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MODI 3.0 CABINET UNCHANGED AT THE TOP WITH BIG 4 RETAINING PORTFOLIOS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari retained their key portfolios in the third term of the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to the list of portfolios released on Monday.

The list was released after the first meeting of the 30-strong Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Modi, a day after the swearing-in ceremony.

Among other ministers in the second PM Modi government who retained their posts were Hardeep Singh Puri (Petroleum and Natural Gas), Piyush Goyal (Commerce and Industry), Dharmendra Pradhan (Education), Sarbananda Sonowal (Ports, Shipping and Waterways), Bhupender Yadav (Environment, Forest, and Climate Change), and Virendra Kumar (Social Justice and Empowerment).

Ashwani Vaishnav has retained the Railways and Electronics and Information Technology Ministries, besides being given the charge of Information and Broadcasting.

BJP President Jagat Prakash Nadda, who returns to the government, got Health and Family Welfare, a post he held in the first PM Modi government. He also got the additional charge of Chemicals and Fertilisers.

Jual Oram, who was Minister for Tribal Affairs in the first PM Modi government, has got back charge of the ministry.



Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, in his first stint in the Union Cabinet, will be the Agriculture and Rural Development Minister, while former Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, who also became a Union Minister

for the first time, is the new Housing and Urban Affairs and Power Minister.

BJP's Gujarat unit chief C.R. Patil has been given the crucial Jal Shakti Ministry in his first stint in the Union Cabinet.

PAK PM SENDS 'FELICITATIONS' TO MODI

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday sent "felicitations" to Narendra Modi on taking oath as the Prime Minister of India for the third consecutive time.

In a short message on X, Shehbaz wrote, "Felicitations to Narendra Modi on taking oath as Prime Minister of India."

Navaz Sharif congratulated him on assuming office for the third consecutive time and expressed hope of "replacing hate with hope" for better future progress of the two nations.

IT IS PEOPLE'S PMO AND NOT MODI'S: PM

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his first address to the staffers of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) soon after taking charge of office on Monday, laid down the government's goals and objectives in his third term.

PM Modi said that 10 years ago, the PMO was perceived as a 'power centre' but that was never the case under his watch. "The PMO should be the people's PMO, and it cannot be Modi's PMO," PM Modi told the gathering, adding that today, this was being seen as a 'catalytic agent'. "Ten years ago, the PMO was seen as a power centre, a very big power centre. It should never become a power centre. We have taken multiple steps since 2024 to expand its reach and make it work like catalytic agent. PM Modi further said that his only goal is 'nation first' and the only motivation is 'Viksit Bharat'. Emphasising the government's focus and resolve on taking forward the Viskit Bharat dream, he also sought the support of all stakeholders. "My every moment is for my country," he said while outlining his priorities to work 24x7 till 2047.

PLEA IN SC SEEKS CANCELLATION OF NEET-UG 2024 EXAM

New Delhi: A PIL has been filed before the Supreme Court seeking cancellation of the NEET-UG 2024 examination.

The plea seeks directions for the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the "malpractices and fraud involved" in the NEET examination held on May 5 and a stay on counselling till the investigations on the paper leak are completed.

The PIL filed by two members of an organisation working for the assistance and benefit of the students said that the news of the NEET exam paper leak has shaken to the core as many of the meritorious students lost the opportunity to become future medical practitioners.

Heavy rains likely in Maha, Goa, & K'taka; heatwave to continue in some parts: IMD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to continue over Goa and Konkan, Madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada and Coastal & North Interior Karnataka on June 10 and 11.

It forecast heat wave to severe heat wave conditions likely over Northwest India including Delhi-NCR, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab as well as East India including Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand during the next 5 days.

IMD also said that the Southwest



Monsoon has advanced into some more parts of Maharashtra on Monday. Conditions are favourable for further advance of the Southwest Monsoon into some parts of South Gujarat and some more parts of Maharashtra during the next 2 days, it added. According to IMD, a

cyclonic circulation lies over north-east Assam and its neighbourhood which is likely to result in wide-spread light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds (30-40 kmph) likely over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura and Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim during next 7 days. Isolated to scattered light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds (30-40 kmph) is also very likely over Gangetic West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha during 12th-14th; Madhya

Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh during the next five days. IMD also said a cyclonic circulation lies over Marathwada in lower tropospheric levels which is likely to result in:

Fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm, lightning & gusty winds (40-50 kmph) likely over Konkan and Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Marathwada, Karnataka, Telangana and Kerala; isolated light to moderate rainfall is also likely over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during the next 4-5 days.

World's largest Miyawaki forest in Hyderabad to be expanded

Hyderabad | Agencies

The world's largest Miyawaki forest at Shamshabad on the outskirts of Hyderabad will be expanded by an additional 100 acres.

Startup Stonecraft Group, a leading biophilic developer and eco-realty conglomerate, on Monday, announced that it will expand its successful flagship project 'Stonecraft Woods Shamshabad'.

The world's largest Miyawaki forest integrates an innovative Japanese ecological restoration technique with a unique concept for daily living. As a net-zero emission and climate-responsive measure, it offers farm units encased by the Miyawaki forest. The first phase of Woods Shamshabad comprises a three-year-old man-made forest that is already self-sustaining. The second project will encompass over 100 acres of total project land, offering 150 individual units sized 1800-3500 square yards.

"Woods Shamshabad Phase 1 exceeded all expectations, validating the growing demand for our most desirable sustainable living model. This expansion marks a significant step forward in our commitment to creating sustainable and net-zero communities," said Kirithi Chilukuri,



Founder and CEO at Stonecraft Group.

"Phase 2 will provide even more opportunities for individuals and families to experience a unique daily living environment that prioritises well-being and conservational responsibility," he said. Woods Shamshabad Phase 2 will deploy a fast-growing forestation technique that fosters the rapid development of a thriving native ecosystem. Reiterating the existing 4,50,000 trees and plants, over 150 native trees and new plants will be cultivated, spawning an expanded, vibrant natural habitat for more

than 141 species of birds and 126 native fruiting and flowering trees.

Beyond its stunning aesthetics, Woods Shamshabad is designed to act as a natural filter, cleansing the air and water within the village and surrounding areas. It actively sequesters carbon footprints, promoting energy efficiency and mitigating the impact of climate change. This dedication to sustainability extends to the diverse native plant life, which attracts a variety of pollinators and wildlife, further enriching the local ecosystem, Stonecraft said.

"We will continue to push boundaries of biophilic-driven sustainable development in more cities in India. The ongoing expansion aims to create a green future where economic growth and ecological conservation go hand-in-hand in urban and neighbouring urban regions." Kirithi added. Woods features sustainable housing options constructed using eco-friendly materials and incorporating green energy-efficient design principles. Residents enjoy access to fresh, locally grown produce through on-site organic farming initiatives, fostering a sense of self-sufficiency and a direct connection to their food source.

According to a CBRE survey, the growing demand for sustainable housing has seen a significant surge. The report also highlighted that green buildings have the potential to reduce emissions by 40 per cent and lower maintenance costs by 30 per cent. Phase 1 of the project has 60 acres with 110 farm units built to cherish Woods Shamshabad as an heirloom property. The three-year-old forest has fully matured 4.50 lakh Indian trees and over 141 species of migratory and resident birds.

'TERRORISTS WILL PAY A HEAVY PRICE', SAYS J&K L-G



Jammu: J&K Lt Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha on Monday said that the terrorists responsible for the Reasi attack will pay a heavy price however government's priority right now is to look after the well-being of the injured. "Those who committed this cowardly act will have to pay a very heavy price," the L-G said after meeting the injured pilgrims in the hospital.

He also assured the victims of all possible assistance. "Met the injured pilgrims at Government Medical College, Jammu & wished them a speedy recovery. The entire nation stands firmly with the families of martyred pilgrims in this hour of grief," the L-G wrote on X. Sinha told the injured pilgrims that the priority of the government right now is the well-being of the injured pilgrims, but those behind the heinous crime would be brought to justice. Terrorists, reportedly two in number, fired at a bus carrying pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in Reasi district of Jammu division at around 6 pm on Sunday.

The terrorists fired at the driver and also at the pilgrims sitting in the bus. Eye-witnesses have said that firing continued for over 10 minutes.

Table with columns: Name, Portfolio, and other details. Includes sections for Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State (Independent Charge), and Ministers of State.



FIRST CABINET MEETING OF MODI 3.0 GIVES GO-AHEAD TO BUILD 3 CRORE MORE HOUSES FOR POOR

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The first Cabinet meeting of the new NDA government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday approved a proposal to provide assistance to 3 crore additional rural and urban households for construction of houses.

The decision has been taken to meet the housing requirements arising out of the increase in the number of eligible families under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

The PM Modi-led government has been implementing the PMAY scheme since 2015-16 to provide assistance to eligible rural and urban households for the construction of houses with basic amenities.

Under PMAY, a total of 4.21 crore houses have been completed for the poor families eligible under the housing scheme since 2015-16.



All the houses constructed under PMAY are also provided with basic amenities such as toilets, LPG connection, electricity connection,

functional household water connection, etc., through convergence with other schemes of the Central government and state governments.

Prime Minister Modi, who took oath as the head of a coalition government, held the first Cabinet meeting of the new regime at his residence in Delhi on Monday.

On the agenda was advising the President to formulate the 18th Lok Sabha, among others.

On Monday morning, PM Modi signed his first file to authorise the release of Rs 20,000 crore as the 17th instalment of the PM Kisan Nidhi scheme to benefit 9.3 crore farmers.

After signing the file, PM Modi said, "Ours is a government fully committed to Kisan Kalyan. It is therefore fitting that the first file signed on taking charge is related to farmer welfare. We want to keep working even more for the farmers and the agriculture sector in the times to come."

Gadchiroli | Agencies

A dreaded and most wanted Maoist carrying a bounty Rs 2 lakh on his head surrendered before the Maharashtra Police and CRPF after being pursued for 10 years, an official said here on Monday.

The Maoist has been identified as Mukesh Penta Kannake (37) alias Kishore, who joined militancy as a Jan-Militia member in 2014 at Bhamragad in Gadchiroli district. In 2022, he was appointed as the head of the Revolutionary People's Council and as a Bhamragad Dalam member, said Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police, Neelotpal.

In his decade-long involvement with outlawed outfits, Kannake was involved in at



least four murder cases of civilians, including three men and a woman, in 2013, 2015, 2018, and 2019.

He was also part of three encounters with the security forces in 2017, 2021, and 2022 in Darba, Koparshi, and Pengunda villages of the district. Kannake was also involved in incidents of arson in 2021, 2022, and 2023 at places like Murumbhushi, Botanfundi, Pengunda, and Hidoor, in which over a dozen government-owned and private vehicles were torched. Neelotpal said Kannake decided to surren-

der as he wanted to quit his life as an outlaw, and take advantage of the government's policy of rehabilitation, including a cash reward of Rs 4.5 lakh from the Centre and the state, along with other benefits.

Neelotpal, along with senior officers Sandeep Patil, Ankit Goyal, and CRPF's top officers Jagdish Meena, M.M. Khobragade, Sandip Pakhale, Jyotsna Masram, Jitendra Vairagade and Pramod Puri were present during the surrender.

Neelotpal also said that between 2022 and 2024, 15 dreaded Maoists have voluntarily renounced violence, laid down arms before the security forces, and also appealed to other outlaws lurking in the jungles to follow suit.

Kangana incident reflects simmering anger caused by her 'venomous' statement: Punjab CM

Chandigarh | Agencies

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Monday that a CISF constable allegedly slapping Bollywood actress and newly-elected BJP MP Kangana Ranaut at the Chandigarh Airport recently represented the simmering anger caused by her "venomous statement" made in the past.

"It is an unfortunate incident, but Kangana should also have exercised restraint before labelling all Punjabis as terrorists," he told the media.

Stating that the actress-politician should have remembered the significant contributions made by the Punjabis in India's freedom struggle, defence sector, and in making the country self-



reliant in food production, Mann said the "immature statements does not behove a public figure of Kangana's stature".

A day after Kangana Ranaut was allegedly slapped at the Chandigarh Airport, an FIR was registered on June 7

against the accused CISF constable, Kulwinder Kaur.

Kaur has been booked under Sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), and 341 (wrongful restraint) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). However, no arrest has been made so far.

DELHI L-G MEETS ATISHI, SAURABH BHARADWAJ OVER WATER CRISIS IN NATIONAL CAPITAL

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena on Monday met Water Minister Atishi and Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj in connection with the ongoing water crisis in some parts of the national capital, an official said.

According to Raj Niwas, the Chief Secretary and the CEO of Delhi Jal Board (DJB) were also present at the meeting which brought to the notice of the L-G and the ministers that a team of Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB), along with senior officials from the city government and Haryana government, inspected the supply of water at the head of Munak Canal on the Delhi side on Sunday evening.

The L-G office said the team found the water supply from Haryana to be sufficient.

As per the inspection report, it was informed that Haryana on June 9 released 2,289 cusec of water at Munak Canal in Haryana and the quantity of water released from Munak to Kakori for supply exclusively to Delhi was 1,161.084 cusec against the quota of 1,050 cusec of water. "However, water received from Munak Canal at Bawana in Delhi was 960.78 cusec, amounting to a loss of 200 cusec, i.e., 18 per cent on that date. These losses should be less than 5 per cent as per the accepted norms," said the L-G office.

Munak Canal is the main source from where



Delhi gets water from Haryana for supply to seven out of Delhi's nine water treatment plants (WTP). "During transit, a huge quantity of water is lost and stolen due to non-maintenance of the Munak Canal during its course in Delhi. This happens because of leakages due to non-repair of lining of the Canal as also theft by tankers, which were seen unauthorised lifting water during the inspection also," said the Raj Niwas officials. In the meeting, the L-G also shared photographs with the ministers showing tankers lined up along the Munak Canal in Delhi and lifting water illegally.

However, it was also informed that during the current heat wave conditions, water received at Munak Canal during May stood at an average of 948 cusec and an average 870 MGD so far in June.

"It also came out during the meeting that it could not be ascertained yet whether Himachal Pradesh was actually releasing the additional 137 cusec of

water into Yamuna. The L-G asked the ministers to take up the matter with the Himachal Pradesh government," said an official.

"It was also informed that even from June 1-8, all but one WTP in Delhi were working beyond their capacity and even on June 8, 854 MGD water was produced against the capacity of 821 MGD.

"The Wazirabad WTP was the only one which had been functioning under its capacity and even on June 8, its production stood at 119.5 MGD against the capacity of 131 MGD," the official added.

At the meeting, the issue of inordinate delay in the commissioning of the Chandrawal and Dwarka WTPs, pending for years, was also discussed.

While it was underlined that the Chandrawal WTP got delayed due to Covid, the one at Dwarka, which had a commissioning date of just 18 months, was running behind schedule due to a shortage of funds.

"The issue of 54 per cent unaccounted water and 40 per cent leakage in Delhi due to theft and un-repaired pipelines was again flagged by the L-G and it was agreed by the ministers that a concrete plan of action for addressing this issue will soon be prepared by the DJB," the official said.

The L-G has assured that he will take up the matter of supply of water with the Haryana government and request them to give extra water on humanitarian grounds.

'Goof-up' in Amethi winner KL Sharma's poll affidavit for 2024 polls, picture is viral on internet

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Kishori Lal Sharma, the recently elected Member of Parliament (MP) from Amethi Lok Sabha constituency, became the talk of town after trouncing Union Minister Smriti Irani in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

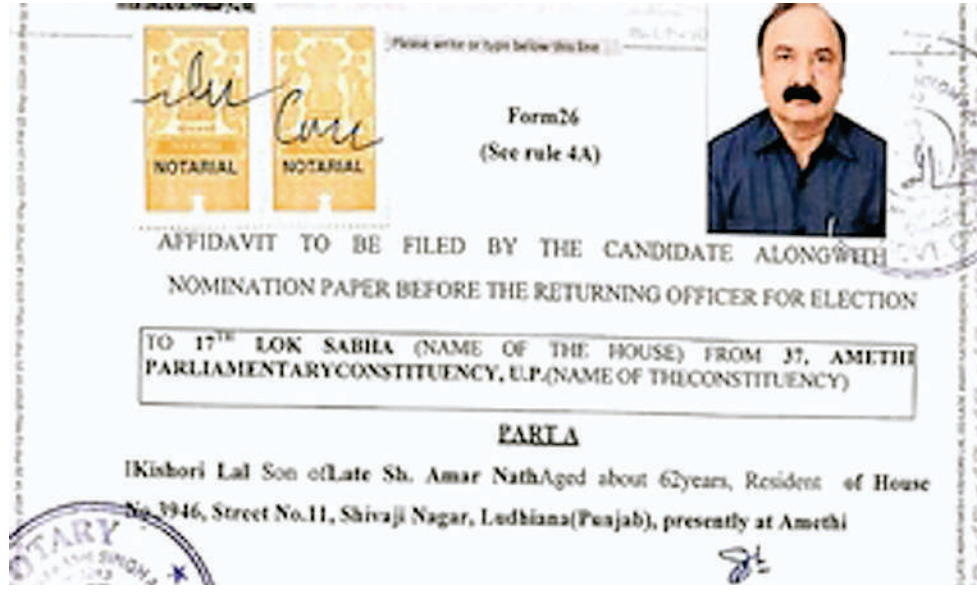
The Amethi winner having earned the epithet of 'giant slayer' is again hitting the headlines over a goof-up in his election affidavit.

According to a viral picture, the Gandhi family loyalist's affidavit reads, "Affidavit to be filed by the candidate along with nomination paper before the Returning Officer for election to the 17th Lok Sabha."

Notably, the tenure of the 17th Lok Sabha came to an end with the second term of the Modi government and the 2024 election was held to elect 543 members of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Sharma's candidature as Congress candidate from Amethi LS seat was finalised at the eleventh hour as the party dithered over the choice of nominees and zeroed in on the family loyalist rather than fielding Priyanka from the seat, as anticipated.

The wrong reference to the 17th Lok Sabha elections in KL Sharma's poll affidavit may also spell trouble for him if he is found to have deviated from the established practices of the Election Commission.



A candidate files his nomination papers along with affidavits based on the checklist furnished by EC officials and is further vetted by the Returning Officers. If serious flaws are spotted in any candidate's affidavit, his/her nomination also gets cancelled.

Given the importance of the prestige seat in light of KL Sharma's victory over Smriti Irani, questions are being raised about whether the Election Commission take cognisance of it or will the latter will take legal recourse after the revelations.

Mizoram-Myanmar cross-border trade stopped after bridge blown up by Myanmar Army

Aizawl | Agencies

Official border trade between Mizoram and Myanmar's Sagaing division has been suspended for the past two days following the destruction of a bridge by the neighbouring country's army on Saturday, officials said on Monday.

Officials and local people said that Myanmar Army personnel blew up the suspension bridge over the Run River in the Teddim township area using explosives on Saturday, and the destruction of this bridge has cut the main road connecting Mizoram to Tahan town in Myanmar's Sagaing division.

The border trade has been taking place through the Zokhawthar border trade centre in eastern Mizoram's Champhai district. Essential commodities, soft drinks, bread, various edibles, and electronic gadgets, among other goods, were being trad-



ed through the centre. Border villagers, however, expressed hope that the import of goods from Myanmar would soon resume via Falam town, even though the route is more challenging and long distance. Tahan, a town in Myanmar's Kalaymyo district, is predominantly inhabited by Mizos who migrated from India after joining the Myanmar Army following then Burma's (now Myanmar) independence in

1948, as well as those seeking better opportunities in the neighbouring country. Tahan town has a 99 per cent Christian population.

Mizoram shares a 510 km unfenced border with Myanmar and through this frontier, legal and illegal trade is taking place regularly.

Various trading organisations have been demanding the development of infrastructure at the Zokhawthar border trade centre to boost legal trade.

Scindia will enjoy a strange privilege after 22 years

Yogendra Lumba | Guna

Even though Jyotiraditya Scindia is going to be sworn in as Union minister fourth time, but a strange thing is going to happen when he is sixth time Parliamentarian. When Scindia in 2005, became Member of Parliament first time, at that time NDA was in power in centre whereas in Madhya Pradesh Congress was in Power. In 2004, Scindia when again became MP, situation changed and in Madhya Pradesh BJP was in power and Central government was of Congress, this condition was upto 2014.

After 2014, Scindia was again Member of Parliament, but both, at centre and Madhya Pradesh, BJP was in Power. Scindia was Member of Parliament and Union minis-



ter in 2020, at that time both governments were of BJP, but he was Member of Rajya Sabha no Lok Sabha. Currently, when Scindia is Member of Lok Sabha, he will enjoy the privilege of having BJP government, both at centre and state, that too in 22 years and he will enjoy the same privilege as his Father late Madhav Rao Scindia in 1980, 1984 and 1991 and the People of Guna and Gwalior got full advantage of it.

Amit Malviya to initiate legal action against Bengal BJP leader's relative over derogatory comments

Kolkata | Agencies

BJP's Information Technology Cell chief and the co-in-charge of the party's state unit in West Bengal, Amit Malviya is heading to initiate legal proceedings against Santanu Sinha, an RSS associate, over his derogatory social media post accusing Malviya of taking sexual favours.

Santanu Sinha has family links with BJP's former national secretary Rahul Sinha.

Earlier, Malviya's counsel served a legal notice to Santanu Sinha on June 8 asking the latter to tender a public apology and also remove the slanderous social media post within three days from the receipt of the legal notice, failing which legal proceedings, both civil and criminal, will be initiated against him.

Sources said that the three-day deadline will expire on Tuesday and appropriate legal actions will be initiated against Sinha if he fails to abide by the directions given in the legal notice served to him on June 8.

As per the legal notice, since the slanderous social media post has been reported by a section of the media having a wide readership, especially in West Bengal. "Resultantly, your defamatory post has lowered the image of my client in the eyes of the public. That your post is a serious allegation against my client who is a respectable member of society



and has further dampened his reputation while causing him mental agony. Your alleged post is a deliberate intent to mislead the public and malign the reputation of my client," the legal notice read.

Santanu Sinha's social media post had been highlighted by the opposition parties, including Congress and Trinamool Congress, in a major way and both held press meetings on the issue.

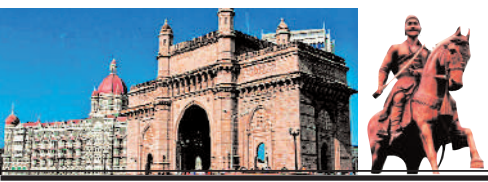
FOUR OF A FAMILY DROWN IN RIVER GHAGHRA IN UP

Lakhimpur Kheri : Four members of a family drowned while another was injured after getting caught in the deep waters of the Ghaghra river near Teliyar village of this district, police said on Monday.

The victims were caught in the river's deep waters, leading to the tragedy early on Monday, the police said.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Nighasan, Pradeep, told reporters that the victims are all Teliyar residents and have been identified as Sushila (52), Satyam (24), Urvashi (17), and Kanha (10).

Another member of the family, identified as Naini, was rescued and rushed to the district hospital in a critical condition, he said.



MCA president Amol Kale passes away in New York after watching India-Pakistan match

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) president Amol Kale has died following a heart attack in New York, United States where he had gone along with some other MCA officials to watch the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, sources in the organisation confirmed to reporter on Monday.

Kale suffered cardiac arrest after watching the India versus Pakistan match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. He was in New York with MCA secretary Ajinkya Naik and Apex Council member Suraj Samat.

Kale, a prominent businessman in the state, took over as MCA president in October 2022 and was in the post for 19 months. He is known to be close to former Maharashtra Chief Minister and present Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Though he hails from Nagpur, which is the headquarters of Vidarbha Cricket Association (VCA), Kale was settled in Mumbai for over a decade and was invested in various businesses.

A BE in Electrical Engineering from Nagpur University, Kale was the Founder



and Chief Executive Officer of J K Solutions Private Limited and Arpita Enterprises.

Though he has not yet completed two years into his tenure as MCA president, Kale was praised by everyone for MCA's decision to grant the same amount of match fee to Mumbai cricketers that is offered by the BCCI. Under his leadership, MCA has organised many international matches at the Wankhede Stadium including the India v New Zealand Test and the 2023 World Cup matches.

MCA sources said they are still waiting for details from the office-bearers accompanying him in New York.

WR busts interstate liquor racket on train, nabs two bootleggers

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Western Railway (WR) Vigilance Department has busted a Gujarat-Maharashtra interstate liquor smuggling racket on its train by nabbing two bootleggers, an official said here on Monday.

Following a tip-off, the Vigilance sleuths kept tabs on the suspects secretly for over a month before taking action, said WR Chief Spokesperson Sumit Thakur.

Finally, on June 8, the Vigilance team swooped upon and apprehended the two alleged bootleggers from the sleeper coach (S-3) of the Bandra Terminus-Jammu Tawi (No. 19027) Vivek Express, soon after it departed from Mumbai.

The WR also effected a seizure of 260 bottles of liquors worth around Rs 46,500 from the duo, Thakur added.

During their interrogation by the law enforcers, the two per-



sons admitted that they were carriers supplying liquor to various hotels and restaurants in the dry state of Gujarat.

Accordingly, they were handed over to the Gujarat Government Railway Police in Surat along with the seized liquor for necessary legal action as per the stringent rules in the adjoining state.

Gujarat is a liquor-free state where possessing, carrying, and selling liquor is strictly prohibited under the law, said the official, and further investigations are on.

NEET results row

Maha govt urges Centre to stay counselling, remove grace marks, re-evaluate OMR sheets

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amid the raging controversy over the results of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) 2024 announced recently, the Maharashtra government on Monday urged the Centre to put a stay on the counselling process till this issue is resolved. In a letter which has been accessed by IANS, the Principal Secretary in the Department of Medical Education, Dinesh Waghmare, appealed to the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the National Testing Agency (NTA) to remove the grace marks given to some specific students due to loss of time.

The state government's move came after around 67 candidates bagged the top rank in NEET-UG 2024 by



scoring 99.997129 percentile points. Of these, around six candidates had appeared for the exam from the same centre in Haryana. The average marks of 720 qualified candidates is 323.55. The results were also marred with charges of irregularities and paper leaks. The Maharashtra government has also appealed to the Centre for a re-evaluation of all the OMR sheets with the actual results by conducting a forensic audit. "Considering the seriousness of the issue, an early response in this matter will ensure justice for the NEET-UG 2024 aspirants," Waghmare said in the letter.

The official also said that the state government has received various representations from NEET aspirants and their parents alleging irregularities in the results. "There was no provision for grace marks in the information brochure published by the NTA. Yet, the NTA has implemented one rule while publishing the results. There is a difference between the actual marks published in the scorecards and the marks in the OMR sheets. This has resulted in great loss for the NEET aspirants in Maharashtra," Waghmare said. The state government also reiterated that the Centre should act promptly keeping in mind the educational interests of the students. The NEET-UG 2024 was conducted on May 5 at 4,750 centres, including 14 overseas centres.

40 MahaYuti MLAs to cross over to MVA in a month: Maha Leader of Opposition

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After the Nationalist Congress Party-SP, Maharashtra's Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar, of the Congress, on Monday claimed that at least 40 MLAs of the ruling MahaYuti are likely to cross over to the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in a month. Addressing media here, Wadettiwar said that the legislators belonging to the MahaYuti constituents - the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party are 'in touch' with the Congress and the NCP-SP for making a 'ghar-wapsi' in the next one month or so.

He contended that after the Lok Sabha elections, when the MVA trumped with a total of 31 seats, there was huge unrest among the legislators of the two parties which had split in June 2022 and July 2023.



"After the LS elections and the subsequent developments, many of their MLAs are in contact with us and they want to come back ahead of the October Assembly elections," Wadettiwar claimed.

His statement came barely a couple of days after NCP-SP MLA Rohit R. Pawar had made a similar claim, that around 19-20 MLAs of the Ajit Pawar-led NCP want to return to the Sharad Pawar side. However, both the NCP and Shiv Sena leaders have asserted that their MLAs are with them and vehemently rejected the NCP-SP-Congress claims as arising out of frustration.

Actress Noor Malabika Das found dead in Mumbai; suicide suspected

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a case of suspected suicide, former air-hostess-turned-actress Noor Malabika Das, who worked with Kajol in the streaming show 'The Trial', was found dead at her Mumbai flat four days ago, creating ripples in the film circles, official sources said on Monday.

Hailing from Assam, Mumbai-born Malabika (31) worked as a stewardess with Qatar Airways for several years before switching careers to become an actress.

The police said that following complaints of a foul smell emanating from her home in Oshiwara on Saturday, a team broke open the door and found her partly mutilated and decomposing body.

She had allegedly hanged herself on Thursday (June 6), but it was only after the neighbours' complained of foul smell that the matter came to light.



The police have seized her mobile phones, some diaries, medicines, and other personal items from the rented flat and registered an accidental death report.

Later, they shifted her body for an autopsy which was

conducted at the BMC's Siddharth Hospital in Goregaon, the details of which are not yet known.

Her mortal remains were handed over to one of her friends and professional colleagues, A.N. Pathak, who organised her last rites through an NGO, which were performed on Sunday.

As per some reports, Malabika was reported to be in a state of depression while her parents, who had visited her last month, left for Assam last week, and could not attend her funeral.

Malabika acted in several films/shows/web series like 'The Trial', 'Teekhi Chutney', 'Dekhi Undekhi', 'Charamsukh', etc.

The news of her unexpected demise was greeted with shock, disbelief, and dismay on social media with tributes pouring in in her memory as many people recalled her acting skills in several projects.

Will two Shiv Sena factions unite? Debate starts after banners displayed in Delhi

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Will the two Shiv Sena factions come together in the run up to the forthcoming Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Elections?

The debate began in Maharashtra's political circles on Monday after banners were displayed in New Delhi urging the Shiv Sena and Shiv Sena (UBT) to unite in the larger interest of Maharashtra to take its development to a new high.

"Shiv Sainiks, Tigers unite. Accelerate the development of Maharashtra. Best wishes to all", the banners read.

The timing of the display of banners is important especially when the Shinde faction had to settle for the MoS Independent rank against its demand for one Cabinet and one MoS in the Union Cabinet.

In his reaction, the Shinde faction spokesman Sanjay



Shirsat said, "Both the groups have decided to march in different directions. However, if they change direction and come together, it will definitely be welcomed. But there is a stark difference in the way of thinking."

"Once everyone used to say that Shiv Sena chief is our god. However, now some people are calling Sharad Pawar and Rahul Gandhi their god which is causing us trouble."

He added, "But if he (Uddhav Thackeray) changes his strategy, there is no prob-



lem in coming together in the future."

On the other hand, Shiv Sena (UBT) Deputy Leader Sushama Andhare said, "We respect the sentiments of Shiv Sainiks. The doors of Matoshree and Shiv Sena will always be open for Shiv Sainiks. However, those who hatched a big conspiracy to defraud the party, and tried to make Maharashtra fall into a ditch as an alternative to the Shiv Sena, in this conspiracy, let the people decide whether they are right or not."

Man, minor killed in house crash as rains lash Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Two persons, including a minor boy, were killed when a portion of a house crashed in Vikhroli as heavy rains clobbered Mumbai during the night, officials said here on Monday.

According to the BMC Disaster Control, the tragedy struck a ground five-storied under-construction building around 11.15 p.m. on Sunday.

Eyewitnesses told the Mumbai Fire Brigade that some portion of the parapet (iron beam) and a slab of one of the floors had fallen.

A part of the broken section was seen hanging precariously and it was removed by a fireman using rescue tools.

Two persons said to be father-son were removed from there by locals and rushed to the BMC's Rajawadi Hospital in a pri-



ivate vehicle before the arrival of rescue teams. They were declared dead at the hospital and the victims are identified as -- Nagesh R. Reddy, 38, and Rohit Reddy, 10.

A search continues for any other victims who may be trapped under the rubble, said the BMC.

Uddhav Thackeray asks cadres to gear up for Assembly elections

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A week after the Lok Sabha results were announced, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Monday asked the party workers to step up their outreach with voters for the victory of 180 Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) candidates in the forthcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections in September-October.

His message to the cadres was not to be complacent after the MVA's victory on 30 seats against the Mahayuti's 17 in the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections, but gear up for a repeat stellar performance in the Assembly polls.

Thackeray was speaking at a meeting



with party office-bearers, district heads and elected representatives.

Thackeray emphasised on the need for the cadres to work hard to further improve SS(UBT)'s performance on the

nine Lok Sabha seats won by the party.

He also asked them to focus on strengthening coordination with allies, including NCP(SP) and the Congress for victory in rest of the constituencies.

SS(UBT) sources said that Thackeray has asked the cadres to avoid the mistakes made during the implementation of the poll management strategy, while preparing for the Assembly elections.

Thackeray has announced that he will soon start a Maharashtra tour and asked the party workers not to worry about seat allocation.

Thackeray said that all MVA constituents will work as a team to defeat the Mahayuti in the ensuing Assembly elections.

Maha CM unveils phase 2 of Mumbai Coastal Road in 94-year-old Rolls Royce

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In an eye-popper, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde hopped onto a gleaming vintage 1930 Rolls Royce-20/25 open-to-sky car to inaugurate the second phase of the toll-free Mumbai Coastal Road, here on Monday.

Shinde in the front seat, along with Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar in the back seat, alighted from their official bullet-proof vehicles to board the roofless vintage steely-grey beauty, to traverse the length of the phase 2 of the MCR. A highly-priced, well-maintained, and 94-year ageless wonder, the Rolls Royce-20/25 was loaned by its proud owner, Raymonds Group Chairman Gautam Singhania from his personal collection for the big event of the modern-day marvel, MCR, and the three dignitaries drove the entire length during the inauguration, said an official source.

Shinde threw open the south-north arm of the MCR for traffic, which will be



allowed from June 11 (Tuesday), which will slash the commute time from Marine Lines to Haji Ali to barely 8 minutes, compared with one hour now.

Roughly 10.5 km long, the first phase of this stretch, the north-south arm from Worli to Marine Lines, along with the twin tunnels, was inaugu-

rated on March 11 and has proved immensely popular with motorists.

Shinde said that the new stretch inaugurated today has been equipped with all the modern amenities and will be a boon as it shall decongest traffic to and from south Mumbai to the northern parts of the city.

The Chief Minister said that the MCR, named after Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, will be fully completed (the southern phase) by October and would entail huge savings of time, fuel, and pollution, plus other benefits, besides easing traffic congestion in both directions.

MVA criticises Eknath Shinde, Ajit Pawar over ministerial berths in news union cabinet

Team Absolute | Mumbai

On Monday, leaders of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) opposition alliance chastised Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar for their roles in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new Union administration. During Sunday's swearing-in ceremony, Prataprao Jadhav of Shinde's Shiv Sena party was appointed Minister of State with independent charge. However, Ajit Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) declined a Minister of State role, preferring a cabinet position.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut stated that the limited roles granted to Shinde and Pawar's parties demonstrated that the BJP had reduced them to secondary posts. "This is what you get when you decide to be someone's slave," Raut told the news agency.

Per the report, Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar suggested that if Pawar's NCP does not accept the Minister of State post, they should not expect a cabinet position in the future. "Ajit Pawar must have realised albeit late that the BJP has a use and throw policy for its allies," said Wadettiwar, the Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly.

Baramati Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule said she was not surprised that Ajit Pawar's NCP did not receive a cabinet berth in the Modi cabinet. In response, Sanjay Shirsat,



spokesperson for the Shinde-led Shiv Sena, downplayed the opposition's criticism, suggesting there may be reasons behind his party not receiving a cabinet position.

"Why should others, who are out of power, be bothered about what we got? When you (Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena) were in power, you had a cabinet post but of a minor portfolio like heavy industries," said Shirsat, an MLA from the Marathwada region.

Ajit Pawar, President of the Nationalist Congress Party and Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, clarified on Sunday that his party had not joined

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Union Ministry, despite the fact that the BJP had offered his party a position as Minister of State (Independent Charge) despite his party's request for a cabinet rank.

The party chose not to settle for the MoS (Independent Charge) position because its Working President Praful Patel was overwhelmingly endorsed for minister and had previously served in the Cabinet. Pawar, on the other hand, stated unequivocally that the NCP would remain a member of the NDA and would continue to provide support in the future.



EDITOR'S SPECS

IOA, WFI extend support for Paris-bound wrestlers

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) have bolstered their support to Paris Olympics-bound wrestlers. The IOA and WFI have strung together a comprehensive support team for the wrestlers. It will include experienced coaches, physiotherapists, nutritionists, mental conditioning coaches, and other essential staff, all dedicated to the well-being and performance of the wrestlers. Apart from this, Vinesh Phogat's request for additional support has also been accepted. "Besides the overarching support framework, IOA and WFI have responded positively to Vinesh Phogat's request for additional support to aid her in her preparation to compete in the Paris Olympic Games. Recognising the importance of her request, an extra layer of support staff will be provided to cater to her needs," the IOA said in a release. IOA president Dr. PT Usha said supporting the athletes' quest for success is of utmost priority. WFI president Sanjay Singh said the Federation is committed to supporting all its athletes in every possible way. This initiative is part of the larger mission of the IOA and WFI to continuously improve the training, preparation, and overall support mechanisms available to all Indian athletes. The goal is to create a sustainable model of excellence that can propel Indians to greater heights on the global stage. Wrestling has not only fetched India's first individual Olympic Games medal through K.D. Jadhav in 1952 but also has seen podium finishers in each of the Olympics since 2008. With as many as seven medals, including two silver and five bronze, wrestling is second only to hockey in terms of medals won by Indians.

The new organisational imperatives

DC Pathak

The frontiers of knowledge, data, and analytics opened by Information Technology and its latest offspring -- Artificial Intelligence (AI) -- have impacted all organisations big or small and altered the known practices of human resource development as well as corporate ethics.

Work from home, digitisation of content, and increasing reliance on 'machine learning' in decision-making have diminished the scope of interactivity within the corporate body, discounted a leadership that drew sustenance only from claims of 'long' experience and created a tendency among the employees to work in silos which would only be at the cost of commitment to the common organisational 'mission'.

Skill development focusing on the handling of information and its meaningful dissemination has become a prime mandate for human resource utilisation and the call of leadership has become more demanding in terms of its ability to constitute teams that are both inclusive and productive, realise the new importance of 'time' as a resource and reset the framework of organisational ethics reconciling freedom of work with the goals of the composite body. This is a situation where the cause of personal growth, autonomy of decision-making and belief in the known corporate objectives must all merge to serve the best interests of the individual and the organisation both. This looks simple but is not easy to achieve. A few points need to be closely examined. The first relates to the philosophy of management itself. The one advocated in India is the 'paternal nurtural' style where the leader grooms the subordinate and feels happy with the growth of the latter. The senior in turn commands the respect as an 'elder' and is happy to provide guidance wherever it is sought. The senior has at least a minimal idea of how the junior is placed outside of the work area so that an 'empathetic' approach was followed even when the evaluation of performance was being done according to 'strict' norms. In the West the boss-subordinate relationship is confined to the place of work and could even be arid and marked by aloofness-- in fact, the senior's interest in the junior's personal life beyond a point might even be resented by the latter. At best the senior there could act somewhat like a 'Coach' which is regarded as a highly respectable function in the West. The universal paradigms of leadership will however always be applicable to the role of a boss -- trustworthiness, practising what one preaches and total impartiality in giving credit for good work, will figure at the top of these. A good leader prepares his successor for handling higher responsibilities and considers this as a legacy he would leave behind -- this should not change even where the sway of knowledge and data compelled an advanced degree of decentralisation of decision-making. Also, the fundamental accountability of the 'guide' will always be there -- the failure of a PhD programme, for instance, cannot be totally free of blame for the 'Advisor'.

The second pertains to the adverse impact of technology on interactivity within the organisation. All business is human activity and it is human to be in need of communication with colleagues at work and friends in the society at large. In all organisations, there is a body of technology-savvy younger inductees and the core of 'old hands' who have grown with the organisation and even seen the transition to the Information Age, Knowledge Economy and Global competition. Their importance lies in their experience as a shrewd observer of how the ways of doing business were changing amidst things that they knew would always be constant such as the basic



correlation between 'productivity' and 'profitability' and the fact that 'brilliance' would be empty without 'diligence'. It would not serve the best interests of the organisation if these two segments of the manpower resource worked in segregation -- one believing in 'superiority' based on 'status' in the hierarchy and a 'higher package' and the other claiming to be the best in their field at present aspiring to be on the fast track of rise in the corporate body. It is for the top leadership of the organisation to make for interactivity between the two while constituting teams, defining the expectations from the team leaders, spreading the awareness of the organisational 'mission' everybody had to work for and revising if necessary the yardsticks of performance evaluation for the high and the low in which significant importance was attached to the ability of the senior to get the junior to produce more. It is not uncommon to see a shallow-minded senior trying to impress his juniors by boasting about his expensive vacations and new acquisitions. A far-sighted leadership at the top should be able to detect such tendencies and discourage them by bringing them under the umbrella of organisational ethics. A third organisational matter of concern arises from the advent of AI as the new instrument of growth for business and upgradation of delivery in vital spheres of life such as healthcare, education, finance, banking and even agriculture. This happens through the AI's enabling strength of analysis of data at a pace that was humanly impossible to achieve. Machine learning helped to create new IT products and services and Large Language Model (LLM) in particular came as a boon in diversifying business, enhancing 'outreach' and securing collaborations and partnerships. AI has created a revolution in manpower management as corporates rush to up-skill their human resource, reorganise teams for specific delivery tasks and practice cost-effectiveness as a means of adding to profitability. The top leadership of the organisation is itself in need of a reorientation to handle strategy formulation in light of the new frontiers revealed by the arrival of Artificial Intelligence as a tool of business management. Data-driven customer-centric approach is the new mantra of success in business. An understanding of the promise and perils of AI is still far from adequate in the rush of things created by this new facet of Information Technology.

AI is already proving the point that a technology howsoever useful for humanity is prone to exploitation by the malcontents, fraudsters and criminals for their own gain.

This is already happening and that is why world powers are deliberating on the prevention of misuse of AI and the creation of an international framework of controls on the development of AI. India is at the forefront of this initiative.

India with its large number of IT graduates and youth attuned to working online has the potential of answering the

challenge of unemployment and producing startups.

Fourth, the mandate of the Age of Knowledge that being well-informed was a prerequisite for success, has become more stringent because of an equally important counsel that whatever appeared on the Internet should not be regarded as the gospel truth. In fact, the advice is to always verify the information on a crucial matter through other means before accepting it. In these days of misinformation and use of social media in 'influence war' nothing should be blindly acted upon without a recheck. Fake news is the order of the day and is used as an instrument of 'proxy war' among the nations as also in the free-for-all kind of business rivalry. This extends to deepfake and other forms of identity fraud committed through the misuse of AI for financial, social and even political objectives. India like other countries has to gear up its crime control machinery at least at the central level to mitigate the threat of fake identities coming into play in all spheres. Law and order and police are state subjects in the Indian scheme of things and hence what the Centre can and must do is organise training courses for senior state police officers most of whom belonged to the IPS, on the new dimensions of technology-based crimes so that a certain level of uniformity about crime control could be ensured through the length and breadth of the country. A central institution like the Rashtriya Raksha University which is controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs, should also take the initiative for framing and conducting such programmes. All this underlines the importance of comprehensive knowledge for informed decision-making in all spheres of life. And lastly, organisations today need to know that their prospects were impacted by national and geopolitical developments both in terms of the opportunity for growth that the latter offered and the risk profile that they created for the former. Scan of the external environment that prefaced all business planning has become far more tedious and the work of the Business Intelligence unit engaged by the corporates has accordingly acquired far greater importance than before because it goes much beyond the study of competitors and involves an understanding not only of the national policy framework but also the emerging 'issues of war and peace' visualised internationally. It may include predictions of any major disruptions of supply chains, breakdowns of collaborations and the advent of any new technology applicability which would boost competitive advantage. For most organisations, cyber security is now a major concern and a cyber security administration has to be put in place by them as a legal requirement. Finally, it can be said that internal cohesion, loyalty of the personnel and transparency of rewards for good work are inter-related matters and the leadership must consciously build the organisational ethos around them. With the evolution of the new system where 'work from home' is part of the organisational functioning in varying degrees, a robust model of supervision, interpersonal communications and feedback has to be worked out and this again is the call for those who were on top of the pyramid. In a nutshell, the new age organisation is more demanding for the leadership than it is for the complying personnel, salespeople or internal researchers.

(The writer is a former Director of the Intelligence Bureau. Views are personal)

international

Black people disproportionately strip-searched by police in England, Wales

London | Agencies

Black people are "disproportionately strip-searched by nearly all police forces" in England and Wales, a recent analysis of new Home Office strip search data shows.

According to a study by the Runnymede Trust, an independent race in the UK equality think tank, Black children are 6.5 times more likely than white children, and Black adults are 4.7 times more likely than white adults, to be strip-searched by police, reports Xinhua news agency.

The data comes alongside a Home Office consultation on the use of strip searches against minors. This follows the Child Q scandal in 2020, during which a 15-year-old Black girl was strip-searched while on her period at her school in East London without an appropriate adult present after being



wrongly accused of smelling cannabis. "Strip searching is such an invasive procedure, and when deployed with this level of racialised disproportionality, the harm reaches way beyond the individual child or person," said Shabna Begum, chief executive of the Runnymede Trust, describing the prac-

tice as "inherently violent, humiliating and harmful, especially for children."

The study revealed that more than 47 per cent of strip searches conducted on children in London are on Black children, even though they constitute only 16.9 per cent of the city's child population.

In Sussex, a Black person is 18 times more likely to undergo a strip search compared to a white person.

"If we actually want to build safer communities and safeguard our children, we need to invest in our social infrastructure and ensure people have the opportunities and resources to thrive and flourish," Begum said.

"We cannot continue to be told by politicians across the political spectrum that so-called 'tough on crime' policies are the solution to social problems," she added.

Diplomatic rift deepens between Russia and Armenia over Ukraine war

Moscow | Agencies

The already strained relations between Russia and Armenia have significantly deteriorated following a diplomatic dispute over Armenia's response to Moscow's all-out invasion of Ukraine.

The diplomatic rift arose after Armenian officials visited the Ukrainian town of Bucha, which prompted Russia to send a protest note to Armenia's Foreign Ministry, wrote Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Telegram on Sunday evening.

The visit to Bucha was a "frankly unfriendly step," Zakharova wrote.

Bucha, a Kyiv suburb, gained international attention when the bodies of more than 400 civilians allegedly massacred by the Russian troops were discovered there after Moscow's withdrawal in the spring of 2022.

During a visit to Bucha a few days ago, an Armenian delegation assured Kyiv of its solidarity "against Russian aggression." The delegation included Armenia's ambas-



sador in Kyiv, Vladimir Karapetyan.

Historically, Russia has been seen as a protector of Armenia and maintains a military base there. However, relations have cooled since the pro-Western Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan came to power in Yerevan. Armenia has felt abandoned by Russia, especially during its conflict with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Following its defeat in a major offensive by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh last year, Armenia has increasingly questioned its membership in the Moscow-dominated military alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

40 world leaders to attend Ukraine peace summit in Switzerland

Geneva | Agencies

Around 40 world leaders have signed up to participate in a Ukraine peace conference to be held on a picturesque Swiss mountain next weekend.

The Swiss government, which is organising the talks at a luxury resort on the Burgenstock, a mountain ridge on Lake Lucerne, said around 160 presidents and prime ministers had been invited in total. About 40 countries will be represented with lower-level officials, Swiss President Viola Amherd said in Bern on Monday. Representatives of the United Nations and other organisations will also be attending. The neutral Swiss government is billing the summit as a "peace conference." But no agreement is expected between the warring sides, not least of all because Russia is not taking part. China, along with other countries with close ties to Moscow, are also staying away. The Kremlin has dismissed the meeting as a Western propaganda event.



Still, diplomats and the Swiss government believe it could serve as a prelude to further talks that may eventually include Russia. Amherd said humanitarian issues, nuclear safety, freedom of navigation and food security would be discussed at a high level during the talks on Saturday and Sunday. Several leaders will travel to Switzerland from the G7 summit in Italy, which starts on Thursday. This includes German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. However, US President Joe Biden is sending Vice President Kamala Harris in his place for the Swiss talks. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who had asked Switzerland to organise the conference, was due to attend.

North Korea warns of 'new counteraction' against South Korea

Seoul | Agencies

The sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has warned that South Korea will face unspecified "new counteraction" by the North if it keeps sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets and playing its loudspeaker broadcasts across the border.

The statement by Kim Yo-jong came after the South resumed propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts toward the North for the first time in six years, in retaliation against the North's repeated sending of trash-carrying balloons, reports Yonhap news agency.

"If the ROK simultaneously carries out the leaflet scattering and loudspeaker broadcasting provocation over the border, it will undoubtedly witness the new counteraction of the DPRK," Kim said in the English statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency on Sunday, using the acronyms for the



official names of the South and the North.

Kim claimed that the North had sent some 7.5 tonnes of "waste paper" in 1,400 balloons across the border over the weekend, arguing that they were just

garbage that contained nothing related to political propaganda, unlike anti-Pyongyang leaflets sent by North Korean defectors in the South.

"It is quite different from the provocative political agi-

tation rubbish scattered by the scum of the ROK against the DPRK," Kim said, adding that the South "will suffer a bitter embarrassment of picking up waste paper without rest, and it will be its daily work."

Kim claimed that the North had planned to stop sending balloons, but the "situation has changed" as the South resumed loudspeaker broadcasting across the border. "I sternly warn Seoul to stop at once the dangerous act of bringing the further confrontation crisis and discipline itself," she said. Seoul's unification ministry said that the government will not permit any attempts by North Korea to incite anxiety and confusion within South Korean society.

"North Korea should not make the mistake of using our rightful response as an excuse for provocation," said Koo Byoung-sam, the ministry spokesperson, during a press briefing.

Yemen's Houthi group claims strikes on British warship, commercial vessels

Aden (Yemen) | Agencies

The Houthi group in Yemen said that it had carried out strikes targeting a British naval destroyer and two commercial ships in the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea.

In a televised statement broadcast on the group's Al-Masirah channel, Yahya Sarea, the military spokesman for the Houthis, said on Sunday that their forces had launched an operation against the British warship HMS Diamond in the Red Sea, hitting it "accurately" with several ballistic missiles, Xinhua news agency reported.

Sarea added that Houthi launched a combined missile and drone attack and directly hit two commercial vessels, Norderney and MSC Tavvishi, in the Arabian Sea, claiming that the two violated the group's maritime shipment ban on Israeli ports.

He declared that the Houthi forces' operations will not stop until the



aggression stops and the siege on the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip is lifted".

Earlier on Sunday, an official from the Yemeni government Coast Guard reported that a Liberian-flagged container ship, identified as the MSC Tavvishi, had been hit by a Houthi missile attack while sailing in the Gulf of Aden, nearly 70 nautical miles southwest of the temporary capital Aden.

The official said that the ship was

struck in the stern section, causing a fire, but no casualties were reported among the crew.

Since November 2023, the Houthi rebels have been conducting military operations in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait, targeting vessels they claim are Israeli or bound for Israel, in retaliation for the ongoing conflict between the Israeli military and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in the Gaza Strip.

In response to the Houthi naval attacks, the US and Britain launched a joint military operation in January 2024, involving airstrikes and missile strikes against Houthi targets in various areas of Yemen.

This prompted the group to expand its targeting to include American and British commercial and military ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, further escalating the conflict in the strategic region.



BJP EYES BIG VOTE BANK IN MADHYA PRADESH THROUGH FIVE MINISTERS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh has got adequate representation in the NDA government formed for the third time under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Through this representation, BJP has targeted the big vote bank of the state.

The NDA cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi took oath on Sunday evening. There are three cabinet ministers and two ministers of state from Madhya Pradesh in this cabinet. Cabinet ministers Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Dr Virendra Kumar have been made, while the responsibility of Minister of State has been given to Durgadas Uike and Savitri Thakur.

While Scindia and Dr. Virendra Kumar have again been made cabinet ministers, Chauhan, Durgadas and Savitri Thakur have got a chance to become ministers for the first time. An attempt has been made to create



regional balance through these ministers. Scindia belongs to Gwalior Chambal while Chauhan comes from

Bhopal division. Similarly, Dr. Virendra Kumar is from Bundelkhand and Savitri Thakur comes from Malwa Nimar. Durgadas

also comes from Bhopal division. Vindhya and Mahakaushal have not got representation in this cabinet.

If we look at the population on the basis of caste in the state, backward classes, scheduled castes and tribes have a significant influence. There seems to be an effort to make deeper inroads into these sections.

Chauhan, who was made cabinet minister, belongs to the backward class, while Dr. Virendra Kumar comes from the Scheduled Caste. Durgadas and Savitri Thakur belong to Scheduled Caste and Tribe category. Both these tribal leaders are also the choice of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

There are 29 Lok Sabha seats in the state and this time the Bharatiya Janata Party has created history by winning all the seats. This is the first time that BJP has registered such a big victory in the state. Earlier, BJP was successful in winning 27 seats in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections and 28 seats in the year 2019.

Chouhan seeks blessings from ex-Prez Kovind, LK Advani before start of new inning

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A day after senior BJP leader and four-time Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan made his debut in the Union Cabinet, he met veteran leader LK Advani on Monday.

Accompanied by his wife Sadhana Singh, the newly-elected Lok Sabha MP paid a courtesy visit to former Deputy PM Advani in New Delhi and sought his blessings for the new inning.

Before that, he met former President Ram Nath Kovind at the latter's residence.

Chouhan also met Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel and BJP President JP Nadda, who is now a Cabinet colleague.

Chouhan won the Lok Sabha election from Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha, around 60 km from the state capital Bhopal.

Although, this is the sixth-time that Chouhan has been



elected as a Lok Sabha MP, he took oath as Union Minister for the very first time. Before it, the veteran leader served as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh for over 17 years between 2005 and 2023.

Apart from Chouhan, two other BJP leaders from Madhya Pradesh, Jyotiraditya

Scindia and Virendra Khatik were inducted into PM Modi's Cabinet on Sunday.

Two other BJP MPs from the state, Savitri Thakur and Durgadas Uike were sworn in as Ministers of State (MoS).

Notably, the BJP has won all 29 Lok Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh against 28 in 2019 and 27 in 2014.

Voting in Chhindwara's Amarwada Assembly on July 10

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Election Commission has announced the date for the by-election to be held in Amarwada assembly constituency of Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh. Voting will take place here on July 10.

This seat has become vacant due to Congress MLA Kamlesh Shah joining BJP and resigning from membership. According to the program released by the Election Commission, voting for Amarwada assembly seat along with other states will be held on July 10.

As per the scheduled schedule, the process of accepting nomination papers will start with the release of notification on June 14. Nominations will be filed till June 21 and scrutiny of nomination papers will take place on June 24.



Nominations can be withdrawn till June 26, counting of votes will take place on July 13. During the Lok Sabha elections in the state, three MLAs left Congress and joined BJP. Of these, Kamlesh Shah had also

resigned from the membership of the Assembly. Vijaypur MLA Ramniwas Rawat and Bina MLA Nirmala Sapre have also left Congress. Both have not yet resigned from the membership of the Assembly.

Electricity workers of Madhya Pradesh preparing for a big movement

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As soon as the code of conduct for Lok Sabha elections ends, employee organizations in Madhya Pradesh are preparing to agitate for their demands. The employees of the electricity department have even announced a major agitation in July if the contract policy is not implemented.

Employees held a symbolic demonstration on Monday under the banner of United Forum of Employees and Engineers in front of the electricity office located in MP Nagar of the capital.

The employees demand that the contract policy should be implemented by June 30 and if this is not done then they will be forced to carry out a state-wide agitation in the month of July.

Let it be known that in July 2023, a Mahapanchayat of contract workers was called at Lal Parade Ground and



a decision was promised in the interest of the employees. Contract Policy 2023 was approved in the cabinet

meeting this month. The new constitutional policy has been implemented in many depart-

ments, but the electricity employees have not been able to get its benefits. There are about 6000 contractual workers in the electricity department who are waiting for the new constitutional policy so that they can get benefits.

Departmental employees say that the State Energy Minister has also instructed the officials to prepare and issue a new contract policy, but till now it is not being implemented. On behalf of the Electricity Employees Organization, from the Principal Secretary of the Energy Department to the Managing Director of the Power Management Company, demands are being made to provide benefits to the employees by implementing the contract policy continuously.

Employees have warned that if the new contract policy is not implemented by June 30, then a major agitation will be organized across the state in the first week of July.

State Tiger Force got huge success

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On May 25, 2024, State Tiger Force Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal and Regional Unit Indore seized the rare living animals Iguana (Iguana) and Emperor Scorpion (Pandanus imperator) listed in Schedule-IV of Wildlife (Protection) Act-1972 as amended. A case was registered under Section-49M, 49Q of 2022 and CITES Living Animal Species Rules-2024. Taking advance action in the said case, the main leader of the gang, Karthik, resident of Delhi, was arrested on June 8, 2024, produced before the Special Court, Indore and taken on Forest Police remand.

On June 9, 2024, while taking action outside the state at Bulandshahr (Uttar Pradesh) on the behalf of the said accused, a large quantity of rare living animal species listed in Schedule-IV, Iguana, Sunkonyur, Agapornis Bird, Kikinyan-Sandboa, Savanna Lizard, Emperor Scorpion, Tarantola Spider and banned Indian wildlife species listed in Schedule-I and II, Yellow Monitor, Black Kite, Water Monitor were seized and sam-



ples of more than 40 animal species were seized. By creating impersonation accounts in Environment 1.0 and Environment 2.0, the gang involved in the case was carrying out illegal trade of rare exotic animal

species in different states of the country without any solid documents. Action is also being taken in other states outside the country.

Presently, in relation to CITES living animal species, Living Animal Species

(Reporting and Registration) Rules-2024 have been implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, New Delhi, under which the Wildlife (Protection) Act-1972 as amended in 2022 has been implemented. Transfer of ownership of living animal species recorded in Appendices I, II and III of Schedule-IV, registration of birth and death is required to be done through PARIVESH PORTAL 2.0. For this, online applications can be made on the portal till August 31, 2024. Every person, who has living animal species as mentioned above, must register himself through this portal. Legal action will be taken against those who do not have registration certificate after August 31, 2024.

The general public is also informed not to purchase any site living creature which is not registered in Environment 2.0. Petshop sellers are also directed not to sell unregistered live animal species and after registration, they will ensure transfer/sale through environment 2.0. The Central Government has also made provision for punishment for violation of rules.

Police Commissioner offered water on Shivalinga wearing slippers, apologized

Team Absolute | Ujjain

Ujjain Division Police Commissioner Sanjay Gupta wore slippers and offered water on Shivaling. Its video has surfaced. In this, he is wearing slippers, while other people standing with him are seen offering water to Lord Shiva without wearing shoes or slippers.

The commissioner had worshiped at Mahadev temple on Saturday. There was an uproar when the video surfaced; demands for an apology from the commissioner were made on social media. On this the Commissioner said that he did this by mistake.

On Saturday, under the 'Jal Ganga Augmentation' campaign, cleanliness was carried out at Ramghat of Shipra River. Apart from public representatives, officers also participated in this campaign. After this everyone wor-



shipped in Mahadev temple. Meanwhile, Ujjain Division Police Commissioner Sanjay Gupta, wearing slippers, offered water to Lord Shiva. Municipal Corporation Commissioner Ashish Pathak, Corporation Chairman Kalavati Yadav and Ujjain North MLA Anil Jain

Kaluhera are also seen in the video, all of them had taken off their slippers.

Commissioner Sanjay Gupta said that he had done this by mistake. As soon as we found out, we immediately took off the slippers. If this has hurt anyone's sentiments, I apologize.

GOVERNMENT OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES ARE SERVANTS OF THE SOCIETY : CHIEF MINISTER DR. MOHAN YADAV

Humanity and sensitivity in the working style of government servants is a must. Chief Minister inaugurates joint basic training programme for IAS, IFS, and State Civil Services officers.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has said that government officers and employees should work with the feeling that they are not government servants but servants of the public. There should always be a manifestation of humanity and sensitivity in their working style. The rights enjoyed by government officers and employees are for the fulfillment of public aspirations and interest for which they are accountable to the public. Government service provides an opportunity to showcase one's versatility and is also a challenge for them. Generally, when a person is empowered, he gets a sense of stability, whereas we have to remain constantly alert and active. Government service is not just a job but a big responsibility to do the best for society. Whatever role we get, we should try to play it in the best possible way with full confidence. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said this while addressing the inaugural session of the joint basic training programme of Indian Administrative Service, Indian Forest Service, and State Service officers at the Academy of Administration, Bhopal online from

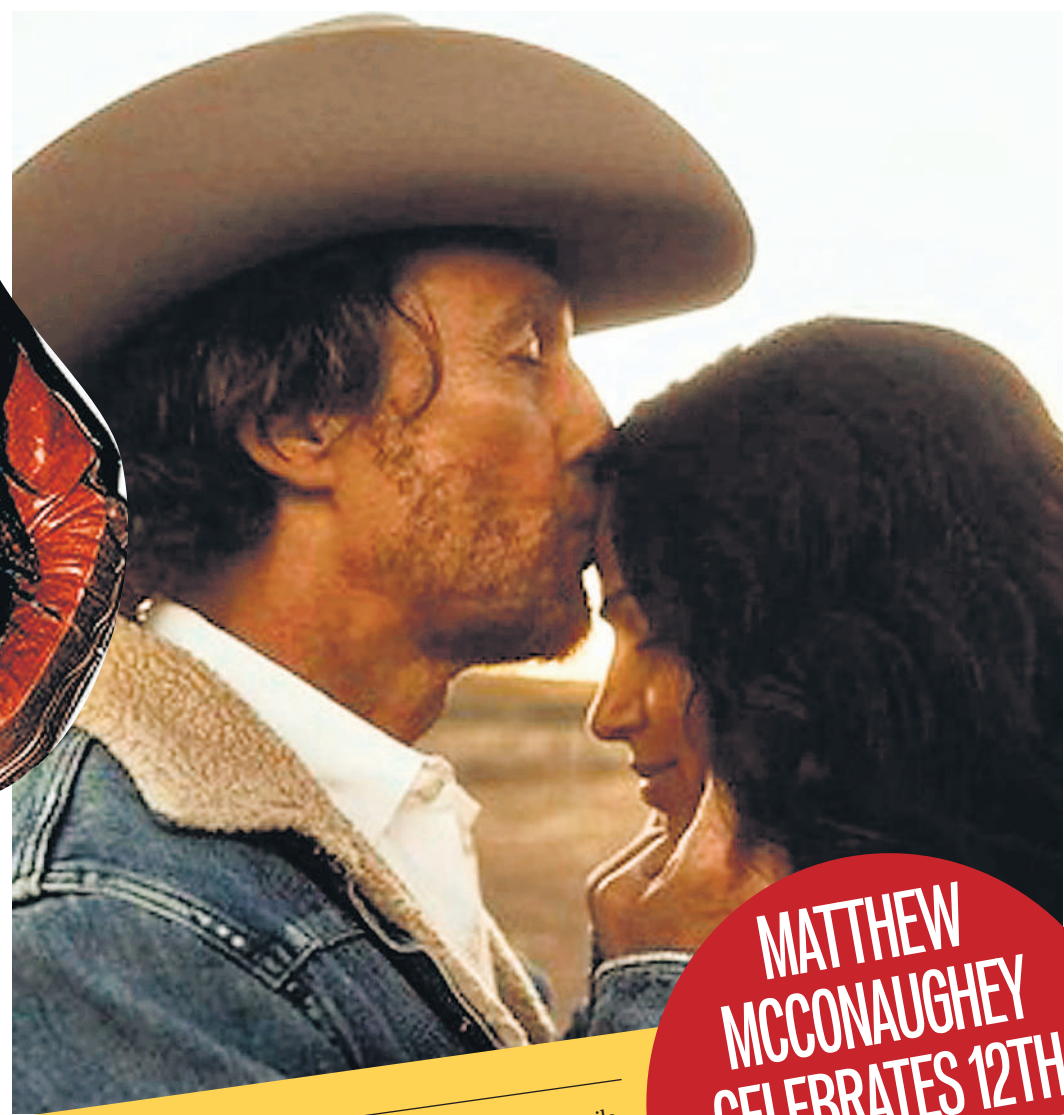
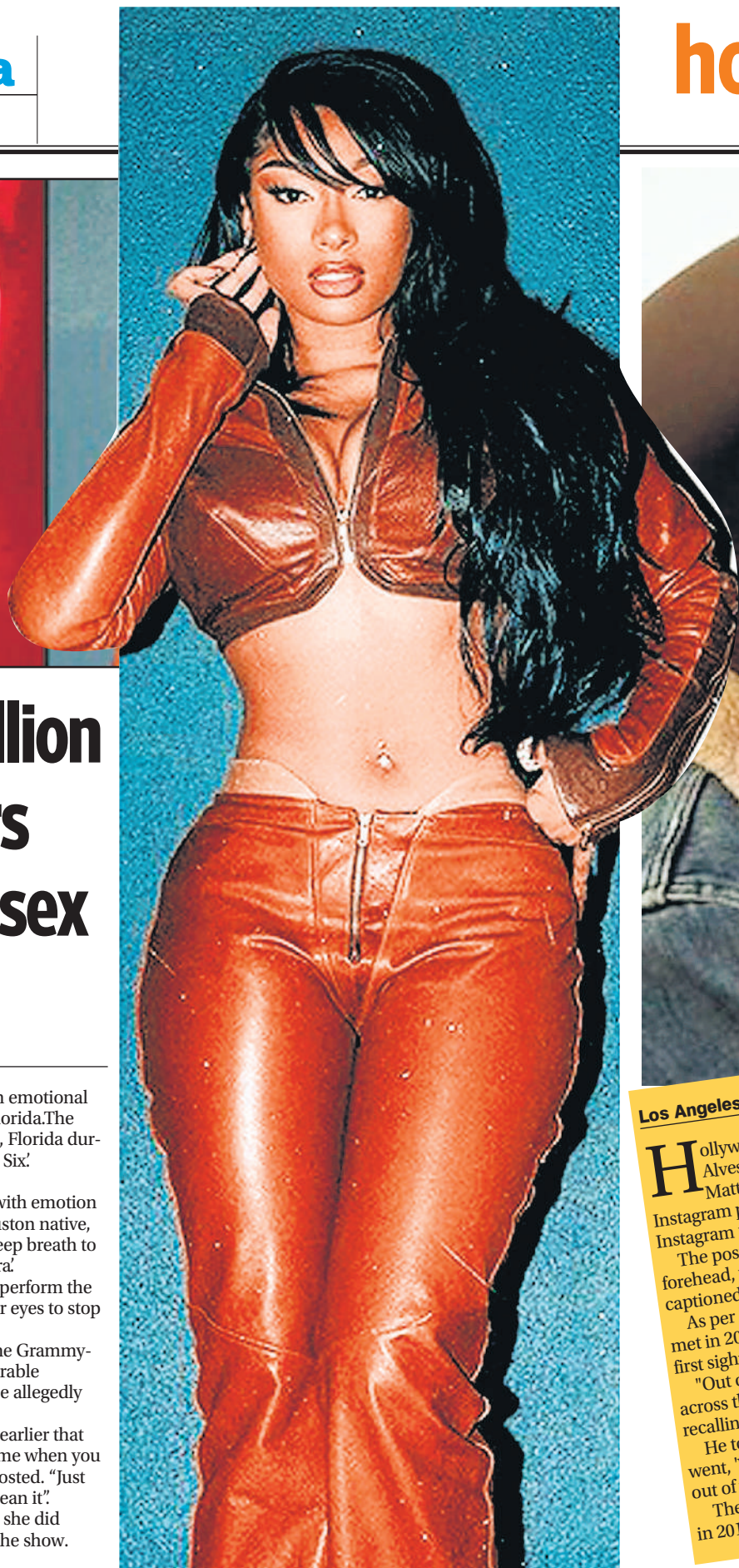
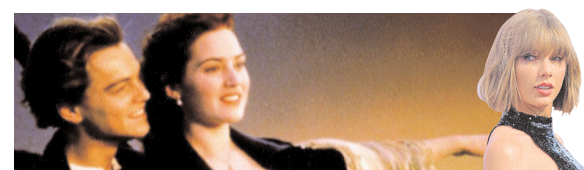


New Delhi.

A state level training program of Indian Administrative Service 2023 batch, basic training program of Indian Forest Service 2022 batch and joint basic training program of State Civil Service 2019-20 batch started at the R.C.P.V. Noronha Academy of Administration and Management, Bhopal from June 10. The program was inaugurated at the Academy of Administration by Additional Chief Secretary General Administration and Director General Academy of Administration Vinod Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary Forest J.N. Kansotiya, Secretary General Administration G.V. Rashmi and Director Administration Academy Mujibur Rahman who lit the lamp. The theme song of the Academy was also sung. All the trainees introduced themselves on this occasion.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that government officers and employees are expected to work for good governance. While explaining good governance, he said that work done in public interest is good governance. The Ramrajya of Lord Shri Ram, and the tenure of Emperor Vikramaditya and Emperor Ashoka are considered syn-

onymous with administrative efficiency and good governance. He told them to make the best use of their time and try to move forward based on their ability and capability. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav encouraged the trainees to create their own identity by working like a Karmayogi while remaining fearless and selfless, to spread their aura in the society on the basis of transparency, honesty and dutifulness in their working style and inspired all to adopt new disciplines and innovations. He also wished them a bright future. Additional Chief Secretary and Director General Academy of Administration Vinod Kumar said that the main objective of basic training is to orient the selected talents towards public service. The administrative structure of Madhya Pradesh, administrative system, rules, and procedures have been included in the training. Along with this, the participants will also be introduced to the social, economic, geographical, and cultural aspects of the state. Director Academy of Administration Mujibur Rahman said that 9 trainees of the Indian Administrative Service, 15 of the Indian Forest Service, and 127 trainees of State Civil Service will receive training in the joint basic training program.



MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY CELEBRATES 12TH ANNIVERSARY WITH WIFE CAMILA

Megan Thee Stallion chokes back tears onstage after AI sex tape goes viral

Los Angeles | Agencies

American rapper Megan Thee Stallion had an emotional moment while she performed on stage in Florida. The rapper choked back tears onstage in Tampa, Florida during her Hot Girl Summer tour, reports 'Page Six'.

A fan video captured the rapper looking overcome with emotion in the middle of her concert at Amalie Arena. The Houston native, 29, can be seen putting her head down and taking a deep breath to gather herself before launching into her hit track 'Cobra'.

But even when the song begins, Megan struggles to perform the lyrics as she fans her face with her hand and covers her eyes to stop herself from crying.

As per 'Page Six', it isn't clear as to what prompted the Grammy-winning artiste to break down into tears, but the vulnerable moment follows rumours that an AI-generated sex tape allegedly depicting her likeness has been circulating online.

Megan seemingly blasted the 'fake a**' video on X earlier that day. "It's really sick how ya'll go out of the way to hurt me when you see me winning. Ya'll going too far, Fake a** s***", she posted. "Just know today was your last day playing with me and I mean it."

While Megan has yet to address the onstage hiccup, she did thank her Tampa fans for their love and support after the show.

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Matthew McConaughey and his wife Camila Alves McConaughey celebrated 12 years of marital bliss. Matthew (54) marked the special occasion with a heartfelt Instagram post — which Camila later shared on her own Instagram page, reports 'People' magazine.

The post featured a photo of the actor kissing his wife on the forehead, wearing a cowboy hat and jean jacket. "Thank you", he captioned the post, adding the hashtag "#happyanniversary".

As per 'People', Matthew and Camila, a model and entrepreneur, first met in 2006 at a club. The actor had earlier revealed that it was love at first sight for him.

"Out of the corner of my eye, this sort of aqua-green figure went floating across the frame about 20 feet in front of me," the Oscar winner said at the time, recalling the moment he and Brazilian-born Camila met.

He told 'People': "My eyes went up and I remember what came out of my mouth. I didn't say, 'Who is that?' I went, 'What is that?'. This is not the kind of woman you call over across the room, McConaughey. Get your ass out of your chair and go get her. Which I did."

The pair welcomed son Levi on July 7, 2008, and daughter Vida on January 3, 2010, before they tied the knot in 2012, in a three-day-long ceremony held at their Austin, Texas, home.

Here's why Drew Barrymore celebrated her 10th birthday at a nightclub

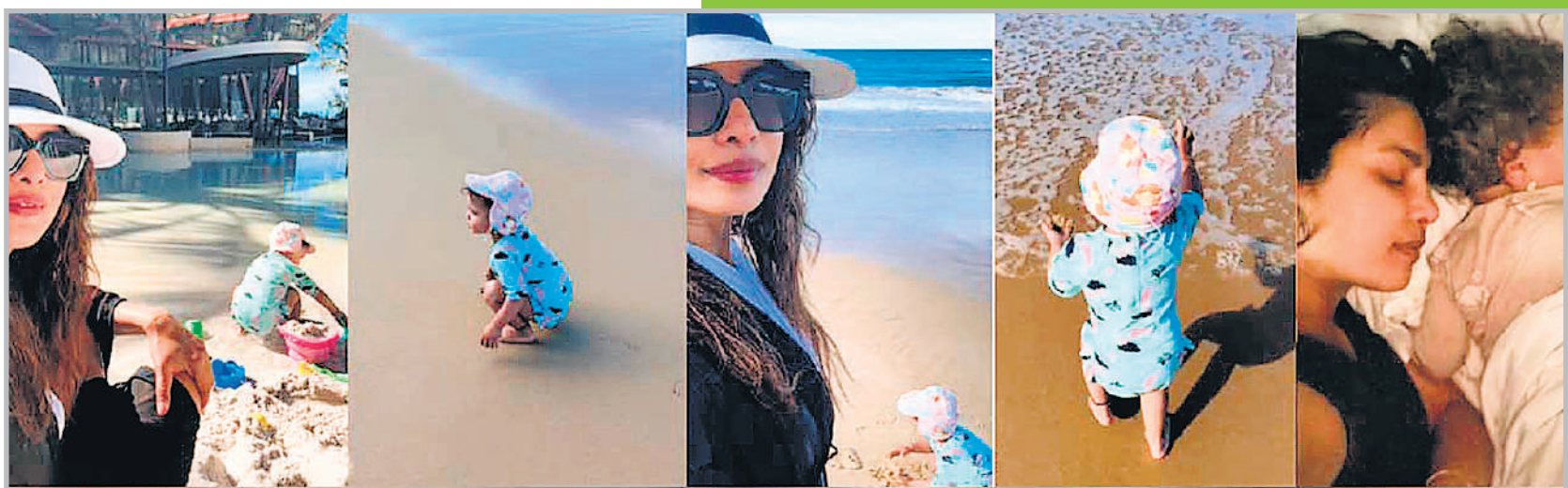
Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Drew Barrymore recalled celebrating her 10th birthday at an iconic nightclub. During a recent episode of her talk show, Barrymore told guest Bobby Cannavale about her memories of the event. The actress said: "I went to Limelight (a nightclub), and I had my 10th birthday party at Limelight. I had been going to clubs for three years at that point. I went to Studio 54, I went to Limelight, and I went to Nell's. You name it, I was there."

Barrymore, who shot to fame at seven years old with her role in 'E.T.', had a childhood marked by early exposure to drugs and alcohol. The actress has often spoken about how her mother's unconventional parenting style encouraged her party lifestyle, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"I had a mom, but she was more like my best friend. She was like, 'Do you want to go to school and get bullied all day, or do you want to go to Studio 54?' And I was like, 'Yes, absolutely!' "Barrymore's early fame and personal life were riddled with challenges, including her parents' divorce. By the age of nine, she had already started abusing drugs and alcohol. Her struggles escalated, leading to stints in rehabilitation for drug and alcohol abuse by the time she was 13. At 14, the actress was legally emancipated from her parents and went on to live on her own in West Hollywood.

In the late 1990s, she reclaimed the spotlight with 'The Wedding Singer' and 'Never Been Kissed'.



Priyanka shares glimpses of her Sunday Beach Day with daughter Malti Marie

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Priyanka Chopra and her daughter Malti Marie are spending precious time together at the beach in Australia. The actress shared a sneak peek of her on Sunday with Malti Marie at the beach through an adorable video collage on Instagram. The video is a compilation of several fun moments, showing Malti running around and playing with sand. In the video, the mother-daughter duo can be seen enjoying their beach holiday. Malti is dressed in a cute blue dress paired with a pink hat while Priyanka wears a white dress and white hat. The footage captures Malti running around, playing with the sand, touching it, and drawing on it. The actress also shared a glimpse showing 'Mama Malti' written on the sand. The video ends with a picture of both of them fast asleep on the bed after a long day. Priyanka shared the video with the caption: "Sundays like this (red heart and folded hands emoticons) grateful." Despite her busy schedule with the ongoing shoot for her upcoming film 'The Bluff', Priyanka manages to fulfil her mommy duties remarkably well. Fans flooded the comments section with admiration. One wrote, "Such precious moments! And it is so important for a mother to have this interaction with her children!" Another commented, "Awww Malti, she is so adorable and getting so tall and beautiful tan."

A humorous remark read, "Where's the leash, brave momma..." Recently, Priyanka shared heartwarming pictures of her daughter from her makeup session, showing Malti doodling over a mannequin's face kept on the table, which the actress captioned: "When MM is in the HMU trailer."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Bella Thorne

PENN BADGLEY EXCLAIMS 'I AM IN A MUSIC VIDEO' AS HE THANKS ARIANA FOR 'THE BOY IS MINE' ROLE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Penn Badgley has thanked singer Ariana Grande for including him in the music video for 'The Boy Is Mine' alongside Brandy and Monica. The 'You' star expressed his gratitude to the 30-year-old pop star in an Instagram post, where he shared behind-the-scenes videos from the set, along with pictures of himself, Grande, and music video director Christian Breslauer, reports people.com.

Badgley, dressed in his costume for the shoot, appeared in a white shirt and black pants alongside Grande, who donned a black leather Catwoman-esque costume. Breslauer held a glass of champagne in the shot, reports people.com.

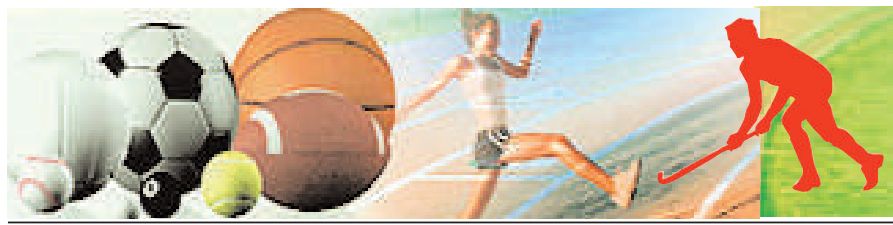
The actor also shared a photo of himself and Grande in casual clothes, eating ice cream, and surrounded by cats, from a scene at the end of the music video. The last image featured the two looking at each other as a video camera zoomed in.

"The boy may be yours but the pleasure was all mine @arianagrande thank you for inviting me into your orbit for a moment and @christhediector for building a little world to play in for a day," Badgley captioned the post.

"Hey ma, I'm in a music video! And in the presence of @brandy and @monicadenise??

Honoured to be alongside these icons," he added, praising the duo who released a song with the same name in 1998.





Rohit hails India's 'never-say-die attitude' after win over Pakistan

New York | Agencies

India skipper Rohit Sharma credited his team's 'never-say-die attitude' on the field after defeating Pakistan in a low-scoring T20 World Cup match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium on Sunday night.

Admitting that "140 was a good score to defend," Rohit revealed the team's confidence in winning, attributing it to the quality of their bowling lineup and the team's resilience.

"Yeah, I thought there was enough in the pitch to be honest compared to the last two games that we played here. So hence we thought 140 will be a good score to fight and with the bowling line up we have you feel confident that the guys can do the job," the Indian skipper said after the match.

"But again there is a never-say-die attitude in the team. We were only 119 on the board and we wanted you know to make early roads which we didn't. But then again, halfway through the stage when we were batting, we got everyone together and we said if things can happen to us, it can happen to them as well," he added.



After Rishabh Pant top-scored via 42 off 31, India experienced a mid-innings collapse on a challenging New York pitch and was bowled out for just 119 in 19 overs. Rohit conceded that his side didn't bat well and fell 15-20 runs short in the total, emphasising the significance of every run on a difficult wicket.

"I think we didn't bat well enough. I thought halfway through the stage when we were batting after 10 overs, we were in good position - we were 80 for one and three down and then you expect the guys to

stitch the partnership. We didn't put enough partnership there and fell short with the bat - we were 15-20 runs short and we spoke about how every run matters on a pitch like that and on a ground like this. We were looking at 140 but nevertheless, I thought bowlers came and did the job for us," said Rohit.

The 37-year-old further praised his bowlers, particularly pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, as India successfully defended a total of 119 on a New York pitch with unpredictable bounce and extra swing.

After getting bowled out for 119, India clawed their way back thanks to Bumrah's heroic spell of 3-14. He also got excellent support from Hardik Pandya, who took 2-24. Mohammed Siraj, Arshdeep Singh and Axar Patel took a wicket each to restrict Pakistan to 113/7 in their pursuit of 120-run target.

"Yeah, look he (Bumrah) is growing from strength to strength. We've seen him over the years now and what he can do with the ball. We all know about it. He is a genius with the ball, we all know that. But again, hats off to the other guys as well. You know, everyone who got the ball in hand, came and made the difference," Rohit said.

He concluded by praising the crowd cheering for the team in New York, "Absolutely there is no doubt about it. The crowd was superb. They never disappoint. Wherever we play in the world, they come out in huge numbers and support us. And I'm sure they will be going back home with a lot of big smiles on their face as well. And like I said, just the start of the tournament, we have a long way to go." India will next play the co-hosts USA on June 12 at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, New York.

Max Verstappen mounts back on top in Canadian GP

Montreal | Agencies

Red Bull's Max Verstappen emerged victorious in a race that swung dramatically between wet and dry conditions, culminating in a tense five-car battle for the lead over the final 10 laps of the Canadian Grand Prix at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

The race began with a damp track, and drivers faced the challenging task of navigating fluctuating weather conditions. McLaren's Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri seized the opportunity to lead at different stages, capitalizing on strategic pit stops and skillful driving.

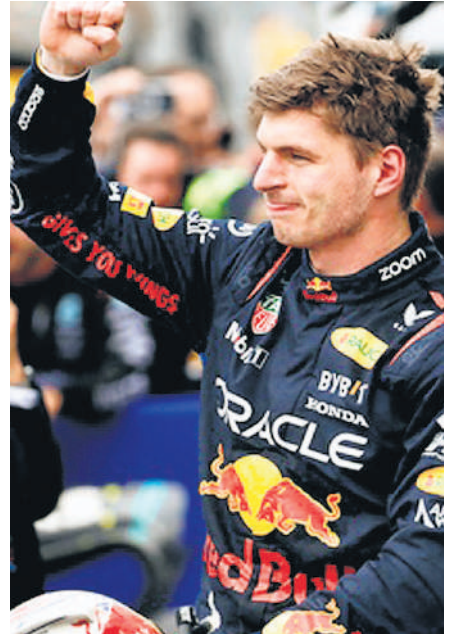
However, Verstappen's keen sense of timing and decision-making proved crucial. He pitted just a lap earlier than Norris each time, allowing him to regain the lead and maintain his advantage.

The decisive moment came after a safety-car period with 11 laps remaining. Verstappen, demonstrating his mastery, executed a flawless restart, quickly pulling out nearly a two-second lead in just one lap.

Behind him, a fierce battle ensued as Norris and Piastri found themselves entangled in a thrilling contest with the Mercedes duo of Lewis Hamilton and George Russell.

Norris, despite his earlier heroics, could not mount a challenge against the world champion in the closing stages. Verstappen's calm and composed driving ensured he maintained control, securing a well-deserved victory. Norris, who had shown impressive pace throughout, had to settle for second place, reflecting on what might have been if not for the strategic missteps.

The drama continued right to the end, with George Russell overtaking his teammate



Lewis Hamilton with just three laps remaining to clinch the final podium spot. Russell, starting from his first pole position in nearly two years, displayed flashes of brilliance but was left to rue a couple of critical errors that potentially cost him a higher finish.

Hamilton crossed the line in fourth, followed closely by Oscar Piastri, who delivered a commendable performance for McLaren. Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso, ever the consistent performer, secured a solid sixth place, rounding out the top contenders in a race that kept fans on the edge of their seats.

MCA PRESIDENT AMOL KALE PASSES AWAY IN NEW YORK AFTER WATCHING INDIA-PAKISTAN MATCH

Mumbai | Agencies

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) president Amol Kale has died following a heart attack in New York, United States where he had gone along with some other MCA officials to watch the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, sources in the organisation confirmed to IANS on Monday.

Kale suffered cardiac arrest after watching the India versus Pakistan match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. He was in New York with MCA secretary Ajinkya Naik and Apex Council member Suraj Samat.

Kale, a prominent businessman in the state, took over as MCA president in October 2022 and was in the post for 19 months. He is known to be close to former Maharashtra Chief Minister and present Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Though he hails from Nagpur, which is the headquarters of Vidarbha Cricket Association (VCA), Kale was settled in



Mumbai for over a decade and was invested in various businesses.

A BE in Electrical Engineering from Nagpur University, Kale was the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of J K Solutions Private Limited and Arpita Enterprises.

Though he has not yet completed two years into his tenure as MCA president, Kale was praised by everyone

for MCA's decision to grant the same amount of match fee to Mumbai cricketers that is offered by the BCCI. Under his leadership, MCA has organised many international matches at the Wankhede Stadium including the India v New Zealand Test and the 2023 World Cup matches.

MCA sources said they are still waiting for details from the office-bearers accompanying him in New York.

I've learned to channelise pressure into motivation: Neeraj Chopra

New Delhi | Agencies

Reigning Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra said he will not leave any stone unturned to defend his gold medal in next month's Paris Olympics as he has learned how to handle pressure and channelise it into motivation.

Chopra made history in Tokyo 2020 by becoming the first Indian to win a gold medal in a track-and-field event with his 87.58m throw to seal the win in the men's javelin throw.

Ahead of Paris 2024, Chopra spoke with Dinesh Karthik on JioCinema's 'Get Set Gold' and discussed what makes an Olympic Champion, and the pressure he will carry into Paris 2024, while teaching Karthik the basics of the sport.

Chopra is being hailed as one of the favourites to bring home a medal from Paris 2024, and he made it clear that he can handle the pressure.

"There is pressure. The whole country's hopes are there. Gradually, I have learned to handle the pressure and channelise the pressure into motivation. So, we are ready for that, and we will work hard to defend the title."

The 2023 World Champion revealed how his Tokyo 2020 win and his recent World Championships triumph proved to Indian athletes that they can overcome all mental barriers



to become the best in their sport.

"It had a contribution in changing the mentality of Indian athletes. Earlier, we thought that the foreign athletes were strong and competing against them was tough, winning medals or winning the Olympic gold is tough. But now that it has happened, I have realised that it's just a mental barrier."

"Even after Tokyo, I was in the World Championships last year and won the gold again. Now it is confirmed that it's just a mental barrier

and nothing else," Chopra said.

After demonstrating the basics of throwing a javelin to Karthik, Chopra discussed the five ingredients that he believes make an Olympic champion.

"First, I think you should be 100%

focused on your training and have respect for your sport. Second, your food and recovery. Third, how well you are training and if a proper plan is being followed. It should be hard plus smart work. And then, our family, the people around us, who love us and think about us, they always help us move forward.

"The last thing which I believe is most important, is self-belief. Sometimes, I have felt that my throw has not been up to the mark, until the last throw. But I still believe in myself that I have to do it till the end. And in many competitions, my last throw has been the best one," he said.

Chopra is among the best javelin throwers in the world right now, as the incumbent Olympic (Tokyo 2020) and World Champion (Budapest 2023). He earned the silver medal at the 2022 World Championships in Eugene.

The 26-year-old has also won the Asian Games Gold medal twice (2018 Jakarta, 2022 Hangzhou) and also clinched the Gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games (Gold Coast).

CHAMPIONS TROPHY: LAHORE TO HOST INDIA-PAKISTAN MATCH IN MARCH 2025, SAYS REPORT



New Delhi | Agencies

In another blockbuster meeting, India and Pakistan are scheduled to face off in next year's Champions Trophy in Lahore as per the draft of the tournament, according to a report. India are yet to decide on travelling to Pakistan due to the strained relations between the two countries. In last year's Asia Cup, the Indian government did not allow the team to travel to Pakistan and their matches in the tournament were played at a neutral venue in Sri Lanka. According to a Cricbuzz report, the two neighbours will take on each other in March next year in the last league match of the eight-team competition. The tournament is likely to be played between February 19 to March 9. However, the final schedule is yet to be announced. However, Pakistan travelled to India for the ODI World Cup, ending their 11-year-long hiatus.

The Pakistan Cricket Board has identified Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi as venues for the 20-day competition, with Lahore as the designated centre for the India games. As per the programme, there will be seven matches in Lahore, five in Rawalpindi and three in the port city of Karachi, the report added. The opening match of the tournament is scheduled to be played in Karachi on February 19. Moreover, Karachi and Rawalpindi are set to host two semifinals.

According to the proposed plan, the final will be held on March 9 in Lahore, which will also host all India games and the semifinal if they qualify. The report further said that neither the PCB nor the ICC is discussing a hybrid model, but there's a possibility of the situation changing at the last minute.

All attention is now focused on the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Government of India.

Ponting lauds Rohit's 'outstanding captaincy' in India's victory vs Pakistan

New York | Agencies

Australia's two-time ODI World Cup winning captain Ricky Ponting said he told India skipper Rohit Sharma that his captaincy was outstanding in the side's thrilling six-run win over Pakistan in a low-scoring Group A match in the T20 World Cup.

At the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium on Sunday, India were bowled out for 119 in 19 overs. In reply, India bowled superbly as Pakistan were restricted to 113-7 in 20 overs, to register their second win of the competition. Jasprit Bumrah was the hero of India's win through his sensational spell of 3-14, including 15 dot balls.

He also got excellent support from Hardik Pandya, who took 2-6 from two overs after conceding 18 in his first two overs. Mohammed Siraj, Arshdeep Singh and Axar Patel took a wicket each to ensure India successfully defended their lowest total ever in T20Is in a remarkable low-scoring heist.

"Rohit Sharma is a very experienced captain, isn't he? And I just saw him then and said, mate, your captaincy today was outstanding. I don't think he could have done much more. You think about a lot of the bowlers that he's got in his team."

"He's actually had those bowlers in the IPL as well, not only for India. So he understands them, knows when he can use

them, but it's one thing for the captain to set a plan, the bowlers are going to go ahead and execute it and Bumrah was outstanding," said Ponting to ICC.

Ponting also hailed Pandya for his economical second spell and Patel for his economical bowling in the match. "I thought Hardik Pandya did a really good job with the ball as well, and then you break it down and this has been a wicket that the seamers have liked. But their spinners bowled four overs for 20 as well and Axar Patel picked up a big wicket. The wicket was definitely different in

the second innings."

"I mean, you can see Pakistan got the ball to hold up through natural variation, and you know, it was just a little bit tacky, but when the sun came out, the wicket dried out quite quickly and then you have to, you have to adapt and adjust on the run. I thought he did that really well," he added.

India, the 2007 T20 World Cup winners, now sit on top of Group A points table and will next face co-hosts USA in New York on Wednesday.



Real Madrid confirm, they 'will compete as planned' in FIFA



Madrid | Agencies

Hours after manager Carlo Ancelotti's comment about skipping the FIFA Club World Cup, Champions League winner Real Madrid have confirmed their participation in the tournament to be held next year. In a statement released by the Spanish giants on Monday, the club said they will "compete as planned" with the "utmost enthusiasm". Real Madrid have sealed their spot in the FIFA Club World Cup after lifting their 15th Champions League trophy by beating Borussia Dortmund 2-0 in the final.

"Real Madrid CF announces that at no time has its participation in the new Club World Cup to be organised by FIFA in the upcoming 2024/2025 season has been questioned. Therefore, our club will compete, as planned, in this official competition that we face with pride and with the utmost enthusiasm to make our millions of fans around the world dream again with a new title," the La Liga champions said in a statement on Monday. Earlier, Ancelotti had said Real and other clubs will "reject" FIFA's invitation to play in the next year's tournament. "FIFA can forget about that. Footballers and clubs will not participate in that tournament. A single Madrid match is worth 20 million Euros, and FIFA wants to give us that figure for the entire tournament: negative. Like us, several clubs will reject the invitation," Ancelotti was quoted as saying by Italian outlet Il Giornale. The Club World Cup has introduced a new format in which 32 teams from around the world, including the top 12 teams in Europe, are scheduled to compete in the new tournament in the June-July window next year. Many clubs have criticised this decision, with the players' workload and playing days already being higher than ever due to the new UEFA Champions League format.



Sonakshi to marry long-time beau Zaheer Iqbal on June 23 : reports

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Sonakshi Sinha is reportedly set to marry her longtime boyfriend, Zaheer Iqbal, in Mumbai on June 23, according to media reports. The couple has been together for a while but has kept their relationship private.

Reports suggest that Sonakshi and Zaheer will get married at a venue in South Mumbai. However, the couple has yet to confirm any of the reports regarding their upcoming marriage.

According to media reports, the wedding invitation is said to be designed like a magazine cover with the text "rumours are true."

Reports also claim that close family and friends, including the star cast of 'Heeramandi,' have been invited to the ceremony.

Both Sonakshi and Zaheer made their Bollywood debuts with Salman Khan's films.

Sonakshi debuted in 2010 with 'Dabangg,' while Zaheer's first film was 'Notebook' in 2019.

The couple also acted together in the comedy-drama film 'Double XL' in 2022.

Last week, Zaheer posted a sweet birthday wish for Sonakshi, sharing unseen pictures of the two of them. The pictures show them sharing happy moments, laughing together, and vacationing at an undisclosed location, dressed in winter clothing.

"Happy Birthday Sonzzz," he wrote with the pictures.



SALMAN KHAN TO BEGIN 'SIKANDAR' SHOOT ON JUNE 18

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Salman Khan, who was last seen in the spy-universe film 'Tiger 3', is set to start shooting for his upcoming movie 'Sikandar' from June 18.

The film is directed by A.R. Murugadoss, who is known for directing the Aamir Khan-starrer 'Ghajini'. The shoot will begin with an aerial action sequence in Mumbai, featuring Salman at 33,000 feet above sea level aboard an aircraft.

The makers of the film shared an update on social media on Monday regarding the film's production.

The film, which also stars Rashmika Mandanna in the lead, marks another collaboration between Salman and Sajid Nadiadwala.

The duo previously delivered 'Kick', which was directed by Sajid Nadiadwala.

Music composer Pritam has reportedly been roped in for the film, which is touted to be Sajid's most ambitious project to date. 'Sikandar' is set to arrive in cinemas on Eid 2025.



ZEENAT AMAN EXPOSES 'MORAL POLICING' SHE FACED

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Zeena Aman on Monday took to her popular Instagram account to talk about how she had to face "moral policing" because of her role in the 1974 film 'Manoranjan'. The actress played a sex worker in the Shammii Kapoor film and that upset the moral police.

The long post, accompanied by archival pictures, a movie still and a hand-painted poster, immediately got a response from Priyanka Chopra, who said the 'moral police' is still around, and made Anil Kapoor recall the day when the film was released in Mumbai.

Zeena wrote, "If I've had a steady companion throughout my career, it's been the moral police. And, my goodness, did they have a field day with this one."

She said the film, starring Sanjeev Kumar as the leading man, defied "existing conventions." The film was an adaptation of the 1963 American comedy, 'Irma La Douce', with Zeena playing the role of Nisha, a sex worker with a sense of dignity, independence and humour.

Reflecting on the filming experience, Zeena described it as a "haste-haste, khelte-khelte affair". The actress noted that the film was Shammii Kapoor's directorial debut and had R.D. Burman as the music director, with producer F.C. Mehra being a family friend. The film was shot entirely in studios in Mumbai.

Elaborating on her character, Zeena said: "Nisha was no damsel in distress! Her outfits were flirtatious and sexy, but more importantly, she was



unapologetic about how she earned a living. This was a character that I could have fun with -- sexually liberated, financially independent, and fully capable of locking horns with, and turning

down, any man."

Calling herself a "director's actor", Zeena credited Shammii Kapoor for coaxing out one of her better performances.

She fondly recalled the music and costumes, and wrote: "I've always maintained that I am a 'director's actor', and I do believe Shammii ji coaxing out one of my better performances with this film.

"The music and costumes were also a hoot. In 'Aaya hoon main tujh ko le jaonga', we dance upon gigantic musical instruments; 'Chori chori solah singar'... has a titillating shower sequence, and 'Dulhan maike chali' is pictured entirely in a police van full of sex workers being taken to the police station. It was sung by all three Mangeshkar sisters!

Zeena concluded by noting: "The 70s were a wonderful time to be alive! Despite the moral police (they're always around) the atmosphere of experimentation, freedom and fashion was unmatched! I wonder if some of my older followers remember this film? I'd love to hear your memories of watching it or any discussion it may have provoked. Enjoy your Monday and have a lovely week, everybody."

Fans and celebrities quickly flooded the comments section with admiration. Priyanka Chopra took to the Comment section and shared her thoughts about moral policing. She wrote: "Moral police is still around and will continue to be around it seems! But you are beyond."

Anil Kapoor got nostalgic: "Loved the film, the song picturisations and performances... screening of the film/picture ka pehla trial show was at the iconic RK Studios auditorium with friends and families of the warm, gracious and generous Krishna Aunti/Mrs Raj Kapoor."

Noor Malabika Das found dead in Mumbai; suicide suspected

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a case of suspected suicide, former air-hostess-turned-actress Noor Malabika Das, who worked with Kajol in the streaming show 'The Trial', was found dead at her Mumbai flat four days ago, creating ripples in the film circles, official sources said on Monday.

Hailing from Assam, Mumbai-born Malabika (31) worked as a stewardess with Qatar Airways for several years before switching careers to become an actress.

The police said that following complaints of a foul smell emanating from her home in Oshiwara on Saturday, a team broke open the door and found her partly mutilated and decomposing body.

She had allegedly hanged herself on Thursday (June 6), but it was only after the neighbours' complained of foul smell that the matter came to light. The police have seized her mobile phones, some diaries, medicines, and other personal items from the rented flat and registered an accidental death report.

Later, they shifted her body for an autopsy which was conducted at the BMC's Siddharth Hospital in Goregaon, the details of which are not yet known.

Her mortal remains were handed over to one of her friends and professional colleagues, A.N. Pathak, who organised her last rites through an NGO, which were performed on Sunday. As per some reports, Malabika was reported to be in a state of depression while her parents, who had visited her last month, left for Assam last week, and could not attend her funeral. Malabika acted in several films/shows/web series like 'The Trial', 'Teekhi Chutney', 'Dekhi Undekhi', 'Charamsukhi', etc.

The news of her unexpected demise was greeted with shock, disbelief, and dismay on social media with tributes pouring in in her memory as many people recalled her acting skills in several projects.

Ranveer Singh hails Deepika as the 'queen of big screen'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Ranveer Singh, who will be next seen in 'Singham Again', has hailed his wife, Deepika Padukone as the 'Queen of the big screen'. On Monday, Ranveer took to the Stories section of his Instagram, and shared Deepika's look from her upcoming epic science fiction action film 'Singham Again' and used a crown gif. The actress also has 'Singham Again' in the pipeline in which she will be seen along with Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Akshay Kumar, Ranveer Singh, Tiger Shroff, Arjun Kapoor and Jackie Shroff. She will be seen in the role of Shakti Shetty in the film. Deepika are also expecting their first baby. Recently, the two were seen together as they went out to cast their votes for the Lok Sabha 2024 elections. Deepika was also spotted on dinner outings with her family as she flaunted her baby bump.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Jennifer Winget

'WHAT A COMEBACK': BIG B LEADS CELEB CHEERS FOR INDIA'S T20 WIN AGAINST PAKISTAN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Whenever there is a match between India and Pakistan, the entire nation unites to watch. Many stars from the Bollywood industry, like the rest of us, watched the match either at the stadium or at home. As soon as India won, both celebrities and fans flooded social media with expressions of joy.

On Sunday, India defeated Pakistan by six runs in New York during a T20 World Cup match.

Amitabh Bachchan took to X and, along with a photo of bowler Jasprit Bumrah, wrote: "Arrey baap re baap (Oh my God)! Ind vs Pak khela dekh rahe the aur beech mein band kar diya TV, kyunki laga haar toh rahe hain hum! Lekin abhi achanak internet dekha aur (Was watching the match and switched off the TV midway thinking we are losing and



now when I saw the internet) WE WON WE WON WE WON!!! YEEEEAAAAHHHHHHHH.....!!!! INDIA INDIA INDIA INDIA INDIA INDIA INDIA." Preity Zinta also celebrated India's win and wrote on X:

"Wow what a match. What a comeback and what a fight back. Full marks to the Indian cricket team for defending 119 runs. A special mention to the bowling unit specially @jaspritbunrah93 for such an

incredible performance. Maza aa gaya #INDvsPAK #PANT #WorldCup2024 #Whatamatch #ting. Ayushmann Khurrana took to X to hail Team India, tweeting: "Match full of nerves. All's well that ends well though. Good comeback for Rishabh Pant. And Boomrah is the man with the golden arm. Cmon India! Let's go all guns blazing in this #t20USA World Cup! #INDvsPAK."

Yuzvendra Chahal's wife, dancer Dhanashree, shared a joyful photo of all the players' wives posing together.

Actress Anushka Sharma also posed with everyone in the stands, beaming with a big smile on her face. Actor Varun Dhawan shared a video of India's winning moment on Instagram Stories and wrote, "Magical moment. Whatta match. Team India shines bumraaaaaah. Jia Hind." Singer Armaan Malik shared

a picture with Aashna Shroff from the stadium and wrote: "Jeet gaya India #IndvsPak #t20USA."

Actor Sidharth Malhotra took to Instagram Stories and shared a photo of Team India with the caption: "What a win, #TeamIndia #HappySunday, indeed. Excitement level at max, as always #T20WorldCup #INDvsPAK."

Taking to X, actor Riteish Deshmukh posted two tweets: "Boom Boom Bumrah!!!!" "Chak De India: What an incredible comeback!!! Bravo Team INDIA - Bravo Bowlers!! #INDvsPAK #t20USA #T20WorldCup 2024."

Kartik Aaryan shared a photo of the match and wrote: "Champion banega Team India."

On Instagram Stories, actor Shradha Kapoor shared a post of herself lying on the ground and wrote: "Itni Khushi ho rahi hai jaise 2-3 wicket maine bhi le li hain."