



NATION > 02
IMD forecasts heavy rain for West Peninsular Coast, Northwest...



HOLLYWOOD > 06
Emma Roberts insists those who criticise 'nepo babies' don't see...



SPORTS > 07
T20 World Cup: Inzamam-ul-Haq accuses India of ball tampering...

OM BIRLA RE-ELECTED AS LOK SABHA SPEAKER

The Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab announced Om Birla as a winner after the election for the Speaker's post. Following this announcement, PM Modi, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and Leader of the Opposition in the Lower House of Parliament, Rahul Gandhi, approached Om Birla and escorted him to the Speaker's chair. During this, Rahul Gandhi shook hands with both PM Modi and Speaker Om Birla.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Om Birla, BJP MP from Kota-Bundi, was on Wednesday elected by voice vote as the Lok Sabha Speaker for the second consecutive time.

With this win, Birla became the first BJP leader to serve the coveted position for the second consecutive time.

2-MINUTE SILENCE ON EMERGENCY TRIGGERS PROTESTS, ADJOURNMENT

New Delhi: Smiles and handshakes between rivals followed the re-election of Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker today. The rare moment of bonhomie was, however, short-lived and chaos returned after the newly-elected Speaker mentioned the "dark days of Emergency" and called for 2-minute silence.

Addressing the House, Birla said all members must work together for the nation. Appealing to the members to ensure decorum in the House, he said there must remain a difference between protest in the sansad (House) and protest on sadak (street). Thereafter, he asked the members to rise for two minutes' silence to mark the 50th anniversary of the "dark days of Emergency". This sparked an uproar from the Opposition benches and the House was adjourned.

According to BJP sources, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Emergency. "It is our collective duty to create awareness about all historic events. Awareness towards Constitution will only strengthen when young generation knows about democracy," a source said.



Pro-tem Speaker of the House Bhartruhari Mahtab announced the election of Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker. PM Narendra Modi and Leader of the Opposition in Lower House Rahul Gandhi took him to the chair and congratulated him after Birla assumed the post. Before the elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister

Amit Shah, along with other NDA leaders, proposed to elect Om Birla for the post. Meanwhile, on behalf of the Opposition alliance, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Arvind Sawant proposed K. Suresh's name for the Speaker's post. The majority was, however, in the NDA's favour, with 297 MPs voting for Om Birla, while the Opposition got 232.

RAHUL GANDHI DEBUTS AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha Speaker is the final arbiter of the voice of the people, and the Opposition this time represents that voice significantly more than the last time, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said after BJP's Om Birla was re-elected the Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament. In his first appearance as the Leader of the Opposition, Gandhi put on white kurta and pajama -- a break from the white t-shirt-trouser look he is usually seen in.

In his congratulatory message to the Speaker, Gandhi said, "The Opposition would like to assist you in doing your work. I am confident that you will allow us to speak. The question is not how efficiently the House is run. The question is how much of India's voice is being allowed to be heard. So the idea that you can run the House efficiently by silencing the voice of the Opposition is a non-democratic idea. And this election has shown that the people of India expect the Opposition to defend the Constitution," he said.

"HOPE SUSPENSION OF MPS WILL...": AKHILESH YADAV

New Delhi: Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday said that he hoped that actions like suspension of MPs would not be taken in the 18th Lok Sabha. "I congratulate you and extend my best wishes on behalf of all my colleagues. The post that you are occupying has glorious traditions attached to it. We believe that this will continue without any discrimination and as Lok Sabha Speaker you will give equal opportunities and respect to every member and party," he said. "Impartiality is a great responsibility of this great position... We expect that no public representative's voice will be stifled, nor will an action like expulsion take place again," he said. Yadav was apparently referring to the unprecedented suspension of more than 100 MPs during the Winter Session of Parliament last year.

EMERGENCY EXEMPLIFIED WHAT A DICTATORSHIP LOOKS LIKE: PM MODI

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday gave a shout-out to the newly elected Speaker Om Birla for condemning the Emergency (1975-1977) in his first speech, in the 18th Lok Sabha. "I am glad that the Honourable Speaker strongly condemned the Emergency, highlighted the excesses committed during that time and also mentioned the manner in which democracy was strangled. It was also a wonderful gesture to stand in silence in honour of all those who suffered during those days," PM Modi said.

CBI gets 3-day custody of CM Kejriwal in liquor policy case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A court here on Wednesday sent Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to CBI custody for three days in connection with the corruption case linked to the alleged liquor policy scam case.

The order was passed by vacation judge Amitabh Rawat on the CBI's application seeking five-day custody of the Aam Aadmi Party supremo for interrogation.

Earlier in the day, CM Kejriwal, when produced before the Rouse Avenue Court, was formally arrested by the CBI. Permission was granted to the CBI to produce CM Kejriwal in the special court on Wednesday after he was questioned by the agency in Tihar Jail.

During the hearing on CBI's plea seeking his custody, Kejriwal said that he did not blame any of his party leaders, including former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, for alleged irregularities in the framing of a now-scrapped liquor policy.

Addressing the court, he alleged that the CBI sources were building a false narrative in the media to malign



the image of the ruling party in the national capital and its leaders. "I have never testified that Manish Sisodia is guilty. Manish Sisodia is innocent, AAP is innocent, I am innocent," he said.

However, the CBI counsel stressed that custodial interrogation of CM Kejriwal was necessary as he shifted the entire onus onto former Deputy CM Sisodia, who handled the liquor portfolio at the relevant time.

Judge Rawat had then reserved his order on the CBI's application.

In a related matter, Kejriwal withdrew his plea filed before the Supreme Court challenging the interim stay ordered by the Delhi High Court on his release on bail in the money laundering case linked to the same case.

Three terrorists killed in encounter in J&K's Doda

Jammu | Agencies

Three terrorists were killed in an encounter with the security forces in J&K's Doda district on Wednesday, police said. Police said that an encounter started in Bajaan village of Doda's Gandoh area at around 9.50 a.m. Wednesday's

operation follows the two terrorist attacks carried out on June 11 and June 12 in the Doda district.

A larger strategy has been devised by the security forces to hunt down a group of around 70 foreign terrorists reportedly operating in the Doda, Reasi, Poonch, Rajouri, and Kishtwar districts of the Jammu division.

Details related to NEET paper leak case shared with CBI

Patna | Agencies

A team of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probing the NEET question paper leak case met the ADG of Bihar's Economic Offences Unit (EOU) and the SSP of Patna here on Tuesday.

The meeting, attended by Patna SSP Rajeev Mishra and ADG of EOU Nayyar Hasnain Khan, was held at the EOU office in Patna. At the meeting, the Bihar officials shared all the details related to the case with the CBI team.

Sources said that the CBI team will interrogate all the accused who have been arrested by the Bihar Police.

The CBI is investigating six cases related to the NEET paper leak. The state police of Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan were earlier investigating these cases.

Of the six cases being investigated by the



Central probe agency, one each is from Bihar, Gujarat, and Maharashtra while three are from Rajasthan.

PUNE CIVIC BODY BULLDOZES 35 ILLEGAL PUBS, BARS; MORE MAY BE TARGETED

Pune | Agencies

Going aggressively after the illegal bars, pubs and restaurants, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) demolished fully or partly around 35 establishments found flouting various rules and regulations, officials said here on Wednesday.

The bulldozing drive by the PMC demolition teams accompanied by a large police force started on Tuesday at some 15 locations and continued for the second day on Wednesday at another 20 venues in and around the city which have blatantly violated the PMC's rules.

On Tuesday, the PMC razed large portions of the Liquid Leisure Lounge (L3) bar - the venue of a drugs party which led to a huge public and political uproar.



On Wednesday the PMC targeted major names like Escobar, The Elephant, FML, The Corner Café, Urbi, Filament, Bru Merchant, Native-The Joy, and Vaishali bars, among others.

After Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's directives two days ago, civic officials -- who have reportedly prepared a list of some 100 establishments -- indicated that the campaign against all kinds of illegalities at these venues will continue over the coming days.

Meanwhile, a RTI reply given to Advocate Sameer Shaikh by the Pune police, has revealed that there are only 23 authorised pubs/discotheques in the city and the vast majority of the other bars/pubs/discos are operated illegally. Now the police have begun a review of all such unauthorised establishments.

98-day survey of MP's Bhojshala complex ending, will ASI seek extension?

▶ The ASI started the 'scientific survey' in March this year following a directive by the Madhya Pradesh High Court which sought to ascertain the 'true character, nature and form' of the disputed site in the wake of both the Hindus and Muslims staking claim over it.

▶ During the survey, more than 1700 artefacts have been uncovered, including numerous statues, structures, pillars, walls, and murals.

▶ The ASI also carried out a 'carbon dating' survey of stones/pillars found during the excavation of the complex premises.

▶ The entire survey process was carried out by complying with the direction of the High Court and in presence of representatives of both Hindus and Muslims.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) is set to conclude its 'scientific survey' of the Bhojshala temple-Kamal Maula mosque complex, said to be a 13th century monument in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district.

The Madhya Pradesh High Court had on March 11 granted permission for a 'scientific survey', and later on April 29 had given extension for eight weeks, which will expire on Thursday. The ASI, which carried out the excavation for the last 98 days, is supposed to submit its report to the High Court on July 2, as July 4 is fixed for the next hearing in the matter.

Whether the ASI has found some substantial evidence to probe the contentious claims on this particular complex by two communities - Hindu and Muslim -- or would it seek

further extension for the survey? It would become clear on July 4.

However, the Indore bench of the High Court in the last hearing on April 29, had said that it won't give further extension and the ASI has been directed to complete its survey by June 27 and submit the report by July 2.

Reporter contacted the Additional Director General in the cultural ministry, under whose supervision the ASI team is conducting the survey, but his office refrained from making any statement as the matter is before the High Court.

At present, the complex is under the ASI's protection and Hindus are allowed to worship in Vagdevi (Saraswati) temple in the complex on every Tuesday, Muslims are permitted to offer namaz in the mosque, situated on one side of the complex, on every Friday.

MCA refutes media reports on clean chit to Byju's

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) clarified on Wednesday that it has not given Byju's a clean chit over financial fraud as the investigation into the matter is still going on.

"There have been reports claiming that edtech startup Byju's has been cleared of financial fraud in an ongoing investigation by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). It is categorically clarified that such reports are factually incorrect and misleading," the Ministry said.

"The proceedings initiated by the MCA under the Companies Act, 2013, are still ongoing and no conclusion should be drawn in this matter at this stage," the Ministry added.

The beleaguered Byju's is currently involved in multiple cases in courts as well as in the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

The edtech company is trying to raise \$200



million in a rights issue but has been restrained from utilising any funds by the NCLT.

Byju's is also exploring out-of-court settlements with some of its creditors. Once valued at \$22 billion, the edtech company is now worth zero. Global investment giant Prosus wrote off the value of its shareholding in Byju's, recording a loss of \$493 million in its annual report for FY24.



IMD FORECASTS HEAVY RAIN FOR WEST PENINSULAR COAST, NORTHWEST INDIA

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday said heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely along the country's West Peninsular Coast during the next 3-4 days while rainfall activity is likely to increase over Northwest India with heavy to very heavy rainfall likely during June 28-30.

The weather office has also forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall for Northeast India during June 27-30.

According to IMD, a trough at mean sea level runs off Maharashtra and Kerala coasts and a cyclonic circulation lies over central Gujarat. Under their influence:

As per the Met department, widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms & lightning is very likely over Konkan & Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada, Karnataka, Kerala and Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh during the next 5 days. Scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall is also expected



over Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam, Rayalaseema, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal during the next 5 days.

IMD also stated that due to a Western Disturbance, light to moderate rainfall accompanied with

thunderstorm, lightning & gusty winds (30-40 kmph) is very likely over Delhi-Haryana-Chandigarh, Punjab, Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and West Rajasthan on June 26 & 27; and likely to increase with fairly widespread to

widespread light to moderate rainfall during June 28-30 over these regions.

As per the Met Department, fairly widespread to widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning & gusty winds (30-40 kmph) is very likely over East Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal during next 5 days.

The IMD said that Isolated heavy rainfall is very likely over Uttarakhand, East Rajasthan, East Uttar Pradesh during June 26-30; West Uttar Pradesh during June 27-30; West Rajasthan on June 26 & 27; Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and over Punjab during June 28-30.

Fairly widespread to widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied with thunderstorms, lightning is likely over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam & Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura during the next 5 days, as per the Met department bulletin.

Sam Pitroda reappointed Indian Overseas Congress chief

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Gandhi family loyalist Sam Pitroda has made a return to the helm of the Indian Overseas Congress, months after stepping down from the post following a huge political controversy that erupted over his 'racist' remarks and comments on inheritance tax.

Pitroda's re-appointment as the Indian Overseas Congress chief was announced by the Congress on Wednesday.

The BJP was quick to react to the re-appointment of Pitroda, as it slammed the Congress saying, "The tormentor of the middle class is back."

Amit Malviya, BJP IT cell chief, said in a post on X: "The tormentor of middle class is back...Congress hoodwinks India, brings back Sam Pitroda soon after elections."

During the Lok Sabha



election campaign towards the end of April, Pitroda stirred a major controversy with his comments on inheritance tax.

His views put the Congress on the backfoot as the party was already battling to deflate the public perception that it would redistribute public wealth among impoverished classes, including minorities.

"In America, there is an inheritance tax. If one has

\$100 million worth of wealth, when he dies, he can only transfer probably 45 per cent to his children, and the remaining 55 per cent is grabbed by the government. That's an interesting law. It says you in your generation made wealth and you are leaving now, you must leave your wealth for the public, not all of it, half of it, which to me sounds fair," Pitroda had said.

Punjab Police ask Gujarat-based social media influencer to join probe

Amritsar | Agencies

Punjab Police on Wednesday asked Gujarat-based social media influencer Archana Makwana, who is facing charges for performing Yoga at Sri Darbar Sahib, also known as the Golden Temple Amritsar, to join the investigation till June 30.

The incident sparked outrage among the Sikh community, terming it a violation of the 'maryada' of Darbar Sahib. Amritsar Police have sent a notice to her. "If she does not appear by June 30, then two more notices will be sent to her. If still, she does not appear before the police, a team will be sent to arrest her," a senior police official told the media.

Darpan Ahluwalia, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) Amritsar, said Archana Makwana's state-



ment will be recorded first and only after that she will be arrested. "A notice has been sent to Archana to appear before the police and record her statement." In a post on social media, Archana Makwana said she would no longer go to any gurdwara.

The social media influencer was last week booked by Punjab Police for hurting religious sentiments for performing Yoga inside the Golden Temple premises. She was provided protection by Gujarat Police after she received multiple threat calls.

Bombay HC junks plea of Muslim students against hijab ban by Mumbai college

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court has rejected a plea filed by 9 Muslim girls of a Mumbai college challenging the latter's ban on sporting hijabs, veils, stole, caps, etc, here on Wednesday.

A division bench comprising Justice A. S. Chandurkar and Justice Rajesh Patil dismissed the plea saying they were not inclined to interfere in the decision by the Chembur Trombay Education Society (CTES)'s NG Acharya & DK Marathe College, in Chembur East.

The girls, students of SYBSc and TYBSc (Computer Science) programmes for the past two years, had termed the CTES management's decision as "arbitrary, unreasonable, bad in law and perverse" in their petition, and are likely to challenge the high court verdict in the Supreme Court.

The students through their lawyer Altaf Khan contended that the new dress code imposed by the college



violated their fundamental rights to privacy, dignity and religious freedom.

Khan said he would consult the students and their parents before moving the SC against the high court order. Besides moving the high court, the girls had also written to the

University of Mumbai, the University Grants Commission, the Vice-Chancellor, and the Chancellor seeking their intervention in the matter.

Senior Advocate Anil Anturkar representing the college, argued that the dress code was not targeted at only the Muslims, but was uniformly

applicable to all religious symbols. He pointed out that the college policy is to prevent the open display of religious symbols unless they are essential under the fundamental right to religion such as the turban for the Sikhs.

Anturkar also challenged Khan to prove his contentions that wearing hijab-veil is an essential religious practice in Islam and said the students should concentrate on their studies rather than displaying such religious symbols.

He said that the petitioner students were aware of the college's dress code when they took admission, and in future, if someone flaunts other religious symbols like a mace or a saffron attire, the college would also object to it. Reacting to the high court verdict, Samajwadi Party state president Abu Asim Azmi said that the Constitution allows everyone in the country to follow their religion and expressed the hope that the SC will permit the girls to wear hijabs-veils in schools and colleges.

Ram temple complex to be completely ready by March 2025: Nripendra Mishra

Team Absolute | Ayodhya

The construction of the entire Ram Temple complex in Ayodhya is likely to be completed by March 2025, while the first and second floors of the temple will be completed by July-end and December this year, respectively.

This information was given by Nripendra Mishra, Chairman of the Ram Mandir Construction Committee.

"Construction of the first floor of the temple will be completed by the end of next month. Thereafter, work will begin for the second floor," Nripendra Mishra told reporters.

"We have set a target to complete the second floor by the end of December this year and the entire temple complex by March next year,"



he added. The statues to be installed at the temple will be carved out of Makrana marble from Rajasthan and the trust has floated a tender to select

four sculptors for the job. More than 1.75 crore devotees have visited the Ram Mandir till date, after its opening on January 22 this year. "On an aver-

age, one lakh devotees visit the temple every day. Since its opening, around 1.75 crore devotees have visited the temple. This figure will reach two crore by the end of this month," said Nripendra Mishra.

He added that the work on the Ram Katha Museum was starting now and a concept note had been made for it. The galleries for the displays would be built according to requirement with arrangements for power and air conditioning. He added, "Our tourism department has made films on Ram Katha. We will try to open the digital gallery for devotees by July 15 or latest by August 15." "With the help of the Union government a film on the life of Lord Hanuman will be made in 7D in a gallery. The work for this will be completed in the next five to six months," he said.

India must aim to lower cost of access to space: ISRO Chairman

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India must aim to lower the cost of access to space as other countries, said ISRO Chairman S. Somanath on Wednesday, at the third Annual India Space Congress (ISC) 2024, in the national capital.

The three-day ISC 2024, organised by SIA-India, includes participation from over 300 global space organisations and 30 countries.

"ISRO has created significant space capability and talent in the country. It's time for new actors to scale India's space operations," Somanath said at the event.

"Bringing down the cost of access to space is a global trend, and India must also look at it. Space can never be solely for business and economy; it must inspire generations to innovate for humanity," he added.

He also mentioned the upcoming launch of the GSAT-20 is a high-throughput Ka-band Satellite, with over 50gbps high bandwidth connectivity capacity. Dr Pawan Kumar Goenka, Chairman, IN-SPaCE said that India's



space startups will increase after the FDI policy. He also boasted about "the enthusiasm of the private sector and how the investments are looking highly positive with the private space sector in India receiving \$135 million in investment last year alone." The event aims to showcase the innovative initiatives taken by space startups, and their strategic foresight of investments for shaping humankind's destiny in space. "The Indian ecosystem is integrating into the global supply chain to bring the benefits of space to all, aiming to make India the hub of global satellite manufacturing," said Dr Subba Rao Pavuluri, President of SIA-India.

Four of a family killed as wall collapses in Karnataka

Dakshina Kannada | Agencies

In a tragic incident, four members of a family, including two daughters, were killed when the compound wall of a neighbouring house collapsed on their home in Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district on Wednesday morning.

The incident took place at Madani Nagar near Ullal town on the outskirts of Mangaluru city.

The deceased have been identified as Yasir (45), his wife Mariyamma (40) and their children Riyana and Rifana. According to the police, the compound wall of Aboobkar's residence collapsed and fell on the victims' house, leading to the tragedy.

Authorities rushed to the spot and, retrieved three dead bodies with the help of locals. One body is yet to be recovered. Yasir worked at the port. The victims had gone to sleep after dinner



and never woke up. Riyana studied at a private school while Rifana was a college student.

Yasir had purchased the house six years ago and had given it for rent. However, his family started living in the house six months ago.

Authorities have stated that the preliminary inquiry found that incessant rains weakened the compound wall, resulting in its collapse. Ullal Police have registered a case and are investigating the incident.

India's FMCG sector poised to clock 7 to 9 pc growth rate in 2024: Report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India's FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) sector is expected to post a growth rate of 7-9 per cent in 2024 on the back of government initiatives to stimulate consumption and create more jobs, according to a report.

"Looking ahead, the FMCG sector in India is poised for sustained growth, with forecasts indicating a 7 to 9 per cent expansion in 2024," a report from ICICI Lombard General Insurance said.

The FMCG industry now has a burgeoning economic footprint, which exceeds Rs 9.1 trillion and has a key role in driving India's economic growth and employment generation, the report states. The online sales channel for FMCG is also increasing and has been valued at Rs 1.7 trillion. Segments such as D2C reflect a rapid digital transformation and evolving consumer purchase behaviour. "Such digitalisation trends underscored the industry's adaptability to changing market dynamics and its proactive approach towards catering to digitally savvy consumers," the report states.



The FMCG industry was struggling after the pandemic and the rural sector was having successive degrowth for some quarters.

However, the industry navigated through showcasing resilience and adaptability amidst evolving consumer trends and witnessed a notable upswing in volume and value growth in the second half of 2023.

The third quarter of 2023 witnessed an impressive 8.6 per cent volume growth nationwide, with rural markets

contributing a significant 6.4 per cent growth rate, signalling a favourable consumption environment, the report said.

Key governmental initiatives such as the Gati Shakti and Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 played instrumental roles in fortifying the FMCG sector's foundation and fostering long-term growth.

Based on these factors, "the corporate risk index for the FMCG sector decreased from 68 to 66," the report added.

RBI Chief sees India on path to steady 8 pc GDP growth

Team Absolute | Mumbai

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das sees India moving ahead towards an 8 per cent GDP growth trajectory on a sustained basis, driven by structural economic reforms such as GST.

"If you look at the average growth India recorded over the three years, the average comes to 8.3 per cent and the current year we have given a projection of 7.2 per cent growth," Das said at the 188th AGM (Annual General Meeting) of Bombay Chamber of Commerce & Industry. India's growth momentum remains strong and could improve further in the coming months. The country was on a path to achieving 8 per cent growth on a sustained basis, he added. The RBI Governor also said there was clear evidence of private sector capital expenditure having picked up momentum, which should



help growth further.

He also highlighted India's contribution to global growth amid the worldwide economic slowdown. "The Indian economy in the last financial year 2023-24 contributed to 18.5 per cent of the global growth, i.e., 18.5 per cent of the global growth was driven by India. It is an achievement as it was much lower 7 or 8 years ago and I think the IMF projects this growth to go up," he said. He said that the major drivers of this growth are the implementation of GST, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, and Flexible Inflation Targeting.



'Struggle of Emergency' will be taught in schools of Madhya Pradesh: Mohan Yadav

Chief Minister honours Emergency detainees, announces schemes for them

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has announced to teach 'Emergency Struggle' in schools. 'Loktantra Senani Samman Ceremony' was organized at the Chief Minister's residence in the capital Bhopal on Wednesday. On this occasion, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav remembered the struggles of the people during the Emergency. He also announced that Emergency will be included in the curriculum of schools in the state.

Around 700 'MISA bandis, those who were imprisoned during the Emergency under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, assembled at Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's residence.

CM Yadav, who returned from Delhi, welcomed the guests with flowers and held one-to-one interactions with them. Many of them narrated their stories about how they were imprisoned during the Emergency in 1975.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, CM Yadav said that India



and Pakistan became free from British rule and democracy was established in 1947. India's democracy became more and more strong with the passing decades because the people stood against draconian rule (Emergency). "Imposing Emergency was an attempt to weaken India's democracy, but lakhs of people stood against draconian rule. Those who fought to protect India's democracy,

deserve respect and today's programme is a part of it," Yadav said. He said that democracy fighters will get the benefit of staying for three days at 50 percent fare in Circuit House and Rest House. In case of serious illness, air ambulance facility of Madhya Pradesh government will be provided. At the same time, 25 percent discount will be given in air taxi. The last rites of democracy fight-

ers will be held with state honours. Along with this, copper plate will also be given.

The CM slammed the Congress led Opposition for fielding K. Suresh against the NDA's Om Birla for the post of the Lok Sabha speaker. Om Birla on Wednesday became the LS Speaker for the second consecutive term.

CM Yadav also announced several welfare schemes for the 'MISA bandis' and their families, including 50 per cent discount on the PM Air Ambulance service.

The state government gives Rs. 30,000 per year as an honorarium to each 'MISA bandi' from Madhya Pradesh. The government pays Rs. 15,000 per year to the families of those who died.

On Wednesday, the MP BJP organised a state-wide programme to remember that the Emergency was imposed by former Prime Minister late Indira Gandhi on June 25, 1975.

Democracy was strangled and the fundamental rights of the people were curtailed. It is the darkest chapter in the history of seven decades of independent India, it said.

Congress will find reasons for defeat in Madhya Pradesh

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Congress is worried over the crushing defeat in the Lok Sabha elections in Madhya Pradesh. In the coming days, party leaders are going to start searching for the reasons for the defeat.

Congress could not win even a single seat out of 29 in the Lok Sabha elections held in the state. The party was contesting on 27 seats. As per mutual agreement, Khajuraho seat went to the account of Samajwadi Party. At the same time, the Congress candidate from Indore had withdrawn his nomination. Congress had to face defeat on the remaining 27 seats.

The party has formed a three-member fact finding committee to review the reasons for the defeat. Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan, Odisha leader Saptagiri Ulaka and Gujarat's Jignesh Mevani have been made members in this committee. All three are going to visit Madhya Pradesh.

Party sources say that this committee will discuss with all the candidates except sen-



ior leaders on June 29 and 30. The committee will try to find out what and where the shortcomings remained in the elections. From party officials to MLAs and other leaders, what kind of role did they play during the elections. After completing the review, the committee will submit its report to the party high command and further action is also possible on that basis. This is the first time in the

state that Congress has not been able to win even a single Lok Sabha seat. BJP won all 29 seats. This time, Congress had fielded former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh from Rajgarh and Nakul Nath, who won the Lok Sabha elections from the same seat in 2019, from Chhindwara. Apart from this, many new faces were also given opportunity by the party.

Accused of cow slaughter's house Bulldozed in Morena

Team Absolute | Morena

On Wednesday, bulldozers were used on the houses of two accused of cow slaughter in Morena district of Madhya Pradesh. A total of six people have already been arrested in this case.

Recently, a complaint was made to the police about cow slaughter in a house in Bengali Colony of Noorabad police station area of Morena district. Based on this complaint, the police found beef in a house.

Police registered a case against nine people regarding this. Six people have been arrested, while three



are still absconding. Action has been taken against the two accused under the National Security Act. On Wednesday, the

administration used bulldozers on the illegal construction of houses of Zafar Khan and Asghar Khan, the two main accused in this case. The illegal construction has been completely demolished. According to police station in-charge OP Rawat, both the accused were given notice for demolishing illegal construction. But, he did not remove it so this action was taken.

Let us tell you that when a person protested against cow slaughter, he was also attacked by the accused. People associated with Hindu organizations had also blocked the road regarding this incident.

Mohan Yadav seeks special support from Center for Ujjain Simhastha

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Preparations are going on for Simhastha to be held in the year 2028 in Ujjain, the religious city of Madhya Pradesh. State Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav met Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil in New Delhi on Wednesday and sought special support from the Center for Simhastha.

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav is also on his visit to Delhi on Wednesday. During this, he met Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil and ministers of state V. Somanna and Raj Bhushan Chaudhary at their office at Shram Shakti Bhawan.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav informed the Jal Shakti Minister about the current status of Ken-Betwa Project and Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal Project and discussed in detail various issues



related to the implementation of the projects. Chief Minister Yadav also requested special support from the Central Government for Simhastha 2028 to be held in Ujjain.

After meeting the Union Ministers, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said during the discussion, during the meeting with Jal Shakti Minister CR Patil, our two big river linking campaigns were discussed. There was discussion on the tender of Ken-Betwa link project. Through this, 10-15 districts of Bundelkhand will get a lot of benefits. This is an area in great need of water and the government has taken steps very seriously in this regard. Its results will be available very soon.

Yadav is continuously visiting Delhi. During this time, he is also meeting many central leaders. He is also requesting the Union Ministers to cooperate in the development of the state.

Sand mafia attacked mineral officers, tried to crush them, emptied the dumper on the road at gunpoint and ran away

Team Absolute | Gwalior

When they tried to stop a dumper filled with sand in Gwalior, the sand mafia tried to crush the officers of the Mineral Department. The dumper owner and driver took the vehicle away. When the Mineral Department team chased them, they parked a dumper on the service road below Baragaon bridge, took out an iron rod and attacked the Mineral Officer and his team.

The matter does not end here either. The sand mafia dumped the sand filled in the dumper on the road at gunpoint and ran away with the dumper in front of everyone. The incident took place on Wednesday morning on Service Road Murar under Baragaon bridge. The accused dumper owner also threatened to shoot the officers. The registration number written on the dumper has also turned out to be fake. Mineral Department officers have lodged an FIR in Murar police station.

Rajesh Kumar Gangele, son of Prem Narayan Gangele, resident of Yashoda Residency, Alkapuri,



city center of the city, is an Assistant Mineral Officer in the Mineral Department.

He had set out with his team on the intervening night of Tuesday-Wednesday to take action against those transporting sand illegally. To check such vehicles, they reached Bijauli Road and started checking. On Wednesday morning, a dumper MP07 ZQ-7931 was seen arriving. When they tried to stop the vehicle which was filled with about 30 cubic meters of sand, the driver ran away while

trying to crush them by hitting them. The mining team chased the fleeing dumper and the driver stopped the dumper on the highway going to the fourline through the service road near Baragaon Highway bridge. Here the vehicle driver and dumper owner Kanha, son of Govind Singh Yadav, resident of Rising City, Baragaon, along with other persons, came and abused the mining team and misbehaved with them and attacked the mining team with an iron rod and threatened to shoot them with a rifle.

Mineral staff in panic, ran away to save their lives. Due to the sudden attack, the entire staff of the Mineral Department got scared and ran away to save their lives. After this, at gunpoint, the owner and driver of the dumper dumped the rags loaded in the dumper in the middle of the service road of the highway and drove away the vehicle. While the team of Mineral Department kept watching. After receiving the information, the police reached the spot, but by then the accused had fled. The police have raided in search of the accused. A case has been registered on the complaint of the Assistant Mineral Officer.

Student commits suicide with father's licensed revolver in Gwalior

Team Absolute | Gwalior

Another case of suicide of a student has come to light in Madhya Pradesh. In Gwalior, a student shot himself with his father's licensed revolver.

17-year-old Mohit Lodhi, living in Guru Kripa Colony of Maharajpura area of Gwalior, shot himself with his father's licensed revolver at his home on Tuesday night. He died on the spot.

The police have seized the revolver and other materials. The reason for suicide has not been revealed yet.

It is told that there was no one at home when Mohit shot himself. He was angry with his family members over some issue for the last few days and it is suspected that



he has taken this step for this reason.

Earlier, two such cases were also reported in Indore where suicide was committed by jumping from the roof. A 14-year-old girl studying in

seventh class had jumped from the upper floor of a building and died. In another case, a project manager of an IT company had committed suicide by jumping from the building.

CONNECTION OF PAPER LEAK IN UP FOUND IN MP, LEAKED FROM BHOPAL'S PRINTING PRESS; 6 ACCUSED ARRESTED

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Bhopal connection of the question paper leak scandal of Review Officer and Assistant Review Officer examination in Uttar Pradesh has come to light. The pamphlets were printed in a printing press in Bhopal. In Bhopal, half a dozen people including printing press employee Sunil Raghuvanshi were arrested by UP STF from Prayagraj.

These 6 arrested accused are Sunil Raghuvanshi, Bhopal (MP), Subhash Prakash, Madhubani (Bihar), Vishal Dubey, Prayagraj (UP), Sandeep Pandey, Prayagraj (UP), Amarjeet Sharma, Gaya (Bihar), Vivek Upadhyay, Ballia (UP).

Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission Prayagraj had organized the Review Officer/Assistant

Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination-2023 on 11 February 2024. Even before the start of this examination, a complaint was received about the paper going viral on social media. After which the government canceled the examination and handed over its investigation to UP STEUP STF, which is investigating the case, after assessing all the evidence, felt that apart from the examination centre, there is a possibility of the paper being out from the printing press also. When information was taken about the printing press, it was found that the paper was printed from Bhopal. During the STF investigation, master mind Rajeev Nayan Mishra, who was arrested earlier in police recruitment, was also revealed to have stayed in Bhopal for a few days. After this, during investiga-

tion, Sunil Raghuvanshi, son of Rambabu Raghuvanshi, resident of Bilkhiriya, Bhopal, was arrested. Sunil works in printing press. On being informed, Subhash Prakash, resident of Madhubani, Bihar, Vishal Dubey and Sandeep Pandey, resident of Allahabad, Vivek Upadhyay, resident of Ballia and Amarjeet Sharma, resident of Bihar were arrested.

The question paper was thrown out of the printing press along with Sunil Raghuvanshi, an employee of the printing press.

Investigation revealed that Rajiv Nayan Mishra, Subhash Prakash, Vishal Dubey and Sunil Raghuvanshi (printing press workers) studied in different private engineering colleges. Vishal Dubey and Sunil Raghuvanshi studied together in engineering college from 2014 to 2017.

Chief Minister meets Amit Shah twice in a week, possibility of cabinet reshuffle

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The politics of Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh, has heated up due to the meeting of Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav with Union Home Minister Amit Shah twice in a week. Political experts are linking these two meetings with cabinet reshuffle and expansion. It is believed that this reshuffle may happen before the assembly elections. The minister who came into controversy due to scams may also be removed.

Sources say that there is a strong discussion about senior leaders Ramniwas Rawat and Kamlesh Shah, who left Congress and joined BJP before the Lok Sabha elections, that they can be included in the cabinet. It is believed that Ramniwas has made it clear that he will not resign



from the post of MLA until he is included in the cabinet.

Sources of Ramniwas Rawat have said that when he left Congress and joined BJP, he was assured that he would be included in the cabinet immediately after the Lok Sabha elections, hence he left Congress and joined BJP. He wants to contest the assembly elections again by becoming

a minister so that his influence remains and he can easily win the elections. Let us tell you that Ramniwas Rawat has been a senior Congress MLA and he left the Congress after being angry over not making him the leader of the opposition in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly. Along with this, there is talk of

including MLA Kamlesh Shah, who joined BJP before the Lok Sabha elections in Chhindwara district, in the cabinet. Meanwhile, it has also been learned that Chief Minister Mohan Yadav wants to drop some ministers from his cabinet. This scene can also be seen in this reshuffle. Political experts believe that the Chief Minister's meeting with Amit Shah twice in a week probably happened in this context. Mohan Yadav had met Amit Shah on June 19 and they met again on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister came to Bhopal from Delhi during the day and went back to Delhi in the evening where he is hosted a dinner for the MPs of Madhya Pradesh. This is his fourth visit to Delhi in the last one week. It is believed that Dr. Mohan Yadav is continuously visiting Delhi to strengthen himself politically.



EDITOR'S SPECS

'Jai Palestine' slogan: Demand to disqualify Owaisi

Several complaints have been filed before President Droupadi Murmu seeking immediate disqualification of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi who raised a slogan in favour of Palestine during his swearing-in as the Lok Sabha MP on Tuesday. One of the complaints filed by Supreme Court lawyer Alakh Alok Srivastava said that by publicly raising the pro-Palestine slogan 'Jai Palestine', that too in the Indian Parliament, Owaisi has clearly acknowledged his deep-rooted allegiance and adherence to a foreign country. It added that Owaisi is liable to be forthwith disqualified from being a Member of Parliament, as per Article 102 (d) of the Constitution of India, which provides for disqualification for membership if a person is under "any acknowledgement of allegiance or adherence to a foreign State." "This is not the first time when Mr Owaisi has displayed his unequivocal loyalty, support and allegiance to the said foreign country 'Palestine'. Rather, it is a matter of record that Owaisi has been exhibiting his consistent support, allegiance and adherence to the said foreign state for the last many years," the complaint read. Further, it said that if the action is not taken against Owaisi, then it will become a precedent and will have disastrous consequences for our nation and the Hyderabad lawmaker be disqualified in the interest of the integrity and unity of Bharat. The AIMIM chief sparked a major controversy in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday by chanting 'Jai Palestine' in the House. Soon after taking oath as MP in the 18th Lok Sabha, Owaisi said: "Jai Bhim, Jai Mim, Jai Telangana, Jai Palestine, Takbeer Allahu Akbar."

Unanimous Choice: Om Birla's Journey to Lok Sabha Speaker

Lalit Garg

Om Birla is elected the new Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha for the second time by voice vote. After which Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Leader of opposition Rahul Gandhi took him to the chair. The opposition did not demand division on voice vote. The opposition's support on Om Birla's name was no less than a surprise for the Modi government. It was expected that the opposition would demand voting and then voting would take place as per the entire process. But today, while the entire process of electing Birla as the new Lok Sabha Speaker was showcasing the beauty of democratic values, it also gave rise to the possibilities that all the sessions of the 18th Lok Sabha would be full of hope, creating a new history. Om Birla, a third-time MP from Kota, has created history by becoming the Lok Sabha Speaker for the second time.

He is the third person to become the Lok Sabha Speaker for the second consecutive time. Before him, BalramJakkhar was the Speaker for 9 years. Om Birla's election is not surprising, but what was a little surprising was the need for an election for this post. Although, in a democracy, there is no reason to feel bad about any election for any post. But the post of Lok Sabha Speaker is one in which general opinion has always been given importance. The reason is that for the smooth functioning of the House, the Speaker needs the support of both the parties. In such a situation, if both the parties select the person sitting on this post by declaring their trust in him, then the prestige of the post increases manifold.

In independent India, elections for the post of Lok Sabha Speaker were held only three times in 1952, 1967 and 1976. In the year 1952, Congress member G.V. Mavalankar was elected as the Lok Sabha Speaker. There was no consensus between the government and the opposition parties regarding the selection of the Lok Sabha Speaker, due to which the need for an election arose. This was the first show of strength between the government and the opposition after the formation of the NDA government for the third consecutive time under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi at the centre. Therefore, the strategists of BJP were engaged in a mission to ensure a big victory for their candidate Om Birla with the support of a maximum number of MPs. In the meeting of India Alliance held the previous



night, the leaders said that India Alliance does not have the numbers. Therefore, the process of electing Birla as the Speaker by voice vote without voting was allowed to happen uninterrupted and an atmosphere of happiness is seen on the parliamentary floor.

Prime Minister Modi said that it is the good fortune of the House that you are occupying this seat for the second time. In this important period of Amritkaal, you have got a huge responsibility to occupy this post for the second time, we all believe that you will guide all of us for the coming 5 years. Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, while congratulating, reiterated the point of protecting the constitution. Akhilesh Yadav, the leader of the third largest party in the House, said that the post on which you are sitting, has a very glorious tradition attached to it. Therefore, everything will move forward without discrimination. Impartiality is the great responsibility of this great post. You are sitting like the Chief Justice of democracy.

The highest forum of every nation is the parliament of that nation, which is run by the representatives elected by the people of the entire nation, decides the rules and regulations of the nation, becomes their voice and works in their interest. It protects the wider interests of the nation. India's democracy is not only strong but also unique and inspiring, its highest forum is the Lok Sabha. Birla started a healthy tradition by conducting the proceedings of the 17th Lok Sabha sessions in a planned and smooth manner, his experience and capabilities have been ready to give a new

vision to the House.

The Lok Sabha, the highest democratic house of the country, has experience of his efficiency and skill in conducting the House. He has not only proved himself in running the Lok Sabha efficiently but has also increased the dignity and pride of the House by setting new standards. By becoming the Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha, he will definitely be able to discipline the proceedings of the House, inspire it and pave the way for taking important decisions in the interest of the country by maintaining a balance between the ruling and the opposition, it is believed. Certainly, by discharging his role impartially, he will prove capable of taking the dignity of the House to a new level. Lok Sabha is not just a beautiful building standing on some pillars, it is the heartbeat of 1.4 billion people. Every minute of it should be utilized properly. There should be no noise, slogans and misbehaviour, there should be no obstruction. This proves costly for the poor and the country in every respect. If our representatives do not think and behave honestly, then the common people of this nation will stop differentiating between right and wrong, moral and immoral. Certainly, on the strength of balance, impartiality, decency and skill, Birla will give a new height to the proceedings of the new Lok Sabha and will give wings to new hopes.

In this, cooperation of the ruling and opposition parties is required, only then the decency and civility of the Lok Sabha will climb to new heights. The future of the

country is written on the face of the Parliament, if there is a display of indecency there, then the problems get complicated instead of getting solved. Using abusive language on small matters, uproar, taunting, ruckus and walkout are such incidents which reduce the prestige of a representative institution like the Parliament. The kind of expertise Birlaji has shown in the past in explaining this to the elected representatives and training them is commendable.

The Parliament represents crores of people and becomes their voice. It is the sacred duty of the Lok Sabha of our nation to maintain its sanctity and health and all the representatives take an oath in the presence of God and soul to fulfil this duty with loyalty and honesty. It is not necessary to elect only an MP with long parliamentary experience for the post of Lok Sabha Speaker. It has to be seen whether the person sitting on this post has the ability to take all the parties along or not and whether he has the courage to do proper justice to all the parties or not. When the values and moral standards in the House become weak and only raising personal status becomes important, then that House definitely becomes weak. Even in the Amritkaal of freedom, we should raise our conduct and capability to a certain level. Leaders and heroes are not things to be produced in a factory, the Lok Sabha itself does the work of molding their capability and character.

The qualities of giving importance not only to the words of the Constitution but also to its spirit also develop here. It is also taught to make good use of the freedom of speech. The new Lok Sabha should be like a training laboratory. The new Lok Sabha should give birth to such an environment within itself, which itself comes forward and creates new things, takes the reins of responsibility and starts the work of reform, health and development. Lok Sabha is trying to ask itself a small question rather than big ideals: who should it say goodbye to in welcoming the new Lok Sabha? Say goodbye to those events of the past due to which the dreams and resolutions of the Lok Sabha remained incomplete and its dignity kept getting tarnished. The beginning is good, let's see what happens next? This much is certain that this time better understanding and maturity will be expected from all parties.

international

India dismisses Pakistan's attempt to raise Kashmir issue as 'baseless, deceitful'

United Nations | Agencies

India has dismissed Pakistan's attempt to inject Kashmir into a discussion of the workings of the Security Council as an undignified misuse of the General Assembly forum. Pratik Mathur, a minister at India's UN mission, reacting to Pakistan bringing up Kashmir, said that it "misused this forum to spread baseless and deceitful narratives, which is not a surprise."

"I will not dignify these remarks with any response just to save valuable time of this august body," he added wryly. Mathur, who did not name Pakistan and referred to it as "one delegation" was reacting to Pakistan's Permanent Representative Munir Akram's suggestion to set up a Security Council body to monitor the implementation of its resolutions on Kashmir. But the target of his scolding dismissal was clear.

Regardless of the topic under discussion or its relevance, Pakistan consistently brings up Kashmir.

While India does directly take on Pakistan by naming it by exercising its formal right of reply on major issues, New Delhi does not name it on other occasions like on Tuesday to deprive Islamabad of an opportunity to prolong the issue, which is ignored by almost all the other 192 members of the UN, but at the same time making a clear rebuttal.



Since it was not named, Pakistan did not get a right to reply when it could amplify its statement.

Because Kashmir does not get traction at the UN, Akram repeatedly tries to link it to Palestine - as he did on Tuesday - but with no effect.

For example, in last year's high-level session of the General Assembly, only one country besides Pakistan even mentioned Kashmir - which means 191 nations ignored it.

Even that was an anodyne remark made in the passing by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who only said that resolving the dispute through dialogue by India and Pakistan "will pave the way for regional peace, stability and prosperity in South Asia."

Pakistan's former Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has himself pathetically admitted Islamabad's failure to get support for its cause.

"We face a particularly uphill task to try and get Kashmir onto the centre of the agenda at the United Nations," he

said at a news conference here last year.

India "strongly object vociferously object and they perpetuate a post facto narrative" to shut out Kashmir, he lamented.

India maintains that Kashmir and all disputes between the neighbours are bilateral matters under the 1972 Simla Agreement signed by Bilawal's grandfather Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was then Pakistan's President, and India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Moreover, when harping on the implementation of the Security Council resolution on plebiscite Kashmir, Islamabad ignores a key element that required it to first withdraw from all areas of Kashmir it occupied.

Security Council Resolution 47 adopted on April 21, 1948, requires the Pakistani government first to secure the withdrawal from the State of Jammu and Kashmir of tribesmen and Pakistani nationals not normally resident therein who have entered the State for the purpose of fighting and to prevent any intrusion into the State of such elements and any furnishing of material aid to those fighting in the State.

The "tribesmen" referred to in the resolution are Pakistani soldiers sent in disguise as tribesmen.

That resolution also requires Islamabad to not fund or arm terrorists who continue attacks in Kashmir, which element Pakistan ignores.

North Korea's missile test ends in mid-air explosion



Seoul | Agencies

North Korea launched a ballistic missile toward the East Sea on Wednesday, but the missile exploded in the air, South Korea's military said, amid a possibility that the North could have test-fired a hypersonic missile.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said the missile was launched from an area in or around Pyongyang at around 5:30 a.m. local time, and the intelligence authorities of South Korea and the United States are conducting a detailed analysis.

A military source told Yonhap news agency that the North appears to have test-fired a hypersonic missile, but the test is believed to have ended in failure after

the missile flew some 250 kilometres.

A JCS official later told reporters on condition of anonymity that the military is considering the possibility of a hypersonic missile launch, noting that the missile exploded in mid-air over waters off the North's east coast. Smoke appeared to emanate from the missile more than previous launches, the official said, raising the possibility of combustion issues. The official added the missile could possibly be powered by solid propellants. Solid-fuel missiles are considered to be harder to detect ahead of a launch compared with liquid-fuel ones as they require less preparation procedures, such as the injection of fuel.

WikiLeaks founder Assange walks out of court as a 'free man'



Washington | Agencies

US federal court in Saipan, the capital of the Northern Mariana Islands, on Wednesday ordered that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who pleaded guilty to a single felony count of violating the Espionage Act, should be released immediately.

He will leave the court as a 'free man,' Judge Ramona Manglona said.

The judge said that it is fair to accept the 62 months, which he has already spent in a cell in the UK, as his sentence. "You will be able to walk out of this courtroom a free man," Judge Manglona said. Earlier in the day,

Assange pleaded guilty in court as part of a deal with the US Justice Department to avoid further prison time and end the years-long legal saga.

The Wikileaks founder on Wednesday morning arrived in the Northern Mariana Islands, a US territory in the Pacific Ocean, after being freed from the UK prison, where he spent more than five years.

Australia's ambassador to the US and former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, and High Commissioner to the UK, Stephen Smith were also present in the courtroom.

Assange will now fly home to Australia's capital, Canberra.

Russian Missile Forces conduct intensive exercises in Irkutsk region

Moscow | Agencies

The Russian Strategic Missile Forces are conducting planned exercises involving the Yars mobile ground-based missile systems in the Irkutsk region of southeastern Siberia, local media reported on Wednesday. "Service members of the Irkutsk missile unit are executing tasks and directives, including intensive manoeuvring actions along combat patrol routes," RIA Novosti quoted the Russian Defence Ministry as saying. According to the ministry, the crews of the Yars



mobile ground-based missile systems (PGRK) are practising a variety of operational tasks, such as marching over distances of up to 100 km, dispersing units with field position changes, engineer-

ing field equipment, organising camouflage, and establishing combat security measures, reports Xinhua news agency.

"The strategic missile troops are also addressing

the challenges posed by sabotage and reconnaissance groups," said the ministry.

As part of these manoeuvres, missile units and sub-units will practice dispersing in forested areas to enhance the concealment of the Yars PGRK systems. Support units will remove special equipment from zones of simulated chemical contamination, while counter-sabotage formations will manoeuvre to secure more advantageous positions relative to potential sabotage and reconnaissance groups, the ministry added.

Deadly heat wave in Karachi, around three dozen unexplained deaths alarm agencies

Hamza Ameer | Karachi

Pakistan's Karachi, hit by extremely hot weather is grappling with an unforeseen crisis even as locals battle waves of heat strokes in the past two days, leading to a spike in the number of deaths.

The largest city of Pakistan is witnessing a concerning and disturbing trend -- the discovery of unidentified bodies, which has now swelled to 36 in number. This has sent alarm bells ringing for the officials as neither the bodies have been claimed by anyone nor any reason identified for the unexplained deaths.

The Sindh provincial government has set up at least 77 heat wave relief centres across Karachi after the discovery of unidentified dead bodies. In the last three consecutive days, at least 36 people are reported to have perished in the



intense heat wave.

The local administration was shocked at the discovery of at least 10, 15 and 11 bodies on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday respectively. The bodies were discovered by welfare organizations, whose ambulances kept shifting the bodies to hospitals.

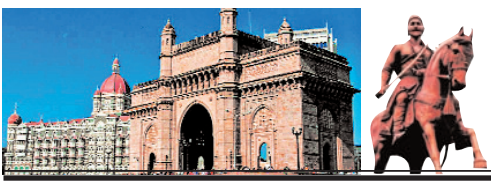
According to an Edhi Foundation representative, most of the dead bodies

were of people, who were under the influence of drugs, which, he said becomes a deadly combination with the heat wave.

Concerns still remain around the identity of the majority of the deceased individuals, as no family member has come to claim the bodies, nor has their identity been established yet.

The alarming surge in the recovery of unidentified dead bodies in the past three days has prompted the Sindh government to take immediate steps and set up heat wave relief centres across the city.

Hospitals across Karachi and the Sindh province have been put on alert while the government is trying to mitigate the flow of patients to hospitals through its 77 heat wave relief centres set up across the city.



Mahayuti, MVA gear up for tumultuous Monsoon Session of Maha Legislature

Sanjay Jorg | Mumbai

The Mahayuti and Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) are geared up for a tumultuous Monsoon Session of the Maharashtra Legislature beginning June 27.

Being the last session of the present state Assembly before the forthcoming elections slated for September-October, the Mahayuti, which is yet to recover from the setback in the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections, is set to list out its achievements in the last two-and-a-half years, while proposing a blueprint for the future.

On the other hand, buoyed by its performance in the General Elections, the MVA is in a combative mood to take on the Mahayuti government on a range of issues, including the farmers' distress due to scanty water and rainfall; the growing mismatch in the cost of production and market price; black marketing and sale of bogus seeds; death of 17 people in the Ghatkopar hoarding crash; Pune Porsche hit-and-run case; lapses in law and order; NEET paper leak; alleged mismatch of scores in MHT CET exam and above all the ongoing protests over the Maratha and OBC reservations.

The Opposition is set to corner the government on the sale and use of drugs in Pune and rest of Maharashtra.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has



already declared that illegal pubs will be demolished and strict action will be taken against those engaged in the sale of drugs. It is the last opportunity for the Mahayuti government to reiterate its claim over zero tolerance in handling law and order disruption and corruption in the state.

CM Shinde has announced that the Pune Porsche case will be fast-tracked.

The Mahayuti hopes to counter the

Opposition's tirade by highlighting the government's initiatives to help the farmers who were hit by natural calamities and provide a slew of amenities to citizens in a hassle-free manner.

The government will broadly reiterate its commitment to achieve a 1 trillion economy, retain Maharashtra's pre-eminence in attracting domestic and foreign investments, increase the irrigation

potential by completing long-pending projects and make the state drought-free by expediting the Jaluykt-Shivar 2.0.

However, the Opposition will target the Mahayuti government by demanding an audit of the expenses incurred in organising the Shasan Aplya Dari events across the state.

The Opposition has alleged that huge amounts of government money was spent in organising such events but the citizens failed to get due benefits.

The Opposition will grill the government on how the Centre's switch-on and switch-off policies on onions, grapes and sugar have cost the farmers heavily.

The Mahayuti leaders have already admitted that the decisions taken by the Centre in the midst of Lok Sabha elections went against it.

The Opposition will flag up the Mahayuti government's inaction in handling the protests over Maratha and OBC reservations.

Although the government has reached out to both Maratha and OBC community leaders assuring that their interests will be protected, the Opposition has claimed that the government was not serious about addressing the issues faced by the two communities.

The Opposition has warned that the growing caste division will be quite dangerous in a progressive state like Maharashtra.

Thane cops bust international prostitution racket; Thai woman nabbed, 3 girls rescued

Team Absolute | Thane

The Thane police have busted an international prostitution racket being operated across the state from Mumbai and nabbed a Thai woman pimp and a Yemeni man, police said on Wednesday.

The racket was being operated from a house in Mumbai's posh Juhu Koliwada area and three girls from Thailand, who were pushed into the flesh trade after reportedly gaining illegal entry into the country, were rescued and sent to a woman's shelter.

Following a tip-off by social worker Binu Varghese, the Thane police's Crime Branch launched a covert probe on the purported shady goings-on involving foreign nationals, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Crime Branch, Shivraj Patil said.

Anti-Human Trafficking Cell Police Inspector Chetna Choudhary investigated the matter before informing the higher-ups and police teams, including Senior Police Inspector Maloji Shinde of the Anti-Extortion Cell, cracked down on multiple locations including Mumbai and Thane.

Acting on Varghese's information, police sent a



decoy customer to Vits Sharanam Hotel in Thane on June 21 evening, and he signalled the police party which swooped on the place and nabbed woman pimp, Salika Udom Wabanglab, 44, hailing from Thailand's Sakon Nakhon province.

Her interrogation led to the rescue of three Thai girls who were forced into the prostitution racket and kept confined at a hideout nearby. Questioning of the accused led the police to Yemeni national, B. Abdullah, at his lair in the Undri area of Pune, said DCP Patil.

Abdullah had arrived in India a few months ago but after his visa expired, managed to get all the necessary documents to prove he was an Indian national, while the passport and visa details of Wabanglab were being verified.

The probe revealed that the accused had come to

India on short-term tourist visas, but during that period, they somehow managed to get bogus documents like passports, PAN cards, Aadhaar cards, and driving licences, opened an account with a leading private bank, and were using various UPI applications like GPay or PhonePe and others.

The accused have revealed that they used to lure customers in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Lonavala, Goa and other places, via social media, and the girls were sent to entertain the clients at heavy rates. While Abdullah has been sent to police custody till July 1, the police are now tracking the tentacles of the flesh trade racket, as to whether more girls from Thailand or any other country have been trapped and are seeking to trace other associates of the accused who helped them to procure bogus Indian documents.

MVA hails Rahul Gandhi's elevation as LS LoP

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders heartily welcomed the appointment of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi as the new Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, here on Wednesday.

Rahul Gandhi's name was announced by AICC General Secretary K. C. Venugopal after a meeting of the Congress's top leadership in New Delhi.

MVA allies - Congress' Balasaheb Thorat, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Sanjay Raut, and Nationalist Congress Party (SP)'s Clyde Crasto - congratulated Rahul Gandhi and warmly lauded the development terming it as a step forward to uphold the Constitution and protect democratic values. "Under your leadership, the united Opposition will contin-



ue to uphold the Constitution and protect the democratic values. The voices of Dalits, backward classes, women, students, farmers and the common man will be amplified in the Parliament," said Thorat, the state legislative party leader.

"Our Rahul Gandhi is now Leader of Opposition. By accepting this Constitutional position, you have taken another step forward to protect the country's democracy. We shall unitedly fight and win. Thank You!" said Sanjay Raut, MP and Chief Spokesperson of his party. "Congratulations to Rahul Gandhi on becoming the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Jai Hind! Jai Constitution!", said Clyde Crasto, the party's National Spokesperson.

K.C. Venugopal said that the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) Chairperson Sonia Gandhi had written to the Pro-Tem Speaker on the decision, and expressed confidence that as LoP, Rahul Gandhi would be a bold voice for the common people of India and ensure that the NDA government is firmly held accountable at all times.

Thane robbery accused on run for 28 years arrested

Team Absolute | Thane

The police on Wednesday said that a 59-year-old man on the run for 28 years after being accused in several cases of robbery has been arrested in Maharashtra's Thane district, reported news agency.

The Thane robbery accused, Ramesh Ishwarlal Solanki, was nabbed from Penkar Pada at Dahisar Check Naka on Monday, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime) Madan Ballal said.



There was several complaints in 1996 of some persons robbing people at public places and bus stops by cutting their bags and slitting their trousers in the Mira Bhayander area, he said. Cases had been registered

in this connection at the Kashmirira police station and two persons were then arrested, but Solanki, who was the main Thane robbery accused, was on the run, he said. During the probe, the police worked on several

leads, including technical and intelligence inputs, and got a tip that the accused was residing at Malad in Malvani area of neighbouring Mumbai and was to come to the Dahisar Check Naka, the official said.

Based on the information, the police laid a trap and caught the man when he arrived at the spot on Monday, he said.

During his interrogation, it came to light that a number of cases had also been registered against in Mumbai and Gujarat, the police added.

Bombay High Court Dismisses Students' Petition Against College's Hijab Ban

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday dismissed the plea filed by women students challenging the ban on wearing hijab, niqab, burkha, stole, cap, etc., on campus by a Mumbai college.

A division bench of Justices A S Chandurkar and Rajesh Patil of Bombay HC refused to interfere in the decision taken by a Mumbai city-based college and dismissed a petition filed by nine female students challenging the college authorities' decision.

Earlier in July, the students who have been studying in the second and third year of a science degree course moved against the directive issued by the Chembur Trombay Education Society's NG Acharya and DK Marathe College imposing a dress code barring the students from wearing hijab, niqab, burkha, stole, cap, etc. inside the premises.

The petitioners claimed such a directive was against their fundamental rights to practice their religion, right to privacy, and right to choice.

The plea termed the college's action as "arbitrary, unreasonable, bad-in-law



and perverse".

Advocate Altaf Khan, representing the petitioners, distinguished this case from the Karnataka High Court judgment on the hijab ban in junior colleges, noting that this case concerns senior college students who have a dress code but not a uniform. Khan argued that the dress code was imposed via WhatsApp without any legal authority, contrasting it with the Karnataka case where a pre-existing uniform policy was enforced. He claimed the dress code violates the petitioners' right to choice, bodily integrity, and autonomy.

Pune Doctor, Daughter Test Positive For Zika Virus

Team Absolute | Pune

A 46-year-old doctor and his teenage daughter have tested positive for Zika virus in Pune, according to a health official. The doctor, who lives in the Erandwane area, showed symptoms such as fever and rashes. He was admitted to a private hospital, and blood samples sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) on June 21 confirmed Zika infection. After his diagnosis, blood samples from his five family members were tested. His 15-year-old daughter also tested positive for the virus. Both are currently stable, news agency PTI reported. Zika virus is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause fever, rash, and other symptoms, according to WHO. It is primarily transmitted by the Aedes mosquito, which is active during the day. Besides mosquito bites, the virus can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her fetus, through sexual contact, blood transfusions and possibly through organ transplants.

Kidnapped For Ransom, Boy Rescued Within Hours; Neighbour Among 3 Arrested

Team Absolute | Jalna, Maharashtra

Police have rescued a 13-year-old son of a trader in Maharashtra's Jalna, hours after three persons, including his neighbour, kidnapped him and demanded a ransom of Rs 20 lakh from his father, an official said.

The drama that began on Tuesday morning, ended around 9 pm with the arrest of the three accused, he said.

The accused are identified as Rohit Bhurewal, Arbaz Shaikh and Nitin Sharma, said District Superintendent of Police (SP) Ajaykumar Bansal.

The victim is a son of an ayurvedic medicines trader Krishna Mujmule (38), he said.

"On Tuesday morning, the boy went to his school. But after some time, Mujmule received a call, in which the callers told him that his son was kidnapped, and demanded a ransom of Rs 5 crore for his release. The kidnappers threatened to give some harmful injection to the boy if their demands were not met," he said. Mujmule checked with the



school and learnt that his son did not turn up here, prompting him to approach the Sadar Bazar police station and the District Superintendent of Police.

"We immediately launched a rescue operation. Throughout the day, the kidnappers kept calling the boy's father and brought down the ransom amount to Rs 20 lakh.

The kidnappers asked him to keep the money bag at a local petrol pump," Bansal said. As per the plan, Mujmule left the bag at the designated spot while the police personnel were hiding nearby. As the main accused, Bhurewal, came there to pick up the bag, the police staffers

pounced on him and arrested him, he said.

During his questioning, Bhurewal told the police that his accomplices were waiting with the boy at some other spot. The police quickly moved in and arrested

Shaikh and Sharma. They rescued the teenager from their clutches and seized the car and the motorcycle used in the crime along with two walkie-talkie phones, he added. Bhurewal, the mastermind of the crime, is a neighbour of the victim. He devised the plan with his two employees to extort money, Bansal said, adding that a case of extortion and kidnapping was registered in this connection.

Oppn to shun CM Shinde's customary tea citing peoples' loss of faith in Mahayuti govt

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Opposition on Wednesday unanimously decided to boycott the customary meeting convened by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on the eve of the Monsoon Session of the Maharashtra Legislature, beginning on June 27. They announced the boycott in protest against the Maharashtra government's alleged anti-farmer policies; its inability to provide them financial assistance; failure to curb deteriorating law and order situation and the flight of industries from the state. The Opposition parties comprising Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP(SP), Samajwadi Party and Peasants and Workers Party claimed that the state government was anti-farmer, anti-people, anti-development and had lost the trust and confidence of the citizens. Therefore, they turned down CM Shinde's invitation for Wednesday's customary tea meeting.

The Opposition accused the Mahayuti government of introducing Manusmriti in the curriculum and blamed the present establishment for the burgeoning corruption and commission culture for awarding contracts for development projects. The decision to boycott the tea party was taken at a



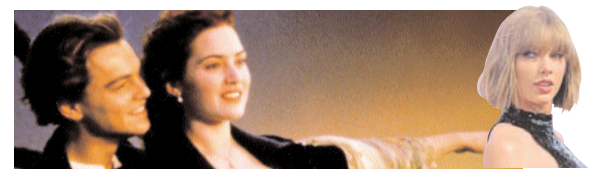
meeting held at the residence of Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly Vijay Wadetiwar.

It was attended by leader of Opposition in the state council Ambadas Danve, Congress Legislature Party leader Balasaheb Thorat, former home minister Anil Deshmukh, former housing minister Jitendra Awhad, former minister Satej Patil, Samajwadi Party leader Abu Azmi. Wadetiwar demanded that the state government immediately announce a crop loan waiver on the lines of the Telangana government to help the farmers who are

in distress due to damage caused to their crops by natural calamities and fall in the prices of soybean, cotton and other agriculture produce.

He also said that the Opposition would demand tabling of a law to curb paper leaks with a provision for strict punishment to the culprits. Danve accused the Mahayuti government of pitting various communities against each other on the reservation issue.

He was referring to the ongoing protests by pro-Maratha and pro-OBC reservation activists across the state and also the fresh demand by the Dhangar community to provide it a quota. Danve alleged that Maharashtra was no more a favoured investment destination due to corruption and red tapism which is leading to a rapid rise in unemployment. He questioned why industries were going out of Maharashtra to other BJP-ruled states. Wadetiwar and Danve said that the voters have taught a lesson to the Mahayuti comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena and NCP in the General Elections as they voted against the misuse of central probe agencies against Opposition leaders and also the BJP's move to topple the Maha Vikas Aghadi government and for engineering a split in the Shiv Sena and NCP.



Paris Hilton

Continues to fall in love with being a mom

Los Angeles | Agencies

The socialite, 43, shared more heartfelt words on her Instagram, capturing the joy she gets from being a mother to her 7-month-old daughter on Saturday, June 22. Alongside a video of the mom-daughter duo, she posted a caption stating, "London, I've waited my whole life for you my beautiful baby girl," Hilton wrote in the heartfelt caption. "My life now feels like every dream & 11:11 wish came true You are my world, I love you endlessly my lil angel." Hilton has been candid about her desire to have children, especially after having a boy. She explained on her podcast I am Paris in June 2023 that she was very eager to have a girl. She even mentioned in an episode of the LadyGang podcast in September 2020 that she was hoping to conceive twins through the IVF process. "We have been doing the IVF, so I can pick twins if I like," Hilton said. She hoped to have "twins that are a boy and a girl."



Lily Allen

Reveals her relationship to her husband, sex, and alcohol

Los Angeles | Agencies

Lily Allen opened up on her BBC podcast Miss Me?, and is not holding back some of the more intimate and vulnerable details of the couple and about herself. The conversation was prompted by the podcast's episode theme, "kink". A listener inquired if she and Allen's podcast co host, Miquita, has ever "kink-shamed" anybody. The 39-year-old singer and actress addresses that she "was very, very promiscuous and experimental," adding that she "had sex with female sex workers". So, she is "quite into normalizing everything that people are

ashamed about in themselves."

But then she took a step back, and shared a bit about her relationship with her 49-year-old American actor husband. "I wonder if I kink-shame my husband. Because he quite often asks for things, and I'm like: 'No, babe, it's not happening.' Allen clarifies that she doesn't just tell him off. "I'm not like: 'You piece of shit, how dare you ask me to do that!'" she then joked. "I'm just like: 'Hmm, headache. Little headache, got a bit of a headache — maybe not

tonight." She also notes that ultimately, her sobriety is a probable factor as to why she is not as promiscuous as she once was. "I think alcohol had quite a lot to do with the kink for me," she shared. "Before I got with David, I don't think I'd ever had sex not drunk."

Jeremy Renner Reveals Scars From Deadly Snowmobile Accident

Los Angeles | Agencies

Jeremy Renner is baring all of his scars following his nearly fatal snowmobile accident in 2023 for a new profile in Men's Health, published on Tuesday, June 25. The Town actor, 53, posed shirtless for the cover photos, and he revealed some of the scars that the accident left him with. After breaking 38 bones and suffering other horrifying injuries, Jeremy opened up about the road to getting better and how the accident changed his outlook on life. In the shirtless photos, which you can see here, some of the Marvel star's scars could be seen on his chest and arms. There's also a pretty clear shot of a wound that has mostly healed on his back. While the scars are visible, he also looks like he's gained a lot of muscle during his process of recovery. In the interview, Jeremy spoke clearly about all the different thoughts that went through his head while he was being crushed by the snowmobile, including speaking about how difficult it was for him to even breathe with the broken ribs and punctured lung. He also recounted what it was like being in the hospital and ICU, and how he spoke to his family during the days after the accident.



"It's All Coming Back to Me Now" recalled the horrific moment: Celine Dion

Los Angeles | Agencies

Celine Dion went through a scary seizure that was filmed during her new documentary I Am: Celine Dion all while battling through Stiff Person Syndrome. The 56-year-old singer was documented at a doctor's evaluation when she started to have seizure-like symptoms while laying on the examination bed. The "My Heart Will Go On" singer was seen in a stiff posture and seemed in an uncomfortable state as she was groaning in pain. "Part of the disease is that as soon as you go into a contraction, sometimes ... the signal to release it, doesn't understand, so it ends up just staying in a contracted position," shared Terrill Lobo, a sports medicine therapist. As he assists Celine, she is later showcased crying and embarrassed by the whole situation. "I don't know how to express it, like, it's just ... you know, like, to not have control of yourself?" the "It's All Coming Back to Me Now" recalled the horrific moment. She went on to ask "Well, what am I gonna do?... If I can't get stimulated by what I love, and then I'm gonna go onstage and, like, you're gonna put the pulse oximeter on me and you're gonna turn me on my back?" Terrill responded back with "It's scary, I know. It's hard. This is not the end of your journey — we all know that. But this is always that step on that journey."



Emma Roberts insists those who criticise 'nepo babies' don't see the 'rejection along the way'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Emma Roberts has spoken about how even successful actors with family working in the entertainment industry don't always have an easy path toward stardom. During Roberts' appearance on the Table for Two with Bruce Bozzi podcast by iHeartMedia, said: "That's the thing that I always talk about — people kind of only see your wins because they only see when you're on the poster of a movie. They don't see all the rejection along the way." Roberts, whose aunt is Julia Roberts and father is Eric Roberts, told the podcast host. "That's why I'm always very open about things I've auditioned for and haven't gotten the part for," she added, reports people.com. "I think it's important to talk about - otherwise people just think everything's been so great and linear and easy, and no, it's not at all. But of course, it looks like that to the outside perspective or to the naked eye." Roberts started her career in acting in 2001. She made a name for herself on the sitcom "Unfabulous" and in movies like 2006's "Aquamarine" and 2007's "Nancy Drew". She also featured in several seasons of "American Horror Story". "I think there's two sides of the coin. People like to say, you know, you have a leg up because you have family in the industry," she said. "But then the other side to that is you have to prove yourself more. Also, if people don't have good experiences with other people in your family, then you'll never get a chance."



JEREMY ALLEN WHITE PLANS TO DO HIS OWN SINGING IN BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN MOVIE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Jeremy Allen is set to play rocker Bruce Springsteen in "Deliver Me From Nowhere," about the making of the rock legend's 1982 hit album "Nebraska". At the Season 3 red carpet premiere of the series "The Bear," White shared that he hasn't met Springsteen yet. "We've communicated a little bit through some other people, but I hope this still all comes together," White said. "We've still got a few things, we've got some timing stuff to work out, and I'm trying to have a bit of my own process with it before meeting the man, too." "I wanna try to have an understanding, so when I meet him, I'll have a bit of confidence somewhere in me to stand there," added the actor. Does he want to do his own singing for the Springsteen film, White replied:

"We're gonna try. We're gonna try our best." White is stepping back into the kitchen as Chef Carmy Berzatto in the third season of "The Bear," reports variety.com.

"We let a lot of these beautiful characters and beautiful actors shine that maybe haven't had their moments in previous seasons," he teased about the upcoming season. "The world gets bigger, but we also maintain the same heart, structure, and energy that we had in the very beginning." White also spoke about his co-star Ayo Edebiri, who is making her directorial debut in "The Bear" Season 3. "She did a beautiful job," White said of Edebiri directing. "She was very confident. Everybody knows how smart she is, and she's a beautiful actress and very intuitive. And I think she's a very beautiful and intuitive director as well."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Gemma Owen



Louis Kimber hammers Robinson for a record 43 runs in an over

Chelmsford | Agencies

Leicestershire's Louis Kimber on Wednesday made cricket history by scoring the most runs in an over in first-class cricket, hammering Sussex's Ollie Robinson for 43 runs in a County Championship match.

On the fourth and final day of their Division Two County Championship match, Sussex's Robinson conceded the most expensive over in the history of the County Championship to Kimber. The over saw Robinson being hit for 43 runs, a new record for the most runs scored in a single over of English first-class cricket. Robinson actually ended up bowling nine deliveries, three of them no-balls.

Kimber's feat is believed to be the most runs scored in



one over in first-class cricket when there was no compliance from the bowler, such as bowling for a declaration. This surpasses the previous record of 38 runs, which was jointly held by Alex Tudor and Andrew Flintoff in 1998, and by Dan Lawrence off the bowling of Shoaib Bashir earlier this week.

Kimber's astonishing knock reached 192 off just 95 balls by lunchtime, forming part of an eighth-wicket stand of 200 runs with Ben Cox. Leicestershire managed to score 236 runs from 29 overs in the morning session, but still needed 80 runs for victory with three wickets in hand.

Cricket legend Kapil Dev takes over as president of Professional Golf Tour of India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

World Cup-winning former India cricket captain Kapil Dev has taken over as the president of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI). This development marks a new chapter for the PGTI, the governing body for men's professional golf in India.

Kapil Dev, who has also excelled as an amateur golfer, has been the Vice President and Member of the Governing Body of PGTI for the last three years and since then, he has played a pivotal role in further shaping and developing Indian professional golf along with the core team of PGTI.

"It is an honour to become the President of PGTI, an organisation with which I have now been associated for quite a few years. It is a player's body, and I am great friends with all of them and with whom I often play. And now it is the sport where I spend most of my time. I have been a Vice President



and I am on the Board, so it's an honour to be chosen by the players to be the President." I promise to do my best, as I always have. What gives me even greater pleasure is that I will be able to spend more time with my golfing friends and play a lit-

tle more," Kapil Dev said of his new position.

Uttam Singh Mundy, CEO, PGTI, added, "We are honoured to have Indian sports icon Mr. Kapil Dev take over as President of PGTI. We are confident that the PGTI will scale greater heights under

Mr Kapil Dev's astute leadership as his name has been synonymous with excellence in sports. His valuable experience as a professional sportsman and an accomplished golfer will be an asset for the PGTI, paving the way for the further growth of Indian pro-

fessional golf. We wish Mr Kapil Dev all the success."

In his new role, Kapil Dev aims to further the vision of transformation, recognising and building the many positive initiatives already underway in the Association in favour of the golfers.

T20 World Cup: Inzamam-ul-Haq accuses India of ball tampering against Australia

New Delhi | Agencies

Former Pakistan captain Inzamam-ul-Haq accused India of ball tampering during the Super 8 match against Australia on Monday.

Inzamam said it's not possible for the ball to reverse swing in the 15th over of the game indicating that "some serious work had been done" on the ball.

"Arshdeep Singh, when he was bowling the 15th over, the ball was reversing. Is it too early (for reverse swing) with the new ball? This means the ball was ready for reverse swing by the 12th or the 13th over. Umpires should keep their eyes open (to spot) these things...If it was Pakistani bowlers (reverse swinging the ball) this would have been a big issue. We know reverse swing very well and if Arshdeep can come in the 15th over and start reversing the ball, it means some serious work had been done before," Inzamam said on Pakistani news channel 24 News.

Meanwhile, former player Saleem Malik agreed with the Inzamam and went on to suggest that officials tend to turn a blind eye towards India.

"Inzy, I always say this, eyes are kept shut when it comes to some teams, and India is one of those teams. I remember in Zimbabwe, when Wasim (Akram) was bowling, he made it wet, and we all were surprised at it; as in how come one side was wet, and when I went and complained I was fined quite heavily," added Saleem Malik.

India's 26-run victory over Australia went a long way in helping to knock the Australian side out of the Super 8 stage of the tournament. Afghanistan then officially knocked the Aussie's out of the tournament with a win over



Bangladesh and booked their place in the semi-finals.

Afghanistan will be hoping to reach the finals of an ICC Men's tournament for the first time in the country's history when they take on South Africa in the first semifinal.

India will take on England in the second semifinal in what will be a rematch of the semi-finals of the 2022 T20 World Cup where England had won by 10 wickets. Both semifinal matches will take place on June 27 (IST).

Michael Phelps believes athletes can no longer have 'faith' in WADA



Los Angeles | Agencies

The most decorated athlete in Olympics history, Michael Phelps has stated that the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) can no longer be trusted following China's swimming contingent getting caught in a doping scandal.

In April, WADA had confirmed that 23 Chinese swimmers were tested positive for trimetazidine, a banned substance, in 2020 ahead of the Tokyo Olympics.

The China Anti-Doping Agency (CHINA-DA) declared that they had unintentionally ingested the chemical and were allowed to compete at the event where the 30-member national swimming team won six medals, three of which were gold.

Wada accepted the Chinese anti-doping agency's findings that the swimmers were accidentally exposed to the drug through contamination, allowing them to compete in Paris."It is clear to me that any attempts of reform at Wada have fallen short, and there are still deeply rooted systemic problems that prove detrimental to the integrity of international sports and athletes' right to fair competition, time and time again."

"As athletes, our faith can no longer be blindly placed in the World Anti-Doping Agency, an organisation that continuously proves that it is either incapable or unwilling to enforce its policies consistently around the world," said Phelps at the congressional hearing held to review anti-doping measures in place ahead of the 2024 Olympics.

PT USHA ADVOCATES FOR YOGA'S INCLUSION IN ASIAN GAMES

New Delhi | Agencies

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president PT Usha made a strong pitch for the inclusion of Yoga in the Asian Games programme. In an impassioned letter to Olympic Council of Asia president Raja Randhir Singh, she urged the Asian sports community to include the ancient Indian discipline that fosters physical and mental health.

"Yoga as a sport can be a very attractive proposition for broadcasters," she said. "Yoga has been a part of the Khelo India Games. Seeing its success, the National Games organisers in Goa included Yoga, including Mallakhambh and Yogasana, as part of the programme. I am sure that the Olympic Council of Asia will find good reason to accept my proposal," read a statement released by IOA on Wednesday.

"The world celebrated the 10th International Day of Yoga on June 21, and the response to its universal appeal has been overwhelming," she said. "People across nations have embraced Yoga and drawn benefits."

Usha also said that it was important for India to lead the efforts to have Yoga included in the biggest celebrations of sport. "I am confident that as the spiritual home of Yoga and as Vishwaguru, India can campaign for the inclusion of the sport in the Asian Games and eventually the Olympic Games as well,"



she said. She drew attention to the fact that the renowned Louvre Museum in Paris will offer visitors the chance to take part in yoga sessions with instructors ahead of the Olympics next month. "It is heartening that the Louvre is welcoming Yoga. It is our responsibility to make the sport gain recognition by getting it included in the Asian Games and Olympic Games," she said.

The IOA president said union minister for youth affairs and sports Mansukh Mandaviya was very encouraging and appreciative of the idea to make a case for Yoga in the Asian Games. "He told me that he sees the inclusion in the Asian Games would be the first step in taking the sport to the Olympics. We need our indigenous sport to be on such platforms," Usha said.

'NO ONE LIKES A QUIET GOODBYE': YUVRAJ PENS SPECIAL NOTE AS WARNER RETIRES FROM INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

New Delhi | Agencies

A veteran batter David Warner's storied 15-year international cricket career came to a quiet close following Australia's elimination from the T20 World Cup, former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh penned a heartfelt note for his former IPL captain.

The duo played for Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL from 2016 to 2017 when Warner was the captain and also led the franchise to its maiden title.

Warner ended his international career in stages, playing his last ODI during Australia's triumphant 2023 campaign in India, his final Test against Pakistan in early 2024.

His final appearance in the Australian jersey, which was against India, ended on a disappointing note: he scored six runs from six balls before edging a delivery from Arshdeep Singh to slip, where Suryakumar Yadav took a well-executed low catch.

Frustrated, he punched his bat with his right hand and walked off the pitch with his head bowed. There was no guard of honour or standing ovation to mark the moment.

"No one likes a quiet goodbye, but that's the game of life mate. Well done on an incredible career @davidwarner31! Yuvraj wrote in 'X'



"From smashing boundaries on the park to nailing Bollywood moves and dialogues, you've done it all in true #Warner style. A feared batsman, a lively teammate and a true entertainer on and off the field. "It was a pleasure sharing the dressing room with you buddy. Go

well #legend and enjoy your well-deserved time off with the lovely family," he added.

Away from international cricket, he has had a prolific franchise T20 career, especially in the IPL, and in 2021 became just the fourth batter to pass 10,000 runs in T20.

ICC Rankings: Head's meteoric rise continues, dethrones SKY as top T20I batter

Dubai | Agencies

Australia's Travis Head has ascended to the No.1 spot in the latest ICC T20I batting rankings, dethroning India's Suryakumar Yadav after stunning performances in the ongoing T20 World Cup tournament, with his latest innings of 76 against India cementing his place at the top.

Since December 2023, Suryakumar Yadav has held the prestigious position of the top-ranked men's T20I batter. His tenure, marked by brilliant performances and consistent runs, has now been eclipsed by Head's exceptional form. Head's knock against India, although in a losing cause, showcased his prowess as he kept Australia in contention despite Rohit Sharma's masterclass for India.

Head's rise in the rankings saw him leapfrog four spots, pushing Suryakumar, Phil Salt, Babar Azam, and Mohammad Rizwan down one place each to round out the top five. West Indies' Johnson Charles made a significant leap into the top ten, moving up four spots, while Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz climbed five places to 11th.



However, the news wasn't as favourable for all Australians. Marcus Stoinis, who briefly held the top spot in the all-rounder rankings, has slipped to fourth. India's Hardik Pandya has moved up to third, with Mohammad Nabi of Afghanistan in second, and Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga reclaiming the No. 1 spot.

West Indies' Roston Chase emerged as a notable mover among all-rounders, jumping 17 places to 12th. In the bowling rankings, England's Adil Rashid retains the top spot, but Afghanistan's Rashid Khan has surged to second following his World Cup heroics. Australia's Josh Hazlewood also climbed three places, securing the fourth position behind Hasaranga.



Saif is always rolling his eyes. So let's go with rolling eyes : Kareena

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor Khan on Wednesday spilled the beans about her favourite mobile chatting group with her girlfriends and said that it has all the juice.

Kareena, who has joined WhatsApp channels, on Instagram shared a video answering questions. The actress was asked about her favourite chat group.

To which, she said: "It has to be Guts 2.0. It is a fun group with all the girls, which I am not going to reveal, but it has all the juice on it."

Kareena's closest friends in the industry include Amrita Arora, Malaika Arora and her sister Karisma Kapoor. The four are often seen spending quality girl time together.

The actress was then asked about her weirdest food pairing, to which she said: "My food pairings are straight-up commercial favourites like chicken curry rice, Rajma chawal and kadi chawal."

Which emoticon does she relate to?

Pat came the reply: "I don't know. Queen."

What about Saif, to which she said: "Saif is always rolling his eyes. So let's go with rolling eyes."

Talking about who is naughtier, Taimur or Jeh, Kareena said: "I think it has to be Jeh. He's always up to something."

The actress then shared that "it's a tizz and it's a saga" are her two favourite phrases that she uses the most currently while chatting on the phone.

Asked how many times a day she chats with her sister Karisma, Kareena said: "I think Saif should answer this question because he is like you are always messaging Lolo. I don't know a couple of hundred times..."



RICHA CHADHA

Is all set to work on a comedy film

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Richa Chadha, who is all set to welcome her firstborn in July, has signed her next, a comedy film and the work is set to begin in October. The script of the film which is a comedy genre, is already ready and has been written by Amitosh Nagpal. The film is set in North India.

Richa commented on her work during her maternity break: "While I can't speak for all women, because it depends on each individual what their journey is like, I am determined to get back to work as soon as possible, and not take a long break, as I have pending commitments."

The actress, who is married to star Ali Fazal, said that she takes inspiration from her own mother, who managed both roles with grace and efficiency.

"I believe I can handle both duties effectively as well because it depends on the kind of support system you have around you and how hands-on your partner is. In my case, I feel blessed to have both those things figured out," she said.

She doesn't feel it is out of the ordinary.

"I have seen the badass women of Mumbai take local trains well into their 9th month, heading to work, looking perfectly groomed with their gajras intact. I am very inspired by the average Indian woman and don't want this to be treated as a medical condition, it is not. It is a natural part of life".



I don't see a superstar in Shah Rukh Khan : Kamal Haasan



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Kamal Haasan, who shared the screen space with Shah Rukh Khan in Hey Ram, paid a heartfelt tribute to the superstar, calling him a connoisseur of art.

"I don't see a superstar in Shah Rukh Khan and he doesn't see a super director in me. We are friends. He made that film for free. This cannot be done by a super-

star but by a fan only. He is a connoisseur of art and a good actor. I am ever thankful to him. We don't see all that. Later you (media) give us the title and we very shyly accept it," Kamal Hassan said while talking about his working equation with SRK on the sidelines of the "Indian 2" promotion.

Kamal Haasan also shared poignant insights into their professional relationship and the impact of the Indian audience on his career.

He said, "I was just a South Indian

actor; you people made me into an Indian actor. I didn't know a word of Hindi when I was doing my first film, I was exactly as Ek Duje Ke Liye hero was and without your support and applause I couldn't have come back onto this stage." Helmed by Shankar, "Indian 2", is a vigilante action thriller, featuring Kamal Haasan in the lead, reprising his role as Senapathy, an ageing freedom fighter turned vigilante who fights against corruption.

Neil Nitin Mukesh calls 'New York' turning point in his career

Team Absolute | Mumbai

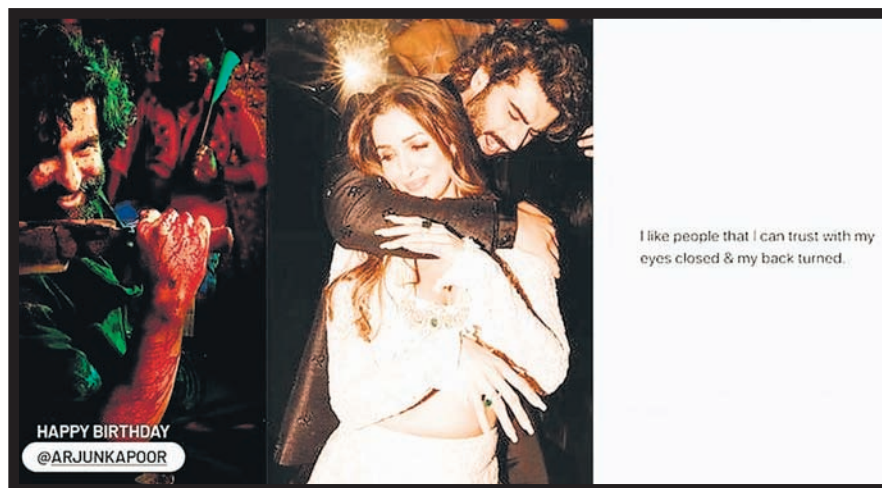
As his film "New York" clocked 15 years since its release in Hindi cinema, actor Neil Nitin Mukesh said the movie was a "turning point" in his career and that it allowed him to explore a "complex character."

"New York was a turning point in my career. It allowed me to explore a complex character and showcase a different side of my acting," Neil said.

Released in 2009, "New York", a thriller directed by Kabir Khan, also stars John Abraham, Katrina Kaif, Neil Nitin Mukesh and late star Irrfan Khan. The film tells the story of three friends studying at a university in New York. However, their life takes a turn after the September 11 attacks.

"Fifteen years later, the story feels just as relevant, and I'm proud to have been a part of it. Working with Kabir Khan and acting alongside John, Katrina, Irrfan ji and the rest of the cast was an incredible learning experience, and I'm grateful for the friendships we formed," he said.

Neil is the son of playback singer Nitin Mukesh and the grandson of singer Mukesh. He made his debut as a child actor in the 1988 films "Vijay" and "Jaisi Karni Waisi Bharni". The actor made his leading role debut in 2007 in "Johnny Gaddaar".



Malaika Arora skips wishing Arjun Kapoor on birthday

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As Arjun Kapoor turned 39 on Wednesday, actress Malaika Arora, who was dating the actor, shared a cryptic message about trust.

Malaika took to Instagram on Wednesday morning, where she shared a quote, which read: "I like people that I can trust with my eyes closed and my back turned."

On Tuesday night, Arjun had a birthday bash, where Janhvi Kapoor, Shanaya Kapoor, Varun Dhawan, Natasha Dalal, and Mohit Marwah were seen at his home. However, Malaika's absence led to chatter about their "break up" once again.

In May, rumours about the two breaking up started doing the rounds on social media.

A source back then had shared that: "Going by Arjun's body language and how

he is right now, it has happened. They have been dating for so long, hence it has been very peaceful, dignified, and respectful. Malaika and Arjun are still amicable with each other."

In 2018, rumours about the two dating started doing the rounds. However, in 2019, Arjun and Malaika made their relationship Instagram official.

Talking about his upcoming work, Arjun will next be seen in "Singham Again" in shades of grey. Filmmaker Rohit Shetty shared a new look of the actor on his Instagram stories.

In the poster, Arjun is seen flashing a mysterious smile and has blood all over his face. He is holding a sickle in his hand.

Rohit captioned it: "Happy Birthday Arjun Kapoor". To which, the actor replied: "Sir what a gift!! Ek aur 'Danger' reveal on birthday."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sidhika Sharma