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NEET-UG 2024: SC ISSUES NOTICE ON PLEA SEEKING CANCELLATION OF COUNSELING

► The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Friday announced the postponement of the Joint CSIR-UGC-NET scheduled for June 25-27, citing unavoidable circumstances as well as logistic issues. In a notification issued on Friday, the NTA stated: "The candidates are hereby informed that the Joint CSIR-UGC-NET Examination June-2024 which was scheduled to be held between 25.06.2024 to 27.06.2024 is being postponed due to unavoidable circumstances as well as logistic issues. The revised schedule for the conduct of this examination will be announced later through the official website." Candidates have been advised to keep visiting the official website for the latest updates.



NTA and Union of India may file their response within two weeks. The other respondents may also file their

response on or before the next date fixed. "The matter will be taken up for hearing on July 8.

ABVP DEMANDS CBI PROBE INTO PAPER LEAKS

New Delhi: The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has come down heavily on the National Testing Agency (NTA) over the irregularities and lapses in conducting the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and the National Eligibility Test (NET), demanding a CBI probe into its 'entire mechanism'.
ABVP National General Secretary Yagywalkya Shukla said the credibility of NTA has come under lens because of the recent episodes, adding that it was the legitimate right of the students to raise a hue and cry and lodge protest over its failures. "The UGC-NET was cancelled after a question paper leak. This raises many questions about NTA's preparedness. Mismanagement in UGC NET has exposed the shortcomings of the examination body... It shows how ill-prepared it was in conducting the competitive exams," Shukla said. He also demanded a CBI probe into the entire row and urged the government to take stringent action against the 'heinous' crime of paper leaks.

CONGRESS ON STREET TO PROTEST; GETS SUPPORT

Bhopal: The Congress here staged a protest on Friday over alleged discrepancies in NEET and NET examinations and demanded justice for affected students. The protest organised at the city's one of the busiest intersections, the Roshanpura Chowk, was led by state unit chief Jitu Patwari and former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh. The Maharashtra Congress on Friday launched a state-wide 'chikkhal phenko' (mudslinging) agitation to protest against the 'anti-people' policies of the state and Central governments.



State Congress President Nana Patole said the campaign aims to highlight the high inflation, growing unemployment, falling law and order, the recent NEET paper leaks, and other failures of the MahaYuti and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led NDA governments. Uttar Pradesh Congress workers staged a protest here on Friday, demanding the cancellation of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET). "The government has failed to hold a prestigious exam like the NEET in a fair manner. They have now cancelled the (UGC-) NET exam too," state Congress chief Ajay Rai told reporters.
"We want the government to punish those responsible for it and safeguard the future of our children," he said. Congress workers held placards and raised slogans demanding the cancellation of the NEET. As the protesters tried to move from the Congress headquarters to Mall Avenue Crossing here, they were stopped by police and some were even detained. In Bihar, the demonstration, led by Legislative Council member Madan Mohan Jha, saw party members and supporters taking to the streets of Patna, voicing their concerns over paper leaks and corruption in several competitive exams. Protesters raised slogans against the BJP government, calling for justice for affected students and stringent punishment for those involved in the malpractices. Addressing the reporters, Mohan Jha alleged that the BJP was "playing with the future of the country."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday issued notice to the National Testing Agency (NTA) and others on a plea seeking cancellation of the NEET-UG 2024 counselling cum seat allotment process which is likely to commence from July 6.

However, a vacation bench presided over by Justice Vikram Nath turned down the request to defer the commencement of the counselling for two days, i.e., till July 8, when the apex court is scheduled to hear the batch of pleas, including the petitions seeking cancellation of NEET-UG exam. The Bench, also comprising S.V.N. Bhatti, observed that the first phase of counselling will extend for a week and halting the seat allotment process may result in irreparable loss of time. After hearing the submission, the apex court ordered, "Issue notice. Tag (with the pending batch of petitions). In the meantime, learned counsel appearing for respondents

Monsoon picks up momentum, Kharif sowing expected to speed up

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday said that the southwest monsoon has picked up momentum as it has advanced into some more parts of Maharashtra, remaining parts of Vidarbha, and some parts of Madhya Pradesh.

The IMD said that monsoon has also moved into more areas of Chhattisgarh and Odisha, some parts of Gangetic West Bengal, remaining parts of sub-Himalayan West Bengal and some parts of Jharkhand.

"Conditions are favourable for further advance of the southwest monsoon into some more parts of Gujarat, remaining parts of Maharashtra, some more parts of Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and some parts of Uttar Pradesh during the next 3-4 days," the IMD said.

This represents good news for the economy as the Kharif sowing which had slowed with the stalling of the monsoon will now pick up speed.

The onset of the monsoon over Kerala this year was two days ahead of the usual date and over northeast, six days in advance.

Thereafter, the northward progress of monsoon was gradual, and it covered Kerala, Karnataka, Rayalaseema, Goa & Telangana;



most parts of southern Maharashtra and some parts of Chhattisgarh, Odisha; most parts of sub-Himalayan West Bengal, and Sikkim, and the entire northeastern states by June 12. However, the monsoon has not progressed after that and the 'Northern Limit' of monsoon on June 18 passed through Navsari, Jalgaon, Amravati, Chandrapur, Bijapur, Sukma, Malkangiri, and Vizianagaram.

The monsoon plays a key role in the Indian economy as over 50 per cent of the country's farmland depend on rain. The monsoon rain is also crucial for recharging the country's reservoirs and aquifers from which the water can be used later in the year to irrigate crops.

98 Indians died due to natural causes during ongoing Haj pilgrimage: MEA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday that 98 Indians died due to natural causes and accidents during this year's Haj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.

Last weekend, over 175,000 pilgrims from India converged on sacred Mount Arafat outside Mecca to offer their prayers during the pilgrimage.

"Each year we have a large numbers of Indians visiting Haj for pilgrimage. This year, we have had around 1,75,000 Indians who have visited Haj. The core Haj period is from May 9 to July 22," said MEA spokesperson Randhir



Jaiswal during a weekly media briefing in New Delhi on Friday.

"So far, we have lost 98 of our citizens. These deaths have happened due to illness, natural causes, chronic illness and old age. On the day of Arafat, six Indians died

and four Indians have died on account of accidents. Last year, 187 Indians died during Haj," he added.
It is believed that several hundred people from various countries have died due to the intense heat during this year's pilgrimage.

MMRDA clarifies after Cong leader Nana Patole claims cracks on Atal Setu

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Hours after Maharashtra Congress President Nana Patole claimed that cracks have appeared on the swank new Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), also known as Atal Setu, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) clarified on Friday that the cracks are not on the actual bridge, but on the approach road from the Navi Mumbai side.

The cracks -- detected at three locations on Ramp 5 (towards Mumbai) -- are minor and located along the road surface near the edges, MMRDA said. Scoffing rumours on social media that the cracks were on the main bridge itself, the MMRDA's operation and maintenance team inspected the site on Thursday and discovered the problem on the Ulwe side in Navi Mumbai, across Thane Creek. The 21.8 km long six-lane bridge has a 16.5 km sea link connecting South Mumbai and Navi Mumbai.

The MMRDA said that the Package 4 con-



tractor (Strabag Infrastructure & Safety Solutions GmbH and Strabag AG) has already initiated the repair works which shall be completed within 24 hours without causing any disruption to the traffic movement.

"It is important to note that these cracks are not due to any structural defects. They are minor longitudinal cracks in the asphalt pavement, which can be effectively repaired without impacting the life or performance of the pavement," the MMRDA said.

DELHI HC STAYS KEJRIWAL'S BAIL RELEASE; RESERVES ORDER

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a turn of events, the Delhi High Court on Friday stayed the release of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal on bail.

The Delhi High Court on Friday reserved its order on the Enforcement Directorate's plea seeking a stay on the release of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on bail.

A Delhi court on Thursday granted bail to the Chief Minister in connection with a money laundering case related to the now-scrapped excise policy, but the high court has stayed the order till it pronounces its final order on ED's plea, which also means that the CM will remain in judicial custody.

The high court said that it would pass its order in two to three days. On Friday, the ED moved High Court challenging the lower court's bail order. The plea was urgently



mentioned before a vacation bench comprising Justices Sudhir Kumar Jain and Ravinder Dudeja by Additional Solicitor General, S.V. Raju, on behalf of the ED.

"I am moving for an urgent stay. The order was pronounced yesterday at 8 p.m. The order is not uploaded. We were not given a clear opportunity to oppose bail," he argued.

ASG Raju further said that his prayer for a stay on the bail order wasn't even considered. "I am demanding that the order be stayed and the matter be heard as soon as possible. We were denied the full opportunity to argue the case. I am making allegations with full seriousness," he stated.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, representing CM Kejriwal, opposed the stay request, citing legal precedents. "There are ten Supreme Court judgments that cancellation of bail is radically different from grant of bail," he contended.

After hearing arguments from both sides, the High Court directed that the bail order should not be enforced until the matter is heard in full. "The bail order will not be given effect. We have not passed the final order. You may argue as much as you can," the Bench stated, effectively halting CM Kejriwal's release.

PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The International Day of Yoga is being celebrated in several countries across the world, including Japan, New Zealand, Thailand, and Malaysia, which witnessed enthusiastic participation in events organised by the Indian missions.

These events underscored the global appeal of yoga and its benefits for a healthy lifestyle. In Japan, despite the inclement weather, the Indian Embassy in Tokyo celebrated the 10th International Day of Yoga at Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple. The event saw overwhelming participation from a large



number of people. In New Zealand, the Indian High Commission

celebrated the day with Indian community members, Kiwi friends, and repre-

sentatives of various yoga institutes. In Thailand, several universities and institutions hosted yoga events in collaboration with the Indian Embassy.

At Siam University, an event saw significant participation from students and faculty and was graced by Thailand President Pongchai Mongkhonvanit.

In Papua New Guinea, the High Commission of India organised a yoga event in Port Moresby, attended by diaspora members, PNGeans, and diplomats. In Malaysia, a mega yoga celebration was held at the iconic Batu Caves in Kuala Lumpur, commemorating the yoga day.

PM Modi leads Yoga Day celebrations

Srinagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday greeted the people of the country and the World on the 10th International Day of Yoga while celebrating the event in J&K's Srinagar city. He told the participants here at the SKICC, located on the banks of Dal Lake, that it is in the sanguine environment of Kashmir and Srinagar that one gets the unique feeling of the strength that Yoga gives us.

He said that the theme of the 10th International Yoga Day is 'Yoga for Self & Society' and the World is today looking at Yoga for help amid the tensions in daily life. Yoga gives us the opportunity for oneness of mind, body and soul. Focus is the most important part of life and this is achieved through meditation. Today Yoga is an essential part of training for the Army and the sports persons. In space projects, Yoga training is given to astronauts. Yoga classes are held for inmates in jails."

Government puts up 67 coal mines for auction across 8 states

Hyderabad | Agencies

The Ministry of Coal on Friday put up 67 coal mines for auction across eight states, including Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal and Telangana.

Union Minister of Coal and Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, launched the 10th tranche of commercial coal mine auctions in Hyderabad. The tranche includes mines that are both fully explored and partially explored and three coking coal mines.

The Ministry of Coal has taken a series of reform measures to ensure that the coal sector grows at a rapid pace and meets the country's energy needs. For the 10th tranche also, mines falling



under protected areas, wildlife sanctuaries, critical habitats, having forest cover greater than 40 per cent, or heavily built-up areas have been excluded.

The block boundaries of some of the coal mines where there was presence of dense habitation, high green cover, or critical infrastructure have been revised to improve the attractiveness of the coal mines.



CENTRE ASSURES STATES OF 100 PER CENT PROCUREMENT OF TUR, URAD AND MASUR AT MSP

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Minister of Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday assured the states that the Centre is committed to procure 100 per cent of Tur, Urad and Masur produced by farmers at the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) to ensure crop diversification and achieve self-sufficiency in the production of pulses.

Chairing a virtual meeting with agriculture ministers of various states at Krishi Bhawan here, Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the e-Samridhi portal has been launched through National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) for registration of farmers and the government is committed to procure these pulses at MSP from farmers registered on the portal.

He urged the state governments to encourage more and more farmers to register on this portal so that they can avail the facility of assured procurement. The minister also informed them about the new Model Pulses Village scheme which is being rolled



out from the current Kharif season.

He requested the state governments to utilise the fallow lands which are available for pulses after the rice crop is harvested.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan also asked the state governments to take up inter-cropping of Tur in a vigorous manner.

He mentioned that the state governments should share their best

practices with each other and inter-state visits should be undertaken for this. The Minister mentioned that the elected representatives such as MPs and MLAs should be actively involved in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs).

The Union Minister emphasised the need for crop diversification towards cash crops and the need to restore the fertility of the soil.

He stressed the requirement for timely and quality inputs to farmers, such as good quality seeds for increasing productivity, and assured maximum support regarding this.

The meeting was called as the government wants to prioritise the increase in production of pulses in the country with a view to reducing imports.

He informed the state ministers that the government of India has opened 150 Pulse Seed Hubs and Cluster Front Line Demonstrations (CFLDs) are being given by the ICAR for making seeds available in low productivity districts. He mentioned the need to develop climate-resilient varieties and short-duration varieties so that the effects of climate change could be countered. The Union Minister requested the state governments to strengthen their seed delivery systems by strengthening the State Seed Corporations.

Agriculture Ministers of the major pulses producing states, namely Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Bihar, Telangana were present during the meeting.

Maha Congress launches 'mudslinging' campaign against govt's failures

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maharashtra Congress on Friday launched a state-wide 'chikkhal phenko' (mudslinging) agitation to protest against the 'anti-people' policies of the state and Central governments.

State Congress President Nana Patole said the campaign aims to highlight the high inflation, growing unemployment, falling law and order, the recent NEET paper leaks, and other failures of the MahaYuti and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led NDA governments.

"The Centre and the state are making merry after abandoning the people. Law and order have completely collapsed in the state, while runaway inflation and joblessness have made it difficult for people to survive," said Patole.

There is rampant black-marketing of seeds and fertilisers due to which the poor farmers are being looted in the state but the government is doing nothing, he claimed.

To draw the government's attention to these 'burning' problems, the Congress organised a 'mudslinging' drive in different districts across the state.

Hundreds of party workers poured muddy water on effigies symbolising the government, raised slogans, and demanded the administration take immediate note of the people's sufferings.



The agitation was carried out in Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, Kolhapur and other parts of the state.

Speaking to the media, Patole alleged that through the direct bank transfer scheme, various farming aids like pesticides, sprays, fertilisers and medicines are given to the farmers, but the government hiked the prices of spray pumps from Rs 2,700 to Rs 4,500, while other items are also being purchased at higher rates.

Though the Centre has increased the MSP for some crops, the hike is very meagre compared to the inflation, considering the high prices of diesel, fertilisers, seeds and other agriculture inputs, thus leaving the farmers with nothing, he pointed out.

The state is gripped by a severe drought in which the farmers have suffered huge losses, but the government is terming it a 'drought-like' situation, thus mocking their plight even as the rains have been delayed, Patole claimed.

10 Indians recruited by Russian Army released and repatriated to India: MEA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As many as 10 Indians recruited by the Russian Army for its conflict with Ukraine have been released and repatriated back to India, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) revealed on Friday.

The government on June 11 had said that two Indian nationals who had been recruited by the Russian Army had been killed in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. New Delhi had then strongly taken up the matter with the Russian Ambassador here and with Russian authorities in Moscow for early release and return of all Indian nationals who are with the Russian Army. "We are engaged with the Russian authorities in New Delhi and Moscow so that persons who



are serving in the Russian army can be released and repatriated to India as soon as possible," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the External Affairs Ministry told the media in the national capital on Friday. "About 20-25 people who want to be released

have contacted us so far. Of those, 10 people have been released and repatriated back to India. We are also in touch with the family members of the two people who died recently. We are constantly engaged with the Russian Defence and Foreign Ministry so that their mortal remains can be brought back to India," added the MEA spokesperson.

Earlier, India had also demanded that there be a verified stop to any further recruitment of its nationals by the Russian Army.

"Such activities would not be in consonance with our partnership. We also urge Indian nationals to exercise caution while seeking employment opportunities in Russia," the MEA stated on June 11.

BSF forced to open fire on B'deshi cattle smugglers along India-B'desh border

Kolkata | Agencies

Border Security Force (BSF) personnel of the South Bengal Frontier were forced to open fire on Bangladeshi cattle smugglers for the second day running along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal in the wee hours of Friday.

The latest incident occurred in Malda district under the jurisdiction of JJ Pur Border Outpost. BSF officials have not ruled out the possibility of injury to any of the smugglers who took to their heels after hearing the shots.

"At around 2 a.m. on Friday, a jawan on duty spotted 3-4 Bangladeshis with four heads of cattle. When the jawan challenged them, the smugglers paid no heed and kept approaching the border. They also tried to attack the jawan with sharp-edged weapons and snatch his service rifle." The jawan was then forced to fire one round from his INSAS rifle, following which the smugglers fled, taking advantage of the darkness.



Reinforcements reached the spot and found a head of cattle and two swords," said A.K. Arya, DIG and spokesperson, BSF, South Bengal

Frontier. In another incident on Friday, a BSF jawan was attacked by Bangladeshi cattle smugglers near the HC Pur Border Outpost, forcing him to open fire in self-defence.

Arya said a strong protest has been registered against such activities with the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). A report has also been filed at the local police station. "Every day, troops of the South Bengal Frontier face 3-4 such attacks. Our personnel display exemplary courage by showing restraint even at a risk to their lives. Several of our personnel have been seriously injured by the criminals.

"A jawan was also attacked at the Natna Border Outpost in Murshidabad during the day. He had to fire rounds from his Pump Action Gun (non-lethal) and use stun grenades to drive away the criminals," Arya said.

Hydraulics, Jaipur: A Landmark Achievement in Innovation and Sustainability

Renowned architect Dikshu Kukreja blends evolving sentiments of environmental protection, engineering marvel and modernistic design



design principles. It stands as a testament to our evolving consciousness towards environmental protection and sustainability."

The Plant layout optimizes the manufacturing process, ensuring logical flow and proximity of each step, thereby minimizing time and distance. Safety measures are paramount, with comprehensive fire protection systems, emergency stop buttons, process segregation, safety movements and warning signs installed throughout the plant. Quality control measures are integrated into the design, including dedicated areas for product inspection and testing, along with systems for tracking products through the manufacturing process. This INR 200 crore project is poised to create approximately 2000 direct and 10000 indirect job opportunities, catering to the stringent quality requirements of global customers.

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

Designed by the renowned architect Dikshu Kukreja, Managing Principal of CP Kukreja Architects, this cutting-edge facility is poised to redefine the landscape of industrial spaces, showcasing a perfect blend of innovation and sustainability.

Spread across 16 acres at Mahindra World City, Jaipur, this ultra-modern plant takes a comprehensive approach towards environmental sustainability and employee well-being. The design

incorporates innovative solutions to mitigate potential environmental impacts associated with manufacturing processes, such as water and air pollution. Situated in the arid climate, the facility boasts robust insulation for thermal comfort and is seamlessly integrated into the surrounding traffic flow.

Dikshu Kukreja remarked, "The facility in Jaipur epitomizes our commitment to blending innovative technologies with sustainable

ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY STEPS DOWN AS BENGAL CONGRESS CHIEF

Kolkata: Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on Friday announced his resignation from the chair of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee.

He made this announcement after a meeting of the state unit of the Congress committee on Friday afternoon, which was convened to review the reasons behind the poor performance of the party in West Bengal in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections.

However, no official confirmation has come from the Congress leadership on whether his resignation has been accepted or not.

Confirming his resignation, Chowdhury claimed that he was just President of the state unit of the Congress. "Since the time Mallikarjun Kharge became the Congress' National President, there was no state President. Now when the full-time President will be appointed you will all come to know that," said Chowdhury. Incidentally, he made this announcement just a day after the Congress' Rajya Sabha member and former Union finance minister, P Chidambaram, dropped in at the state secretariat Nabanna and had a 35-minute-long meeting with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Govt will find solution to Manipur crisis in 2-3 months, says CM Biren Singh

Imphal | Agencies

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said on Friday that a solution to the ethnic crisis in the state will be found soon.

Stating that some solutions to the Manipur ethnic crisis would be found in the next 2-3 months, Singh, who also holds the home portfolio, said the security forces deputed for Lok Sabha election duty in different states have returned to Manipur and they are being deployed in the sensitive and vulnerable areas of the state.

"Incidents of violence have reduced significantly during the past several months in most parts of the state, except some sporadic incidents of violence being reported from a few places," the Chief



Minister told the media. He also claimed that out of the last 14 months, violent incidents took place in the first seven months, while such incidents largely reduced in the subsequent months barring in a few pockets of the state.

"Schools, offices, and business establishments are functioning normally in most parts of Manipur. While few incidents of violence have been reported from some areas, I hope with the return of the central forces, such incidents would be prevented to a large extent," the Chief Minister said.

Jolt to BRS as ex-Speaker Srinivas Reddy joins Congress

Hyderabad | Agencies

In a huge setback to Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS), its senior leader and former Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy joined the ruling Congress party on Friday.

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy personally visited Srinivas Reddy's house to invite him to join the party.

Srinivas Reddy, a BRS MLA and prominent leader from Nizamabad district, accepted the invitation and agreed to work under Revanth Reddy's leadership.

The former Speaker told media persons that he is ready to work with the leadership which is delivering. He hailed the works undertaken by the Congress government for agriculture, farmers and irrigation projects.

The Chief Minister, who was accompanied by Revenue Minister Ponguloti Srinivasa Reddy, welcomed Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and his son into Congress.



CM Revanth Reddy assured the former Speaker that the Congress would give him due place. The CM praised the senior leader for his efforts in the development of agriculture and the welfare of farmers.

Stating that the Congress government is working for farmers' welfare, the Chief Minister said it would take Srinivas Reddy's suggestions in this regard.

When the Chief Minister was inside Srinivas Reddy's house, there was tension outside as some BRS leaders reached there and wanted to meet the BRS MLA. They were stopped by police. The BRS leaders, including Balka Suman, were detained.

Pocharam Srinivas Reddy served as minister for agriculture and cooperation in the first BRS government between 2014 and 2018.

Canal Land 'Disappears' In Shivraj Chouhan's Area, Officials Puzzled

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a bewildering development, land designated for a canal in the constituency of Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has inexplicably vanished.

The government department responsible for the canal has sought help from the revenue department to locate the missing land.

Historically, the canal, documented to be used for irrigation in Daulatpura and Madankhedha, was established with the aim of providing irrigation water to farmers and to boost agricultural productivity.

This canal, positioned near the Betwa river, played a vital role in the region's agriculture. However, the canal has mysteriously disappeared, leaving the community and the authorities puzzled.

"When we were small, we used to bathe in the canal water, but now it has vanished," said Basant Kumar Kushwaha, a resident.

Adding to the intrigue is the theft of



a water-lifting machine worth lakhs of rupees which was installed on the banks of the canal.

The canal department has asked the revenue department about the

exact location of this land. The local administration, however, appears equally perplexed and concerned.

"We have brought this matter to my notice. A thorough investigation

will be conducted to find out who has encroached upon the land and the government land will be freed," district collector Buddhesh Kumar Vaidya said.

The matter dates back to 1980 when the land was acquired by the government at a relatively low cost, and farmers were compensated properly.

Over the years, residential colonies began to emerge in the area where the canal once stood. Encroachments upon government land, under the guise of colony development, had become a recurring issue. The exact timeline of when the canal was dismantled and the whereabouts of its material remain shrouded in mystery.

This land that disappeared was in the Union Agriculture Minister's constituency, raising significant questions and concerns among the local population and government authorities. Locals said they are tracking how the investigation unfolds, and want the valuable canal land to be restored.



NEET EXAM ROW: MP CONGRESS STAGES PROTEST IN BHOPAL

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Congress here staged a protest on Friday over alleged discrepancies in NEET and NET examinations and demanded justice for affected students. The protest organised at the city's one of the busiest intersections, the Roshanpura Chowk, was led by state unit chief Jitu Patwari and former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh.

Digvijaya Singh demanded strict action against those involved in the alleged nexus of paper leaks.

He said, "Lakhs of children are affected due to irregularities and paper leaks of NEET exams and most of them are Hindus. RSS and Bajrang Dal should also come forward to raise this issue because it is an act of anti-nationalism."

Jitu Patwari said his party will continue to keep raising the issue of scams, irregularities and paper leaks until the government takes strict action.

"Madhya Pradesh witnessed the Vyapam scam under Shivraj Singh



RSS, BAJRANG DAL SHOULD JOIN PROTEST: DIGVIJAYA SINGH

Bhopal: Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh said on Friday that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bajrang Dal should also come forward and join the protest against the alleged irregularities and paper leaks during the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and the National Eligibility Test (NET). Addressing a gathering of party workers assembled here to protest against the alleged paper leaks, the veteran Congress leader also said that like the RSS workers, those agitating against the irregularities in NEET should also reach out to the people with their messages.

"RSS workers would never hit the streets to face lathi-charge by the police. Instead, they would go from door to door and meet the people," Singh said. Speaking on the alleged discrepancies in the NEET and NET, Singh demanded justice for the affected students and strict action against those involved in the alleged nexus of paper leaks.

Chouhan-led BJP government and now the entire country is witnessing scam in the NEET exam," he added.

On Thursday, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi said that paper leaks will continue in the country as long as the universities remain captured by the BJP. A paper leak, he added, is an "anti-national activity" since it "hugely hurts the country's young people, who are the country's future". The Union Education Ministry on Wednesday ordered the cancellation of UGC-NET following inputs of the exam's integrity being compromised.

CM kick-starts 'Anna Samvardhan Abhiyan' on International Yoga Day

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Friday kick-started the 'Anna Samvardhan Abhiyan' campaign on the occasion of the 10th International Yoga Day (IYD) and asked people to make the campaign successful by gifting Kudo-Kutki seeds to the farmers.

The Chief Minister said that 10 years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had presented a proposal at the United Nations which was welcomed by the international community.

"PM Modi's appeal for Yoga was received globally and today we are celebrating the 10th International Yoga Day. It is a milestone which PM Modi has achieved," the Chief Minister said after participating in the IYD celebrations. On the occasion of International Yoga Day, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav made a big announcement on Friday. He said that the



lessons of Ram and Krishna will be taught in higher education and school education of the state.

While talking to reporters in the state capital Bhopal after participating in the state level function organized on the occasion of Yoga Day, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said, the state government has taken up two projects - Rampath Gaman and Shri Krishna Path Gaman. The state government has decided to develop the places where Lord Ram and Krishna visited in the state as pilgrimage sites. Referring to the upcoming scheme, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that

the achievements of Lord Ram and Krishna are also going to be included in the curriculum of higher education and school education. After the formation of the government, decisions have been taken on the things mentioned in the BJP manifesto. Let it be known that the government has been working on the Ram Path Gaman Yojana in the state for a long time. These are the places through which Lord Ram passed during his exile. The government plans to specially develop these places and make them pilgrimage sites. The government has also selected some districts for this. Earlier on Friday, on International Yoga Day, people practiced yoga with enthusiasm and excitement in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav participated in the state level yoga program organized in the capital. The state ministers also participated in the Yoga Day celebrations at different places across the state.

Police arrest over 1K involved in cattle smuggling in 6 months

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Police have claimed to have registered as many as 575 cases in the last six months related to cattle smuggling and arrested a total of 1,121 people in this connection.

Besides, more than 7,000 cows were rescued from illegal possession during the same period.

The police said that most cases of cattle smuggling were reported in Balaghat, Seoni, Chhindwara, Barwani, Kargone, Burhanpur, Ujjain, Ratlam and Neemuch districts. A source said the operation against cattle smuggling was carried out extensively following the direction received from Chief Minister Mohan Yadav. "Several teams of police were formed across the state and the routes that were used frequently for cow trafficking were identified. Sources were



developed in particular regions to get real-time information and the cases of 10 years were examined," a police source said.

The BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government has been strict on cattle smuggling and the sale of meat in open places for the last several years. Notably, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, in one of his initial orders after taking over charge of the CM

Office, directed the police to take strict action against cattle smuggling.

The recent action in Mandala where 11 houses were demolished was as part of action against the illegal beef trading in the state, a police officer said.

The action was taken after a tip-off was received that numerous cows had been held captive for slaughtering.

AIIMS BHOPAL CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY WITH ITBP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The tenth International Yoga Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm by the AYUSH department under the leadership of AIIMS Executive Director Prof. (Dr) Ajai Singh at Kanhasiya of ITBP Camp, Bhopal, in which, from the side of ITBP, Mr. Ashok Tamta (Deputy Inspector General), Mr. Vijay Kumar Dogra (Deputy Inspector General) and other officers, soldiers and staff were present. The AYUSH department made the people of ITBP and AIIMS patients, doctors, staff and students practice the common yoga protocol, in which people participated enthusiastically. The AYUSH department of AIIMS also unveiled the brochure of general yoga therapy for the ITBP soldiers, in which the major problems and diseases occurring in the soldiers were told and their treatment through yoga and diet therapy was also told.

In the program, practice of micro exercise, asanas, pranayama, mudra and meditation was done. For the better life of the soldiers, to avoid diseases, to reduce stress, and to do asanas that can be practised daily, were also explained. According to Dr. Danish Javed, Senior Medical Officer



of the AYUSH Department, every person should practice yoga. In the AYUSH department, we conduct yoga classes every day from 7 am to 8 am, anyone who wants to take advantage of it can do so. Yoga instructor Chanchal Suryavanshi said that there are many benefits of practising yoga, which balance and improve physical, mental, and spiritual health. Yoga means 'unity' or 'union', and its purpose is to establish physical and mental balance. Yoga is a group of various asanas, pranayama, meditation, and attitude control techniques that help in the development of body, mind,

IHM BHOPAL CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY

Bhopal: The Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition (IHM) Bhopal proudly celebrated International Yoga Day on June 21, 2024. The event saw enthusiastic participation from both trainees and staff, highlighting the institute's commitment to promoting holistic well-being and a balanced lifestyle.

The celebration commenced early in the morning at IHM Bhopal campus. The serene setting provided the perfect backdrop for a series of yoga sessions designed to cater to different levels of experience, from beginners to advanced practitioners. Certified yoga instructor of IHM Bhopal Seema Shukla led the sessions, guiding participants through a variety of asanas (postures), pranayama (breathing exercises), and meditation techniques. The event was a resounding success, reaffirming IHM Bhopal's dedication to fostering a culture of health and wellness among its community. The institute plans to make yoga sessions a regular feature, encouraging students and staff to integrate these practices into their daily routines.



The then Registrar M.P. Nursing Registration Council Shiju dismissed from service

DECISION TAKEN ON IRREGULARITIES IN ISSUING RECOGNITION OF NURSING INSTITUTIONS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Executive Officer and Dean, Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal, Sunita Shiju, then Registrar, Madhya Pradesh Nursing Registration Council and present Staff Nurse, Medical College, Datia have been ordered to be dismissed from service with immediate effect. This decision has been taken on the basis of non-discharge of official duties properly based on the facts obtained in the investigation of granting recognition to various ineligible nursing colleges during her tenure in the Nursing Council.

It is noteworthy that Shiju was posted as Registrar in Madhya Pradesh Nurses Registration Council, Bhopal from 22 September 2021 to 24 August 2022. During the post of Registrar Nursing Council, Bhopal, serious irregularities in the recognition process of nursing institutions and non-discharge of official duties by Shiju were found in the investigation.

The charge sheet was issued by the Dean Medical College, Bhopal on 20 July 2023 and the additional charge sheet was issued to Mrs. Shiju on 04 August 2023. Since the case was of very serious nature, a

departmental inquiry was instituted by the Office of the Dean, Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal. In the investigation, the irregularities committed by Sunita Shiju during her tenure were found to be in the category of extremely serious misconduct.

Due to the said act, issuing of wrong accreditations of many nursing institutions in the state, the future of the admitted students was in jeopardy and the image of the nursing education system of the state was tarnished.

In view of the above, it has been decided to terminate the service of Mrs. Shiju with immediate effect.

GST raids at 4 places including Bhopal; Tax evasion of Rs 5 crore revealed among 8 businessmen in Indore

Bhopal: Major action has been taken against real estate and construction companies in the state. Different GST teams conducted simultaneous raids in Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Sagar on Friday morning and caught tax evasion. Initially, evidence of tax evasion of about Rs 5 crore has been found.

GST Anti-Evasion Bureau officials reached the office of Labham Group at Nariman Point on Friday morning. And they are seizing the mobile laptops of the employees and scanning the documents and data from the transactions.

Millet should be included in every plate: Deputy Chief Minister Shukla

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Deputy Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla launched the Shree Anna (Coarse Grains) Promotion Campaign in Rewa on the occasion of World Yoga Day. Deputy Chief Minister Shukla said that it is necessary to include coarse grains in our diet. In ancient times, when coarse grains like jowar, millet and maize were regularly included in the diet in our country, people used to fall ill less.

He said that our country is the largest producer of food grains and a large quantity of food grains is being exported. Today again there is a



need to adopt coarse grains. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is making efforts for the promotion of coarse grains. His resolution is that millets should be included in

the plate of Indians, so that the citizens of our country remain healthy. On this occasion, Shukla distributed packets of grain seeds to the farmers.

Bus facility will be available in government colleges of Madhya Pradesh from July 1

Team Absolute | Bhopal

To facilitate the transportation of girl students to government colleges of Madhya Pradesh, the government has decided to start a bus service. Buses will start running for PM Excellence College from July 1, so that girl students will get the facility to travel to and from the college at a fare of only one rupee.

Bus facility will be provided to girl students in 570 PM Excellence College of MP. Hamidia College of Bhopal is also included in this facility. Girl students will have to pay only one rupee fare for traveling to and from college by bus. A budget of Rs 460 crore has been fixed for setting up



PM College of Excellence in every district. There are about 570 government colleges in the state. One college in each district: A PM College of Excellence will be established in each district. This step has been taken by the Madhya Pradesh gov-

ernment keeping in mind the improvement in the field of education and the safety and convenience of girl students. This will not only improve the attendance of girl students, but will also facilitate them in attaining higher education.

25 new shiny Innova Crysta cars will join the government fleet for Ministers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

25 new gleaming vehicles for the ministers of Mohan Yadav government will reach Bhopal by the end of this month. New vehicles for the ministers are being purchased through JAM portal, the date for delivery of which has been given in August, but the ministers are demanding the vehicles this month, due to which the government has given time to the company to provide new vehicles by the end of June. Before this, five ministers have already received new vehicles.

The state government provides Innova Crysta car to the ministers which is considered comfortable for long distance travel. The exercise for the purchase of this luxurious car was started before the Lok Sabha elections, after which the Home Department and the Law



Department gave permission after testing it. After this, there was a wait for the election code of conduct to end so that orders could be placed for purchasing 25 new Innova Crysta. After the end of the code of conduct, the government has issued orders for this. Therefore, soon new

vehicles will be included in the conveyance of ministers. According to Aditya Richhariya, Superintendent of State Garage, the vehicles are expected to be delivered by the end of June.

The total cost of the vehicles being purchased for the ministers of Mohan government is Rs 5 crore.

The average price of a vehicle is said to be around Rs 20 lakh, which will reach Rs 5 crore for 25 ministers. After placing the order for the purchase of the car through Jaam portal, the company has given time of August for its delivery but after placing the order, the minister now wants to enjoy the pleasure of the new car as soon as possible. Therefore, demand for delivery has been sent in June itself. It is worth noting here that five ministers of the Mohan government have already been given new vehicles.

During the Lok Sabha election code of conduct, the Election Commission had banned the use of government vehicles by ministers in all other circumstances except in circumstances of emergency public service. Now after the code of conduct is over, orders for this will be issued on June 6.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Lack of coordination between leaders defeated BJP in UP

The absence of coordination between Lok Sabha candidates and party MLAs has emerged as one of the main reasons of the BJP's underwhelming performance in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh. The feedback collected so far by the designated teams which have been sent to almost all the constituencies, confirms this. Another feedback, according to sources, says there was no enthusiasm among the party workers across the state because of various reasons. Common among them was the State BJP leadership's inability to communicate with the party workers as it had been the case in the previous elections. Secondly, the workers for the past several years are feeling left out as despite doing their best in elections after elections, they are not able to get even their genuine work done at the tehsil and the thana level. They have also complained about an overdose of campaign and party programmes. Another common trend reported was a 'misplaced confidence' among candidates, state leaderships and office-bearers that despite not doing much work, they would sail through as the 2024 Lok Sabha polls were not about electing MPs but giving a third term to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This complacency led to party candidates not listening to workers' feedback and even not fulfilling the basic requirements of party workers and functionaries. In all, more than 70 office-bearers and former office-bearers have been entrusted with the responsibility of ascertaining the reasons for the BJP's lukewarm performance in the state. The observers have been tasked to meet district-level office-bearers, MLAs, sector-level office-bearers and collect their feedback. Even though the last date to submit the reports was June 20, sources said the date will have to be extended as many observers have not been able to complete the process and prepare a report so far.

Yoga: Teachers, Tough Love, And The Twinning Of Mind And Body

Nishtha Gautam

My yoga class is a microcosm of modern society. A group of individuals coming together in a spatio-temporal context to achieve different goals. It is also a study in efficiency or its lack; efficiency of not just the body, trying to twist and turn, but also of the belief system.

It is difficult to adopt any ancient art, craft, belief system or even word without navigating a landmine of sensibilities. For example, it is not easy to assert that hatha yoga or the physical practice of postures (asanas), is not the pure form of yoga. Even though it is seen as the most central yogic practice, this is probably not how yoga originated. And I'm not even referring to the pop styles of yoga practices that have emerged across the world purely thanks to laissez-faire.

These days, a good deal of breath is wasted, quite literally, on decoding whether yoga practice is geared toward an "inward-oriented detachment from material outcomes and desires", or if it's merely another fitness routine. If it's just the latter, why do some yoga teachers insist on following a puritanical pedagogical system of surrendering one's self?

The large-scale export of yoga from the Indian subcontinent to the world began in the early twentieth century when different Indian yogis were evangelising about this Indian knowledge system taking different routes. Swami Vivekananda, for example, may be seen as largely dismissive of yoga's bodily practices and presented it as more of a spiritual system. Ramana Maharshi saw yoga as facilitating a state called self-realisation: "simply being oneself, not knowing anything or becoming anything". Sivananda Saraswati and Tirumalai Krishnamacharya focused on the corporeality of the yoga practice, saw it as a physical fitness regime and even developed new postural systems. Krishnamacharya's student BKS Iyengar went a step ahead and insisted on absolute precision and bodily alignment. Starting from Vivekananda, all these yogis relied selectively on texts like Patanjali's Yogasutras and the Bhagavad Gita. While some sought to link their postural systems to these spiritual texts, others saw them as merely guiding lights. A practice session of Iyengar Yoga, for example, begins with an invocation to Patanjali. However, Iyengar is not known to have ever compelled his students to adopt any form of Hindu set of



beliefs. Now, what is a modern yogi or yogini ought to look for before even embarking on this journey? As a regular practitioner now, all I can say is the possibility of annihilation of ego is a good goal to begin with. Once you are on the yoga mat, all your accomplishments and the underlying pride ought to leave the room. If that does not happen after practising for a while, maybe yoga is not for you. Pride, and prejudice, block our path to recovery and healing. It is helpful to think of the practice of yoga as psychotherapy. I have many vices, but pride is not one of them. So what have I gained on the yoga mat? Looking back at my brief journey, I can confirm that yoga has given me the patience to deal with other people's pride. I have learnt to remove myself from situations and contexts where pride overran. I also realised that relying on your innate virtues is not very helpful in any situa-

tion: intent must be followed by action, or it is pointless. Yoga practice has also made me more fearless in terms of expressing myself. The reason is simple. Once you are on the mat, you are aware of every tissue of your body. What it is capable of and what must wait. Hypocrisy on the yoga mat is the gateway to a hospital bed. I may not be the fittest person around, thanks to my Covid-ravaged body, but yoga has encouraged me to look out for myself. It has allowed me to differentiate between vacuous, gentle words and harsh, painful instructions. While my heart may crave the former, I understand the importance of the latter. I understand the importance of the bitter verbal pill. I've stuck to my yoga teacher for a while now, despite her not-so-affable demeanour, because it's clear to me what her pedagogy is. Tough love. Most people use

"tough love" to mask their cruelty and lack of empathy. It is a much-maligned phrase today with its history of hiding abuse. To some, my teacher's words may come across as abuse (they surely are not gentle!). I have seen many of them deregistering from the programmes. Let this essay be seen as an apology for my teacher's pedagogy, let me iterate, that we are not close in personal life. Our interactions are strictly in the space and context of the yoga practice. I am not striving to be either the best or a favourite student. What defines this relationship, however, is her doggedness to make my body - and therefore, mind - the best that it can be and my often frustrated attempts to do the same. Neither is giving up.

international

Yogis create island of stillness at New York's frenetic Times Square

New York | Agencies

Thousands of yogis created an island of stillness in the frenetic whirl of 'Crossroads of the World'. Apty named, 'Mind Over Madness', the day-long yoga event featured seven massed yoga practices that included lessons for newbies at Times Square, on Thursday, the Summer Solstice Day.

"People seek stillness, they seek that peace in a frenetic world that we live in, and what better place than at Times Square to really practise that," said Tracy Warfield, a yoga teacher, as she prepared to lead a session.

Cealia Brannan, another yoga teacher who led a session, said the day's celebration "I feel like it's kind of homage to yoga". In the microcosm of the world -- people with origins across Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia and beyond -- stood with Swati of Indian origin warming up for a session with her husband and two sons.

"I'm immensely proud that it has become a global phenomenon," she said.

"I love it that people are coming to embrace the Indian culture and Indian values and they are adapting and embracing spirituality," she said. The Indian Consulate General was the sponsor of the first event of the day and Consul General Binaya Pradhan greeted the yogis and highlighted the benefits of the ancient art. It was the longest day, and also the hottest so far this year at 33 degrees Celsius. About 8,000 people had pre-registered for the event, according to



the organisers, and thousands more dropped by. As the yogis reached for Nirvana in the media strip of Times Square, overhead ads for movies, luxury watches, clothes and food and drinks floated by on electronic billboards, the NASDAQ building flashed the ups and downs of the stock market, characters dressed as the Statue of Liberty and Walt Disney characters sauntered, the area fixture "Naked Cowboy" strummed his guitar, and gawking tourists stopped to watch and sometimes imitate the asanas impromptu. "I think it's very easy to get caught up in the world, especially all the things that are going on now," said Warfield. "And you get this opportunity to just be together. Enjoy the practice. Enjoy your body. Enjoy your breath, and enjoy life". Swati said of the differing approaches to ancient art, "In India, it's more intense here is more fun". Warfield brought that out asking the yogis at the start to "smile, turn your head, make contact, say, 'I love you'". "It's that kind of yoga," she told the participants in the session she was leading.

The 'Mind Over Madness' yoga celebrations at Times Square on Solstice Day have been going on for 22 years, starting a dozen years before the United Nations General Assembly created the International Day of Yoga.

Cofounder of the event, Douglas Stewart said that the millennia-old yoga from India is relevant to the people of New York as everywhere as it is "a template for living" relating mind, body and spirit creating a relationship with nature". "It slowly begins to unfold to other parts of the world and will continue to express itself as a template for life," he said. According to the Centres for Disease Control, one in about six Americans now practise yoga -- 17 per cent or about 55 million people. About 30 per cent of them do yoga to treat and manage pain, the federal agency said in a brief published this month. Many of the yoga enthusiasts at Times Square like Brannan and Warfield said they first came to yoga seeking a panacea for pain. "I started because I had low back pain," Brannan said. "But then I just started realising all the other awesome ways that I felt after" starting yoga. Swati said that as a parent coordinator at her sons' international school "I promote yoga there".

"I promoted it to other friends who are not Indian, and they are here today," she added.

She said they also practise yoga at her gym. The Indian Consulate had earlier arranged yoga classes at Bryant Park and Central Park.

Thousands of Israelis turn out in renewed rally against govt

Jerusalem | Agencies

Thousands of Israelis turned out for fresh protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government in a renewed show of anger at the failure to agree on a ceasefire in Gaza and bring about the return of hostages.

According to Israeli media on Thursday, the largest rally took place in front of a private home of the Prime Minister in the city of Caesarea.

The demonstrators demanded new elections and the release of the hostages held in the Gaza Strip.

Hundreds also gathered in



Jerusalem for a protest, according to reports. These are the latest in months of protests as people accuse Netanyahu of bowing

Palestinian Islamist organisation Hamas.

Some Ministers oppose an agreement with Hamas as it would also provide for a ceasefire and the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails.

Israel continues to seek to eliminate Hamas, which attacked sites in southern Israel on October 7, killing nearly 1,200 people and abducting about 250 more to Gaza.

Israel responded by pounding Gaza with airstrikes and launched a ground offensive into the sealed-off Palestinian territory at the end of October.

15 shot during Juneteenth celebration in Oakland



San Francisco | Agencies A shooting during a Juneteenth celebration at Lake Merritt in Oakland, US state of California, left 15 people injured, the police said.

The crowds were peaceful until around 8:15 p.m. local time on Wednesday when an illegal sideshow involving vehicles and motorbikes occurred near Grand Avenue and Bellevue Avenue, Oakland Police Department said on Thursday in a press statement.

During the sideshow, someone walked onto the

hood of a car, which led to the occupants getting out and assaulting that person. Then came the gunfire, Oakland Police Department Chief Floyd Mitchell said at a press conference on Thursday noon as reported by Xinhua news agency.

The Oakland Fire Department said it transported at least four gunshot victims to a local hospital.

Police also took some victims to nearby hospitals. Other victims were self-transported.

Forest fire kills 5, injures 44 in Turkey



Ankara | Agencies

Five people were killed and 44 others injured in a forest fire in southeastern Turkey, Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said on Friday.

A stubble fire broke out on Thursday night in the cultivated areas between the Cinar district of the Diyarbakir province and the Mazidagi district of the Mardin province, Yerlikaya said on social media platform X.

The fire was fueled by wind and quickly spread over a wide area, but it has been taken under control following firefighters' interventions, reports Xinhua news agency, citing Yerlikaya.

Local authorities have issued warnings about the high risk of forest fires due to the forecasted extreme heat and dry weather conditions during the week.

Turkey is often subjected to forest fires in summer, especially in its western and southern regions.

Washington prioritises Ukraine, postpones military supplies to others

Washington | Agencies

The US government plans to postpone the delivery of some military equipment to other countries to prioritise strengthening Ukraine's air defences. White House National Security Spokesman John Kirby said on Thursday that given Kiev's urgent needs, the US government had made the "difficult but necessary" decision to postpone certain planned arms sales to other countries, in



particular missiles for the Patriot and NASAMS air defence systems. These should go instead to

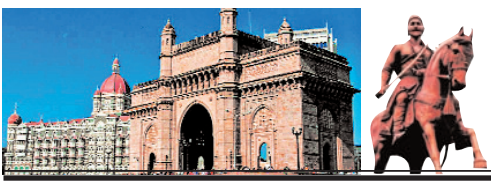
Ukraine, whose armed forces urgently need additional air defence capacities, he added. The countries concerned

had been informed, Kirby said, though he did not say which countries were involved.

All are to receive what they had ordered, just a little later than originally planned, he added.

This was first mentioned by US President Joe Biden during a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky a few days ago on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Italy.





Govt to proceed on Shaktipeeth Expressway only after taking public into confidence: Eknath Shinde

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amid ongoing protests, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Friday announced that the government will proceed with the development of the 802-km Nagpur-Goa Expressway, also known as Shaktipeeth Expressway, only after considering the sentiments of the public and taking them into confidence. The project cost is estimated to be around Rs 80,000 crore.

"This government belongs to the common people. Therefore, the project will be taken forward only by considering the sentiments of the public and taking them into confidence. No project will be imposed on the people. We completed the game changer project of Samruddhi Mahamarg (Nagpur-Mumbai Expressway) by taking people into confidence," said Shinde.

He further said that "the government is considering redrawing the Shaktipeeth Expressway's present alignment, especially on the sections where the protests are underway".



"No project will move forward without taking the public into confidence," CM Shinde said.

The Maharashtra Chief Minister's statement on the matter assumes significance to avoid any backlash in the upcoming Assembly elections.

Shinde's assurance came a day after the Maharashtra Minister of

Higher Education Chandrakant Patil said that the government has taken a decision to stop land acquisition in view of protests by farmers.

The project has been hogging headlines due to protests by farmers and political parties.

The Maharashtra government in February this year cleared the project

connecting all important Hindu religious pilgrim centres.

Of the 8,419 hectares required for the project, around 8,100 is private agricultural land.

A massive march was recently taken out in Kolhapur to demand cancellation of the expressway project. Newly elected Congress MP Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, MLC Satej Patil, MLA Rituraj Patil, former MP Raju Shetty, along with many activists and farmers participated in the march. Congress legislator Satej Patil had warned that the state government should cancel the Shaktipeeth Expressway by July 12 or else they will stage an agitation.

The farmers had claimed that they would lose agricultural land from 11 districts.

They submitted that the development of Shaktipeeth Expressway was unnecessary as it aims to benefit the contractors. In addition, the farmers have raised alarm over the environmental damage and destruction of small rivers and water streams due to the land filling and tunneling works.

Girl dangles mid-air for reel, Pune Police nab 2 for daredevil stunt

Team Absolute | Pune

The Bharti Vidyapeeth Police Station has arrested a man and woman for performing a potentially deadly stunt to click a reel atop a dilapidated temple building, an official said here on Friday.

They are identified as Mihir Gandhi, 27, and his friend Minakshi Salunkhe, 23, while a third person who was making the reel is absconding.

"After we got information about the video, we launched investigations and managed to trace them. They were summoned to the police station late last night and placed under arrest. We have charged them under IPC Section 336 and others," Senior Inspector of Bharti Vidyapeeth Police Station, Dashrath Patil told reporter.

However, since the offence is minor with a jail term of less than six months plus a fine or both, they will not be remanded to custody, added Patil.

Earlier this week, people of Pune were rattled to see the boy and girl, and the unidentified reel-maker performing a daring feat atop an abandoned temple roof.

Gandhi was seen lying at the edge of the temple roof and the girl Salunkhe, laughing away, gingerly got down, grabbed his hand



and was seen dangling mid-air from a height equivalent to at least a 10-storied building.

The background showed the depth below the building, indicating that in case her grip slipped, she would have met with a gory end, as speeding vehicles ply on a road nearby.

The reel, which quickly went viral, elicited angry responses from the people who demanded stringent punishment for the duo for endangering their lives and setting a bad example for others, especially youngsters.

Patil said that the police are on the lookout for the third accomplice who was shooting the reel on his mobile and expressed hope that he would be caught soon.

14 cops injured as people throw stones after girl's sexual assault, murder in Jalgaon

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As many as 14 cops were injured after a group of persons allegedly pelted them with stones demanding the custody of a man, who was arrested for sexually assaulting and killing a six-year-old girl at Jamner in Jalgaon district in Maharashtra, police said on Friday, reported a news agency.

The incident of stone-pelting occurred around 9:30 pm on Thursday outside the Jamner police station in Jalgaon, the police said.

"A six-year-old girl was allegedly abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered at Chinchkheda Shivar village in Jamner on the night of June 11. The accused person



had fled away from the spot taking advantage of darkness," an official said.

"The police had launched a search for the accused, who was finally arrested on Thursday. But after getting information about his arrest,

the deceased girl's family members, their relatives and local residents gathered outside the police station demanding that the accused be handed over to them so that they can punish him for the heinous crime," he said,

the news agency reported on Friday.

The people started agitating outside the police station. Some time later, they learnt that the police shifted the accused person to a safer place. This angered the crowd and some of them started hurling stones at the police station, he added.

"A few members of the group even attacked the police and damaged the public property by indulging in arson," the police official said. At least 14 police personnel, including an inspector, were injured in the incident, he said.

The police used force to disperse the crowd, he said, adding that police personnel were deployed in large numbers after the incident.

AI to be used for effective policing in state, says Devendra Fadnavis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be used for more effective and efficient policing and resolving traffic management issues in the state.

According to a news agency, while speaking to reporters after a meeting of the home department, which he heads, Fadnavis said IIM Nagpur, in association with the government, had prepared a report on how to use AI for effective and efficient policing, crime detection and "predictive situations".



"A government company will be formed, the project will be rolled out soon. Analysis of criminals and the

nature of crimes can be done. Data on cyber crime can be analysed and traffic management issues can also be

resolved. Modules will be prepared for different units," he said, as per the news agency. Devendra Fadnavis said that the rains and model code of conduct (MCC) for the assembly polls, due in October, could delay the ongoing police recruitment drive and some candidates might not get another chance because of the age bar. Wherever it is raining, the next dates have been announced for outdoor physical tests, he said.

However, tests will continue where there is no rain, he said. Directives have been given to provide proper accommodation to the candidates, he said.

Bhima Koregaon-Elgaar Parishad case: SC grants 2-week interim bail to Mahesh Raut

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Mumbai

The Supreme Court on Friday granted two-week interim bail to Bhima Koregaon-Elgaar Parishad conspiracy case accused Mahesh Raut to attend ceremonies relating to the last rites of his deceased grandmother.

"Considering the facts and circumstances of the case and the period of incarceration already undergone by the applicant and also the nature of request made for the purpose, we are inclined to grant two weeks' interim bail to the applicant, which may commence from 26th June, 2024 and end on 10th July, 2024," said a Vacation Bench presided over by Justice Vikram Nath.

In its order, the Bench, also comprising Justice SVN Bhatti, said that the terms and conditions of release will be determined by the Special Court (NIA) and the National



Investigation Agency (NIA) would be at liberty to request the trial court to impose such stringent conditions as may be necessary.

Raut will have to surrender on July 10 without fail, the apex court said.

In September last year, the Bombay

High Court had granted bail to Raut, who has been in jail since June 6, 2018 for his alleged links with Maoists.

However, a Division Bench of Justice AS Gadhkar and Justice Sharmila Deshmukh of the High

Court deferred implementation of its order for a week after the anti-terror agency sought a stay for filing a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court.

On an appeal filed by the NIA, the Supreme Court had passed several interim orders that the bail granted to Raut will not be given effect till further orders.

In July 2023, the top court had granted bail to two other accused -- Vernon Gonsalves and Arun Ferreira, who were in jail since August 2018.

The case pertains to inciting people and giving provocative speeches during the Elgar Parishad organised by the activists of Kabir Kala Manch at Shaniwarwada in Maharashtra's Pune on December 31, 2017, which allegedly promoted enmity between various caste groups and led to violence resulting in loss of life and property and a statewide agitation in Maharashtra.

Western Railway to operate jumbo block between Mahim and Goregaon

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Western Railway, while sharing Mumbai local train updates, on Friday said that it will carry out jumbo block between Mahim and Goregaon railway stations on Sunday.

In a statement, the Western Railway said "To carry out maintenance work of tracks, signalling and overhead equipment, a jumbo block of five hours from 11.00 hrs to 16.00 hrs will be taken on up and down Harbour Lines between Mahim and Goregaon station on Sunday, June 23.

According to a press release issued by Vineet Abhishek - Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, during the block period, all Chhatrapati



Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) - Bandra - CSMT and CSMT/Panvel - Goregaon - CSMT/Panvel Harbour train services of Central Railway & some of the Churchgate - Goregaon - Churchgate Slow services will

remain cancelled. "Detailed information to this effect is available with concerned Station Masters. Passengers are requested to take note of the above arrangements," the Western Railway said on Friday.

Thane temple donation box broken, Rs 1 lakh stolen

Team Absolute | Thane

An official on Friday said thieves broke into a temple and stole Rs 1 lakh from its donation box in Maharashtra's Thane district, reported news agency.

Three persons committed the theft at the Hanuman temple in the Mira Road area around 2.30 am on Wednesday,

the official said.

The priest called the police after he found the lock on the main door and the Thane temple donation box broken in the morning.

The Naya Nagar police have registered a case after the Thane temple donation box was found broken. Efforts are underway to nab the three captured on the temple's CCTV camera, he added.

Six arrested for cheating trader of Rs 25 lakh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Six persons were arrested for allegedly cheating a trader of Rs 25 lakh in Mira Road in Maharashtra's Thane district on Friday. As per the report, from June last year to June 2024, the six accused lured him into partnering in a flour mill business and cheated him after he invested Rs 24.98 lakh, the Mira Road police station official

said. The accused have been identified as Riku alias Avinash Phatak, Sishodia alias Manish Thakur, Ashraf Chowdhari, Jamal Ansari, Ashish Mishra and Jagarti Manish Choudhari. Allen six accused have been charged under IPC sections 406 (criminal breach of trust), 409 (criminal breach of trust by a public servant), 420 (cheating) 467 (forgery), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating), the official added.

"Victim families traumatised, but so is teen": High Court in Pune Porsche case

Team Absolute | Pune

The drunk Pune teen who killed two people - while driving his father's Rs 2.5 crore electric Porsche supercar - caused the accident but was probably in "shock" and it is natural, therefore, to assume his mental faculties would have been adversely affected, a division bench of the Bombay High Court said.

The court's observation came even as it acknowledged the families of the two killed - Aneesh Awadhya and Ashwini Kosta - are still facing mental and physical trauma over news of their deaths.

The court was hearing a plea by the boy's aunt seeking his release on grounds his arrest - hours after a high-speed collision with a motorbike carrying two people - was "arbitrary and illegal", and that the police - who were heavily criticised for appearing to shield the boy, who is the son of an influential city builder - were guilty of "abuse of process and blatant disregard for the rule of law".

A bench of Justice Bharati Harish Dangre and Manjusha Deshpande reserved its order for Tuesday.

The Pune teen had received bail, within 15 hours of his arrest, on condi-



tions that included writing a 300-word essay on road safety. The bail order led to public fury and the police sought to amend the order;

The bail order was modified and the boy - whose parents and paternal grandfather were also arrested, on charges they bribed cops and faked blood tests - was sent to a juvenile remand home.

Last week the teen's paternal aunt filed a habeas corpus plea before the High Court. She claimed the Juvenile

Board's remand order was "in complete violation" of applicable laws.

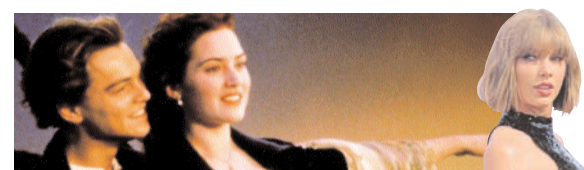
In Friday's hearing, the petitioner argued against modification of that bail order. Appearing for the aunt, Senior Advocate Aabad Poonda said Section 104 of the Juvenile Justice Act does not allow for a minor accused on bail to be sent to an observation home until the earlier order is revoked. In this case, Mr Poonda said, the boy's bail order had been amended, not cancelled.

Team Absolute | Thane
An official on Friday said that a 46-year-old Thane man was killed allegedly by three persons over his opposition to an interfaith marriage proposal involving one of the accused and his daughter, reported news agency.

daughter and had persistently sought her hand in marriage despite being rejected by the father.

The official told agency that Khairat and two other persons stormed into Shaikh's home in Kalyan taluka during Eid festivities and fatally attacked the Thane man with sharp weapons and sticks and assaulted others present, including women.

A case of murder has been registered against the trio and a search is on to arrest them, the official added.



Actor Donald Sutherland passes away at 88

London | Agencies

Canadian actor Donald Sutherland (88), renowned for his portrayal of rebel army surgeon Hawkeye Pierce in 'M*A*S*H', general-impersonating US GI Vernon Pinkely in 'The Dirty Dozen', Sergeant Oddball in 'Kelly's Heroes', Mr X in Oliver Stone's 'JFK', and President Stone in 'The Hunger Games', has died after a long illness, as per his son and actor Kiefer Sutherland, reports said on Thursday.

"With a heavy heart, I tell you that my father, Donald Sutherland, has passed away. I personally think one of the most important actors in the history of film," Kiefer Sutherland said in a statement, the BBC reported.

"Never daunted by a role, good, bad or ugly. He loved what he did and did what he loved, and one can never ask for more than that. A life well lived," he added. Born on July 17, 1935, in Canada's New Brunswick, Sutherland started as a radio news reporter in Canada before coming to London in 1957 to study at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. He then took on small roles in British films and television shows.

War flick 'The Dirty Dozen' (1967) was his first notable film, and he cemented his position with his roles in 'M*A*S*H' (1970), 'Kelly's Heroes' (1970), and 'The Eagle Has Landed' (1976) -- all war films too, spanning comedy to thriller genres.

He went on to act in 200-odd films, before shifting to TV in the 2000s. Despite his numerous roles, he was never nominated for an Oscar but did receive an honorary Academy Award in 2017.

'Let's just start dating again!': Khloé Kardashian

Los Angeles | Agencies

Khloé Kardashian isn't ruling out marriage, she revealed during a new episode of The Kardashians. The 39-year-old Good American founder opened up about exploring a future long-term relationship during a scene from the Thursday, June 20, episode.

While sitting down with her best friend Malika Haqq, Khloé acknowledged that, as a public figure and a mother, she wants to be careful how she approaches dating.

"It's a scary world out there -- there's phones everywhere," the reality TV star began. "I definitely think what I've been through is a factor why I'm not just like, 'Let's just start dating again!'"

Khloé went through a public breakup with her ex Tristan Thompson. The two amicably co-parent their children, True and Tatum Thompson. However, after dating on and off since 2016, the NBA player, 33,

fathered a child named Theo with Maralee Nichols in 2021 while he was still in a relationship with Khloé.

Toward the end of that year, his paternity scandal surfaced, effectively ending his and Khloé's relationship for good.

Joe Biden, Helen Mirren, Edgar Wright and Ron Howard pay tributes to Donald Sutherland

Los Angeles | Agencies

After Canadian star Donald Sutherland passed away aged 88 after a long illness, a string of Hollywood personalities along with US President Joe Biden paid their tributes.

President Biden took to X to honour Sutherland, who he described as "a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and one-of-a-kind actor who inspired and entertained the world for decades."

Veteran star Helen Mirren, who starred with him in "The Leisure Seeker," shared a statement, where she said Donald Sutherland was one of the smartest actors she ever worked with.

Mirren added: "He had a wonderful enquiring brain and a great knowledge of a wide variety of subjects. He combined this great intelligence with a deep sensitivity, and with a seriousness about his profession as an actor."

"This all made him into the legend of film that he became. He was my colleague and became my friend. I will miss his presence in this world."

In the thriller "Klute," Sutherland starred as a romantic lead and titular character John Klute across Jane Fonda's Bree Daniels. Fonda called Sutherland a "brilliant actor and a complex man" in her tribute on Instagram, saying the pair loved working together on the film, reports variety.com.

Filmmaker, actor and 2017's "Baby Driver" director Edgar Wright posted his tribute to X, praising Sutherland's legacy in film and TV.

"RIP the great Donald Sutherland, a favourite



actor and always fascinating screen presence. He starred in two of my very favourite and most influential films - 'Don't Look Now' and the 1978 'Invasion Of The Bodysnatchers,'" Wright tweeted.

"But that is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of his legendary filmography; a funny, laconic, but also intense and dramatic presence in so many memorable movies, starting with his breakthrough in 'The Dirty Dozen,' and then on an incredible run in the 70's, 80's and beyond with 'M*A*S*H,' 'Kelly's Heroes,' 'Little Murders,' 'Klute,' 'Don't Look Now,' 'The Day Of The Locust,' 'Ordinary People' and 'JFK,' among many others," Wright said

"I even adore his very early appearances in 'Dr Terror's House Of Horrors' and 'The World Ten Times Over,' as well as his very silly cameo in 'Kentucky Fried Movie.'"

"I know many of you following me will feel the same way about this great screen legend's passing, so please list your favourite Donald Sutherland films," Wright added.

"So sorry to see you go Donald, but what a legacy you leave behind."

Director Ron Howard wrote: "I was blessed to direct him in #Backdraft. One of the most intelligent, interesting & engrossing film actors of all time. Incredible range, creative courage & dedication to serving the story & the audience with supreme excellence."

Actor Rob Lowe remembered Sutherland and said: "Today we lost one of our greatest actors, Donald Sutherland. It was my honour to work with him many years ago, and I will never forget his charisma and ability."

"If you want a master class in acting, watch him in 'Ordinary People.' My condolences to Kiefer." "The Batman" Director Matt Reeves called Sutherland "one of the all-time greats" in his tribute on X.

Sutherland worked over 200 film and TV credits over 60 years starring in films like "Ordinary People" and "Don't Look Now." Sutherland landed his first big role in 1967's "The Dirty Dozen," which later earned him a spot as surgeon Capt. "Hawkeye" Pierce in "MASH."

His son Kiefer Sutherland called him "one of the most important actors in the history of film."



JENNIFER LOPEZ VACATIONS WITHOUT BEN AFFLECK

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jennifer Lopez was flying solo while enjoying a trip to Europe as rumors continue to swirl about her and Ben Affleck's marriage. The 54-year-old pop icon was spotted at a hotel in Positano, Italy, on Wednesday, June 19, before boarding a boat and soaking up the sun.

According to photos and a video published by TMZ that day, J. Lo was all smiles while sporting a yellow tube top and shorts. She also wore her hair down for the day out alongside a group of friends. Ben, 51, wasn't seen with Jennifer during her outing.

However, just three days prior, the "Jenny From The Block" hitmaker sent the Argo director a sweet shout-out in honor of Father's Day. While taking to her Instagram Stories on June 16, Jennifer shared a throwback black and white headshot of Ben, calling him her "hero."

Despite effectively shutting down breakup rumors with her Father's Day post, Jennifer and Ben are still the subject of split rumors, which began in the spring. For several weeks, they weren't photographed in public together, and they're reportedly selling their Beverly Hills home in Los Angeles.

Moreover, multiple outlets have reported that the couple -- who rekindled their love in 2021 and got married in 2022 -- are having issues in their marriage.

Matthew McConaughey stopped acting for two years, thought about becoming a teacher

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Matthew McConaughey shared that "it was scary" quitting Hollywood for two years when romantic comedies were all that was being offered to him early in his career.

The actor was speaking to Glen Powell in an Interview magazine discussion. McConaughey has worked on romantic comedies such as "The Wedding Planner," "How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days," "Failure To Launch," "Fool's Gold," and "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past."

"I've usually zigged when I felt like Hollywood wanted me to zag," McConaughey said, reports variety.com. "When I had my rom-com years, there was only so much bandwidth I could give to those and those were some solid hits for me. But I wanted to try some other stuff. Of course, I wasn't getting it, so I had to leave Hollywood for two years."

"Dude, it was scary. I had long talks with my wife about needing to find a new vocation.

I think I'm going to teach high school classes. I think I'm going to study to be a conductor. I think I'm going to go be a wildlife guide."

He added: "I honestly thought, 'I stepped out of Hollywood. I got out of my lane,'"

"The lane Hollywood said I should stay in, and Hollywood's like, 'You should have stayed in your lane... It was scary. The days are long -- the sense of insignificance. But I made up my mind that that's what I needed to do, so I wasn't going to pull the parachute and quit the mission I was on. But it was scary because I didn't know if I was ever going to get out of the desert.'"

The actor then moved into more dramatic roles in movies such as "Mud," "Dallas Buyers Club," "Magic Mike" and "Interstellar." He won the Oscar for Best Actor for his performance in "Dallas Buyers Club."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kristin Cavallari



T20 WORLD CUP:

ROHIT CREDITS SURYAKUMAR-HARDIK 'CRITICAL PARTNERSHIP' FOR WIN OVER AFGHANISTAN

Bridgetown (Barbados) | Agencies

India captain Rohit Sharma credited a 60-run partnership between Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya after registering a 47-run win over Afghanistan in the Super Eight clash at T20 World Cup on Thursday.

The duo joined forces in the middle in the 11th over and stitched a crucial fifth-wicket partnership to take the side to the 150-run mark. Suryakumar smashed 53 off 28 balls studded with three sixes and five fours while Hardik Pandya scored 32 as India posted 181/8 in 20 overs.

"I think everyone coming in there and doing their job is critical for us and that is something we dwell on. So that is something we keep talking about how each one, if they can play their role, we can set up a good platform for ourselves. Surya Kumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya's partnership was very critical for us at that point in time because we kept losing wickets there. So we needed somebody to bat little deep. Surya Kumar



Yadav did that along with Hardik Pandya and it was a great partnership in the end," Rohit said after the match.

Chasing 182, Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh scalped three wickets each to bundle out Afghanistan for 134 in 20 overs. Bumrah returned with the figures of 3-7 in his four overs and claimed important wickets of Rahmanullah Gurbaz (11), Hazratullah Zazai (2) and Najibullah

Zadran (19).

Rohit said Bumrah understands his role well and is always ready to take up the challenge. "We know his class. We know what he can do for us and it's important for us as well that we use him smartly. We use him smartly and he is the one who is ready to take that responsibility as well because it's not easy for a strike bowler to keep holding him on. "But Jasprit Bumrah being Jasprit

Bumrah, he has been doing that for years. Wherever he plays, he understands that this is what the team expects from him and he is always ready for that responsibility," he said.

India added Kuldeep Yadav to their playing 11 to bolster their spin attack but the move didn't pay much dividend to the side as the left-arm spinner conceded runs at an economy of 8 despite picking up two scalps. Rohit also acknowledged the fact and said they would make changes according to the conditions.

"Nothing as such. I've got to assess the condition and see what is right and wrong - look at the opposition composition as well, what they play and how they play as well. So based on that, we are open to making any changes if required. At the moment we felt that 3 spinners is a good option here and we went with that. If the game in the next venues offers something for the seamers, we will be open for that as well," Rohit said.

India will now take on Bangladesh in their next Super Eight match in Antigua on Saturday.

Euro 2024: Spain edge Italy 1-0 to seal round of 16 spot



Gelsenkirchen (Germany) | Agencies

Spain claimed first place in Euro 2024 Group B, and a spot in the round of 16, with a narrow 1-0 but dominant win over Italy late on Thursday night (as per IST) at the Arena AufSchalke, thanks to Riccardo Calafiori's own goal early in the second half.

Italy faced an early scare when Nico Williams' skillful play on the left wing set up a header for Pedri. However, Gianluigi Donnarumma made a spectacular save, tipping the ball over the bar.

Williams himself missed an even better opportunity in the tenth minute, sending a header wide while unmarked in front of goal. Spain continued to press, forcing Donnarumma into action again to block Alvaro Morata's angled shot. The Italian keeper then made a quick dive to his left to tip over a long-range effort from

Fabián Ruiz, who later had another shot blocked by Alessandro Bastoni.

Aside from a couple of characteristic forays down the left by Federico Dimarco, Italy struggled to penetrate the Spain penalty area. In response, Luciano Spalletti brought on Bryan Cristante and Andrea Cambiaso at halftime. However, this did not stop Spain's relentless attacks. Pedri nearly broke the deadlock again, but he fired a gilt-edged chance wide from Marc Cucurella's cross, Euro 2024 reports.

Finally, the breakthrough arrived, although from an unexpected source. It was no surprise that the move originated down the Spain left with Williams, however, his cross flicked on by Morata; Donnarumma could only get fingertips to the header and the ball rebounded in off Calafiori.

The goalkeeper tipped over another Morata effort, and Cambiaso cleared off the

line moments later. Lamine Yamal curled just wide, while Williams hit the crossbar from the corner of the area.

Italy's late push saw Cristante's flick easily gathered by Unai Simon. Spain nearly extended their lead in stoppage time, but Donnarumma denied Ayoze Perez twice. Ultimately, Spain secured their place in the round of 16.

"This was our best performance since I became coach. We played well against Italy in the [2022/23] Nations League, but I think this was a more complete performance. I'm very proud of the result and the way in which we won this match, but it's a very challenging tournament. We were superior across the board. I have so much respect for Italy; they had some difficulties tonight, but part of that is because we played so well." Italy head coach Luis de la Fuente was quoted by UEFA.

CUMMINS CLAIMS HAT-TRICK AS AUSTRALIA BEAT BANGLADESH IN RAIN-HIT MATCH

North Sound (Antigua) | Agencies

Fast bowler Pat Cummins etched his name in the record books, becoming just the second Australian to claim a hat-trick in T20 World Cup match during his team's victory over Bangladesh in the Super 8 clash on Friday (according to IST) at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

The Australian pacer reached a milestone by claiming three wickets across two separate overs. He took two wickets on the final two deliveries of his third over and then achieved the feat on the first ball of his last over, dismissing Towhid Hridoy, who was caught at short fine leg.

Cummins has now joined Brett Lee as Australian bowlers who have taken a hat-trick at a Men's T20 World Cup. Lee achieved this feat against Bangladesh in the 2007 edition.

Overall, the Aussie joined an illustrious group of just seven players to have taken a hat-trick at a Men's T20 World Cup, with Lee (2007), Curtis Campher (Ireland, 2021), Wainindu Hasaranga (Sri Lanka, 2021), Kagiso Rabada (South Africa, 2021), Karthik Meiyappan (UAE, 2022) and Josh Little (Ireland, 2022) the other bowlers to have done so previously.



The 31-year-old finished his spell with figures of 3-29 as Australia restricted Bangladesh to 140/8 after inviting them to bat first. In response, openers David Warner (53 not out) and Travis head (31) were all guns blazing in the run chase.

However, the game didn't reach a proper conclusion due to rain. The Aussies secured a first Super Eight win, finishing 28 runs ahead of the par score via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern Method.

Batting first, Bangladesh suffered an early blow as Mitchell Starc bowled Tanzin Hasan with the

third delivery of the innings. In doing so, Starc moved past Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga into outright first for wickets in Men's World Cups - both ODI and T20s, ICC reports.

Apart from the initial blow, Bangladesh dominated the early exchanges. While the Australians maintained a tight grip, Liton Das and captain Najmul Hossain Shanto's 58-run partnership rejuvenated the innings, propelling Bangladesh to a competitive position.

The partnership finally ended when Adam Zampa spun one through Das in the ninth over. Things got difficult for the Asian outfit with Rishad Hossain giving away his wicket on the final ball before drinks, placing Bangladesh at 67/3.

Zampa then made the next breakthrough by dismissing Shanto (41 off 36) at the end of the 13th over, putting significant pressure on the Bangladesh middle order. Towhid Hridoy (40 off 28) made a valiant effort to accelerate, helping his side reach three figures by the 16th over.

Pat Cummins collected two quick scalps to end Australia's 18th over and then removed Hridoy upon return to start over 20, completing the tournament's first hat-trick, as Bangladesh were restricted to 140/8.

India to tour South Africa for four T20Is in November

Johannesburg | Agencies

India will be touring to South Africa for four-match T20I series, starting on November 8, Cricket South Africa and BCCI said in a joint statement on Friday.

The series opener will be played at Hollywoodbets Kingsmead Stadium in Durban. The next match is scheduled to take place in Gqeberha at Dabab St George's Park on November 10. The series then moves to the highveld, with SuperSport Park hosting a match on November 13, and DP World Wanderers Stadium hosting the final match of the series on November 15.

The tour will take place after India's home Test series against New Zealand and prior to their tour of Australia for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah said, "India and South Africa have always shared a deep and strong bond, one that both nations take great pride in. The Indian Cricket Team has consistently received immense appreciation and love from South African fans, and this sentiment is equally strong among Indian fans towards the South African side.

"I am confident that the upcoming series



will once again highlight the on-field cricketing excellence and deliver enthralling, high-intensity contests."

Lawson Naidoo, CSA Chairperson added, "I would like to thank the BCCI for their continued support to South Africa's cricket, and world cricket in general. Any tour by the Indian cricket team to our shores is filled with amazing camaraderie and exciting cricket, and I know our fans will be eagerly awaiting this series which will showcase the exceptional talent from both teams."

In the last T20I series played between the two sides during their all-format tour last year, the three-match series ended in a 1-1 draw after the first T20I was washed out in Durban.

Stimac labels AIFF chief a liar, says 'sooner he leaves Indian football'

New Delhi | Agencies

Sacked by the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) following a disastrous World Cup Qualification bid, India head coach Igor Stimac has dropped many bombshells in his final address to Indian media. The Croatian coach slammed the current president of the AIFF, Kalyan Chaubey, and labeled him a 'liar'.

"Kalyan, you are the one lying not me. Sooner he leaves, Indian football stands a chance. Indian football needs someone powerful and influential. The only time Kalyan is powerful is when he walks with armed guards in Kolkata. Apart from that no one knows him," said Stimac in a press conference.

This is the latest development in the ongoing war of words between the AIFF and Stimac after he was sacked following India's exit in the second round of the FIFA World Cup 2026 Qualifiers. It will be interesting



to see how the AIFF and its President Kalyan Chaubey respond to these latest allegations.

"Me and Kalyan never had a rela-

tionship, it was obvious. I reported to the secretary general. The president doesn't indulge in these things. When Kalyan came and was elected presi-

dent, our first meeting at the Hyatt lasted for three minutes in which he looked at his watch five times," said Stimac.

Shaji Prabhakaran was recently criticised as he was in power when Stimac renewed his contract till 2026. Stimac was questioned on Shaji's sacking and whether the move was good for Indian football. "The sacking of Shaji can't be good, if you start a process and start working together and before even a year you have a fight. It is wrong and shows negatively," added the 56-year-old.

All footballing decisions which include the coach's appointment and contract are handled by the technical committee of the AIFF which is led by chairman and football legend I.M. Vijayan. The Croatian took time to express his feelings for the former player. "IM Vijayan is a great footballer and legend in Indian football but not the right person to be chairman of a Technical Committee," he concluded.

Paddler Sathiyian alleges unfair umpiring at WTT Contender Lagos, says robbed of a win

Lagos (Nigeria) | Agencies

India's former National Champion Sathiyian Gnanasekaran on Friday took to social media to highlight "unfair umpiring" during his 2-3 defeat to French player Thibault Poret in men's singles Round of 16 stage at the WTT Contender Lagos 2024 here on Friday.

Sathiyian, ranked 71st in the WTT World Rankings, made a comeback from two sets down and was leading 2-0 in the fifth and final set when he claimed the umpire made some "unfair" calls that cost him the match. Sathiyian lost to the 111th-ranked Poret 8-11, 8-11, 11-4, 11-5, 6-11 at

the Sir Molade Okoya Thomas Indoor Sports Hall in Lagos, Nigeria.

In his post on Instagram headlined, "Unfair umpiring at its worst here in Lagos", Sathiyian said the "unfair umpiring" broke his rhythm and left him disappointed and dispirited.

"I never normally complain about these things but what just happened today is beyond imagination & was totally unfair," said Sathiyian in his post.

"I made a good comeback from 2 sets down & was leading 2-0 in the final set. The opponent was given a service fault (he was even given a warning before), and



after a lot of quarrels with the referee, out of the blue, the opponent took a medical timeout just to kill time when he had no medical issue until then, and to my surprise, it was granted as well," wrote

Sathiyian in his post. "And then when I was leading 3-1 in the last set, I was given a service fault out of nowhere without even a warning, in the serve in which I was getting a lot of

points, probably just to make it even which totally spoiled my rhythm," said the Indian player a multiple-time medallist in the Commonwealth Games.

Sathiyian, who won a bronze medal in the Men's Team event at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta, said this kind of umpiring at the international level was very disappointing. "We players work so hard and such kind of unfair umpiring at the international level & to rob a match like this is certainly very disappointing," wrote Sathiyian in the post marked to World Table Tennis (@wtt), the governing body for the sport at international level.

T20 World Cup: Jadeja bags Fielder of Match honour against Afghanistan

New Delhi | Agencies

India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja bagged Fielder of the Match after the spectacular show against Afghanistan in the T20 World Cup Super Eight match on Thursday.

India won the match by 47 runs to start the Super Eight campaign on a high as Suryakumar Yadav struck a fiery half-century as Men in Blue posted 181/8 in 20 overs.

Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh scalped three wickets each to bundle out Afghanistan for 134/10 in 20 overs. Jadeja, who scored seven runs, picked one scalp and also grabbed two catches. The all-rounder saved a couple of runs on the field with his electric skills.

The BCCI posted the video of the medal ceremony on X with the caption, "Don't look beyond the 'wall' of the dressing room to see who presents this medal."

India fielding coach T Dilip lauded the side for their situational awareness on the field. Ashdeep Singh, Jadeja, Axar Patel and Rishabh Pant were in contention for the



medal. India head coach Rahul Dravid presented the medal to Jadeja and the all-rounder lifted the veteran after getting the accolade. After getting the medal Jadeja said, "This medal is very important, I am very happy to get this medal today and I am very very inspired from Mohammad Siraj. Thank you Siraj, cheers!"

India will now lock horns with Bangladesh in their second Super Eight match in Antigua on Sunday.



Shatrughan made his first appearance with Zaheer Iqbal ahead of the wedding

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Putting all rumours to rest actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha finally made an appearance with Zaheer Iqbal, who will soon be his son-in-law, at his residence.

On Thursday evening, Shatrughan made his first appearance with Zaheer Iqbal ahead of the wedding, which will take place on June 23.

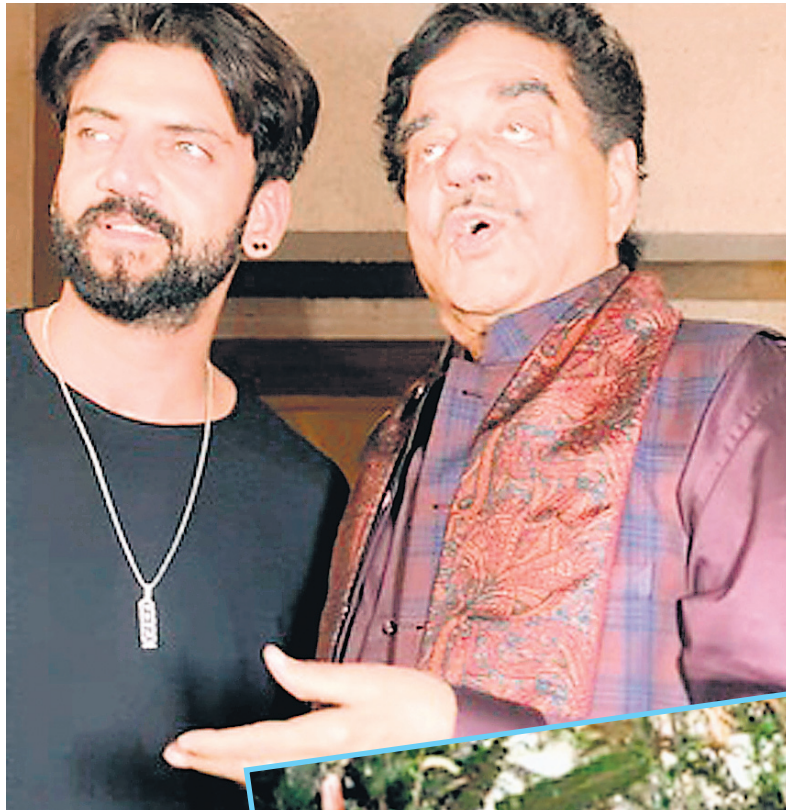
Zaheer and Shatrughan first smiled and then posed for the shutterbugs stationed outside the building. The veteran star also gave his blessings to his soon-to-be son-in-law. In several clips, the two were seen embracing each other.

At one moment, Shatrughan was heard saying "Khamosh" on request by a camera person.

Sonakshi, who has been dating Zaheer for almost seven years, too was spotted ahead of her wedding. However, she did not stop for a picture. The actress got out of the car and straight went into the building.

Some media reports suggested that Sonakshi's father was upset with her for not sharing the wedding plans with him. However, Shatrughan rubbished the claims.

Sonakshi and Zaheer will reportedly have a court wedding on June 23, which will be followed by a wedding celebration at Shilpa Shetty's high-profile restaurant called Bastian in Mumbai.



Akshara Singh performs Dhanurasana on Yoga Day; says 'kariye yoga, rahiye nirog'



Team Absolute | Mumbai

On the 'International Day of Yoga', Bhojpuri actress Akshara Singh dropped a picture performing Dhanurasana, extending warm greetings to the fans and said 'kariye yoga, rahiye nirog'.

The 'Bigg Boss OTT' fame, Akshara took to Instagram Stories, and shared a picture in which we can see her wearing a black tights, and a matching top. She is doing Dhanurasana in a park. The post is captioned in Hindi as: "Kariya yoga, rahiye nirog... International Yoga diwas ki hardik badhai aur shubhkamnaye".

In another Instagram post, Akshara shared a closeup shot of herself, flaunting her makeup and hairstyle. She is wearing a white outfit and has gone all glam with the makeup. Her hair is left open and is styled in soft waves. She is gazing right into the lenses, and captioned the post as: "Caught your eye".

A fan commented on the post, saying, "fantastic", and another user said: "Aap to south ke heroine jaisi lag rahi ho... bhojpuri ke sherni".

Akshara was last seen in a Punjabi music video titled 'Defender', alongside singer Mankirt Aulakh. The song is sung by Mankirt, Renuka Panwar, and Shev.

'CHACHA-BHATIJA' ANIL, ARJUN KAPOOR TO SHAKE A LEG

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Anil Kapoor along with his actor-nephew Arjun Kapoor will be seen setting the 'Bigg Boss OTT 3' stage on fire at the grand premiere, which is set to take place on Friday evening.

Sources told that the two will be seen dancing on the track "Chokra Jawaan" from the 2012 film "Ishaqzaade", which marked Arjun's debut in Hindi cinema as an actor. Anil, who is for the first time stepping into the shoes of a host for a digital version of the controversial reality show "Bigg Boss", which was earlier presented by filmmaker Karan Johar and Bollywood superstar Salman Khan, will be seen shaking a leg on his numbers too. The actor will be seen performing on the track "Kate Nahin Kat Te" from the 1987 film "Mr. India". The song, which was originally sung by Alisha Chinai and Kishore Kumar, was originally picturised on him and the late actress Sridevi, who passed away in an accidental drowning in 2018. He will then perform on the song "My Name Is Lakhan" from the 1989 film "Ram Lakhan". The iconic track is synonymous with the actor, whose 'tapori' style in the film resonated with the country's youth. Anil will also be seen performing on the number "The Punjaabban Song" from the film "Jugjugg Jeeyo" sung by Gippy Grewal, Zahrah S Khan, Tanishk Bagchi and Romy. As the house is set to host its contestants, several names have been confirmed as the participants. Diva journalist Shobhaa De to Bollywood actor Ranvir Shorey and Internet sensation Chandrika Dixit, famously called the "vada pav" girl from the national capital, will be seen in the show.



Saiyami Kher to star alongside Sunny Deol in upcoming film

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Saiyami Kher will be seen starring alongside star Sunny Deol in Gopichand Malineni's recently announced directorial, which is being touted as the "biggest action film of the country."

Saiyami shared her enthusiasm about the project and said that she is beyond thrilled to be a part of the film, which is tentatively titled "SDGM".

"Working with Sunny Deol, an icon of Indian cinema, is an incredible honour and a dream come true. After Ghoomer, this opportunity is a significant milestone in my career. Have waited to be a part of a proper commercial film," Saiyami said.

She added: "And I'm glad I have gotten this opportunity. Gopichand Malineni's vision for the film is truly very exciting. I can't wait to start this journey and bring our story to life." The actress is grateful to the producers for believing in her and giving her a chance to showcase her abilities on such a "grand platform."



Team Absolute | New Delhi

As the world celebrates International Yoga Day on Friday, actress Shilpa Shetty heaped praise on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that he has played a pivotal role in bringing yoga to the global stage.

Talking about what she has to say about Prime Minister Modi's role in taking yoga to the international level, Shilpa heaped praise on the iconic leader.

Shilpa told: "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has played a pivotal role in bringing yoga to the global stage. His efforts, including the establishment of International Yoga Day, have significantly increased worldwide awareness and appreciation of yoga's benefits."

"This has inspired millions to embrace yoga, fostering a healthier and more balanced lifestyle globally." The International Day of Yoga was proposed by the United Nations in 2014. The initiative for "Yoga Day" was taken by Prime Minister Modi in his 2014 UN address.

The actress, who herself strongly practices yoga, an ancient and complex practice, which promotes physical and mental well-being, urged everyone to adopt a disciplined lifestyle on the occasion of International Yoga Day.

"This means not just practicing yoga, but also keeping healthy habits like eating on time and maintaining a regular sleep schedule, awareness when you breathe. Yoga brings mental peace and many health benefits," she said.

Shilpa, a mother of two, who is known for her svelte figure, also stressed to make yoga a part of her lifestyle. "By spending just 20 minutes a day on simple asanas/breathing, you can improve your well-being and stay disciplined. Let's make yoga a part of your lifestyle and enjoy its benefits together," she said.

YOGA BRINGS MENTAL PEACE AND MANY HEALTH BENEFITS : SHILPA SHETTY



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-singer Ayushmann Khurrana on the occasion of World Music Day, which intends to foster musical diversity, on Friday, decided to tease his fans with his new track "Reh Ja".

Also known as the 'Fete de la Musique', World Music Day is celebrated on June 21 every year. It helps to connect musicians and music lovers across the globe to share their experiences of music. It also helps in appreciating the diversity of musical traditions from across the globe.

With "Reh Ja", Ayushmann will also turn into a solo composer and songwriter for this track.

"If you split my heart into two, I guess music will take up one half as it is truly my reason to live and to create. It touches upon every relationship that I share with my family,

If you split my heart into two, I guess music will take up one half : Ayushmann

friends, my passion, my work, my existence," said Ayushmann, whose track "Pani Da" featured in his debut film "Vicky Donor" in 2012. "So, on World Music Day, I decided to tease people who love my music with my next song, which is a collaboration with Warner Music India, called Reh Ja."

"Reh Ja" will be the second collaboration between Warner Music India and Ayushmann. Their last song "Akh Da Taara".

The actor said: "I'm taking on the role of a solo composer and songwriter after a long time and I hope it speaks to all those who have ever been loved or want to love with all their heart. It has a sense of nostalgia and yearning."

"After 'Akh Da Taara', this is going to be my next song with Warner Music and we are supremely excited to put this one out quickly."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Anushka Sen