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PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S PROMISES EMPTY LIKE HIS DONATION ENVELOPES: PRIYANKA GANDHI



Jaipur | Agencies

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's promises are as hollow and empty as his donation envelopes which he deposited some months ago at a Rajasthan temple, the envelope only had Rs 21 in it.

Priyanka Gandhi said that all the promises made by the Prime Minister and his party are hollow. "Kyun Ki, Modi Ji Ka Lifafa Khaali Hai" (Modi Ji's envelope is empty), she said.

Addressing people in Jhunjhunu, many of whom have a Defence background, Priyanka spoke about her late grandmother Indira Gandhi

and her late father Rajiv Gandhi, and referred to their martyrdom. She said, "My grandmother used to say whenever you are confused, you should go to the public, which will guide you."

"I am also a martyr's daughter. I am the granddaughter of a martyr. I know the value of sacrifice given for the country," Priyanka said.

Referring to a number of public welfare schemes in Rajasthan, which have reached the grassroots and touched millions of lives, she cautioned people against the lies and fake promises of the BJP. Referring to a recent appeal by urging people to vote for him, she pointed out that Modi is not going to be the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, as he is the Prime Minister of the country.

She said that the BJP in Rajasthan is a divided

house and the party is busy planning to marginalise senior leaders by sending them to the BJP 'Marg Darshak Mandal', an organisation within the BJP for superannuated and sidelined leaders.

Lauding the Congress government in Rajasthan led by Ashok Gehlot, she said, the public welfare schemes implemented here were exclusive for the state, as no such welfare schemes existed anywhere else in the country.

She urged people that if they want to continue to get the benefits from the government schemes, they must vote for the Congress in the upcoming elections. She warned that the BJP will again raise the divisive issues of religion and caste at the time of election to divert public attention.

She said that people should ask them (BJP)

what they have actually done for people. She said the BJP has only given unemployment and inflation to the country while all sources of employment had been finished. She said the PSUs, which were one of the major sources of employment which also provided reservation, were handed over to a select few friends of the Prime Minister.

She said that agriculture which was another main source of employment is no more remunerative. She said that the GST and demonetisation had destroyed the small trade which otherwise also was one of the main sources of employment.

The Congress General Secretary said that when the employees demanded the old pension scheme or farmers sought debt waiver, the government claimed it did not have money.

The statehood of Jammu and Kashmir should be returned as the people are unhappy : Satya Pal Malik



2019 attack.

Speaking on Pulwama, the Congress leader said as soon as he learnt about the incident, he went to the airport to pay his respects to the martyrs. "I was locked inside a room. I felt like it was an event. PM Modi was there. I had to fight my way to get out of the room. It was quite distasteful," Rahul Gandhi said.

The former governor said that the Prime Minister should have reached Srinagar.

He further said that on the day of the incident he was shooting in Jim Corbett. Then he called me up in evening and he asked me to not to speak on the issue.

"I told two channels that it was our fault but I was asked to not say this anywhere...I thought my statements might impact the investigation, but there was no investigation. It was used for the purpose of election. On the third day, Prime Minister Modi gave his speech where he used it politically," Malik claimed.

Rahul Gandhi then asked why did the Pulwama incident happen. Malik replied that they (CRPF) had asked for five aircraft. Had he asked me, I would have given those right away as I provided aircraft to students stuck in the snow. He also said that it is easy to get aircraft on rent in Delhi.

"But their application was lying for four months in the Home Ministry. And then it was rejected. The CRPF personnel then took the road which was known to be unsafe," the former governor said.

He also said that the explosive-laden truck that attacked the CRPF vehicle was roaming in the area for around 10-12 days and our system was not good.

"The explosives were sent from Pakistan. The driver and the owner of the vehicle had terrorist records. They were arrested and then released several times. But they were not on the radar of the intelligence and on the day of the incident all the link roads were not sanitised and I was in tears after hearing the news," Malik said.

Rahul Gandhi also talked about the caste-based census and mentioned about his speech in Parliament and asked for Malik's opinion.

Malik said that we need to make it compulsory and make people aware to come into the system.

As the two leaders discussed the Manipur situation, Malik said the government has no control in Manipur. "But it is only for six months. I can give in writing.

They will not come back to power," Malik added.

The Congress leader also said that how the GST and the demonetisation has hurt the businesses in the country.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday shared the interview of former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik in which they discussed Pulwama terror attack, the statehood of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir among others. Malik in his conversation with Rahul Gandhi, on October 14, said that the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir should be returned as the people are unhappy. He also said that the government's lapses led to the February 14, 2019 Pulwama terror attack, in which 40 CRPF troopers were killed. Rahul Gandhi while sharing the post on X, said, "Will this conversation create a stir amid ED-CBI?"

In his conversation with Malik, Rahul Gandhi asked him that during his tenure it was the most complicated time. He said while referring to the revocation of Article 370 and the state being bifurcated as union territory. To this, Malik said, "In my opinion, you cannot keep Jammu and Kashmir by force and through armed forces. You can do anything by winning the trust of the people."

To this Rahul Gandhi again asked him how Jammu and Kashmir will return to normalcy, to which Malik said that the government must restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Revocation of Article 370 and removal of the statehood of the state was most painful for the people. I felt that the government was thinking that the state police will revolt. They never shared it with me. But the fact was that the Jammu and Kashmir Police remained with the government and the police personnel did not even take leave on the occasion of Eid," the former governor said, who is at loggerheads with the BJP.

He also said that the statehood must be returned to Jammu and Kashmir and it is also a promise by Amit Shah to the people in Parliament and hold the election immediately.

Rahul Gandhi said that even the people of Jammu are not happy with the government's decision of taking away the statehood of Kashmir. Malik then said that I don't know why they are not doing it. Now the insurgency has again returned and the terrorist activities have increased.

When Rahul Gandhi asked him about the Pulwama terror attack, Malik blamed the government's lapses for the February 14,



MAHARASHTRA

RISING TRANSFORMING PROSPERING

Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister to launch Developmental Projects Worth Rs. 14,000 Crores

'Nam0 Shetkari Mahasanman Nidhi'

- Envisaged on the lines "Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Yojana"
- Rs. 12,000 to be distributed to each farmer family every year (Rs.6,000 Government of India + Rs.6,000 State Government)
- Rs. 6,900 Crore Provision for the year 2023-24
- Rs. 1,712 Crores to be distributed to 86.6 lakh beneficiary farmers during the launch

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS	Project Cost
The new Darshan Queue complex, state-of-the-art facilities for the devotees	₹ 109 Cr.
Dedication to the Nation : The left bank (85km) canal network of Nilwande Dam	₹ 5177 Cr.
Inauguration of four laning of Sangli to Borgaon section of NH-166 (Package-I)	₹ 1102 Cr.
Dedication to the Nation : Jalgaon to Bhusaval 3 rd & 4 th railway line	₹ 640 Cr.
Dedication to the Nation : Electrification of Kurduwadi-Latur Road railway section	₹ 237 Cr.
Development of Additional Facilities at Manmad gas Terminal, Maharashtra	₹ 221 Cr.
Foundation Stone laying of Maternal & Child Health Wing at Ahmednagar Civil Hospital	₹ 25 Cr.
Inauguration of AYUSH Hospital at Ahmednagar Civil Hospital	₹ 9 Cr.

Distribution of Ayushman Card and Swamitva Card

- Health cover up to 5.00 lakhs per annum to each family
- Commencement of distribution of 1.11 crore Ayushman Cards
- 'Sanad' distribution to beneficiaries under Swamitva Yojana

Venue : Near Shirdi Airport, Kakadi, Tal. Kopergaon, Dist. Ahmednagar.
Time : 3.30 p.m. On Thursday, 26th October, 2023.

Devendra Fadnavis Deputy Chief Minister | Eknath Shinde Chief Minister | Ajit Pawar Deputy Chief Minister

www.mahasamvad.in | MaharashtraDGIPR | MahaDGIPR | Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, Government of Maharashtra

ROC-2023-24/No - 5/C 4450



EX-PRESIDENT KOVIND CHAIRS 2ND MEETING OF 'ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION' COMMITTEE, LAW COMMISSION GIVES PRESENTATION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Former President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday chaired the second meeting of the 'One nation, one election' committee during which the Law Commission gave a presentation.

In a statement, the government said that the high-level committee constituted under the chairmanship of Kovind to examine the issue relating to holding of simultaneous elections in the country and make recommendations thereon held its second meeting here today.

The meeting was also attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Law and Justice, committee members Ghulam Nabi Azad, N. K. Singh, former Chairman, 15th Finance Commission, Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap, former Secretary General, Lok Sabha, Harish Salve, Senior Advocate and Sanjay Kothari, former Chief Vigilance Commissioner.

During the second meeting, Kovind along with the members confirmed the minutes of the first meeting held on September 23 and the action taken on the decisions thereof.



It said that Secretary of the Committee N. Chandra apprised the Committee members about the various follow up actions on decisions taken in the first meeting.

"The Committee was informed that according to the decision taken earlier the HLC has been renamed as 'High Level Committee on One Nation, One Election'. The Committee was also informed that letters have been sent to six national parties, 33 state parties and seven

registered unrecognised parties inviting their suggestions on One nation One Election," it said.

The Secretary further informed the Committee that a website www.onoe.gov.in has also been developed for the One Nation One Election, which besides being a repository of all relevant information on the subject, shall provide a platform for interaction and receiving suggestions from all stakeholders. The website was launched during the

meeting, it said.

"The Law Commission of India made a presentation during the meeting elaborating their suggestions and viewpoints on the issue of simultaneous elections in the country. The law commission was represented by its Chairperson Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, Professor Anand Paliwal, Member and Member Secretary Khetrabasi Biswal," it said.

It said that during the meeting two decisions were unanimously taken by the Committee which included budgetary provision for the committee for current FY -2023-24 being approved and the resignation of Adhir Ranjan Choudhury, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, from the membership of the committee was noted.

Meanwhile, sources said that the law Commission has also given a detailed presentation to the committee about what are the challenges and how the legal framework needs to be structured for implementing the 'one nation, one election'.

The source further said that there was even a detailed discussion on the additional number of electronic voting machines required for the process and how much time it would take to procure them.

NCERT panel for replacing India with Bharat in school textbooks

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A seven-member National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) panel has recommended to replace India with Bharat in school textbooks, committee chairman C I Issac said.

However, the NCERT said the development of new syllabus and textbooks is in the process and for that purpose various Curricular Area Groups of domain experts are being notified by the NCERT. "So, it is too premature to comment on the matter," the NCERT said.

The panel has recommended that Bharat should replace India in NCERT books, which has been approved, Issac said.

It has also sought introduction of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in curriculum for all sub-



jects, and suggested that "classical history" should be introduced in history textbooks, instead of "ancient history".

Padma Shri awardee Issac said that word Bharat finds mention in Vishnu Puran and Sanskrit poet and playwright Kalidas had also used the word Bharat in his works.

He said that the current curriculum details about the country's defeats but not the victories.

Issac said, "why our books did not tell that Indian tribals defeated Afghan invader Muhammad Ghori when he was returning after plundering India."

"The Battle of Colachel (Kulachal) between the Travancore kingdom and the Dutch East India Company in August 1741 which ended Dutch colonial endeavours in the country is missing in the textbooks," he said.

11 minors rescued from Ahmedabad restaurant

Ahmedabad | Agencies

In a crackdown against child labour, a coordinated operation by police and the child rights group, Bachpan Bachao Andolan, led to the rescue of 11 minors from the Iskon Thal restaurant near the SG Highway in Ahmedabad, officials said on Wednesday.

The operation was done on Tuesday. Upon receiving credible information from Damini, an active member of the Bachpan Bachao Andolan with a track record of exposing child labour practices, a team quickly assembled to conduct the raid.

The minors were found working under harsh conditions for extended hours they were being compensated with a meager salary of Rs 8,500 per month per child.

A breakdown of the rescued children revealed four 17-year-olds, six aged 16, and one as young as 13. The Satellite police in



Ahmedabad have since initiated legal actions, arresting the restaurant's manager and filing a complaint against the establishment's owner. The matter was under investigation and there is speculation of bigger organised crime, said sources. More details were awaited.

MVA SLAMS GOVT ON QUOTAS AS MARATHA LEADER AGAIN LAUNCHES HUNGER STRIKE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) attacked the Maharashtra government for not implementing its promise on giving reservations to the Maratha community even as their leader Manoj Jarange-Patil started a fresh fast-unto-death agitation in Jalna on Wednesday.

Congress state President Nana Patole, Nationalist Congress Party Working President Supriya Sule and Shiv Sena-UBT national spokesperson Kihore Tiwari targeted Shiv Sena Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and Deputy CMs of Bharatiya Janata Party Devendra Fadnis and NCP-AP's Ajit Pawar on the Maratha quotas issued that returned to the centre-stage in state politics.

Patole said that before it came to power, the BJP had assured quotas for Marathas, Tribals, Dhangars, OBCs, etc. but despite being in power for 10 years, they have not fulfilled the promise that is now fuelling afresh the Maratha agitation.

"The BJP's attempts to create strife among communities has resulted in a huge outcry from all these sections of society. The CM is unsure whether he will retain his seat, so his words have no relevance, then how can he ensure the promised quotas for the Maratha brethren," demanded Patole.



Sule took a swipe at Shinde who dramatically bowed and vowed before a bust of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at a Dassehra Rally in Mumbai on Tuesday night "to give justice and reservations to the Marathas till the last drop of blood in his body". "Perhaps, he (CM) has some magic wand... Let us see what they now decide on the reservations and whether the decision will come in 24 hours," said Sule, even as Shinde-Fadnis left for New Delhi this evening.

Tiwari said that for the past 40 days, the government has taken "the Marathas for a ride with a big

'jumla' of hollow commitments to give the quotas', but it confused how to go about it now.

"Why did the government not think of this when the Special Session of Parliament was held last month where justice could have been done to Marathas and all other communities clamouring for reservations by raising the ceiling for quotas? It shows that the BJP at the state and Centre are only busy safeguarding their seats and fooling the people," he said. Patole reminded Fadnis how he had promised to give reservations to Marathas in the first cabinet meeting and in one month after becoming CM in 2014, and its now one-and-half-years since he returned to office as Deputy CM.

"Instead, they are consciously trying to create conflicts between the OBCs, Marathas, Dhangars and Tribals, and owing to this 'cheating' of the OBCs for political reservations, even the civic bodies elections are put on hold for past more than one-and-half-years," he said.

Sule accused the double-engine government of 'policy paralysis' and politicising the name of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the question of Maratha quotas, while Tiwari felt that the Shinde-Fadnis-Pawar regime has exposed itself on the issue and "the people will teach them a lesson in the next elections".

Bengal ration distribution scam: ED traces property worth over Rs 100 cr of arrested bizman

Kolkata | Agencies

Enforcement Directorate (ED) sleuths have tracked assets and property worth over Rs 100 crore of Bakibur Rahman, the Kolkata-based businessman arrested recently by it in connection with the multi-crore ration distribution scam in West Bengal.

Agency insiders said that a total of 95 properties registered in the name of Rahman, his family members, relatives and close associates have been traced by the ED sleuths and initial calculations have revealed that the combined value of these assets will be Rs 100 crore.

Investigations have also revealed that even the properties that were registered in the name of family members, relatives and close associates, the actual investments behind it were made by Rahman himself. However, sources added, Rahman is yet to give any satisfactory answer about the sources of the funds



that were invested behind such properties and assets. The assets and properties include around 51 acres of land in several plots scattered over different pockets in the state and majority of which are in Murshidabad and North 24 Parganas district. The assets also include nine residential flats, measuring 7,000 square feet in total, registered in the name of

Rahman.

Apart from that, the central agency sleuths have also traced a hotel, a high-end bar-cum-restaurant and three rice-mills owned by Rahman. Apart from that the ED has also traced two high-end residential flats in Dubai which are also registered in the name of Rahman.

ED sleuths have got definite proof of the hawala route being adopted by the said businessman in purchasing these overseas properties. While these are the assets and properties that have surfaced, the ED sleuths believe that there are more which are yet to surface.

The central agency sleuths have also got some clues of Rahman using the bank accounts of his wife and brother-in-law to divert the proceeds. Several inward and outward remittances in extremely short intervals from these accounts have been traced by the investigating sleuths.

Bengaluru | Agencies

The officials of the Department of Customs in Bengaluru have rummaged through a flight that arrived from Abu Dhabi and recovered one kg of gold bar in a black pouch hidden in the washroom, according to an official statement on Wednesday.

The statement read, "On Oct 24, 2023 officers of Air Customs, Bengaluru rummaged flight EY 238 which had arrived from Abu Dhabi. During rummaging gold paste wrapped in a black pouch was found hidden in the aircraft washroom. 1331.66 grams of gold worth Rs 80,21,920 lakh was recovered."

Earlier, the officers of Bengaluru Air Customs intercepted four passengers who arrived from Kuala Lumpur, Dubai and Colombo on October 22 and seized approximately three kg of gold worth Rs 1.76 crore. Two passengers were arrested and further investigation was on.



On October 21, 1.133 kg gold of value of Rs 67.57 lakh along with one iPhone 14 pro max worth Rs 1.49 lakh were seized by Bengaluru Air Customs from three passengers.

RBI directs private banks to have at least two whole time Directors on boards



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The RBI has directed all private sector banks and wholly-owned subsidiaries of foreign banks to ensure the presence of at least two Whole-Time Directors, including the MD & CEO, on their boards.

The number of whole time Directors (WTDs) shall be decided by the board of the bank by taking into account factors such as the size of operations, business complexity, and other relevant aspects, states the RBI circular issued on Wednesday.

"In compliance to these instructions, banks that currently do not meet the mini-

mum requirement as above are advised to submit their proposals for the appointment of WTD(s) within a period of four months from the date of issuance of this circular," it added. Those banks which do not already have the enabling provisions regarding appointment of WTDs in their Articles of Association may first seek necessary approvals expeditiously, so as to be in a position to comply with the requirements under these instructions. While ensuring compliance to the above instructions, careful consideration shall also be given to meet the requirements under other applicable statutory/regulatory provisions, the circular states.

IMPOSSIBLE TO BREAK RAMANAGARA DISTRICT - KUMARASWAMY TO SHIVAKUMAR

Bengaluru | Agencies

The ongoing fight between JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy and DyCM D.K. Shivakumar over merging of Kanakapura (currently in Ramanagara) with Bengaluru Urban district appears to be intensifying by the day.

Throwing a challenge at the Congress leader Shivakumar, he said, "Even if you take a new birth, you will not succeed in disintegrating Ramanagara district" asserted Kumaraswamy on Wednesday.

Reacting to Shivakumar questioning his senses and common knowledge over the row, Kumaraswamy stated that he won't require the intelligence and sense of robbing the lands from the people, looting hills and minting money by foreign exports and to kill those who come in the way.

"Not only in this lifetime, D.K. Shivakumar must understand that even if he takes birth for seven more times it is impossible to disintegrate Ramanagara district. The district had been formed after careful consideration of convenience and inconveniences of the people. Now, if he claims that he can break the district and join Kanakapura taluk to Bengaluru, the people will resort to agitation," he stated.

The DyCM alleged that Kumaraswamy issues loose statements but his thoughts are different. "What's on his mind? Is it to loot and handover the costly lands of Kanakapura to builders? Or to build a



fortress on the benami lands in Kanakapura?."

Several new districts were created in the state. Has the exercise been futile? They were created considering the interests of the people. There was no vested interest to create new districts. Whose interest is behind the plan to join Kanakapura to Bengaluru? Everyone in Kanakapura knows the truth. Won't the existing prosperity suffice, how much more do you want? Kumaraswamy

questioned. "You (Shivakumar) are reminded of the development of Kanakapura now. Before 1983, how was Kanakapura and Sathanuru? When former PM H.D. Deve Gowda visited after making late former CM Ramakrishna Hegde as a candidate, the situation was such that there was no power connection, there were no roads, or UGD system.

"Deve Gowda then held PWD and Large Irrigation ministries uplifted Kanakapura

and Ramanagara regions. I have continued his work. What is your contribution Shivakumar? Only to fence the lands of the poor and murdering those who came in between, looting granite boulders, pursuing goondagiri. Now, you want to join Kanakapura to Bengaluru and build a mafia. Is that on your mind?" Kumaraswamy charged.

He further stated that Shivakumar does not have the moral right to take the names of great persons who took birth in Ramanagara district.

"You have turned that land into a sinful real estate ground. DyCM Shivakumar, while attending a religious function at Kanakapura on Tuesday, stated that the city of Kanakapura will join Bengaluru and appealed to the people not to sell their lands to people from Bengaluru.

"The people of Kanakapura do not belong to Ramanagara district. They are from Bengaluru district and it must not be forgotten. All villages will be part of Bengaluru one or the other day. Mark my words. Also, I can't discuss making Kanakapura a separate district as well," he maintained.

"I can't deposit money or construct houses for everyone here. God has given me power to increase your prices of property by ten times. The position of DyCM is confined to Bengaluru. I won't hesitate to deliver when it comes to my place. This is the reason I chose to come here despite the important programme in Mysuru," Shivakumar stated.



REAL ANTI-NATIONALS THOSE TOPPLING ELECTED GOVERNMENTS: PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI'S REBUTTAL TO CM EKNATH SHINDE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a fiery response to statements made by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its alliance partners of undermining the principles of democracy and neglecting the constitutional institutions. Chaturvedi's comments came as a rebuttal to CM Shinde's recent remarks about his former boss Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray. Shinde had said: "You (Uddhav Thackeray) backstabbed Bal Thackeray by committing dishonesty with his ideological legacy. I won't be surprised if they ally with terrorist groups like Hamas and Lashkar-e-Taiba for their own selfish motives." Shinde was addressing Dussehra rally of his faction of Shiv Sena on Tuesday, October 25, 2023. "They know that they will lose when the elections will be there. The people of Maharashtra would make them lose," Chaturvedi asserted.



ed. She went on to criticize the BJP and some of its alliance partners. However, she stressed that the real 'anti-nationals' were those who were allegedly toppling democratically elected governments and neglecting the agencies and the Constitution. "In a true sense, the real anti-nationals are those who are toppling

the elected governments and those who are neglecting the agencies and the Constitution, and reducing the rules of democracy. And they are the BJP and their one or two alliance partners," Chaturvedi added. The comments reflect the ongoing political tension between the ruling coalition, which includes the Shiv

Sena (Shinde faction), Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit faction), and BJP, and the opposition Indian National Congress, Shiv Sena (Uddhav faction) and Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar faction) in the state of Maharashtra. The Maha Vikas Aghadi government was formed after the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly elections, and it has faced its share of challenges, including power-sharing dynamics and ideological differences between the coalition partners. As elections draw closer, the political climate in Maharashtra appears to be heating up, with parties on both sides engaging in verbal sparring to assert their positions. Early in the day, Maharashtra opposition leader and Congress leader Vijay Wadetiwar said that Shinde is "speaking all this because of the support that Uddhav Thackeray is getting". "They should declare elections and then they will know who is original and who is a duplicate, who has the support of the public, and who has Shiv Sena's ideology."

Maratha leader: Govt casual on quotas, starts 'tough' hunger strike

Jaina | Agencies

Tightening the screws, Maratha leader Manoj Jarange-Patil has accused the government of not being serious on the issue of reservations for his community and launched a "tough" hunger strike, here on Wednesday.

Patil, flanked by scores of his supporters in his native Antaravali-Sarati village, has decided to abstain all food, water and medication till the government concedes the demand for Maratha quotas.

"The state government wanted 30 days, we gave them 40 days... Today, it's the 41st day since the ultimatum, but nothing has been done. The government is not serious about our plea for quotas," declared Jarange-Patil.

He told mediapersons that the Marathas are coming within the ambit of quotas, yet they are denied reservations despite a series of agitations, processions and promises.

Patil expressed hope that the government will announce the quotas in a day or so, particularly after Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday night bowed and vowed before a portrait of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Mumbai to give Maratha reservations and fight till the last drop of blood in his body for justice to the community. The Marathas have



been on a warpath since August 29 when Jarange-Patil launched his first indefinite hunger strike which he called off after 17 days, then went on a tour of several key districts and addressed a series of mammoth rallies of the community. Earlier, he had warned that by October 24, "either my funeral procession will be taken out or the Marathas' victory march", and reiterated that the community which is now fully united, will not back off even an inch on the issue. The state has witnessed several suicides by pro-reservations activists and around five dozen villages in some districts have banned the entry of politicians from all parties as a protest. Jarange-Patil's agitation has secured response of almost the entire political spectrum in the state including the ruling Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party-Nationalist Congress Party (AP), the Opposition Congress-Shiv Sena (UBT)-NCP (SP) and other Maratha groups.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit Maharashtra, Goa today

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Maharashtra and Goa on Thursday, during which he will dedicate several various projects. As per his itinerary, at around 1 p.m., the Prime Minister will reach Shirdi, where he will perform a puja and darshan at the Shri Saibaba Samadhi Temple. At the temple, he will inaugurate the new Darshan Queue Complex. About an hour later, the Prime Minister will perform the "Jal Pujan" of Nilwande Dam and dedicate a canal network of the dam to the nation. At around 3.15 p.m., Modi will attend a public programme in Shirdi, where he will inaugurate, dedicate to nation and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth about Rs 7,500 crore in sectors like health, rail, road and oil and gas. He will also launch the 'Namoo Shetkari Mahasmanan



Nidhi Yojana' benefitting more than 86 lakh farmer beneficiaries. At around 6:30 p.m., he will reach Goa, where he will inaugurate the 37th National Games. This is the first time the National Games are being held in the coastal state.

WR TRAVELLERS GIVE THUMBS UP TO FOUR VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS TRAINS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The semi-highspeed four Vande Bharat Express trains running on the Western Railway (WR) networks are going nearly house-full for their cleanliness, comfort, design and ambience, officials said here on Wednesday. WR Chief Spokesperson Sumit Thakur said that the Vande Bharat Expresses ply on Mumbai-Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad (Sabarmati)-Jamnagar, Ahmedabad-Jodhpur and Indore-Bhopal-Nagpur sectors, and have proved a 'hit' with the passengers. "The passengers have appreciated the comfort level of the Vande Bharat trains, the plush interiors, the variety of healthy, delicious food served and the reduced travel time as compared to other trains. They have equated the journey by Vande Bharat trains as that of travelling by aircraft with less hassles of check-in & more economical pricing," said



Thakur. He said that the Vande Bharat Express trains link major business hubs like Mumbai, Surat, Ahmedabad, industrial centres of Vapi, Valsad, Jamnagar, Sanand, Nagpur, tourist destinations like Jodhpur, Abu Road and religious

places like Ujjain, Indore, Sabarmati and Palanpur, thus becoming a catalyst for business growth and tourism. The Mumbai-Gandhinagar service was launched on September 30, 2022, and has an average occupancy rate of more than 130 percent, remaining in great demand from the

age group of 31-45 years who constitute over 33 percent of the total passengers, followed by 46-60 age group (25 percent), and the 15-30 age group (24 percent), with senior citizens accounting for 14 percent, with even more women clamouring to travel by Vande Bharat Express.

Mumbai local train: Over 2,500 services cancelled

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Western Railway announced the cancellation of over 2,500 local train services in Mumbai from October 27 to November 5, as part of their efforts to commission the sixth line between Bandra and Goregaon stations. In a statement, the Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Sumit Thakur emphasized meticulous planning to minimize disruptions for passengers. The statement details that 43 mail and express trains will face complete cancellations, while 188 others will be partially cancelled or short-terminated, a railway term indicating the early termination of services before the scheduled final destination. The sixth line between Khar and Goregaon is expected to enhance the carrying capacity of the



suburban train network. The 30 km stretch from Mumbai Central to Borivli is divided into phases. The project is estimated to cost Rs 918 crore and will increase the line capacity of the Mumbai suburban section, alleviate congestion, and add more train services, according to Western Railway. The fifth line between Borivli and Santacruz was commissioned in 2002, and between Mumbai Central and Mahim in 1993. Due to land shortages, the stretch between Mahim and Santacruz was not built. In the existing stretches, the fifth line, known as the suburban train avoidance (STA) line, serves as a bi-directional route for long-distance trains departing from and arriving at Mumbai Central and Bandra Terminus. Western Railway has asked affected passengers to check with its authorities for specific details of train cancellations and alternative travel arrangements during this period.

10 injured as bus taking people from Shinde's Dussehra rally crashes

Team Absolute | Thane

About ten persons were injured when a private bus taking people back from Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Dussehra rally in Mumbai met with an accident in Thane district, the police said today. The accident happened at around 12:30 am on the Kolambe bridge on the Mumbai-Nashik highway near Shahapur. A truck rammed into the

bus from the rear side pushing it onto the divider. In the meanwhile, another bus hit the truck from behind and overturned due to the impact. About ten people were injured, including two seriously, said an official. The police used cranes to move to buses and clear the road, he said. The first bus was carrying about 20 people, who were returning after attending Chief Minister Shinde's rally in Mumbai, said an official from Thane rural police con-

trol room. It was going towards Sillod in Nashik district, he said. The injured were taken to a local government hospital for treatment, said the official from Thane police's rural control room. Shinde on Tuesday addressed thousands of people at the Shiv Sena's Dussehra rally at Azad Maidan in Mumbai. His rival and Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray held his party's annual rally at Shivaji Park.

BMC deploys dust suppression vehicle at Marine Drive

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai's civic body, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), on Wednesday deployed a dust suppression vehicle at Marine Drive where a layer of haze was visible in the morning. The overall air quality in Mumbai has persisted in the 'moderate' category for the third consecutive day, with on Wednesday morning, according to SAFAR-India. On Monday, Mumbai's air quality was recorded in the 'moderate' category with an AQI of 115. Notably, Mumbai was ranked as the second most polluted city in the world, with an overall AQI value of 167 (in the afternoon) according to the live city AQI ranking, and it was listed among cities with the most polluted air by IQAir, a Swiss firm, on Monday. While Beijing, China topped the list, Mumbai secured the second position, Delhi was in the seventh position, and Kolkata at 24th place. According to IQAir's live air quality monitoring, the overall AQI recorded in Mumbai on Monday afternoon was 167, which reduced to 158 in the evening, but the city retained its position as the second-most polluted city on



October 23. Delhi, which was in the fourth position during the day with an AQI value of 155, dropped to seventh by evening with an AQI value of 144. The Air Quality Index (AQI) between 0-50 is considered "good," 51-100 "satisfactory," 101-200 "moderate," 201-300 "poor," 301-400 "very poor," and 401-500 "severe." An AQI above 500 falls in the "severe/critical plus" category. Despite the efforts of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to mitigate air pollution, poor air quality continues to affect the financial capital. While the

overall AQI value for the city remains in the moderate category, several areas in the city continue to record poor AQI, posing significant health risks. This situation is expected to persist. While the AQI improved in some areas, some locations continued to register poor air quality in the evening. As per CPCB's SAMEER app, AQI recorded on Monday evening at various locations including Colaba (MPCB station) - 238, Denaur (IITM station) - 275, Mulund West (MPCB) - 244, Kherwadi-Bandra East (MPCB), and Sion (MPCB) - 200.

Gang of seven externed from five districts of Maharashtra for two years

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Seven members of a gang involved in multiple "heinous and hazardous" crimes have been externed for two years from five districts of Maharashtra, the Mira-Bhayandar, Vasai-Virar police said on Wednesday. The gang members have been externed from the limits of Thane, Mumbai, Mumbai suburban, Palghar and Nashik districts for two years, the MBVV police said. The police identified the seven as gang leader Ajay Amod Mishra (24), Jagan Patkatiar (20), Prishit, alias Dipka Pal (23), Sunny, alias Abhishek Tak (24), Harshal Rathod (19), Mohammad Karim Shakil Sheikh (21), and Rahul, alias Tika Ramesh Savant (22). 27-year-old man held with country-made pistols, 11 live cartridges. In a separate incident, a 27-year-old man has been arrested in suburban Bandra with two country-made pistols and 11 live cartridges, a Mumbai police crime branch official said. The arrest was made near Rangsharda Bhavan on Tuesday when tight security was in place in the city in view of the Dussehra rallies of two Shiv Sena factions, immersion of idols of Goddess Durga, and an ICC World Cup cricket match. The arrested man was identified as Amit Kinake, a resident of Nagpur. "Acting on reliable information,



the crime branch nabbed Kinake and recovered country-made pistols made up of steel and iron metals, and 11 live cartridges," the official said. Police are investigating to whom Kinake was going to deliver the firearms. A case has been registered under the Arms Act and the Mumbai Police Act, the official added. Meanwhile, nine children sustained burns after a generator caught fire during a procession

taken out with an idol of Goddess Durga on Dussehra in Maharashtra's Satara district, an official said on Wednesday. All the children are in stable condition, he said. The incident took place on Tuesday evening in the Koli Aali area of Mahabaleshwar, a popular hill station. According to the police, the generator was fitted on a vehicle on which an idol of Goddess Durga was being taken for immersion.

"The generator got heated up and caught fire as there was a can of petrol nearby. Nine children, who were sitting in a corner of the decorated vehicle, sustained burn injuries. They were rushed to hospitals in Satara and Pune," said an official from Mahabaleshwar police station. Superintendent of Police Sameer Shaikh said all the children are stable and undergoing treatment at different hospitals.



EDITOR'S SPECS

SP out to play spoiler to Cong in MP

In view of the assembly elections of five states being held before the Lok Sabha elections, differences among the political parties of the INDIA bloc have come to the fore. Expressing displeasure over not sharing seats with Congress in Madhya Pradesh, SP has fielded its candidates on many seats in Madhya Pradesh. In the last assembly elections, the candidates of SP and BSP had lost by very small margins at many places. If this time they bridge that gap, then Congress' dream of forming government in Madhya Pradesh may be shattered. Political experts say that SP is making all efforts to defeat Congress along with BJP in the election battle of Madhya Pradesh. In the absence of alliance with Congress, SP has so far declared 33 candidates for the 230-seat Madhya Pradesh Assembly. In 2018 assembly poll in Madhya Pradesh, Congress had to suffer loss on many seats due to SP being in the electoral fray. This time also SP is fighting alone. Congress has aspired to include BSP in the INDIA bloc. But in Madhya Pradesh, BSP and Gondwana Ganatantra Party (GGP) are contesting together. As per the data of Madhya Pradesh Election Commission, SP had won maximum seven candidates here in 2003. Before that, in the 1998 assembly elections also, four of their candidates had reached the assembly after winning the elections. After that, in 2008 and 2018, one candidate each won the election.

FROM ALEXANDER TO NAPOLEON, GAZA'S CYCLES OF DEATH, DESTRUCTION - AND REVIVAL

Vikas Datta

For the last three-quarters of a century, it has led a sordid existence under the authority of either of its neighbours or under their blockade, is termed the largest 'open jail' in the world, and/or an epicentre of terrorism. As the Israelis are poised to invade it following the Hamas attack, Gaza remains one of the world's top flashpoints.

In a region characterised by political instability, fratricidal conflict, and geopolitical tensions, Gaza holds its own special niche, for its 4,000-years-old history predates the current Israel-Arab tensions of the 20th century.

Its position as a key land bridge between Asia and Africa led to it becoming a constant battleground over the centuries and witnessing repeated cycles of destruction and revival. Across the centuries, the tread of Alexander the Great's Macedonian phalanxes and two centuries later, of the Roman legions, the pounding gallop of the Crusaders, the canter of Mongols' mounted archers, Napoleon's Frenchmen, the British (bolstered by their Indian Army contingents including the Hyderabad and Mysore Lancers, as well as the Australian Light Horse) echoed in the region.

Yet Gaza was not always an epicentre of battles and conflict - and spent long periods of prosperity and renown as a trading hub and seat of culture and learning.

The first records of human habitation in Gaza dates to the Bronze Age in 3300-3000 BC when the Ancient Egyptians built a fortress at a site south of present day Gaza City amid trade with what is now Israel. There were several spells of existence, destruction, and revival in the epoch and human settlements finally ceased to exist at the end of Bronze Age (c. 14th century BC).

Gaza figures, under its present name, in the ancient period when the Ancient Egyptians resettled the area but its location as a prominent caravan route made it the site of many battles between them and their neighbours from the Fertile Crescent, especially the Assyrians. It, however, remained in the former's hands for over three centuries before being settled by the Philistines - who would go on to give their name to the whole area subsequently (Palestine).

In the Old Testament, Gaza is the area where legendary strongman Samson - whose strength was in the locks of his hair - was imprisoned and killed. According to biblical history, it was captured by King David of Israel



but in the course of the next few centuries, fought over and captured at various times by Assyrians, Ancient Persians, and Babylonians.

When Alexander the Great marched on his way to conquer the world, Gaza was the last city to resist his path to Egypt and withstood a siege for two months, before he finally captured it in 332 BCE. However, afterwards, he transformed it into a hub of Hellenic learning and philosophy as it continued to be held by his successors - the Ptolemaic and then, the Seleucid dynasties.

After another century and a half of flourishing as a port and being destroyed in local wars, Gaza next came to prominence in 60 BC when the Romans captured it under Pompey the Great, rebuilt it, and under the Roman Empire handed over to their client king, Herod the Great. Under the Romans, there were six centuries of relative peace and prosperity as it became a busy port and trade point between the Middle East and Africa.

There were tensions between the slowly spreading Christian faith and the Romans but no major violence till the 6th century until armies marched out of the Arabian desert to spread Islam. Gaza had a special place for Muslims as Prophet Mohammad had visited it several times when he was a trader - and it is believed that his great-grandfather lies buried there.

Gaza was besieged by the Arab army under Amr ibn al-As in 634 after the Battle of Ajnadayn with the Byzantines, gave them control over much of Palestine's countryside, but not the major garrison cities. Under Caliph

Umar, who had lived in Gaza himself earlier, the effort was strengthened and the Arabs overcame and killed the Byzantine troops, and city's Jewish community, who fought alongside them, in 637, but spared the city's inhabitants.

There was, by and large, peace again in Gaza for next few centuries, though it continued to come under various regional Islamic dynasties but its political and economic significance gradually dipped.

The First Crusaders, sweeping all before them, wrested it from then masters, the Fatimid dynasty, in 1100 and it remained in Christian hands for nearly two centuries, notwithstanding a devastating attack by Saladin in 1170. It came under his control as he conquered most of the Christian kingdoms of the area in 1187. In 1192, amid the Third Crusade, Richard the Lionheart captured it back but its fortifications were torn down.

Gaza remained under Muslim rule till around 1260 when Hulagu Khan's Mongol hordes swept the Middle East, capturing Baghdad, Damascus, and rolling on through Palestine to conquer Egypt. They reached Gaza and destroyed it thoroughly. However, the withdrawal of Hulagu Khan with the bulk of his forces enabled the Mamluks to rout the Mongol remnants and reoccupy the area, on their way to rid Palestine of its Christian kingdoms.

Under Mamluk rule, Gaza began thriving initially but then again declined and when the Ottomans took over in 1516, it was an impover-

ished town with the port barely functioning and trade down. Under them too, its situation was so-so - flourishing under some governors and languishing under others.

The next conqueror was Napoleon, who occupied Gaza in 1799, as part of his Egyptian expedition, and termed it "the outpost of Africa, the door to Asia". However, his stay was brief as the French soon withdrew.

The next battles in Gaza would take place in the First World War, when British armies from Egypt attempted to seize Palestine and other parts of the Middle East from the Ottomans, whose forces were bolstered by Imperial German officers. While the British lost the First and Second Battles of Gaza in March and April 1917, respectively, they prevailed in the Third Battle (November 1917) - Australian film "The Light Horsemen" (1987) offers a glimpse of the campaign.

Gaza was part of the British mandate of Palestine but was still restive - with the 1929 riots there forcing out the Jewish residents. After the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, it ended up with the Egyptians till the Israelis won it in 1967. After widespread insurgency, in the 1980s and 1990s, Israel unilaterally withdrew from it, but subsequently blockaded it and launched assaults in 2008-2009, 2012, and 2014. Will the Israelis, which have, more or less, devastated half of it already, invade Gaza again and script another chapter in its (largely) star-crossed history?

international

UN UNIVERSITY REPORT WARNS ABOUT RISK TIPPING POINTS

Bonn | Agencies

A United Nations University report, released on Wednesday, finds that drastic changes are approaching if risks to fundamental socioecological systems are not addressed.

The Interconnected Disaster Risks report 2023 published by the United Nations University -- Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) warns of six risk tipping points. They are: accelerating extinctions; groundwater depletion; mountain glaciers melting; space debris; unbearable heat; and uninsurable future. "Systems are all around us and closely connected to us: ecosystems, food systems, water systems and more," says the report.

"When they deteriorate, it is typically not a simple and predictable process. Rather, instability slowly builds until suddenly a tipping point is reached and the system changes fundamentally or even collapses, with potentially catastrophic impacts." A risk tipping point is defined in the report as the moment at which a given socioecological system is no longer able to buffer risks and provide its expected



functions, after which the risk of catastrophic impacts to these systems increases substantially.

These diverse cases illustrate that risk tipping points extend beyond the single domains of climate, ecosystems, society, or technology. Instead, they are inherently interconnected, and they are also closely linked to human activities and livelihoods. Many new risks emerge when and where physical and natural worlds interconnect with human society. One example of a risk tipping point that the report explains is groundwater depletion. Underground water reservoirs called aquifers are an

essential freshwater resource around the world, and they supply drinking water to over 2 billion people. Around 70 per cent of groundwater withdrawals are used for agriculture, often-times when there is not sufficient water from above-ground sources available. Today, aquifers help to mitigate half of the losses in agriculture caused by drought, a phenomenon which is only expected to increase in the future due to climate change.

But the report warns that now it's the aquifers themselves that are approaching a tipping point: More than half of the world's major aquifers

are being depleted faster than they can be naturally replenished. If the water table falls below a level that existing wells can access, farmers can suddenly find themselves without the ability to access water, which puts entire food production systems at risk of failure. Some countries, such as Saudi Arabia, have already surpassed this groundwater risk tipping point; others, like India, are not far from it.

The analysis reveals that the cases share similar root causes and drivers which are embedded in our actions and behaviours that increasingly put pressure on our systems until they are pushed to the brink of collapse. Reaching these points means new risks will be introduced, many of which we do not yet know of.

The report does not just define and identify risk tipping points, but it also proposes a new framework to avoid or mitigate the consequences. Solutions fall into two categories: Avoid solutions, which target root causes and drivers of risk to avoid risk tipping points altogether, and Adapt solutions, which help prepare or better address the negative impacts of risk tipping points if they cannot be avoided.

Teacher shortages reported in 87% of public schools in Aus state

Sydney | Agencies

A new survey has found that 87 per cent of public schools in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) have borne the brunt of casual teacher shortages.

According to the figures released by the NSW Department of Education, students in more than 9,800 lessons daily are being left without adequate support due to a 42 per cent shortfall in casual teachers, reports Xinhua news agency.

The survey indicated that public schools have been wrestling with an average shortage of 3,000 casual teachers every day -- nearly half of what is required to meet the state's educational demand.

In primary schools, 40 per cent of the lessons unable to be covered by a casual teacher resulted in merged or collapsed classes, while students in nearly 28 per cent of high school lessons were left to their own devices with minimal supervision.

Across the most populated



Australian state, situations were identified as significantly worse in parts of Sydney's west and south-west, rural and remote areas, and at schools for specific purposes.

The study also raised the alarm of a domino effect caused by the severe shortfall, including the cancellation of library lessons and programs providing additional support to those most in need.

"We already knew from lis-

tening to teachers and parents that NSW has been facing a teacher shortage crisis, leaving huge numbers of students without quality teaching every single day," said Prue Car, the state's deputy premier and minister for education and early learning. The state government pledged that a number of programs and recruitment initiatives are in place or under development to attract more teachers.

Palestinian Health Ministry warns of possible epidemic wave in Gaza

Gaza | Agencies

The Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza warned of the possible outbreak of a major epidemic wave amid the ongoing Israeli airstrikes and siege on the Hamas-controlled enclave.

In a statement, Ministry spokesperson Ashraf al-Qedra said that up to 3,150 cases of diseases were recorded in a single day since the Israel-Hamas conflict erupted on October 7, with the most of them reported among children, reports Xinhua news agency.

The diseases included diarrhoea, food poisoning,

scabies and bronchial infections. Due to overcrowding in shelter facilities, lack of clean water and poor personal hygiene, epidemic diseases have become increasingly prevalent, he said.

To prevent the spread of diseases, he called on the international community to provide immediate assistance and restore basic services in Gaza, including water, electricity, and sanitation.

Hamas militants launched a surprise attack on Israel on October 7, firing thousands of rockets and infiltrating Israeli territory, where they took more than 200 people hostages.

Superfog leaves 8 dead, 63 injured in massive US car wreck

Washington | Agencies

The death toll from a massive car wreck has increased to eight with 63 others injured due to a "superfog" of smoke from marsh fires in the US state of Louisiana and dense morning fog, authorities said.

The authorities revealed the death toll on Tuesday night, reports Xinhua news agency.

The National Weather Service said there were multiple wetland fires in the region on Monday and smoke from the fires mixed



with fog to create a "superfog," resulting in extremely poor visibility.

As many as 168 vehicles

were involved in the series of crashes leading to a mile-long fiery pileup, the Louisiana State Police said

on Tuesday evening.

Witnesses on Monday morning initially reported two deaths from a box truck that slid underneath an 18-wheeler, according to local media.

One tanker truck carrying a hazardous liquid was also reportedly off-loaded due to a compromised tank.

The pileup caused a cluster of fires leaving a dozen vehicles burnt.

The superfog which led to extremely poor visibility was formed by smoke from local wetlands fires combined with dense fog.

Start of EU membership talks this year top priority: Zelensky

Kiev | Agencies

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said that the launch of the talks on accession to the European Union this year is a top priority for his country, the presidential press service reported.

"For Ukraine, this is a top priority -- to be ready for a political decision to start negotiations on EU membership this year," Zelensky said while participating in a meeting of the College of the European Commission via a video link on Tuesday, Xinhua news agency reported.

Currently, Ukraine is

implementing seven recommendations of the European Commission as quickly as possible to enable a political decision to pave the way for the membership negotiations, Zelensky said.

In particular, Ukraine is implementing reform of constitutional justice and strengthening anti-corruption efforts, he noted.

For her part, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, who also participated in the meeting, voiced her support for Ukraine's accession to the EU. In June 2022, EU leaders accepted Ukraine as a candidate for membership in the bloc.



CONGRESS REPLACES 4 CANDIDATES IN MP AHEAD OF CRUCIAL ASSEMBLY POLLS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With less than a month left for the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Congress on Wednesday replaced four of its candidates.

Congress General secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said, "Ajab Singh Kushwaha has replaced Kuldeep Sikarwar from Sumawali Assembly seat, while Virendra Belvanshi will contest in place of Guru Charan Khare from Pipariya (SC) Assembly seat."

According to sources, the Congress has replaced Sikarwar sensing the sentiments of the local people.

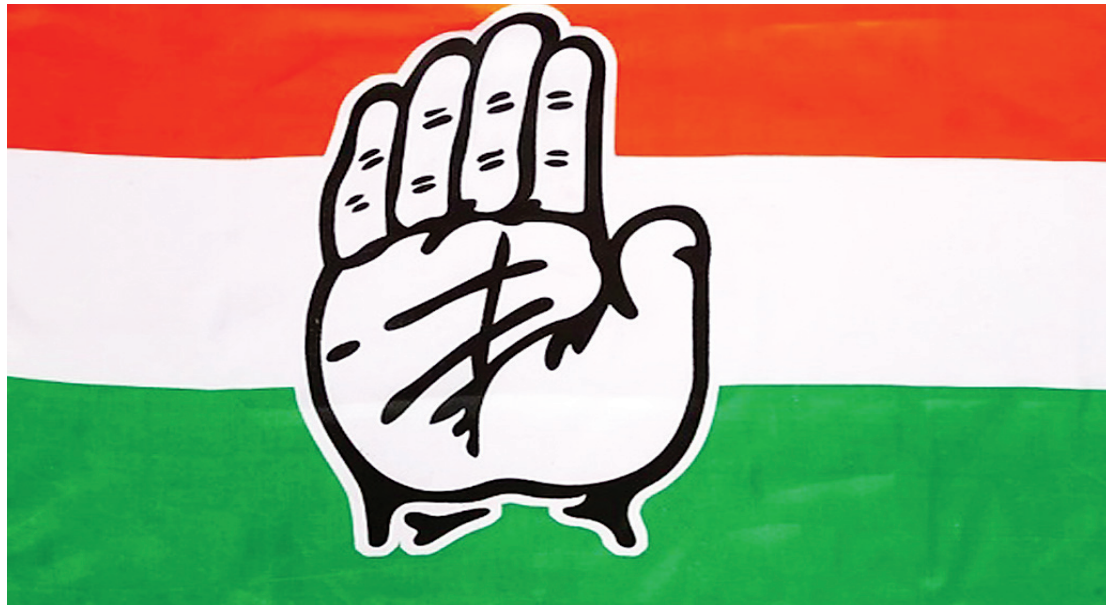
Venugopal also said that Murlidhar Morwal has been fielded in place of Rajendra Singh Solanki from Badnagar Assembly seat and Virender Singh Solanki will replace Himmat Shirmal from Jaora Assembly seat.

The decision to replace these candidates was taken in view of the resentments of local people and caste education in all four Assembly seats.

The Congress has released the list of all 230 candidates for November 17 elections in the state.

Counting of votes will take place on December 3.

The Congress has fielded state unit chief Kamal Nath and senior party leader Digvijaya Singh's son



Jaivardhan Singh from Raghogarh.

Budhni seat will witness a fight between Congress's actor Vikram Mastal, who played Lord Hanuman's role in Anand Sagar's 2008 TV show Ramayana, and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Sanjay Shukla from the grand-old party will be contesting the election against BJP's national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya from Indore 1. Leader of Opposition

(LoP) Govind Singh has been fielded from Lahar Assembly seat and former LoP Ajay Singh (Rahul) from Churhat in Sidhi district.

The Congress has pitted Avdhes Nayak against the state home minister Narottam Mishra from Datia seat.

It has fielded senior party leader Ramkishor Dange against state agriculture minister Kamal Patel from Dhar Assembly constituency.

While former minister Jitu Patwari has been given ticket from Rau seat of Indore district, ex-Union minister Kantilal Bhuria's son Vikrant Bhuria will be contesting from Jhabua seat.

Sources also said that the Congress is likely to replace its candidate from the Amla Assembly seat of Betul district. Deputy Collector Nisha Bangre, who has resigned from the post, is likely to be fielded.

"Will Contest Polls": Madhya Pradesh bureaucrat who quit after leave denied

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A former Deputy Collector Nisha Bangre, whose resignation was accepted recently, has said that she will definitely contest the forthcoming state assembly elections.

The state government accepted the resignation of Ms Bangre, who was posted as Dy Collector in Chhatrapur district, on Monday (October 23).

She resigned from her post on June 22 this year citing that she did not get permission to attend the inauguration of her newly constructed house from the state government.

After the state government accepted her resignation, Ms Bangre on Wednesday told ANI, "I will definitely contest the election. I want to be a part of democracy - becoming an MLA is a part of it. I will definitely file my nomination."

When questioned about political motive behind her resignation from the civil service Ms Bangre said she has already specified her reasons to leaving. "I had already explained

in detail that at the time of my resignation that I was not granted permission to participate in the inauguration of my house. After that when I found out in these two-three months, I came to know that all this is happening due to political action. I always want a good system to be maintained in this country. The systems are made by the officers and our public representatives," she said.

The former officer further added, "After being an officer, I saw that if the political intent is good then officers can also do good work. So, I decided that now I will become an MLA and we will fight against what has happened to me so that such injustice does not happen to anyone else. So all this has happened gradually and today I am ready to contest the elections."

Meanwhile, when asked about whether she had spoken with any party for a ticket, Ms Bangre said that Congress was standing with her during her struggle and they had assured her that they would wait for her resignation. Therefore, she

would meet state Congress chief Kamal Nath and ask him about his stand.

"When my struggle was going on, Congress spoke about standing with me. When I was arrested, Congress leaders were with me. They had assured me that they would wait for my resignation. So, I would like to meet Kamal Nath today and ask him about his stand as now my resignation has been accepted, today I am free to fight for the people's right," She said.

When questioned about the possibility of not being given a ticket Ms Bangre said she would continue to work in public service.

"I will work for the public. If the public says to contest as an independent or to contest with some other party, then I have no problem. As the public says, I will follow their order," she added.

Madhya Pradesh will undergo assembly polls on November 17 and the counting will take place on December 3. Through the polls, the state will elect legislators from 230 Assembly constituencies.

DCW Chief writes to MP CM over girl rape in Ujjain

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Bhopal

The Delhi Commission for Women Chief Swati Maliwal has written a letter to the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan over the incident of rape of a 12-year-old girl in Ujjain.

Maliwal has requested for immediate access for the survivor to medical, psychological, and rehabilitative care to aid her recovery, and a financial assistance of at least Rs 50 lakh to the survivor's family for recovery and rehabilitation.

In her letter, the DCW Chairperson said that the survivor child was forced to travel door-to-door on foot for 2.5 hours covering 8 kms, seeking help.

"However, no one helped her and she was found bleeding in a semi-naked condition. The girl was admitted to a hospital where she spent several days in recovery. Thereafter, an FIR was registered in the matter and the accused was arrested by Madhya Pradesh Police," she said.



She said that it was reported in media that Madhya Pradesh government had announced assistance to the girl including financial help. However, reportedly, the same has not been furnished by the Government till date. "A meager Rs 1500/- has been given to the family by a local leader, which is insufficient for the kind of recovery needed for the survivor," said Maliwal. The victim was raped by a 24-year-old auto driver in Ujjain.

Congress accuses BJP of promising money to booth workers ahead of assembly polls in MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress on Tuesday accused the BJP in Madhya Pradesh that its leaders are giving several kind of inducements to people ahead of the crucial assembly elections as it is losing badly.

The party said that it has lodged a complaint against the BJP leaders with the Election Commission which has filed a case.

Addressing a press conference here, Congress leader Shobha Oza said, "Assembly elections are going to be held in Madhya Pradesh, in which BJP is losing badly. That's why its leaders are giving various kinds of inducements to the public."

Showing a video, she said, "State Transport and Revenue Minister Govind Singh Rajput was seen saying in a video that he will give Rs 25 lakh to the in-charge of the booth where



BJP gets more votes." She also said that in another video, senior BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya is seen saying that he will give a reward of Rs 51,000 to the in-charge of the booth where Congress will not get a single vote.

Firing salvos at the BJP, Oza said,

"Here a question also arises that from where did these BJP leaders get so much money to give to booth in-charges." She further said that after the video surfaced of BJP leaders promising money to workers, a complaint was made to CEC and State Election Commission. "The Election

Commission has investigated this and registered an FIR against Rajput," she said. She also demanded that strict action should be taken against those BJP leaders who are involved in corruption and who are thinking of winning elections on the strength of money.

She said that Minister Rajput should be immediately dismissed and prevented from contesting elections and his assets should be investigated. Lamenting at the state government, she said, "Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan and Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia should also answer in this regard."

Polling for 230-member assembly is scheduled on November 17. Counting of votes will take place on December 3. Congress has been campaigning aggressively in the state and is looking to make a comeback back in the crucial elections.

Cancer cured by Brachytherapy

Team Absolute | Bhopal

32 year old Rashmi (name changed), resident of a village in Damoh district, was suffering from pain due to a blister on her lower lip for the last 7 months and could neither eat food nor drink water. After seeing many doctors in the entire district, it was found out that he had lip cancer. Then, on the advice of the villagers, she came to AIIMS Bhopal. Doctors of Radiotherapy Department of AIIMS Bhopal examined Rashmi and decided to do brachytherapy. Dr. Vipin Kharade under the guidance of Additional Professor Dr. Manish Gupta & Dr. Saikat Das started their treatment and after only one week of treatment, lip cancer was completely cured. And there was no expenditure on treatment because she also had the



Ayushman Yojana card. Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal, Prof.

(Dr.) Ajai Singh congratulated the entire team for this achievement.

In brachytherapy, the radiation source is placed inside or near the tumor. Most of the radiation sources used in these are radiation isotopes which emit low energy gamma rays. Therefore, even with high dose treatment, the tissues surrounding the tumor remain safe and do not suffer any harm. In other circumstances, surgical removal of the cancerous tumor is carried out and plastic surgery is required.

To deliver the drug to the cancer tumor, the radiation isotope has to be placed in the affected part of the body, for which various Applicators including interstitial needles have been developed. The design of these Applicators depends on the size, type and location of the tumor. This facility is available only in a few selected hospitals in Madhya Pradesh.

Police bust gang involved in child trafficking, arrest 5

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Police have busted a gang involved in child trafficking in the state and arrested five people so far while a search for a woman doctor, suspected to be the kingpin, was under way, said officials. The matter came to the fore after two minor girls were kidnapped from a temple premises in Bhopal on Saturday on the behest of 'Kanya Bhojan' during the Navratri festival. Following the incident, the Bhopal Police swung into action and over 200 CCTV cameras were scanned for the next three days.

A war footing investigation led the police towards a posh



residential society -- English Villas society -- located in the Kolar area in Bhopal. During a raid on Tuesday, the police rescued both the minor girls -- Kajal (8) and her 11-month-old sister Deepawali.

The police have arrested five persons namely -- Archan Saini (36), her live-in partner Nishant (31), and Suraj (19) and Muskan (20). During the interrogation, police learnt that the group has been operating a child trafficking racket for the last few years and that the group was connected with

a Delhi-based group.

Police said that Archana Saini, who is the main accused in the case, hails from Punjab while her live-in partner Nishant hails from Kerala. "We have arrested five persons and a hunt for a woman doctor, who is suspected to be the main kingpin, is underway. Our further investigation is still under way," Bhopal police commissioner Harinarayana Chari Mishra told the media.

Police also said that during the interrogation it has found that the group has been involved in child trafficking for the last few years and children were transported to Delhi and some other states. After busting the gang in Bhopal, the police will lead the investigation into some other states.

IISER BHOPAL'S BIOMEDICAL ADHESIVE TO BIND BONES, GLASS EVEN UNDER WATER

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER)-Bhopal have developed a clear, synthetic biomedical adhesive that can effectively seal and repair injured and dissected tissues.

The biodegradable and biocompatible adhesive is capable of binding different surfaces such as tissues, bones, eggshells, and wood in both air and underwater and requires no additional crosslinking agents or metal ions.

"Biomedical adhesives are bonding and sealing materials that provide support and cohesion to repair tissues and are extensively used in medicine. Suitable materials for these adhesives can be found in nature and are commonly secreted by underwater organisms such as sandcastle worms and mussels," said Aashesh Srivastava, Faculty, Department of Chemistry, IISER Bhopal, in a statement.

Previous biomimetic adhesives made from natural polymers such as fibrin, collagen, gelatin,



and chitosan, have a risk of triggering immunological reactions, and may not always be useful in cosmetics and surface tissue adhesion applications. These are also not transparent and can have

different colours, which may affect the aesthetic value. The new adhesive, detailed in a paper published in the peer-reviewed journal Chemistry, was developed using a mixture of

oppositely-charged water-soluble polyelectrolytes that are known for their biodegradability and biocompatibility.

"These polymers have multiple amide groups and thiol residues that lead to strong adhesion due to the formation of hydrogen bonds and disulfide bonds. The resulting adhesive layer is colourless and transparent," Srivastava said.

To test their binding capabilities, three different formulations were developed and applied directly to various pressed substrates to achieve adherence. One of them which the authors called 'A30' had excellent adhesive action and could bind a variety of substrates such as mammalian bones, wood, glass, mica, and aluminium.

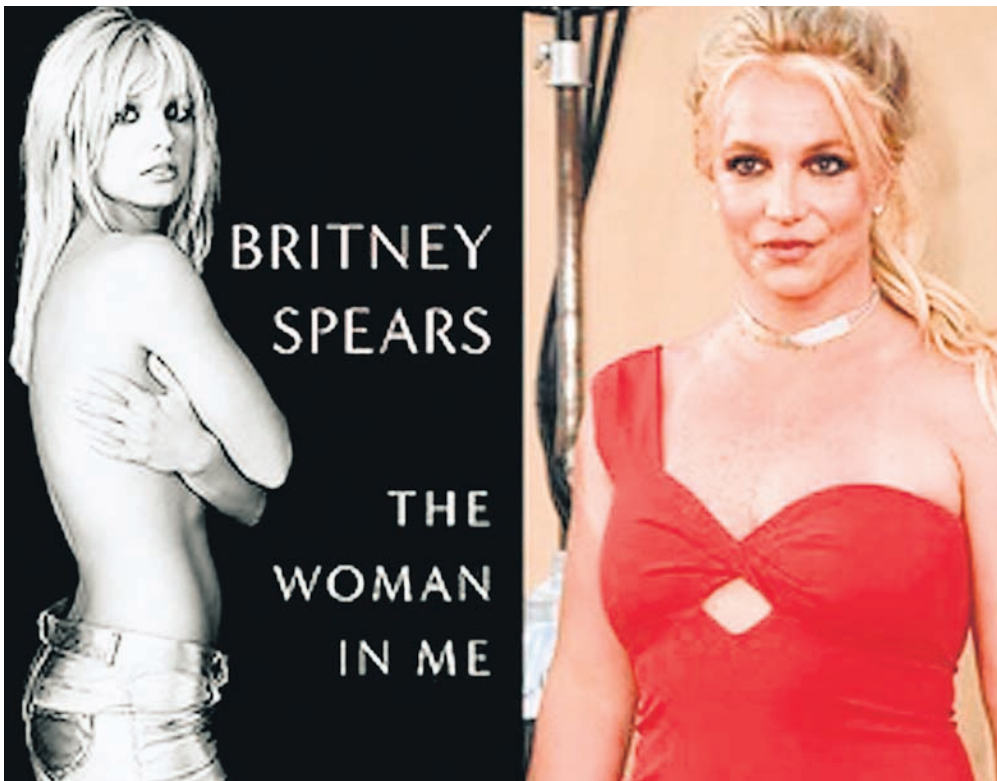
The researchers also add that adhesive A30 had a porosity of 40 per cent which can help a great deal in tissue regeneration by allowing cell movement through the adhesive layer. This way weight or pressure across the adhered joint is distributed across the tissue surface which can lead to quicker healing. The researchers used this adhesive (A30) to bind two glass slabs under

water. The adhesive was able to glue the glass slabs without dissolving in water. This is similar to the way natural marine animal-secreted adhesives work.

"Our A30 adhesive could even bind bones while fully submerged under water, and after curing the adhered bone pieces could bear large weights while remaining bonded. Our adhesive provides a maximum adhesion strength of about 7 kg/cm². This makes it a promising glue for bone restoration and fracture repair," said Dr. Tanmay Dutta, Postdoctoral Researcher - IISER Bhopal, in the statement.

The adhesive will find use in cosmetics medicine, dentistry, drug delivery, and tissue engineering and biological applications. It can also be used in orthopaedic procedures to enhance bone repair and can even be used as an alternative to sutures, staples, and wires, in wound closures.

They could also be used in eco-friendly packaging applications and products, contributing to sustainable practices in various industries, the researchers said.



My management wanted to market me as an eternal virgin: Britney Spears

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop star Britney Spears has been dropping bombshell after bombshell revelations in her memoir 'The Woman In Me'. Spears has revealed that her management was obsessed with marketing her as an 'eternal virgin' despite the fact that she already had sex when she was 14 years old. "Given that I had so many teenage fans, my managers and press people had long tried to portray me as an eternal virgin; never mind that Justin Timberlake and I had been living together, and I'd been having sex since I was 14," the memoir read according to People.

This obsession of her management regarding her sex life had been haunting her for a very long time. She added: "Why did my managers work so hard to claim I was some kind of young-girl virgin even into my 20's? Whose business was it if I'd had sex or not?"

The 'Toxic' singer's mother Lynne Spears had written her own memoir in 2008 called 'Through the Storm: A Real Story of Fame and Family in a Tabloid World'. In this book, she had also confirmed her daughter had already lost her virginity when she was 14.

Britney Spears was only one among the several girl icons at the time, some of the other being Christina Aguilera and Jessica Simpson whose sex lives were being constantly discussed and interfered by their management due to their status as teen, or young adult stars.

Ever since she released her memoir, the singer has been revealing various secrets of her personal life and relentlessly assailing those who have created lies about her for years.

"It is finally time for me to raise my voice and speak out, and my fans deserve to hear it directly from me," Spears told People just sometime before the book's release. She added: "No more conspiracy, no more lies, now it is just me owning my past, present and future."

Tom Cruise-starrer 'Mission: Impossible 8' delayed until May 2025

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Tom Cruise's next 'Mission: Impossible' film has been delayed until May 2025. It's also said that the film will also undergo a name change with a new title expected to be announced at a later date.

However, the picture is still expected to directly follow the events of 'Dead Reckoning Part 1', reports Female First UK.

The movie had been in production this year but shut down to allow the cast to promote the first instalment over the summer.

However, the cameras remained off as the Hollywood actors strike started in July meaning the cast could not get back to work on the film.

As per Female First UK, the action film is among a number of other titles which have also been pushed back including 'A Quiet

Place: Day One' -- a prequel to the 2018 original starring Lupita Nyong'o and Denis Hare -- which had originally been due for release in March 2024. The film will now land in June 2024.

Animated adventure 'SpongeBob SquarePants' has also been delayed from May 2025 to December 2025.

'Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning, Part 2' director Christopher McQuarrie previously promised fans they will be treated to some epic underwater scenes in the new movie.

The 54-year-old director and his lead actor Tom Cruise have spent time working out how to perfect underwater sequences after using them in previous movies 'Edge of Tomorrow' and 'Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation' and McQuarrie says they will be taken to the next level in the upcoming sequel.



Jennifer Lopez dances to Usher, Adele tracks at their Las Vegas concerts

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jennifer Lopez is a big fan of both Usher and Adele.

The 'Play' singer, 54, recently shared an Instagram reel which consisted of a lot of dancing and singing.

The clip began with Jennifer's night at Usher's 'My Way' Las Vegas residency, reports People magazine.

Jennifer appeared to be in great spirits as she sang along with the crowd to Usher's hit 'Burn'.

She danced while holding up her phone torch light and sipped a drink.

"Until Next Time Vegas..." the star wrote in the caption of her clip, as she swayed enthusiastically to the beat as rapper Nas joined Usher onstage.

As per People, on Saturday night, the singer passionately sang along to Adele's 'Someone Like You' at her Weekends with Adele residency. The video then captured Adele walking among the audience and giving Jennifer a salute, before shouting, "Love you J.Lo," when she was back onstage, to which Jennifer replied by writing, "Love you too Adele!"



The 'Mother' actress' attire consisted of black high-waisted pants and a stylish white cropped top. One user commented under her post, "I just imagine those people going to see Usher and Adele and you right there in the crowd ahhhhh double treat."

Meanwhile, the mom-of-two has also been enjoying stylish nights out on the arm of her husband, Ben Affleck. On October 17, the couple were pho-

tographed in Los Angeles enjoying a night out at Peppermint Club, and they wore their chicest fall 'fits for the occasion'.

The 'This is Me...Now' singer kept super cosy in a white teddy bear coat featuring a dramatic collar.

Meanwhile, the 'Air' director, 51, opted for an all-black suit consisting of a button-up shirt, jacket and trousers. He rounded out his look with a pair of classic black shoes.



SNOOP DOGG SAYS HE WENT 'DIRTY' WHILE PERFORMING AT BAR MITZVAH

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rap icon Snoop Dogg has shared an incident when he went "dirty" with regards to the lyrics of one of his tracks during a bar mitzvah.

Bar mitzvah is the initiation ceremony for Jewish boys who are regarded as ready to observe religious precepts and eligible to take part in public worship.

In an interview for the Musicians on Musicians issue of 'Rolling Stone', Snoop, 52, opened up to the 'Big Energy' rapper Latto, 24, about opting to go "dirty" while performing at a bar mitzvah, reports 'People' magazine.

The pair were discussing the business of performing and how certain gigs will pay more than others. "You're going to have opportunities where somebody going to book you for a wedding that's going to pay you more than you getting paid onstage," Snoop tells Latto, to which she replies, "Bar mitzvah money."

As per 'People', Snoop then playfully recalled his own experience performing at a bar mitzvah.

"No, for real. I did a bar mitzvah for some kids that was, like, five years old. I'm doing the radio version. They doing the m***** dirty version. So I'm like, "F*** it, we going to go dirty," he says of the experience.

Latto said the mantra "this game is 85 per cent business, 15 per cent talent" has stuck with her.

Cher says her boyfriend doesn't get most of her references

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Cher has a lot of "love and understanding" for her beau Alexander 'A.E.' Edwards even when he's not quite sure what she's talking about.

The 77-year-old icon opened up about what it's like dating someone 40 years younger, reports People magazine.

She told Extra: "I hate to talk about how happy I am, but no, we have a great time together. We can talk about music. We can talk about everything. He's got a great sense of humour, he's got the cutest son in the world, ever... We just get each other."

As per People, the 'Believe' songstress and Edwards first sparked relationship rumours when they were photographed holding hands in November 2022. His role as a music executive at Universal Music Group may help with their common connection, but when it comes to other topics, Cher admits he can be left stumped.

She said: "Sometimes I'm talking to him and he has no idea who I'm talking about... The other day, I said, 'Do you know who, I don't



know, Clark Gable, (is)?' Somebody said, 'Yes, of course,' but most of my references... He'll look at me and go, 'I wasn't born yet!'"

Cher spoke with Extra while promoting her latest album, 'Christmas'. Edwards also worked on the project. "This must be the right time because I was asked forever and starting from Sonny and Cher days," the Golden Globe winner said, noting how she previously felt she'd never do a holiday album.

"It's a very strange Christmas album. All the tracks are their own little islands. Nothing seems to go together, but when you hear it, it works," she added.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kelsea Ballerini



Men's ODI World Cup

MAXWELL, WARNER, ZAMPA SHINE AS AUSTRALIA HAMMER NETHERLANDS BY HISTORIC 309 RUNS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After Glenn Maxwell and David Warner's brilliant show with bat, Australia's Adam Zampa spun a web around the Netherlands' batter as Australia achieved the biggest victory in WC history - 309 runs in the 24th match of the ongoing ICC World Cup, here on Wednesday.

Zampa scalped four wickets, while Mitchell Marsh took two to bundle the Netherlands out for just 90 in 21 overs at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins also managed to take one wicket each.

The five-time champions earned two points, and got a massive NRR boost, and are once again on course for a spot in the semis if they continue this way. A target of 400 was always going to be daunting and fans wanted to see how Netherlands would respond to the target. However, it turned out to be a disappointment. The wickets just kept tumbling, and Zampa ran



through the tail. Zampa now has the most wickets at the 2023 WC with 13 wickets. Vikramjit Singh (25) was the highest scorer for the Netherlands.

Earlier, Maxwell scored the fastest century (106 off 44 balls) of the World Cup to guide Australia to a mammoth 399/8. Maxwell reached one of the most entertaining ODI centuries of all time in just 40 balls, breaking the previous record held

by Adien Marken (in 48 balls) at the same ground.

Maxi smashed the Netherlands' bowlers in all parts of the stadium. And he was given a standing ovation by the crowd for his thrilling innings. Meanwhile, David Warner, too, hit an impressive 104 runs off 93 balls. Warner made the ton more iconic by celebrating it in his famous 'Pushpa' style at the almost

packed stadium. It was his 6th ODI World Cup ton.

After deciding to bat first, Australia didn't get the kind of start they thought of as Mitchell Marsh (9) lost his wicket to Logan van Beek in the fourth over. From there, Warner and Steven Smith (71) built up a solid 132 runs partnership to put Aussies on the drivers' spot. Both the batters played some brilliant shots to entertain the cricket fanatics present in the stadium. However, Aryan Dutt dismissed Smith to break the partnership. M Labuschagne (62) then joined hands with the opener batter to frustrate the Netherlands bowlers. The duo stitched 84 runs together. At 244, Australia lost Labuschagne. Next batter Josh Inglis (14) also failed to spend time on crease as he was sent back early by Bas de Leede. Soon after that, Warner also got out by Logan Van Beek. But from there Maxwell changed the gear and entertained the cricket fanatics with some brilliant eye-catching shots all over the ground.

Men's ODI WC: Australia's Glenn Maxwell smashes fastest century in ODI World Cup

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Australia's big-hitting all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has smashed the fastest hundred in Men's ODI World Cup history when he reached his hundred in 40 balls against the Netherlands in a league match at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Wednesday.

Through his whirlwind knock, he broke the record of fastest ODI World Cup century held by South Africa's Aiden Markram, who reached three-figure mark off just 49 deliveries against Sri Lanka at the same venue and co-incidentally at the same pitch on October 7.

Maxwell's 40-ball hundred, eventually making 106 runs off 44 deliveries, hitting nine fours and eight sixes, to score what is now overall the fourth fastest century in men's ODI cricket. He reached his fifty in 27 balls and then took only 13 balls to get a record-breaking century in a breath-taking assault over Netherlands' bowling attack.

"Just about getting a read of the bowler. For those who bowl quick, my hands have to be faster. Some may go for six but generally I'm trying to get it just over the infield. Netherlands saved a couple of certain boundaries. Could've been a better score but they were outstanding in the field. The ball seems to travel here," said Maxwell in a mid-inning chat with the broadcasters.

Maxwell's heroics, along with David Warner's sixth ODI World Cup century meant



Australia made 399-6 in 50 overs, their second highest total in the history of the tournament. The carnage also meant Netherlands fast-bowling all-rounder Bas de Leede now holds the record of bowling the most expensive ODI spell in history, with his figures of 2-115 in ten overs going past the 113 runs conceded by Mick Lewis and Adam Zampa.

It has always been my motto to chase betterment, not excellence, says Virat Kohli

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With India winning five out of five matches in the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup and sitting comfortably on top of points table, talismanic batter Virat Kohli has emerged as a key player in acing chases for the hosts' in the tournament.

With India set to return in action when they face defending champions England at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium on October 29, Kohli has given an insight into how the motto of chasing betterment over excellence is fueling his drive to win matches for the team.

"I have always worked on how I can be better myself every day, every practice session, every year and every season. So, that is what has helped me play for this long and perform. I don't think it is possible to perform consistently without having that mindset, because if performance is your goal, then one can get satisfied after a while, and stop working on their game," he said to Star Sports.

In 31 Men's ODI World Cup matches, Kohli has amassed 1,384 runs at an average of 55.36, including hitting three centuries and nine fifties, with a highest score of 107. "It has



always been my motto to chase betterment I would say, and not excellence, because I honestly don't know what the definition of excellence is." "There is no limit to it, nor there is a set standard that when you reach here you have achieved excellence. So, I try to work towards betterment every day, so that would be a better word to use. And yes, performance becomes a by-product, because your mindset is how do I make the team win from here," he concluded.

Asian Shooting Cships: Sarabjot and Surbhi win silver in 10m air pistol mixed team

Changwon (Korea) | Agencies

Indian duo of Sarabjot Singh and Surbhi Rao won the silver medal in 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Asian Shooting Championships, here on Wednesday. Sarabjot Singh and Surbhi Rao lost 4-16 to the China's Jinyao Liu and Xue Li in the gold medal match and settled for silver.

This was India's second medal in the senior category at the ongoing Asian Shooting Championships as Sarabjot clinched the individual bronze medal in the men's 10m air pistol on Tuesday. In addition to the podium finish, Sarabjot's performance also earned India its first Paris Olympics quota in the pistol events.

The Indian pair finished third in the qualification with Sarabjot (293-10x) and Surbhi (288-10x) shooting a combined total of 581-20x while Jinyao and Xue finished on top with 581-22x. Another Chinese pair China's Ranxin Jiang and Bowen Zhang were placed second after scoring 581-21x.



Usually, the top two teams from the qualifying round would advance to the gold medal match. However, due to the rule allowing only one team per country to qualify for medal matches, Ranxin Jiang and Bowen

Zhang were forced to bow out. In the skeet events, the Indian shooters drew blank in both men's and women events. Anantjeet Singh Naruka, who won the silver medal at the Asian Games

in Hangzhou, missed out on a medal and an Olympic quota after finishing fourth in the final on Wednesday. He was eliminated after scoring 33 of 40 shots in the six-man final.

Gurjoat Khangura also made it to the men's skeet final but was first to crash out after missing five of the first 20 shots. He was third in the qualifying round after shooting 121 from five rounds. In the women's skeet event, Ganemat Sekhon emerged as the top-performing Indian, securing the 15th position with a score of 108.

Following her, Kartiki Singh and Parinaaz Dhaliwal claimed the 17th and 18th positions, respectively. Darshna Rathore took the 19th spot with a score of 106 in a field that included 28 shooters.

The Asian Shooting Championships serve as a qualification opportunity for the Paris 2024 Olympics, with a total of 24 Olympic quota places available.

In each of the 12 Olympic shooting events, the top two finishers (one per country) secure a coveted spot for their national teams."

Men's ODI World Cup: Scoring three hundred in five innings is a pretty special effort: JP Duminy on De Kock

Team Absolute | New Delhi

South Africa batting coach JP Duminy credited Quinton De Kock's performance in the ongoing ICC ODI World Cup as a 'pretty special effort' after he slammed his third century of the tournament against Bangladesh on Tuesday.

Earlier in the tournament De Kock has scored century against Sri Lanka 100, and 109 against Australia.

De Kock who is set to retire from ODI cricket after the World Cup is now the leading run-scorer of the tournament (407 runs) after his dominating 174 runs against Bangladesh leapfrogging Virat Kohli (354 runs).

"It's easy to score a hundred and then sort of take a back seat, but every single day that he comes to training and the games that he has played so far, you know, scoring three hundreds in five innings is a pretty special effort," Jean-Paul Duminy, South Africa's batting coach, said on Tuesday night. "Knowing the character that he is, he is certainly not going to rest on that.



He has got great ambitions to go all the way and be a real strong performer for the team."

South Africa's hopes will likely hinge on the remarkable batting skills demonstrated by Quinton de Kock as they are about to encounter a challenging series of matches, with upcoming games against Pakistan, New Zealand, and the host nation and tournament favorites, India.

MACCABI TEL AVIV TO HOST EUROLEAGUE GAMES IN BELGRADE DUE TO SECURITY SITUATION IN ISRAEL

Jerusalem: Israeli champions Maccabi Tel Aviv will hold its upcoming Euroleague home games in Belgrade due to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, Maccabi said in a statement, citing the Euroleague Basketball (EB) decision.

Maccabi's upcoming home game against Real Madrid in Round 6, originally scheduled for Nov. 2, was postponed to an unspecified date, Xinhua reports.

The Israelis' following four home games, against Bayern Munich, Olympiacos Piraeus, Barcelona, and Alba Berlin will be played on their scheduled dates later in November at the Aleksandar Nikolic Hall in Serbia's capital. "Maccabi has received the support of the Belgrade Municipality and the Serbian Government and will engage in conversations to plan the necessary security measures," said the EB decision. "EB will continue to monitor the evolution of the situation, staying in contact with all related parties, and will announce any modifications, if necessary," it concluded.



Asian Para Games: Sumit Antil wins gold with new world record; Pushpendra takes bronze in men's javelin F64 event

Hangzhou | Agencies

Sumit Antil, the reigning Paralympic and world champion, clinched a gold medal while improving his own world record in the men's javelin F64 event at the Asian Para Games, here on Wednesday.

Sumit pocketed the gold with a remarkable throw of 73.29 meters, setting new World, Para Asian and Games records. Another Indian in action, Pushpendra Singh bagged a bronze with a throw of 62.06 meters. Sri Lanka's S Arachchige Kodithuwakku won silver with 64.09m. Sumit made a powerful start with his first throw of 66.22m, effortlessly surpassing the Games Record of 56.29m he had established



back in 2018 in Jakarta. His second throw reached an impressive distance of 70.48m, coming close to his own world record of 70.83m, which he had set at the World Para Athletics Championships in Paris earlier this year.

In his third attempt, he astoundingly shattered that record with an enormous throw of 73.29m. India won total of 42 medals including 11 gold, 12 silver and 19 bronze medals, sitting fourth in the medal tally.



ICC ODI Rankings: Gill inches closer to top-ranked Babar; Kohli rises to fifth

India's top order batter Shubman Gill inched closer to Pakistan skipper Babar Azam for the top spot in ICC Men's ODI batting chart while Virat Kohli jumped three places to joint fifth in the latest rankings update released by International Cricket Council on Wednesday.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Babar's lead at the top of the Rankings with 829 points has been reduced to just six rating points as Gill closed him with 823 points.

The Pakistan skipper's ratings dropped after scoring 157 runs from five innings so far at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, with his most recent effort a fighting 74 in a losing side against Afghanistan in Chennai.

Gill has 95 runs from just three matches for India, with the right-hander improving to 823 rating points on the back of his standout innings of 53 against Bangladesh in Pune.

Kohli, who is currently second highest run scorer in the 2023 ODI World Cup with 354 runs to his name, share fifth place on the rankings with Australian batter David Warner (up two spots) following his unbeaten 103 and 95 against

Bangladesh and New Zealand respectively.

However, Gill faces stiff competition from South African Quinton de Kock, who has staged the tournament on fire with his surreal form with three marvellous centuries in five matches and is currently positioned third in the rankings with 756 points.

Another South African, Heinrich Klaasen (up seven places to fourth and a new career-high rating) also makes good ground. New Zealand all-rounder Daryll Mitchell is another player, who rose 16 places to 13th overall after 268 runs from four hits at the World Cup.

India skipper Rohit Sharma, however, maintained his place in the top 10, currently sitting eighth with 725 rating points.

In the bowling list, Australian Josh Hazlewood maintains himself on the top of the table (670 points) with Indian pacer

Mohammad Siraj inchingly closely with 668 points jumping 16 places to 13th overall.

South Africa left-arm pacer Marco Jansen, the biggest mover with the in-form No.7 jumped 23 places on this list to share 11th place alongside Scotland's Michael Leask.

South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj rises two places to third and a new career-high rating following his seven wickets at the tournament thus far, while Afghanistan veteran Mohammad Nabi (up four places to sixth) and Australia tweeker Adam Zampa (up four places to seventh) also make ground inside the top 10.

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan remains out in front of the ODI rankings for all-rounders, with South Africa bean-pole Marco Jansen the biggest mover with the in-form No.7 jumping 23 places on this list to share 11th place alongside Scotland's Michael Leask.



Shazahn Padamsee on her nickname: Sashaa for personal, professional growth

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shazahn Padamsee, who is known for her work in movies like 'Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year', 'Dil Toh Baccha Hai Ji', etc revealed why she wants to be known by her nickname Sashaa.

Talking about the same, Shazahn said she initially decided she wanted to be known by her nickname Sashaa simply because 'it's easier to pronounce'.

But she also feels that the name Sashaa which is an acronym of her real name, signifies both personal, and professional growth as the coming year holds exciting projects for her.

The daughter of legendary advertising and theater personality Alyque Padamsee, Sashaa has had a notable career in the entertainment industry.

She will be next seen in the upcoming Hindi film 'Pagalpan Next Level', in which she portrays the role of Harman Mann.

Having acted in Bollywood films like 'Housefull 2', Sashaa has garnered recognition and acclaim in the Indian film industry.

On where she has been all these years, Sashaa said that she took a bit of a break from films since the projects that were coming her way were not very interesting.

She will also be foraying into the music scene with indie Hindi album very soon.

Talking about the same, she shared: "Music has always been a childhood passion of mine and so I used the time to build & develop myself as a musician, a singer/ songwriter & composer and I learnt the piano as well."

"This whole phase has been a journey of self discovery. I have so much more to offer now to my performances. I feel refreshed and enthusiastic to be back. OTT has expanded the acting canvas. It's such an exciting time," added Sashaa.

'Pagalpan Next Level' stars Guru Mann in the lead. The movie is an embodiment of Guru's relentless pursuit of a dream, and offers a raw and authentic portrayal of his extraordinary journey. The film has been shot in diverse locations of Punjab, Mumbai, and California, providing a vibrant backdrop to the inspiring tale. It also stars Rituraj Singh, Suprana Marwah, Aarya Babbar, Rakesh Bedi, and Avtar Gill. Directed by Aryaman Keshu Ramsay and produced by GJ Singh under the banner of Golden Glass Entertainment, 'Pagalpan Next Level' is set to release in theatres on October 27.



Mani Ratnam, Luca Guadagnino to receive Excellence in Cinema Award at Mumbai Film Fest

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Indian filmmaker Mani Ratnam, known for his works like 'Roja', 'Bombay', and Italian director Luca Guadagnino, who is known for 'A Bigger Splash', 'Call Me By Your Name', etc will be honoured with the 'Excellence in Cinema' award, here, at the MAMI Mumbai Film Festival.

Both the directors will attend the festival to receive this prestigious accolade, and will conduct masterclasses at the festival. It will be held at the Opening Night ceremony on October 27.

The award honours individuals who have made outstanding, long-lasting contributions to the world of film and cinema. Previous recipients include Darren Aronofsky, Sharmila Tagore, Fernando Meirelles, and Chen Kaige.

The festival will also screen Mani Ratnam's most recent historical dramas -- 'Ponniyin Selvan: Part one and two', and Guadagnino's Golden Globe-nominated film 'I Am Love'.

With a career spanning four decades, Mani Ratnam is one of the most celebrated directors from South Asia. Over the decades, his cinema has explored different themes, from the classic love story to political drama to human drama.

His films have layered characters and complex themes that are deeply rooted in a cultural and social context. His most notable movies include 'Mouna Ragam', 'Nayakan', 'Iruvar', 'Alaipayuthey', 'Guru' etc.

Luca Guadagnino is the auteur film-

maker behind some of the most visceral and visually stunning films of the last two decades, including the Oscar, BAFTA, and Golden Globe-nominated films 'I Am Love', 'Suspiria', and the feature documentary 'Salvatore: Shoemaker of Dreams'.

Guadagnino made his TV debut with the HBO drama series 'We Are Who We Are', which he created, directed, wrote, and produced. He is currently in post-production for his next feature based on William S Burroughs' novel 'Queer'.

Anupama Chopra, festival director said: "It's a privilege to award these formidable artists. They have redefined and expanded our ideas of what cinema can be."

Shraddha Kapoor gifts herself swanky Lamborghini worth Rs 4cr

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood diva Shraddha Kapoor has gifted herself a new car - Lamborghini Huracan Technica, on the occasion of Dussehra, and the picture of the same has went viral on the social media.

The price of the swanky car is reported to be Rs four crore. She has opted for the red colour. Reportedly, the puja for the same will be held at ISKCON temple on Wednesday. The photo that went viral on the internet, shows Shraddha flashing her beautiful smile, while sitting down alongside her new purchase. She is wearing a floral white and pink salwar suit, with minimal makeup and a bindi.

In a video, we can see her driving her new car, with a man sitting next to the driver's seat. She is flashing her smile for the paparazzi, and is seen swiftly driving the car. Fans showered love on Shraddha and congratulated her on the social media. Some netizens commented: "Driving like a pro", "she is doing everything with confidence", "sign me up for your new driver", etc.

On the work front, she was last seen in romantic comedy 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar' alongside Ranbir Kapoor. She next has 'Stree 2' in the pipeline.



Ranveer Singh recollects the moment he first saw Deepika Padukone: 'I just went ohh my God'

Mumbai: Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh, who was recently seen in the theatrical release 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani', recollected the moment when he saw his wife-actress Deepika Padukone for the first time in person.

The incident is from a meeting with the director Sanjay Leela Bhansali for the film 'Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela'.

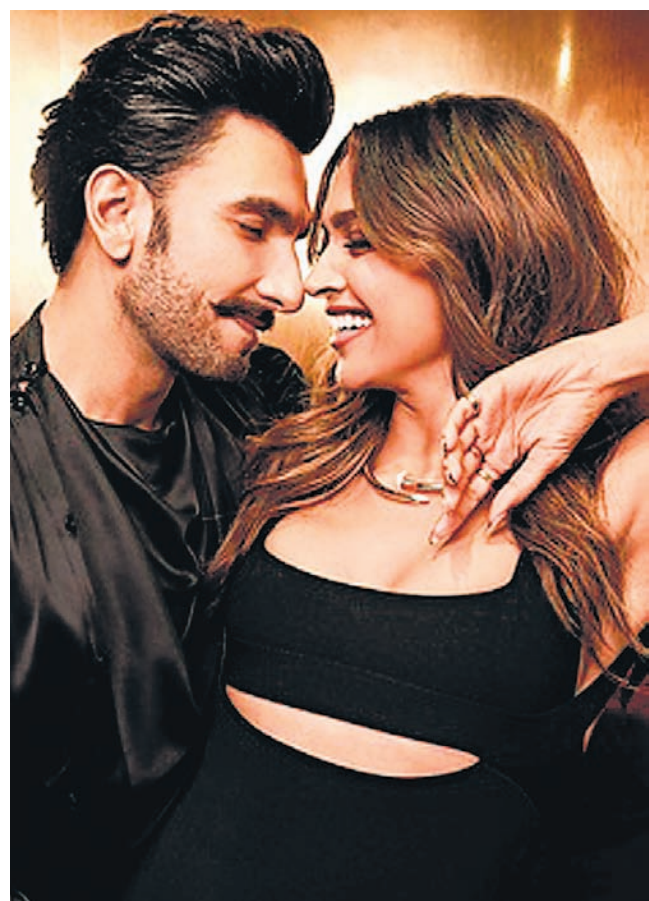
Ranveer is set to grace the couch of the chat show 'Koffee With Karan' in its season 8 with his wife.

Talking about his first meeting with Deepika, Ranveer said,

"There was a famous or infamous reading for the movie at Mr Bhansali's house in Versova. I was supposed to meet him before Deepika's arrival. So I was sitting on the table and the door was on my left. He has these heavy doors and he lives by the seaside."

He further mentioned, "So, these heavy doors open and the gush of wind comes from the sea. There, Deepika enters wearing this white chikankar, hair blowing due to the sea wind just like some sadgi ki moorat. I was like Oh My God."

'Koffee with Karan' Season 8 is set to stream on October 26 on Disney+ Hotstar with new episodes dropping every Thursday.



Amit Sadh calls independent cinema important tool for creative freedom

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Best known for his performances in projects like 'Kai Po Che', 'Sultan', 'Gold' and 'Breathe' among others, actor Amit Sadh has expressed his gratitude towards independent cinema and filmmakers, calling it an important tool for creative freedom.

Amit had recently attended the Yellowstone International Film Festival, here.

During a panel discussion, he said: "I believe independent cinema should be given more priority in our country and elsewhere as it is a very important tool for creative freedom."

"In recent times we have seen amazing stories which were told by independent filmmakers through their outstanding craft - cinema," he added.

Showcasing 140 films under categories including Feature shorts, LGBTQIA+, Women empowerment, Comedy, Horror, Short and feature documentaries feature films from the US, the UK, France, Germany, Australia, Brazil, Canada, INDIA, Italy, the Netherlands, Chile, Spain, Pakistan, Belgium, Turkey, Israel, Finland, New Zealand, Sweden and many more, the festival will conclude on October 27.

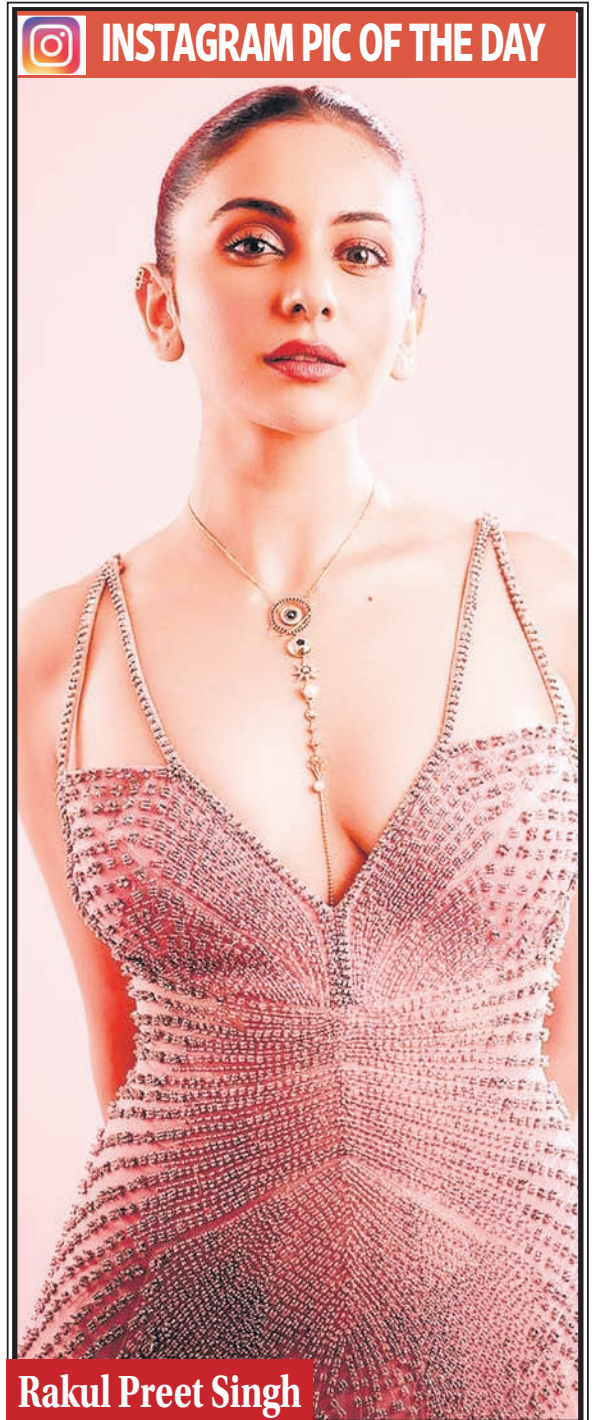
In the festival, Amit also received the award for 'Outstanding Performance In a recurring Role' for 'Breathe Into The Shadows'.



The festival witnessed Bani J, Amit Sadh, Deepak Kalra, Siddharth Chauhan, among others.

On the work front, he is currently seen in 'Duranga 2', which is the Indian adaptation of the popular K-drama 'Flower of Evil'. He plays the character of Sammit Patel in the show.

The second season of the show saw the return of Gulshan, Drashti Dhami, Amit Sadh, Barkha Sen Gupta, Rajesh Khattar reprising their respective roles. Spanning across eight episodes, 'Duranga S2' is streaming on ZEE5.



Rakul Preet Singh