



"Want BJP to become zero...": Mamata Banerjee after meeting Nitish Kumar, Tejashwi Yadav

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Afternoon

VOICE

IEWS & VISION OF CITY

Volume: 15, Issue: 198

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023 MUMBAI

08 PAGES, ₹ 2/-

RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332

www.afternoonvoice.com

Web Team



Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday claimed that the Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government's "death warrant has been issued and it will collapse in the next 15-20 days."

Talking to reporters in Maharashtra's Jalgaon District, Raut said his party was waiting for the court's order and expecting that justice will be done.

He was referring to the verdict of the petitions pending in the Supreme Court disqualifying 16 MLAs who rebelled against Thackeray's leadership.

"The government of the existing chief minister and his 40 MLAs will collapse in 15-20 days. The death warrant of this government has been issued. It is now to be decided who will sign it," Raut claimed.

After Raut's remark leaders from Maha Vikas Aghadi and BJP expressed their thoughts.

BJP MLA Atul Bhatkalkar said, "BJP and Shiv Sena will fight in alliance in all upcoming elections and will win hugely. It doesn't matter to us whether the opposition joins hands or not. Their alliance is not natural, not based on ideas."

NCP Spokesperson Clyde Crasto told us, "The question is how long the Eknath Shinde camp and the BJP will stay together. BJP and Shinde group are worried about what will happen to the Eknath Shinde group after the verdict of the Supreme Court. Mahavikas Aghadi will stay together, fight elections together, and also win the elections."

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Arvind Sawant said, "Mahavikas Aghadi will fight all the upcoming elections together and is certain to have a big victory in it. BJP and Shinde's faction will be defeated in both Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections so badly."

Congress Spokesperson Sachin Sawant stated, "BJP and Shinde's Sena faction will demolish in upcoming Elections. People don't like the way they are running the government and that's why they are not taking elections out of fear."

MAHA GOVT'S 'DEATH WARRANT' ISSUED, CLAIMS SANJAY RAUT



"The Kerala Story" is very close to the reality

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

When the teaser of "The Kerala Story" was released, there was a lot of uproar on social media condemning the story line. Though Producer Vipul Amrutlal Shah gave many interviews to media stating that the tragedy of Kerala is that, the girls are converted and then pushed into flesh trade. I do not wish to comment on the movie and its dramatization but the theme of the movie is near to the brutal reality. There is a big racket, these fraudsters and flesh traders stick posters on public places, after seeing the posters many fall for the offer because on those posters they say the recruitment is free and no money will be collected from the seekers, even for visa processing and air ticket. Then they are lured into the

handsome package. Then they gradually tell the woman if you get converted you will get more money and this conversion would be for employment. Many women agree to get converted because their aim is to get that job on foreign land. If you remember the story of three women who escaped from the clutches of a human trafficking network in Kuwait last year you will understand how pathetic women's condition in Kerala is. Those girls were not only converted but also sold to some Arbs, following the intervention of some social organisations there. These days even Kerala Police suspect many more such people may have been trapped in West Asian countries.

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Editoritis

“The Kerala Story” is very close to the reality

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The National Investigation Agency (NIA) also questioned the three women who returned to Kerala after they complained that their ‘oppressors’ often took the name of terrorist groups in Islamic State-controlled areas,

Then the Kochi Police commissioner Nagaraj Chakilam did combing operations and exposed many such agents. MK Gassali, alias Majeed, hailing from north Kerala was the kingpin behind the trafficking racket.

Looking at the lavish lifestyle and the riches of bridegrooms, women of other religions are asked to convert and then they are shown to these rich men. Kerala has a lot of fascination for Muslim countries.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) also questioned the three women who returned to Kerala after they complained that their ‘oppressors’ often took the name of terrorist groups in Islamic State-controlled areas, and threatened to take them there if they protested and informed family members back home. Police then arrested a local agent named Ajumon who had put out advertisements and recruited some of these women as babysitters and part-time domestic workers. In the interrogations it was revealed that at least 30 girls were sent by him and 15 returned to the country. After preliminary inquiry, police found out that the issue of selling those girls to ISIS was a kind of threat. Then the Kochi Police commissioner Nagaraj Chakilam did combing operations and exposed many such agents. MK Gassali, alias Majeed, hailing from north Kerala was the kingpin behind the trafficking racket. M K Gassali, a Dubai-based Kannur native demanded a ransom of Rs three lakh to release the women when their families approached him. Then the husband of one of the women approached the Malayali group and sent its members whatsapp videos and voice clips featuring the torture the trio were facing. The collective approached the Kuwaiti authorities forcing Gassali to release them.

These agents stick posters in the city to attract women from poor backgrounds. When the woman approaches them they give them wrong promises that they would be babysitters, or working in day care centres or house help and taken care of well. These women don’t even realise that they are sold unless they go to those respective countries and face the reality. In many cases to bypass Indian regulations, the racketeer takes the women to Sharjah on a visit visa and later shifts them to Kuwait by road. In Kuwait, they are sold to rich Arab families for `10 lakh to 20 lakh each. The victims realised, to their horror, a few days later that they were trapped. They are subjected to torture by their new ‘owners’. Their phones, passports and everything get confiscated and hence they cannot even contact their families back home to inform them about their fate.

There is another kind of scam that lures girls to get converted because Gulf migrants are highly sought bridegrooms in Kerala. Looking at the lavish lifestyle and the riches of bridegrooms, women of other religions are asked to convert and then they are shown to these rich men. Kerala has a lot of fascination for Muslim countries. When the first gulf boom started in early 1960s Keralites were among the first ones to spot this and they started moving to the Gulf for work. Over the decades Keralites moved up the ladder in the Middle East economy and a big percentage of business owners in the Middle East

are from Kerala. Most of these business houses tend to hire the majority of their work force from Kerala. This also increases the number of Malayalis working in the Middle East. In 2008, they numbered more than 2.5 million. Nearly 80 percent of Indians living in Kuwait are from Kerala according to the 2008 survey commissioned by the Department of Non-resident Keralite Affairs. Arabs settled in Kerala, especially around the present day Malappuram district have a huge population. Since the mass invading of Muslims and Christians in Kerala the region is always under threat for Hindu girls. The other communities are heavily funded by Islamic countries to lure Hindu population into Islam so that the entire state remains in their control.

Once Kerala, the small beautiful coastal Indian state that is popularly known as God’s Own Country, is a land that has welcomed people from different parts of the world and from different races, cultures, religions and traditions over the centuries. Not only have these people settled in Kerala but they have also assimilated and contributed to the culture of this wonderful land. Kerala has historically been home to the largest Jewish settlement in the whole of South Asia, dating back to the time when Jerusalem was sacked by the Romans and its native Jews massacred or driven out by the European Christian hordes. Kerala also had significant European and Muslim settlements along the Malabar (and Tulunadu-Karnataka) coasts since the 11th century AD at least. The single largest group of foreigners were Peninsular Arab traders, many of whom settled down, married local Malayali women of high ranking castes and prospered in their newly adopted homeland. Their descendents form a proportion of the region’s Muslim community (Mappilas). The Arabs built numerous mosques along coastal Malabar (Northern-Kerala) and for several centuries Arabic was the de facto language of trade and commerce along the Kerala-Tulunadu coast and nearby Sri Lanka. Year by year the Muslim population is on rise and this beautiful state is turning into the Islamic state by posing a threat to Hindu girls.



Volume No. 15 | Issue No. 198

Afternoon VOICE
RNI No. MAHENG/2009/29332
VIEWS & VISION OF CITY

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Voices



Letters to the Editor

Govt can ill afford to tinker capital gains tax before an election year!

Market rumors of govt tinkering with capital gains tax had investors worried & jittery as Indices show weak signs after a decent run on the bourses. We are heading towards Parliamentary elections next year & investors should not be duly perturbed about such rumors as the ruling party can ill afford to raise taxes before election time. Also, we won't have a normal budget next year due to elections & it would merely be an 'interim budget where govt actually cannot take a decision on raising rates & that can only happen once we have an elected govt in power.

Taxes are on profits made & investors should be not much worried if they have to pay them if they make money as taxes are the only revenue source for any govt to run the country. Our economy is on a strong footing because of capital expenditure by the govt which helps businesses thrive. Taxes are one of the lowest in our country when compared to some of the developed countries & an appropriate balanced tax structure is the need of the hour for the country as well as citizens' wellbeing!

S. N. Kabra

Concerning turn of events

Relevant to Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf killing the shooters, two of whom are in their early twenties and the third who is only eighteen years old, have told police that they murdered the Ahmed siblings in order to 'make a name' for themselves in the criminal world. The ease with which they were able to murder the pair indicates serious lapses on the part of the escorting cops. The assailants had an easy time because of police laxity. The killings had an air of inevitability about them; it was just a question of how would they pull the trigger quicker than the UP cops. The state's recent spate of police encounters and extrajudicial killings must be investigated. Police, emboldened by an apparent trigger-happy government, have opened the floodgates to a vicious circle of killings. As a result, gangsters are fiercely competing for 'glory and fame'. This is a concerning turn of events. The judiciary and the Centre must strongly advise the UP & other state governments to change its ways and uphold the rule of law.

Vijaykumar H K

Threat to Press

Recent controversial amendments to the IT rules by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology making headlines and are considered draconian and against the principle of natural justice and akin to censorship. The fact-checking unit which can be constituted by the ministry has given absolute power to determine what is fake or not which will result in sweeping power to the central government. Amendments are another attempt to hijack the press which is universally criticized and media organizations across the country. Supreme Court should intervene and declare it unconstitutional.

Muzakkir Khan

Jai ho! Indian culinary habits

It's really great to know that in a recent report published in the latest journal of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), scientists have stated how the traditional culinary habits of Indians have helped lower heavy fatalities during the covid pandemic.

The study highlighted that Indian diets maintain high iron and zinc concentration in blood. Rajma rice, tea, and turmeric, probably played a significant role in saving people from dying during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The scientific study was made by a team of scientists from Brazil, Jordan, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, and India. A thorough study of the culinary habits of India and the Western world was made.

Though the pandemic did claim the lives of more than five lakh people in India, according to

covid statistics, when compared to the European nations and America it was lesser considering the very large Indian population. This made the scientists go in for research on the effect of Indian culinary habits and covid.

The scientists who made the study found that food habits and food ingredients, including vaccination and other measures did play a very significant role in reducing the severity and high death rate among Indians.

The study highlighted that Indian diets such as idli-sambar, rajma rice, legumes, and whole grain-based vegetarian foods maintain high iron and zinc concentrations in the blood in Indians which helped severity even when the Indians got infected with the virus.

Regular consumption of tea, intake of turmeric, and other tra-

ditional diets which contain Zinc probably reduced the risk of lakhs of Indians succumbing to covid. The research also shows that

Western diets which consist of the consumption of red meat, processed foods, and dairy products probably activate cytokine storm and several COVID-19 severity-related pathways resulting in severity during a covid attack.

As more scientific studies are being made it is definitely a matter of pride that our traditional culinary do help us in a great way. The younger generation which is more attracted to Western cuisine has to be made aware of the benefits of our traditional cuisines and the status of the healthy benefits of our food has to be spread globally.

- M Pradyu

Columnist

Keep malaria at bay

World Malaria Day is celebrated on April 25 every year. The World Health Organisation (WHO) celebrates the day in order to emphasise the need to utilise collective energy and commitment of the global community as it moves towards its goal of a world free from malaria. The theme this year for World Malaria Day 2023 is: "Time to deliver Zero Malaria: Invest, innovate, implement".

Malaria has always been a major disease in India till today. Large pools of stagnant water left behind by heavy torrential rains and ignored by the authorities have become the perfect breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

Malaria is a life-threatening disease that spreads when an infected mosquito bites a person. The mosquito transfers parasites into that person's bloodstream. Symptoms of malaria include fever and chills. It is learnt that among all communicable

diseases, malaria is the third largest killer of children between the ages of one month and five years after pneumonia and diarrhoea. Malaria occurs mostly in poor, tropical and subtropical areas of the world. In the year 1953, the Government of India had launched the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) with a focus on spraying of DDT. Within five years, the programme reportedly helped in dramatically reducing the annual cases of malaria. In the present day, the measures to control the spread of malaria focuses on reduction of contact between mosquitoes and humans, destruction of larvae by fogging and the use of mosquito larvae predators and destruction of adult mosquitoes by indoor spraying and using insecticide-treated bed nets. The two major malaria species affecting humans are Plasmodium Falciparum and Plasmodium Vivax. India has reportedly made considerable

progress in reducing its malaria burden. The risk of acquiring malaria as a tourist to India is low. India happens to be the only endemic country which has reported a decline in the numbered cases of malaria.

Chloroquine is the preferred treatment for any parasite that is sensitive to the drug. Some parasites are resistant to malaria drugs. The type of medication and length of treatment depend on which parasite is causing the symptoms. Early diagnosis makes treatment more effective. It is also important to seek treatment right away to stop malaria from spreading to others.

- Jubel D'Cruz

Columnist

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

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No postal letters will be entertained
(The views expressed are authors' own.)

City

Maharashtra Minister Gulabrao Patil involved in Rs 400 crore medical equipment procurement scam during Covid-19: Sanjay Raut



Shiv Sena Uddhav faction leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut has alleged that Maharashtra minister Gulabrao Patil was involved in a scam of Rs 400 crore in the procurement of medical equipment, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Raut has alleged that he has evidence that Patil had procured medical equipment above the

market price. "Maharashtra minister Gulabrao Patil was involved in a Rs 400 crore scam during the Covid-19 crisis. I have evidence of corruption against him," Sanjay Raut alleged on Sunday.

"He (Gulabrao Patil) purchased overpriced equipment during the Covid pandemic. He purchased ventilators at a higher price of Rs 15 lakhs when it was

for Rs 2 lakh," Raut said. Raut said Patil had given instruction to make these purchases as a Guardian Minister for Jalgaon district and the president of the district planning committee during the Covid-19 period.

Patil is now the Water Supply and Sanitation Minister of the Maharashtra government led by Eknath Shinde. Shiv Sena MLA Sanjay Shirsat on April 20 filed a case against Sanjay Raut alleging that the former was spreading fake news regarding the number of deaths from heat stroke in Kharghar. "Sanjay Raut is spreading false news. Whatever happened at Kharghar is a saddening incident. As Sanjay Raut is saying 50 people have died, then he should give proof for that", Shirsat said. ANI

COVID dip Mumbai sees 59 cases down from 141 a day earlier no death



Mumbai on Monday reported 59 COVID-19 cases, the addition to the tally dipping below the 100-mark for the first time since April 10, when 95 cases were detected, a civic official said. It took the tally to 11,61,946, while the death toll stood unchanged at 19,761, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation official added. Mumbai had reported 141 cases on Sunday, and the dip on Monday may be due to fewer coronavirus tests conducted on

weekends, he pointed out.

A BMC bulletin said 944 coronavirus tests were carried out in the last 24 hours, which took the overall figure to 1,88,35,126. The recovery count increased by 131 to touch 11,40,921, leaving the metropolis with an active caseload of 1,264. As per BMC data, the recovery rate is 98.2 per cent, the overall growth rate of cases between April 17 and 23 is 0.0156 per cent and the caseload doubling time stands at 4,442 days. PTI

Maharashtra Police recover animal organs from Nashik farmhouse; 3 held

Maharashtra Police has recovered a huge amount of animal organs and weapon from a farmhouse in Pawarwadi of Nashik and apprehended three in connection with the matter, police said.

According to the police, there are five accused in the case out of which three have been held.

The police, upon the receipt of information, reached the farmhouse and recovered six deer

heads. "We received information about deer meat being found in a farmhouse in Pawarwadi. 6 deer heads, 120 kg deer meat, a pistol and a round were recovered from the spot. There are 5 accused in the case out of which 3 have been detained, search is on for others," Tegbir Singh Sandhu, Sub-Divisional Police Officer, Malegaon, Maharashtra said.

The police investigation is underway. ANI

Uddhav's attack on PM: BJP workers will get angry, warns Bawankule

Maharashtra Bharatiya Janata Party chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule on Monday slammed Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray for the latter's comments a day earlier against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and warned such remarks may make BJP workers restive.

Addressing a mammoth rally of his party at Pachora in Jalgaon district of north Maharashtra on Sunday, Thackeray had taken a swipe at Modi based on the revelations of former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satyapal Malik on the Pulwama terror attack, in which 40 CRPF troop-



ers were killed. "Union Minister Amit Shah recently wondered why Malik didn't speak when he was the governor. But Malik has already replied to it claiming he was asked by the prime minister to keep mum," Thackeray said during Sunday's rally.

"Thackeray must be circumspect while talking about the PM, Union Minister Amit Shah and (Maharashtra deputy chief minister) Devendra Fadnavis. Because, it may result in discontent among BJP workers," Bawankule claimed. PTI

Nagpur missing man found murdered in Bhandara district, two held

A 24-year-old man who went missing from Nagpur city of Maharashtra a fortnight back has been found murdered in a forest in Bhandara district, following which two suspects have been held, police said on Monday.

The half-burnt body of the man, who went missing on April 7, was found in a forested area near Gadegaon in Bhandara recently. Prima facie, the murder was the

fallout of a dispute between the deceased and two suspects.

As per the preliminary investigation, the victim was stabbed with a knife and strangled with a stole, a police official said. Police used the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) system to search for missing people across the state and contacted the victim's family after the body was found. Further investigation is underway. PTI

Sunstroke deaths Pay Rs 25 lakh as compensation to kin of deceased says Cong leader

Maharashtra Congress leader Arif Naseem Khan on Monday said the state government must provide Rs 25 lakh as compensation to the kin of the 14 people who lost their lives due to sunstroke and other health complications at the Maharashtra Bhushan award event on April 16. The deaths took place as several lakh people, mostly followers of awardee Appasaheb Dharmadhikari, assembled under the scorching morning sun at the sprawling



International Corporate Park in Kharghar in Navi Mumbai. "The kin of the deceased must be given Rs 25 lakh as compensation. Moreover, the number of deaths is 50 and not 14 as mentioned by

the authorities. A judicial probe must be initiated to fix responsibility. A culpable homicide case must be registered against the event contractor," he told reporters. PTI

Nation

"Want BJP to become zero...": Mamata Banerjee after meeting Nitish Kumar, Tejashwi Yadav



(Narayan) ji's movement started from Bihar," Mamata said.

If we have an all-party meeting in Bihar, we can decide where to go next. But first of all, we must convey that we are united. I have said earlier too that I have no objections. I want BJP to become zero. They have become a big hero with media's support and lies," Mamata added.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has taken upon himself the task of uniting Opposition forces against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government at the Centre, will also meet with Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday evening.

Earlier on April 12, Nitish Kumar had met with Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge and former MP Rahul Gandhi in the national capital. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Rahul Gandhi said it was a "historic step" towards Opposition unity and for an "ideological fight".

Whatever will be done next, will be done in the nation's interest. Those who are ruling now, have nothing to do. They are just doing their own publicity. Nothing is being done for the nation's development."

Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee also pitched for opposition unity while calling for an opposition meeting in Bihar, the land of the JP movement.

"We will go ahead together. We have no personal ego; we want to work together collectively. I have made just one request to Nitish Kumar. Jayaprakash

Proceeding ahead to achieve the mission of uniting the entire Opposition to take on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav met West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata on Monday.

After the meeting, the three leaders held a joint press conference.

Nitish Kumar said, "We have held talks, especially about the coming together of all parties and making all preparations ahead of the upcoming Parliament elec-

Wrestlers move plea in SC seeking registration of FIR against WFI chief Brij Bhushan

A ace Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat and other wrestlers have moved a plea in Supreme Court seeking the registration of an FIR against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Senior Advocate Narendra Hooda mentioned the plea before Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, who asked him to mention the matter again tomorrow as his petition was not in today's list of mentioned matters.

Vinesh Phogat and the other seven wrestlers have urged the top court to issue directions to Delhi police to lodge FIR against Brij Bhushan as there is an inordinate delay in doing so. According to the lawyer connected to the case, the petitioners will again approach the court tomorrow for an urgent hearing. WFI President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh was accused by the wrestlers of sexual misconduct and intimidation.

The government established



a five-member oversight council to oversee WFI operations. Boxer Mary Kom is heading the oversight committee which was formed to probe into the allegations levelled against the WFI and its chief Singh and other coaches.

Earlier in the day, Delhi Police sought a report from the investigation committee set up by the Union Sports Ministry to investigate the allegations and has begun a probe into the fresh complaint by wrestlers.

"BJP ended injustice to villages done by previous govts..." says PM Modi in Rewa

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party government ended "injustice" done to the villages by the previous administrations which "ignored and avoided spending money in the rural areas".

The Prime Minister said that the political parties in the past indulged in "dividing the people of the village".

Addressing the Panchayati Raj Diwas celebrations in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa, PM Modi said, "Earlier governments used to avoid spending money for the village... so they were ignored. Many political parties were running their shops by dividing the people of the village. BJP has also ended this injustice being done to the villages. Our government has opened the coffers for

the development of villages."

The Prime Minister said that the governments after independence destroyed the Panchayati Raj System of India.

"The system which existed hundreds of years, thousands of years ago, the same Panchayati Raj system was not trusted after independence. I always think, those people of Chhindwara whom you trusted for so long, why were they never serious about your development?... The party that run the govt the most after independence broke the trust of those villages..." he said.

Reflecting on the years before 2014, PM Modi said that only 6,000 panchayat buildings were built, while during the BJP rule in these eight years, more than 30,000 new panchayat buildings were constructed.

Cong workers detained ahead of PM's visit to Kerala alleges party leader

Kerala Leader of the Opposition and Congress leader VD Satheesan on Monday alleged that the Kochi Police has detained party workers ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on Monday.

PM Modi is slated to reach Kerala on Monday for a two-day visit. He will lay the foundation stone and inaugurate

various projects worth more than Rs 3,200 crore in the state.

While talking to the media, Satheesan said, "We have not decided on any program to stop the Prime Minister. Even DCC officials have been detained. This is a situation where Congress workers cannot walk. We will fight hard against this."

Describing the police action as a "violation of human rights",

the Congress leader alleged that the police vehicle arrived at the residences of the party workers early in the morning.

"This is a violation of fundamental human rights. The police vehicle is coming to the houses of Congress workers at four in the morning. Police in Kochi are equal to Stalin's police. This is Kerala, not Yogi Adityanath's UP," he added.

K'taka Assembly polls: Amit Shah holds roadshow in Gundlupete

People of Gundlupete in the poll-bound Karnataka were filled with euphoria as Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday held a roadshow in the Chamarajanagar district.

Amit Shah is on a three-day visit to Karnataka that started on Sunday. Earlier in the day, he of-

fered prayers at Sri Chamundeshwari Devi Temple in Karnataka's Mysuru.

Ahead of the Assembly elections in Karnataka, Bharatiya Janata Party which is in power in the only southern state, seems to throw all its efforts into the poll campaign aiming for the second

consecutive term.

BJP president JP Nadda will embark on a three-day visit to Karnataka starting today. He will participate in a roadshow in Sidlaghatta, Chikkaballapur district. He will also visit a temple at Sirsi in Uttara Kannada district and will address several public meetings.

World

EU Council adopts new rules on pay transparency



The EU Council has adopted new rules to combat pay discrimination and help close the gender pay gap in the EU. Under the pay transparency directive, EU companies will be required to share information about how much they pay women and men for work of equal value and take action if their gender pay gap exceeds 5 per cent.

The new directive also includes provisions on compensation for victims of pay discrimination and penalties, including fines, for employers who break the rules. Women in the EU earn on average 13 per cent less than their male counterparts, and the gender pay gap has largely stag-

nated over the last decade.

While a number of factors contribute to this difference, pay discrimination has been identified as one of the key obstacles to achieving gender pay equality. Unequal pay puts women at greater risk of poverty and contributes to the EU's pension pay gap, which in 2018 stood at around 30 per cent

The new rules will make it compulsory for employers to inform job seekers about the starting salary or pay range of advertised positions, whether in the vacancy notice or ahead of the interview. Employers will also be prevented from asking candidates about their pay history.

Once in the role, workers will be entitled to ask their employers for information about average pay levels, broken down by sex, for categories of employees doing the same work or work of equal value. They will also have access to the criteria used to determine pay and career progression, which must be objective and gender-neutral. Companies with more than 250 employees will be required to report annually on the gender pay gap in their organisation to the relevant national authority.

For smaller organisations (initially those with over 150 employees), the reporting obligation will take place every three years. If the report reveals a pay gap of more than 5 per cent that cannot be justified by objective, gender-neutral criteria, companies will be required to take action in the form of a joint pay assessment carried out in cooperation with workers' representatives.

Under the new directive, workers who have suffered gender pay discrimination can receive compensation, including full recovery of back pay and related bonuses or payments in kind.

Taliban rejects Pentagon report about presence of ISIS in Afghanistan



Taliban has denied the media report citing "classified Pentagon assessment" stating that Afghanistan has become a significant coordinate site for the Daesh/ISIS group that plans attacks in Europe and Asia and carries out "aspirational plotting" against the US, TOLO News reported.

The head of the Taliban-led Qatar-based Political Office Suhail Shaheen refuted the report. He said that Daesh has been suppressed in Afghanistan, TOLO News reported. The statement of Suhail Shaheen comes after The Washington Post in its report cited a "classified Pentagon assessment" that demonstrates the threat as a "growing security concern."

Suhail Shaheen said that The

Washington Post report is not as per the ground realities in Afghanistan. "The report of The Washington Post is not in accordance with the ground realities in Afghanistan. These reports are made based on their personal wish. The fact is that the Daesh has no physical presence in Afghanistan as it had during the invasion," TOLO News quoted him as saying.

The attack planning detailed in US intelligence findings revealed that the Discord messaging platforms revealed particular efforts to target embassies, churches, business centres and the FIFA World Cup tournament which had over 2 million spectators in Qatar, TOLO News cited The Washington Post report.

Operation Kaveri: Ships, aircraft set to bring Indians back home: EAM



As the fighting between the Sudanese Army and paramilitary groups intensified in the capital Khartoum, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar informed that its 'Operation Kaveri' to evacuate its citizens from battle-torn Sudan is underway and about 500 Indians had reached the Port Sudan. India has launched "Operation kaveri"

to bring back stranded Indians from the war-torn Sudan.

Taking to Twitter, Jaishankar said, "Operation Kaveri gets underway to bring back our citizens stranded in Sudan. About 500 Indians have reached Port Sudan. More on their way. Our ships and aircraft are set to bring them back home. Committed to assist all our bretheren in Sudan."

Earlier, France Embassy in India informed that their country has evacuated some Indians along with citizens of 27 other countries as part of its evacuation mission from violence-hit Sudan.

The French embassy in New Delhi said on Monday that 388 people from 28 countries, including India, were evacuated.

Md. Shahabuddin sworn-in as Bangladesh's 22nd President

Mohammed Shahabuddin was on Monday sworn in as the 22nd President of Bangladesh. Bangladesh Parliament Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury administered the oath to Shahabuddin at the Durbar Hall of Bangabhaban at 11 am (local time), Dhaka Tribune reported. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, cabinet members, and hundreds of distinguished guests attended the oath-taking ceremony of Mohammed Shahabuddin. Shahabuddin replaced Md Abdul Hamid, whose tenure as Bangladesh's President ended on Sunday.

After the swearing-in ceremony, Mohammed Shahabuddin signed the oath documents for the president's office. Earlier on February 13, the 73-year-old politician was elected as the 22nd President



of Bangladesh.

Mohammed Shahabuddin was born on December 10, 1949, in Bangladesh's Pabna town, Dhaka Tribune reported. He obtained his MSc degree from Rajshahi University in 1974 and later cleared LLB and BCS (Law) examinations.

Mohammed Shahabuddin served as the General Secretary

of Pabna Edward College Chhatra League from 1967-68, Vice-President of Undivided Pabna District Chhatra League from 1969-70 and President of Pabna District Chhatra League from 1970-73.

He served as the convener of Pabna District Shadhin Bangla Chhatra Sangram Parishad, according to the statement on the office of the President of Bangladesh's website. Mohammed Shahabuddin actively participated in the Liberation War in 1971 as a member of 'Mujib Bahini,' according to the Dhaka Tribune report.

During his career, he served as a district and sessions judge and an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) commissioner. He also worked as director of the Bangladesh Prime Minister's Office, as per the news report.

Expression

Fun Frolic and Ferrari



C.K. Subramaniam

Columnist

Abu Dhabi is welcoming tourists again in the post-covid world with open arms. The Emirate is offering memorable experiences to all tourists- From high-octane adventurer to a curious cultural explorer, or an uninhibited gastronomer, Emirates of Abu Dhabi has something for everyone! Abu Dhabi boasts not just expansive deserts or colossal mountains it also has pristine beaches and breath-taking architecture. From traditional to modern and cosmopolitan, the UAE's capital has a bouquet of rich culture and heritage with historic buildings and traditional experiences with the most modern tourist attractions. Plan a trip to Abu Dhabi and experience the best of adventures for the perfect summer getaway including theme parks, dining and leisure experiences, immersive cultural experiences. Here are the 5 attractions that make Abu Dhabi an ideal spot for you next vacation:

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi is a mostly indoors theme park located on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. It is the world's first Ferrari-themed park and features Formula Rossa, the world's fastest roller coaster. The foundation stone for the park was laid on 3 November 2007. When you hear Ferrari world theme park, you think this is something wow. But it isn't. I think the name of the famous brand makes people coming inside this only under the roof theme park. The entrance fee (around 55 Eur) is much higher than deserved. If you're a Ferrari fan you have to visit this place. Would suggest visiting this place before the park is open so that one can avoid the long queue for the

rides. World's fastest roller coaster happens to be here. Also they have rides and entertainment for kids, toddlers, and adults. One can easily spend 3-4 hours.

Ferrari World is an indoor theme park that features a variety of Ferrari-themed rides and attractions, as well as a collection of Ferrari cars and memorabilia. Some visitors may find it to be a thrilling and unique experience, while others may not be as interested in the Ferrari brand or theme park attractions. If you are a fan of Ferrari or theme parks, it may be worth visiting. It is also a good idea to check online reviews and ask for recommendations from people who have been there before making a decision.

Upvote Two things I can point out as very good. First, the Formula Rossa, the fastest roller coaster on Earth (reaching up to 240 km/h) and an excellent karting race. Other

rides are average, some even boring. There are simulators, which you can find in shopping malls and gaming centers, a lot of shops and displayed cars for fans.

It is not worth the separate full paying ticket, but if you have the Entertainer 2 for 1 coupons, or you buy a Combo ticket with Yas waterpark, it becomes reasonable.

The car is designed with an aim of giving you a thundering experience and performance. It has a huge displacing engine with about 6300cc power and outstanding delivery of horsepower ranging 680 bhp. It is also very spacious with a boot space of 450 litres. The car keeps all my boredom at bay with the spicy turns and textures in its gleam. I am deeply enticed by its appearance and luxurious comfort in the interior. It has everything I ever looked for in my dream crazy

car.

If you want high adrenaline fun for everyone in your family, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi is the right place for you. From toddler to teen, parent to grandparent, the mostly indoor theme park, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, has something for everyone. Open all round the year, it is the world's first Ferrari-branded theme park. It offers more than 20 rides and attractions, shopping, and authentic Italian dining experiences. It houses the Formula Rossa – the world's fastest roller-coaster. It goes from 0 to 240km/h in 4.9 seconds, and reaches a height of 52 metres. Another of its rides, the Flying Aces showcases the world's highest roller-coaster loop which climbs 63 metres at a 51-degree angle! It is fun, frolicking in the Ferrari World all round and winter months of November - December worth a tour to this unique paradise on earth.



Entertainment

"Gal Gadot doing great job", Ana de Armas denies reports of being new Wonder Woman

'Blonde' star Ana de Armas was asked if she was going to take over the Wonder Woman role as Peter Safran and James Gunn look to reinvent the DC Universe. As reported by Deadline, "Well, I feel like Gal Gadot is doing a great job," De Armas said in the interview. "I think she should keep doing that."

Gal Gadot recently reprised her role of Diana Prince in 'Shazam! Fury of the Gods'. However, Gadot's future in the role is uncertain after the third installment of Patty Jenkins' 'Wonder Woman' was scrapped.

At The Views By Adani Realty Adani Realty Join MyFreeStyle program today Freestyle Libre After the news of the new 'Wonder Woman' being scrapped emerged, Jenkins released a statement saying, "I never walked away. I was open to considering anything asked of me. It was my understanding there was nothing I could do to move anything forward at this time. DC is obviously buried in changes they are having to make, so I understand these decisions are difficult right now." ANI



Badshah apologises after receiving backlash over his new song 'Sanak'

Rapper Badshah on Monday issued an apology after many people raised objections to the lyrics of his recently released song 'Sanak'.

Taking to Instagram, Badshah wrote, "It has been brought to my attention that one of my recent releases, Sanak, sadly seems to have hurt the sentiments of some people. I would never willingly or unknowingly cause offence to anyone's sentiments. I bring my artistic creations and musical compositions to you, my fans, with the utmost sincerity and passion." ANI



Coachella 2023: Actor – singer Zendaya returns to stage after 7 years, fans elated

Actor-singer Zendaya surprised everyone with her special performance at Coachella 2023. The act marks her return to the stage after almost seven years. She joined Labrinth onstage to perform two songs, including their hit "All For Us," from the HBO series Euphoria recently.

Taking to Instagram, she shared several images and videos from the event. She also penned a note of gratitude. "I cannot express my gratitude enough for this magical night. Thank you to my brother Clabrinth for inviting me and giving me the most beautiful safe space to be on a stage again. And to the crowd tonight. wow. My heart is so full, I can't thank you enough for the love I received tonight, made all my nerves melt away, I'm so grateful," she wrote. ANI

Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli enjoy 'dance pe chance' moments, fan says "enough to break the internet"



Amid IPL matches, Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli are enjoying their couple time. They enjoyed South-Indian food over the weekend and now Anushka lits up Monday with her new Instagram reel video. The 'Pari' actor posted a reel video in which Anushka and Virat shook legs on a hook step over a Punjabi song. The video ends on a funny note as Virat shouts out of pain as his legs ache after doing the hookstep. Anushka wore an oversized shirt and ripped jeans, while Virat sported a black tee teaming it up with beige-coloured pants and a cap.

"Dance pe chance skills - @iamsidkaul - @shubhworldwide" Anushka used the words from her debut movie 'Rab ne bana di jodi' song "Dance pe chance mar le" as the caption.

Fans loved the video and showered comments on it. "Enough to break the internet tbh!" wrote one. Another one wrote, "Best video!" The Sunday IPL match of RCB vs RR at the M.Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru saw Virat and Anushka indulging in a cute PDA moment. ANI