Swastika Mukherjee, and Babil Khan in his film debut.

On the work front, Anushka will be seen essaying the role of the iconic Indian pace bowler Jhulan Goswami in the much talked about film 'Chakda Xpress'. The film is inspired by the life and times one of Indian women cricketer's most revered cricketer.



MONALISA READ 30 NOVELS TO PLAY AN EROTIC POETESS IN 'HASRATEIN'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Monalisa, who is popular for her work in Bhojpuri cinema, is playing the role of an erotic poetess in the web series 'Hasratein' and says she did a lot of research for her role.

She says: "When I was offered the role, my first notion was to gain as much knowledge about the character that I would be portraying. I took my time, pondered over it, and started with my research."

After doing her research, the 'Nazar' actress arrived at the conclusion that very few female writers explore erotica.

"The conclusion that emerged was a big surprise for me as there were a handful of female writers who explored the genre of erotica," she adds. She reveals further about her research and how she read about 30 novels to understand the genre and her character in a proper way.

"I read close to 30 novels to gain a sound understanding of the genre, but unfortunately, most had the male viewpoint. I was determined to start a conversation around this. So, I discussed it with a small circle of friends. Soon, I realized that all women have their fantasies but are unable to express them. Step by step, I started identifying with Shararat Bai and enjoyed the process of discovering her," she adds.

'Hasratein' showcases the stories of five women who fight with society and their families for their right to find a perfect partner for them.



Malaika Arora has a fear of mouthing dialogues

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Divya Malaika Arora, who is currently seen in her reality show 'Moving In With Malaika'

expresses her fear of mouthing dialogues.

The first episode of the series opens the doors to Malaika Arora's strengths, weaknesses and fears. She speaks her heart

out about her fears and how she tries to overcome them one step at a time.

In a conversation with her manager Ekta, where she asks if Malaika was dodging a movie script because of her fear of acting.

Malaika says, "I am not dodging it... I am just not sure. Honestly, it's not the fear of acting, but more about the discomfort I feel in mouthing dialogues. Standing up in front of people and actually being comfortable about emoting with dialogues is something I have always been a little apprehensive about. I get a little nervous about it... So that's probably why I shy away from it."

She adds: "Over the years there have been loads of scripts that I have seen and read but somewhere I've always stayed away. Well, that's another fear of mine. Even in school, I used to hate when I had to mug up something and say it in public."

"I thought it was the most daunting task. I felt there was so much pressure, that it would make me feel very uneasy. I couldn't eat, sleep or do anything if I had to learn something. So this fear of mine has just always been there."

I feel poetry gives a deeper meaning to life: Saiyami Kher

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Saiyami Kher, who is gearing up for her OTT show 'Faadu: A Love Story', has revealed that her understanding and love for poetry is the prime reason behind her nod to the series. Saiyami portrays the character of Manjiri, a Maharashtra girl, who is quite romantic and loves poetry in the series directed by Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari of 'Bareilly Ki Barfi' fame.

Talking about her character, the actress said, 'Manjiri is a simple girl who loves simple things in life. While we portray a character who is so different from us, we take a lot from our personal experiences. For example, Manjiri loves poetry and so do I.' She then spoke about the writer, who inspires her most, Gulzar - a towering figure of the Hindi film industry with whom she has worked in her debut movie, 'Mirzya'.

"I feel poetry gives a deeper meaning to life. Gulzar Sahab's work is something I absolutely love reading. My bond with him goes back to my first film. I always make sure I go, hear him whenever he has live shows," the actress added. The web-series, which is written by Saumya Joshi, also stars Pavail Gulati and will stream on Sony LIV from December 9.

My love for poetry came in handy for my upcoming show



Shivangi Sharma was pranked upon by DJ Bravo in the Queen's palace in the UK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer Shivangi Sharma, who is known for her song 'Roshni', has collaborated with cricketer-singer DJ Bravo for the song 'Party Party'. Shivangi has shared her experience of working with DJ Bravo, who is known for his aggressive lower-order batting.

Talking about the same, she said, "I have known DJ Bravo for more than six years but we never worked together. This is the first time I worked with him professionally and I just started respecting him even more. He's absolutely a gem and a thorough professional guy. Our call time for the shoot used to be 5.30 a.m. and he used to be ready at 5.15 a.m., despite sleeping for just 2 hours. He was totally jet lagged but his energy on set was out of the world."

Not just punctuality, the cricketer-singer is also a prankster and a funny guy as one can gauge from his on-field demeanour. She further mentioned, "He's a big time prankster and played pranks on me many times on set specially after pack up. So we were shooting in the Palace of Queens in England and there were so many hide-outs in the palace. So just after finishing the shoot we both were going together towards our rooms because I was wearing heels, I was little slow in walking so he reached early and hid himself somewhere and when I was crossing that place he was like

wuhuuuuuu in a loud voice and instead of getting scared, I was laughing." The singer is also gearing up for another song of hers titled 'Same Old Lies'. Talking about the same, she said, "This song is about getting cheated by a guy which is totally relatable to many because it's going on in the society quite a lot and I have experienced it personally too. Most importantly, I shot the song in the US as I literally waited for the fall season to shoot this music video inspired by the song 'Tumhi Dekho Na (KANK)'. I just love the fall season and I made up my mind that I'm going to shoot one of my songs in America during Autumn."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Divya Agarwal