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SUPREME COURT QUESTIONS CENTRE ON EWS CRITERIA

'MAKING UNEQUAL EQUAL BY RS EIGHT LAKH LIMIT'

The bench queried Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj if the government collected some data -- demographic or sociological or socio-economic -- before fixing the EWS criteria uniformly. It further queried whether the government accounted for the differences in urban and rural purchasing power, and also whether it undertook any exercise before arriving at the criteria. Nataraj submitted the limit was fixed based on the Sinho Commission report but the bench was not convinced.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday questioned the Centre over adopting the criteria of OBC "creamy layer" of Rs 8 lakh annual income for granting reservations under the economic weaker section (EWS), despite the latter not suffering from social and educational backwardness.A bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud told Centre's counsel: "You just cannot pull out eight lakh from thin air. You are making unequal equal by applying the Rs 8 lakh limit."The bench noted that for OBCs, people who are below Rs 8 lakh annual income, they suffer from social and educational backwardness. "Under the constitutional scheme, the EWS category is not socially and educationally backward."

It said it is proposing to form the following issues in the order on which the affidavit is sought: whether Centre undertook an exercise before arriving at the criteria to determine EWS, and if the answer is affirmative, then is the criteria based on the Sinho Commission report.

The bench added the report should be placed before the court and expressed its displeasure over failure of the government to file an affidavit in this context, despite its direction on the last date of hearing on October 7.Giving time to Centre to file its response in the matter, the top court scheduled the matter for further hearing on October 28.

The top court made these observations while hearing a clutch of petitions by Neil Aurelio Nunes and others against the 27 per cent reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) and 10 per cent reservation for EWS in all-India Quota seats for postgraduate medical courses.As many as 15 per cent seats in MBBS and 50 per cent seats in MS and MD courses are filled through All India Quota from the candidates selected through NEET.

Gauri Lankesh murder case

***New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that one of the accused in the 2017 murder of activist Gauri Lankesh will face charges under the stringent Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act (KCOCA). A bench headed by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar and comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, and C.T. Ravikumar held that the stringent provisions can be invoked against a member of the crime syndicate involved in organised crimes without two previous charge sheets against him. The top court allowed the appeals filed by Kavitha Lankesh, sister of the slain activist, and the state government against the Karnataka High Court judgment of April 22, which quashed the charges against accused Mohan Nayak N., who was arrested on July 18, 2018. The top court said the high court examined the matter by applying erroneous scale and the observations in the judgment clearly reveal that it has glossed over the core and tangible facts.*

82 percent eligible population received at least one dose of vaccine

Team Absolute | New Delhi

As many as 82 per cent of the eligible population has already received one dose of the Covid vaccine and 39 per cent has received both doses, as per the IANS-CVoter Vaccine Tracker.

While India is intensely pro-vaccine, vaccine hesitancy is several times higher in Europe by 5 times and in US by 10 times.

In the vaccination drive, the entire population may not be counted as the eligible population is only above 18 years.

India is the most pro-vaccine country in the world as 98 per cent of its eligible population want to get vaccinated for Covid 19, as per IANS C Voter Vaccine Tracker.

The data comes on a day when India reached the milestone of 100 crore vaccinations, and demonstrates that lack of vaccine hesitancy has played a big role in achieving this number.

CVoter Founder Yashwant Deshmukh said that India is the most pro-vaccine country in the world and at all times, 90 per cent or more wanted to get vaccinated.

The talk of vaccine hesitancy being high in India that may hold up the vaccination drive may have been a false narrative, Deshmukh said.

Only 2 per cent have said they do not want to get vaccinated, as per the tracker. The vaccine hesitancy was 12-13 per cent a year back, which has come down to only 2 per cent now.

In the tracker, when asked if the country of origin of the vaccine has no impact, 22.4 per cent disagreed and 70.1 per cent agreed with the notion. The 22.4 per cent represents aversion to Chinese vaccines.

A total of 15.4 per cent in the tracker disagreed with the notion that vaccines are compatible with religious beliefs. Even though 15.4 per cent said this, almost 13 per cent also said they will take the vaccine, leaving the vaccine hesitancy at only 2 per cent.

PRIYANKA PROMISES SMARTPHONES, SCOOTY TO GIRLS IN UTTAR PRADESH

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress General Secretary and in-charge of the Uttar Pradesh unit, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has announced to give smartphones and electronic scooty to girls if the party comes to power in the state.

In a tweet in Hindi on Thursday, she said, "I met some students, they said they need smartphones to study and for security. I am happy that with consent of the manifesto committee, the UP Congress today took a decision to give smartphones to the girls who pass Intermediate and electronic scooty to Bachelor students."

This is Congress' one of major steps to attract and get the votes of women. Earlier, she had announced 40 per cent tickets to women in Uttar Pradesh.

Priyanka, on Tuesday, had announced that her party would give 40 per cent tickets to women in the upcoming Assembly elections. She said that all women who want to bring about a change in the system, are welcome to come forward and contest elections.

"Any woman who wants to contest can give an application till November 15," she announced at a press conference.

After Priyanka, Rahul Gandhi also tweeted in Hindi and said, "The daughter of the country says - with our hard work, with the strength of education, with proper reservation i can go on and on."

The party has been out of power since 1989 in the state and is trying to make its presence felt in the state politics where the BJP and the SP are said to be in direct contest in the upcoming polls. Sources in the party say that by making such promises, it will be able to attract the people's attention towards it which will do good in the upcoming polls.

Farmers open service road at Ghazipur border closed for 11 months

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Farmers protesting on the Ghazipur border at Delhi for the last 11 months against the three farm laws enacted by the Centre last year, have started to open the service lane to ease the traffic. They said it is the police who have closed the road and not them. Farmers belonging to the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) on Thursday started removing the tents built on the service road to start the traffic movement.Farmers have claimed that wrong information is being spread about them in the Supreme Court. "We had never closed the road, we wanted to go to Delhi. The police did not allow us to go across the border," the farmers said.The farmers have removed the media centre on the Ghazipur border, while they have parked their vehicles near the police barricade.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) is going on at the Singhu border, in which a decision can be taken to open the roads.The Delhi Meerut Expressway from the Ghaziabad side to Delhi is completely closed due to the farmers' agitation for the last 11 months, due to which lakhs of people are facing problems in commuting every day.Earlier on Thursday, the Supreme Court reiterated that farmer groups have the right to protest, but they cannot keep roads blocked indefinitely. The top court sought a response from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of farmer unions, and other farmer unions on a petition filed by a Noida woman.

Covid outbreak in China leads to closure of schools, tourist sites

New Delhi: An outbreak of Covid-19 in China has led to swift restrictions being imposed in multiple Chinese provinces over the last week, the BBC reported.

Since October 16, cases of Covid-19 linked to travel and tourism in China's north have reached at least nine provincial-level regions.Parts of Inner Mongolia and Gansu province have gone into tight lockdown. Many schools have closed in both the regions; a school has also closed in Beijing, the report said.Tourist sites have closed in parts of Xi'an - the home to the Terracotta Warriors - and some cities have cancelled large-scale exhibitions and closed venues like cinemas.The number of cases in China is still relatively low - only in double digits. However, it is common for the country to tackle outbreaks by swiftly locking down communities when even one resident tests positive, the report said.Citywide testing drives have been ordered, and people have been prohibited from leaving the affected areas unless they can show a negative test report within days of travel.

Given many of the affected regions in this latest outbreak are in China's north, the National Health Commission has urged enhanced measures to ensure that Covid prevention work can be carried out safely.

It has particularly emphasised on protecting female medical workers from the cold in the coming months, and has urged limiting the amount of time people spend outdoors.

350 fake voter cards, two dummy EVMs seized in Patna district

Patna: Two persons were arrested in Patna district on Thursday for allegedly making fake voter cards and a couple of dummy Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) seized from them, police said. ASP, Danapur, Sayyad Imran Masood said that the two were arrested from the Bihta area in a raid."We have received information about EVMs being procured in one of the houses which was adjoining a polling booth in the Bihta area. Accordingly, we formed a dedicated team which raided that house. During the search, we found 350 fake voter identity cards and two dummy EVMs," he said."During interrogation, the accused revealed that they had made fake voter identity cards of those persons who are not residing in the panchayat but whose names are still present in the voter list. Those fake voter identity cards were prepared to be used for voting in the panchayat elections," Masood said."The investigation is currently underway to arrest other persons involved in this fraudulent activity. An FIR has been registered under relevant sections of the IPC in Bihta police station and a copy has been also sent to the State Election Commission office in Patna," he added.

AGICULTURE, HEALTH AT RISK FROM DECLINING DIURNAL TEMPERATURE RANGE

This short term decrease in maximum and minimum temperature range is most prominent during monsoon and post-monsoon and stands out despite a long-term trend of increasing differences between the two. This accelerating decline in diurnal temperature range owing to faster rise in minimum temperature and decline in solar radiation, as suggested in the study, may put agriculture and health at risk.

The study, supported by the Department of Science and Technology, and published in International Journal of Climatology (accepted online in December 2020 but made available in journal recently) suggested that the persistent atmospheric aerosol loading over Indo-Gangetic Plain might have caused declining solar radiation over the region, leading to rise in minimum temperature, thus resulting in declining DTR over these regions.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Variation in diurnal temperature range is asymmetric over India's four agroclimatic zones with a marked accelerating decrease in the range witnessed over the last 30 years in the northwest, parts of Gangetic plains, northeast, and central India, said a new study.

Diurnal temperature range (DTR) is an important indicator of climatic change and a critical thermal metric to assess the impact on agriculture and human health. Hence, it is extremely important to identify the regions of wide diurnal variation and decreasing DTR and to assess the explicit causes responsible for these phenomena.

The researchers found an alarming decline in DTR in the recent 30-year period over four agro-climatic zones. At the same time, an overall increasing trend in DTR, maximum and minimum temperature over a long-term period was also observed with large diurnal asymmetry in different agro-ecological zones.

Importantly, the significant decline in DTR was associated with a large increase in minimum temperature in comparison to maximum temperature. In contrast, the temperature range in the east and west coast as well as in the southern India showed an increase.

FCRA AMENDMENTS TO PROTECT INDIA'S SOVEREIGNTY, INTEGRITY,

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that there is no fundamental right to receive unbridled foreign contributions without any regulation, as it defended the 2020 amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).

It emphasised that the FCRA's aim was to ensure foreign contribution does not adversely impinge upon the functioning of parliamentary institutions, political associations and academic and other voluntary organisations as well as individuals in India.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in a 355-page affidavit filed in the Supreme Court, said the Parliament has enacted the FCRA, to lay down a clear legislative policy of strict controls over foreign contributions for certain activities in the country.

It said the "legislation has also prohibited acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activities detrimental to the national interest and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto".

On the aspect of violation of fundamental rights, the MHA said: "It is unequivocally submitted that there exists no fundamental right to receive unbridled foreign contributions without any regulation. It is submitted that in fact, there exists no fundamental right under which any right, legal or otherwise, can be said to include the purported right to receive foreign contributions."

It added that "no part of any purported right to receive foreign contributions can be said to be a part of the fundamental rights granted to citizens".

It emphasised that foreign contributions, considering their nature and vast expanse of abuse, are tightly regulated and the government is well within its rights to make the changes in order to effectively implement the objects of the Parliament. The MHA's response came on three petitions -- two challenging the validity of the amendments and the other seeking stricter enforcement of the amendments.

"In the absence of any violation of a fundamental right, the present set of petitions, claiming a moonshine fundamental right of 'received unbridled foreign contributions' are not maintainable under Article 32 and therefore, on this ground alone, the petitions deserve to be dismissed," it said.

The MHA said that the FCRA was enacted with a clear objective to insulate the democratic polity and public institutions and individuals working in the national democratic space from the undue influence of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality received from any foreign source."Therefore, sovereignty and integrity of India including public order and public interest is an essential dimension of the Act since its inception," it said.

The Centre said during the implementation of the FCRA, 2010, it was increasingly noted that certain NGOs were involved primarily only in routing of foreign contributions.

"In other words, rather than 'receiving' and 'utilising' it - as is the intent of the Act - the NGOs were only receiving the foreign contribution and transferring it to other NGOs. Thus, establishing a principal-client relationship," it added.

The petitioners are Noel Harper and Nigel Mills of Share and Care Foundation in Andhra Pradesh and Joseph Lizy and Annamma Joachim of National Workers Welfare Trust in Telangana.

The affidavit was settled by Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta, who was assisted by advocate Kanu Agrawal.

Two more Telangana lawmakers announce gold donation for Yadadri temple

Two more Telangana legislators on Thursday announced donation of one kilogram of gold each for Yadadri temple in the state.

HYDERABAD | Agencies

Responding to Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's call, Member of Legislative Council T. Chinnapa Reddy donated one kilo of gold on behalf of his family and Srini Pharma Group of companies for gold plating of the Vimana Gopuram of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple at Yadadri.

"We thank Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao who has inspired us to be partners in the great renovation programme of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple, Yadadri," he said.

Danam Nagender, a Member of Legislative Assembly, has also announced a donation of one kilogram of gold on behalf of his family.

Nagender, who represents Khairatabad constituency in the state capital, said that it is a marvel that Rao has rebuilt a temple with great glory.

During the last three days, legislators, other public representatives, corporate houses and businessmen have announced gold donations for the temple, which is scheduled to reopen after renovation on March 28, 2022. After a visit to the temple on Tuesday, the Chief Minister announced the first donation of 1 kg 16 tolas gold to the temple on behalf of his family. The temple requires 125 kg gold for gold plating works of Vimana Gopuram.

Since then, donors have announced donations of about 30 kg of gold.

EC bars political activity in areas adjoining bypoll-bound seats

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Election Commission on Thursday barred political activity in the adjoining areas of the various constituencies, where bypolls will be held on October 30, and asked the district election officers to ensure compliance.

"It has been brought to the notice of the Commission that certain political parties/candidates are organising electioneering activities in the areas adjoining the district/constituency where the bye-election is being conducted. In this regard, all political parties/candidates are advised not to organise any political activities directly related to the bye-elections even in the areas adjoining the district/ constituency where the bye-election are being held," it said. Election officials have been asked to ensure that the Model Code of Conduct and Covid guidelines relating to the norms of social distancing are followed in the districts adjoining the poll-going district/constituency."The Commission's existing instructions regarding enforcement of Model Code of Conduct during bye-elections to Parliamentary/Assembly Constituency provides that the applicability of Model Code of Conduct would be to the concerned district(s) comprising the AC/PC going to such bye-election." It said that the only relaxation in these instructions have been given vide its letter dated June 29, 2017 and reiterated vide letter dated January 18, 2018 that in case the constituency is comprised in state capital/metropolitan cities/Municipal Corporations, with the "objective that the operation of MCC does not hamper normal developmental and administrative functioning in the state and districts".

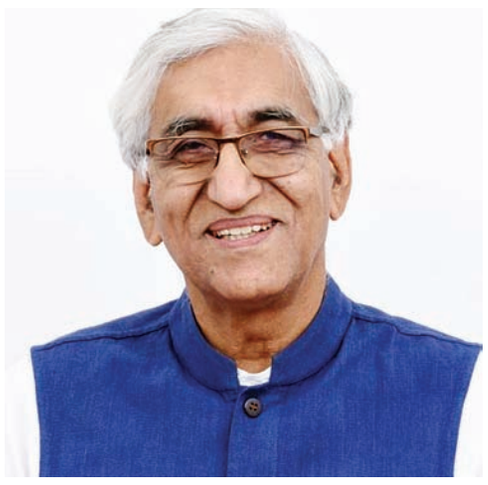
TS Singh Deo camps in Delhi, wants early resolution of CM issue

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Chhattisgarh Health Minister TS Singh Deo is camping in New Delhi to meet the party leadership to raise the issue of a rotational chief minister in the state. Sources close to him say that he wants an early resolution of the issue and it cannot linger on for so long.

His close aides say that the matter was not settled as the final decision from the party high command has not yet come while his supporters are pressing for a change in the state.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel had told IANS that: "State in-charge P.L. Punia has spoken about the issue of the rotational Chief Minister in my state. He clearly said that there is no such formula and with that the matter has ended." There is no change happening as the state in-charge has himself said that there was no such formula. The Congress is united in the state, there are no differences and the issue is settled now, he added.



Meanwhile Baghel has been appointed senior observer for Uttar Pradesh and is working in close coordination with Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. His team is already at work in UP and is being credited with a successful rally in Varanasi.

On the issue of a rotational Chief Minister, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi had held two meetings last month involving both the leaders. Both Singh Deo and Bhupesh Baghel were present at the first meeting, while the second meeting took place between Rahul Gandhi and Baghel but saw no decision being taken on a leadership change. But sources say that the issue is not yet resolved and the top leadership is likely to talk to Singh Deo before arriving at any decision. For the time being Baghel has got a reprieve from Delhi, but is it permanent or temporary, there is no clarity on that and no official statement has been issued.

Singh Deo, who is pushing for rotational chief ministership, is maintaining that everything is in the purview of the party leadership and whatever decision will be taken by them will be acceptable.

CONGRESS DAMAGED INTERESTS BY NOT TRUSTING ME: AMARINDER

CHANDIGARH | Agencies

Two days after announcing to launch his own political outfit to serve the interests of the people, two-time Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Thursday slammed AICC general secretary Harish Rawat, saying the party has damaged its own interests by not trusting him and giving the party into the hands of an 'unstable person' like Navjot Sidhu.

"Your apprehension is that I'll damage @INCIndia interests in Punjab.... Fact is @harishrawatcmuk ji, the party has damaged its own interests by not trusting me and giving @INCPunjab into the hands of an unstable person like @sherryontopp who's only loyal to himself: capt_amarinder," media advisor Raveen Thukral quoting Amarinder Singh as saying in a tweet.

In a series of tweets, Amarinder Singh asked Rawat, who is Punjab affairs in-charge, "Today you're accusing me of helping my rival @Akali_Dal for 4 and a half years @harishrawatcmuk ji. Is that why you think I've been fighting court cases against them for the last 10 years? And why I've won @INCIndia all elections in Punjab since 2017?"

Asking Rawat to stop talking about secularism, the former Chief Minister said, "Don't forget @INCIndia took in @sherryontopp after he was with @BJP4India for 14 years.

And where did Nana Patole and Revnath Reddy come from if not RSS? And Pargat Singh was with @Akali_Dal for 4 years!"

Amarinder Singh further asked Rawat, "And what are you doing with @ShivsenaComms in Maharashtra? Or are you saying @harishrawatcmuk Ji that it's ok to join forces with so-called communal parties as long as it suits @INCIndia purpose.

"What's this if not sheer political opportunism?" he asked.The former Chief Minister's reaction came a day after Rawat said Amarinder's announcement of floating a new party will not hurt the Congress in Punjab.

FEEL PROUD WHEN CALLED BIHARI: PRESIDENT KOVIND

Patna: President Ram Nath Kovind on Thursday said he feels proud and exalted whenever anyone calls him 'Bihari'.

"Rajendra Prasad -- the first president of the country, belonged to Bihar. I am taking forward his inheritance. It is my honour and privilege to take forward his legacy," he said here. The President is on a three-day visit to Bihar. He reached Patna on Wednesday morning and attended the centenary event of the Bihar Vidhan Sabha as the chief guest. "The soil of Bihar has produced many great personalities in the rank of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Sacchidanand Sinha, Shri Krishna Singh and others. The social structure of the state is equal which always creates social equality and egalitarian society," Kovind said.He also appreciated the work done in the state by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Southwest monsoon likely to withdraw on Oct 26: IMD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The southwest monsoon is likely to withdraw on October 26, the same day when the northeast monsoon is likely to commence over southeast peninsular India, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The northeast monsoon brings in rains mostly to Tamil Nadu, parts of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

"With likely setting in of north-easterly winds in the lower tropospheric levels over Bay of Bengal and extreme south Peninsular India, the southwest monsoon is likely to withdraw from the entire country around October 26. Simultaneously, the northeast monsoon rains are also likely to commence over the southeast peninsular India from around October 26," IMD said in a release.

As against the normal date of October 15 when the southwest monsoon completely withdraws from across India, this time the process is delayed. The commencement of withdrawal too had started on October 6 against the normal date of September 17.

Meanwhile, the southwest monsoon withdrawal line continues to pass through Kohima, Silchar, Krishna Nagar, Baripada, Malkangiri, Nalgonda, Bagalkote, Vengurla. Conditions are becoming favourable for further withdrawal of southwest monsoon from remaining parts of northeast India; entire north Bay of Bengal; remaining parts of West Bengal; some parts of Central Bay of Bengal; remaining parts of Odisha; some parts of Andhra Pradesh; some more parts of Telangana; entire Goa; some more parts of Karnataka and some more parts of Central Arabian Sea around October 23.

Low pressure systems over Kerala and Tamil Nadu near the Arabian Sea and another over Odisha and Andhra Pradesh coast near Bay of Bengal had delayed the process, IMD had said earlier.Because of the low-pressure systems and cyclonic circulations Kerala, Tamil Nadu and parts of Karnataka have experienced heavy to extremely heavy rainfall.

Let's give govt credit: Shashi Tharoor on 100 cr vaccination

After India on Thursday achieved a major milestone of 100 crore vaccination, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said that the credit should be given to the government and this is a matter of pride for the entire country.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

This is a matter of pride for all Indians. Let's give the Government credit. After severe mismanagement of the second #Covid wave & botching the vaccination orders that might have prevented it, Govt has now partly redeemed itself. It remains accountable for its earlier failures," Tharoor said in a tweet.

The CoWin portal on Thursday mentioned that a total of 100 crore vaccine doses has been administered so far to the eligible population under the vaccination drive in India.

India's vaccination drive against the Covid pandemic was launched on January 16, 2021. The healthcare workers were the first ones to get doses. Later, the frontline workers were also included in the drive from February 2. The state and central police personnel, Armed Forces, Home Guards, Civil Defence and others were included in the vaccination drive.

The vaccination drive was expanded from March 1 to include people above 60 years of age and those above 45 years with associated specified comorbidities. From May 1, the vaccination drive was thrown open to all above 18 years of age.

Prime Minister Modi said in a tweet, "India scripts history. We are witnessing the triumph of Indian science, enterprise and collective spirit of 130 crore Indians. Congrats India on crossing 100 crore vaccinations. Gratitude to our doctors, nurses and all those who worked to achieve this feat.

CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN ANNOUNCES 8% INCREASE IN DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

Now dearness allowance will increase from 12% to 20%. 50% of the increment amount will be given in the salary for the month of November and the remaining 50% in the salary of March 2022

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the employees of my state are Karmayogis in true sense. The service rendered by the employees during the Corona period is certainly commendable. In the last one and a half year, the state had to face two horrific waves of Corona. Due to this, on the one hand, the expenditure of the government increased, while on the other hand there was a huge decrease in the revenue income. That is why the government had postponed for some time the increment given to the employees in those difficult times. Now we have decided to increase dearness allowance and give increment.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that dearness allowance of all government staff of the state would be increased by 8 percent. The increased dearness allowance to government staff will be added to the salary of October 2021 to be paid in November 2021. With this, now the total dearness allowance to the officers and employees of the state will increase from 12 percent to 20 percent. Due to the financial condition of the state getting greatly affected during the Corona-era, the increments to government staff in July 2020 and January 2021 were also postponed. The state government has now decided that 50 percent of the pending increment will be given along with the salary of October 2021, to be paid in November 2021.

The remaining 50 percent of the pending increment will be given along with the salary for February 2022 to be paid in March 2022. Chief Minister Chouhan said this while discussing with the media at the state hangar in Bhopal.

Nation is grateful to martyred police personnel: Governor Patel

- Government and society stand with the families of the martyrs, Governor attends Police Memorial Day Parade programme

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that the entire nation is indebted to the martyred police personnel who laid down their lives in the service of the nation. He said that the government and the society always stand with the families of the martyrs. Patel was addressing the Police Commemoration Day Parade-2021 held at Lal Parade Ground.

Governor Mangubhai Patel said that commendable efforts are being made by the police administration to maintain law and order in the state. Speedy investigation of crimes and increase in punishment to the criminals has become possible due to the activeness of the State Police. He said that it is a matter of pride for all of us that the State Police is counted among the best forces of the country. Be ever ready to enhance the identity that the State Police has established with its activities. Appreciating the innovation Dial-100 innovation of the State Police, he said that common citizens have benefited from online character verification and e-FIR. Governor Shri Patel lauded the police for its success in effectively curbing the bandit problem and Naxalite activities in the state. He expressed happiness over the establishment of women police stations in all the districts and 700 Mahila Urja desks. On this occasion, Governor Shri Patel met the families of the police officers-employees who were martyred during the year 2020-21 and expressed his condolences. In his address, Director General of Police Vivek Johri said that on October 21, 1959, a team of Central Reserve Police Force personnel was martyred in an encounter with the Chinese Army in the remote area, Hot Springs in Ladakh. It is in their memory that this day is celebrated by all the police units of the country. He told that this year 15 police personnel of Madhya Pradesh were martyred while on duty. He assured the families of the martyrs that M.P. Police stands always with them and is determined to provide them facilities and assistance as per rules. The programme began with the Rashtra Dhun presented by the Police Band. Thereafter, the Pall-Bearer party handed over the list of martyred soldiers to be honoured to the Governor Patel and paid tribute to them by saluting the Parade Memorial. Governor Patel, Home Minister Dr. Narottam Mishra, Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains, Additional Chief Secretary Dr. Rajesh Rajoura, Director General of Police Vivek Johri and police officers paid tribute to the martyr police personnel by laying wreath at the martyr memorial.

CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PAYS TRIBUTE TO MARTYR KARANVEER SINGH RAJPUT

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has paid tribute to the martyr Karanveer Singh Rajput. Chief Minister Chouhan has tweeted that the brave son of India, the beloved of Satna, the brave jawan Karanveer Singh Rajput has attained martyrdom while displaying heroism and valour in Kashmir. May God grant the virtuous soul of the brave martyr a place at his feet and strength to the family members to bear this tremendous loss. The brave jawan Karanveer Singh Rajput is gone, but will live forever in our memories. We cannot bring him back, but his family is not alone. The whole country and Madhya Pradesh stand with his family.

IAF aircraft Mirage 2000 crashes in Bhind, pilot ejected safely

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A Mirage 2000 aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) crashed in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind district on Thursday.

The incident occurred at Mankabagh village near Barauli area of Bhind, which is around 500 km from state capital Bhopal.

The aircraft was being flown by lieutenant Abhilash. A video taken by a local shows pilot gliding down smoothly with the help of a parachute. However, he received minor injuries. Soon after the crash, the plane caught fire, however, the pilot was ejected safely with minor injuries, said a police official in Bhind district. "Villagers spotted the aircraft and informed local police. A team rushed to the spot and started rescue operation," said a senior police official. The aircraft had taken off from Maharajpura airbase in Gwalior in the morning, a senior airport official told reporter.

"An IAF Mirage 2000 aircraft experienced a technical malfunction during a training sortie in the central sector this morning. The pilot ejected safely," IAF said adding that an inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the cause of the crash.

CHIEF MINISTER CHOUHAN PLANTS RUDRAKSHA SAPLING IN PANNAS TAJ SAFARI

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a Rudraksha sapling at Hotel Taj Safari Complex in Panna this morning. MP V.D. Sharma was also present. Chief Minister Chouhan has taken a pledge to plant one sapling daily along with making the state lush and green. Under the same resolution, Chouhan planted a sapling of Rudraksha. Rudraksha is considered very sacred in Indian traditions.

Kamal Patel made controversial remarks on Kamal Nath

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel, while making controversial remarks on former Chief Minister and Congress State President Kamal Nath, said that Kamal Nath has gone mad. Responding to the attacks being made by former Chief Minister Kamal Nath on the BJP government of the state, Agriculture Minister Patel said that Kamal Nath is grieving after losing the power of the state. He looted this region a lot during the reign of 15 months.

Taking forward his point, Kamal Patel said that many welfare schemes were started under the leadership of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, they were stopped by Kamal Nath as soon as he came to the government. Along with this, Vallabh Bhavan was made a den of corruption. Agriculture Minister Patel further said that the condition of Kamal Nath has become exactly the same as that of a fish that came out of the water. Be it Kamal Nath or Digvijay Singh or any Congress leader, now it should be known that they are not going to return to power.

He claimed that in the upcoming assembly and Lok Sabha by-elections, the BJP will win at all four places and the lotus flower will bloom.

Women killed in third leopard attack in Seoni since Sep

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A 50-year-old woman was mauled to death by a leopard in Madhya Pradesh's Seoni district, a forest official said on Wednesday.

This was the third leopard killing in the district in one and a half months.

According to the forest official, the incident occured on Tuesday when the woman along with others was busy in cutting paddy in a field in Ugli area of Seoni."While the woman was busy in cutting paddy, she was, all of a sudden, attacked by the leopard and was mauled to death. Others, who were also in the field, however, managed to escape from wild animal's attack and raised an alarm," the official said.Forest officials said that four cages have been set up in the area to trap the animal.On October 16, a 16-year-old was killed by a leopard in Kanhiwada forest area in the district, while on September 15, a woman was attacked and killed by a leopard in another village of Seoni.

District authorities have written to the forest headquarters to declare this leopard a 'man-eater'. Following the attack, the Forest Department has advised villagers to stay away from areas where such incidents have occured and remain alert till the animal is captured.

Tussle between Shivraj and Kamal Nath gets bitter in the by-elections

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With the date of assembly and Lok Sabha by-elections approaching in Madhya Pradesh, the tussle between Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Congress state president Kamal Nath is increasing, both of whom are attacking each other. There is a possibility of more bitterness in the statements in the coming days. There is a by-election in Khandwa parliamentary constituency along with three assembly constituencies of Jobat, Prithvipur and Raigaon in the state. Voting is to be held on October 30. In these elections, both the parties are waiting for victory, that is why the series of attacks is also increasing continuously.

Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, while calling the state Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan an actor once again in the meetings of Pandhana Chhegaon Makhan and Sanawad, said that Shivraj should be a good actor, a good artist, know the art very well, from morning to night. You tell lies, mislead the public, make false announcements everyday, you should leave politics and go to Mumbai, do art there.

Kamal Nath alleged that in the last 17 years, more than 22 thousand false announcements have been made. We are talking about development every day, we are talking about inflation, we are talking about farmers, we are talking about fertilizer crisis, we are talking about electricity crisis, we are talking about crops damaged by rain. We are talking about employment of youth, you are talking about respect and security of sisters and daughters, but you leave the development, only misleading issues, false announcements, false foundation stones, false coconuts.

On the other hand, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan made a scathing attack on Kamal Nath in the public meeting in Khandwa parliamentary constituency and said, Congress leaders come, reprimand the speeches and Kamal Nath gives less speech and plays more Twitter-Twitter. Kamal Nath keeps tweeting me everyday, just ask him how many irrigation schemes you have made. Shivraj accused Congress that Congress has nothing to do with development. Roti, cloth, house and education, medicine and employment are the issue in elections, but Congress has no issue, so they are making unrestrained statements on women.

'Chashma' a new entrant in by-polls campaign in MP

Praveen Dwivedi | Bhopal

With just a few days left for the by-polls in three assembly constituencies and one Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh, leaders from both national political parties -- the BJP and the Congress -- are letting go of no opportunity to take a swipe at each other.

While the ruling BJP leaders at each campaign rally accused the Congress of 'indulging in corruption and vasooli' (recovering money) during Kamal Nath's 15 month government, the latter (Congress) is busy reminding the people about incidents which occurred in the last 15 years in the state.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, for whom the by-polls have become a matter of prestige, repeatedly accused Kamal Nath of stopping several development works initiated during his tenure.

"During the last elections Kamal Nath-led Congress made several promises but all those promises were thrown into the dustbin after coming to power. He (Kamal Nath) had promised he will bring money from his own sources and will start development works, provide jobs but he failed. Now, he and the entire Congress party are asking me to show my work report," Shivraj Singh Chouhan said while addressing a rally in Raigon assembly constituency in Satna district on Wednesday.

If the BJP finds Kamal Nath's 15 month tenure as chief minister less to blame, it leaves no chance to remind people about former Congress chief minister Digvijaya Singh's tenure, who was the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh from 1993 to 2003.

Amid this blame game and reminding of past incidents, the by-polls campaign has taken another route also. For the last two days, leaders from both the parties have found a new subject for the campaign 'Pratima ke balon me latka chashma' which sounds akin to the popular comedy show 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah'.

'Pratima ke balon me latka chashma' became a subject of political speech after Brijendra Pratap Singh (a minister in Shivraj's cabinet) was seen removing a chashmah (spectacle) from Pratima Bagri's hair, who is the BJP's candidate from Raigon assembly constituency.

Taking a dig after the incident, state Congress leaders named it - 'Pratima ke balon me latka chashma'.

Also, the Congress found this incident to be an opportunity to blame the BJP for 'disrespectful behaviour with a woman'.

However, Chouhan, who was addressing a rally in Raigon (Satna) for Pratima Bagri on Wednesday, attacked the Congress saying, "They (Congress) have nothing to tell what they have done in 15 months, which is why they have found this incident as a political opportunity."

Meanwhile, Kamal Nath blamed the BJP-run state government for high inflation and rampant corruption. "He (Shivraj) is a good actor of his director (PM Modi). In the last 15 years, more than 22,000 announcements have been made but the condition of people in Madhya Pradesh is worsening day by day. People are fed up with fake promises," Nath said while addressing a rally in Kandwa Lok Sabha constituency on Wednesday.

EDITOR'S SPECS

Breach of Paris agreement

As climate disasters increase in intensity and frequency around the world, the 2021 Production Gap Report by leading research institutes and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on Wednesday found that despite increased climate ambitions and net-zero commitments the governments still plan to produce more than double the amount of fossil fuels in 2030 than what would be consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Over the next two decades, the governments are collectively projecting an increase in global oil and gas production, and only a modest decrease in coal production. Taken together, their plans and projections see global, total fossil fuel production increasing to at least 2040, creating an ever-widening production gap. The devastating impacts of climate change are here for all to see. There is still time to limit long-term warming to 1.5 degrees C, but this window of opportunity is rapidly closing. The 2021 Production Gap Report provides country profiles for 15 major producer countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the UAE, the UK, and the USA. The report's main findings include the world's governments plan to produce around 110 per cent more fossil fuels in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 1.5 degrees C, and 45 per cent more than consistent with 2 degrees C. It finds governments' production plans and projections would lead to about 240 per cent more coal, 57 per cent more oil, and 71 per cent more gas in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C. The global gas production is projected to increase the most between 2020 and 2040 based on governments' plans.

KASHMIR: A BATTLE THAT HAS BEEN LAID OFF FOR FAR TOO LONG

Amjad Ayub Mirza

On October 22, 1947 Pakistan attacked the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It was the beginning of a conflict that would leave thousands dead and maimed and scar the lives of millions. It was also the start of a feud between India and Pakistan that continues to this day.

Attempts, thenceforth, made by India to try to resolve the issue of Kashmir peacefully through the corridors of international diplomacy have each time ended in a stalemate at the floor of the United Nations forcing India to start attempts to seek a resolution, all over again.

Meanwhile, religious terrorist outfits, working in unison with Pakistani military establishment and its spy agency the ISI, have kept the riot alive, which Pakistan presents to the world community as evidence of an ongoing imaginary mass separatist movement in Kashmir.

Today, as battle hardened LeT and other jihadi terrorists returning from Afghanistan have once again managed to infiltrate our territory and an all-out Indian military operation in Poonch is under way, which, by the way, has already cost the lives of 10 of our jawans and 15 infiltrators, the occasion begs to seek a new approach towards solving the seventy odd year old conflict that seems to be going round in circles.

At the time of Partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 guidelines for the future of the 560 plus Princely States were stated in the 1935 Government of India Act according to which, The Indian (princely) state's...accession to a Federation (Pakistan or India) ... cannot take place otherwise than by the voluntary act of the Ruler of each State.

The government of Pakistan entered into a bilateral agreement (Stand-Still Agreement. August 15, 1947) with the State of Jammu Kashmir according to which Pakistan was obliged to accept the independent status of the State. However, on October 22 of the same year Pakistan army, along with tribal mercenaries that it had hired from north-western parts of the newly established country, launched an attack on the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Due to its surprise nature, the attack caught Maharaja Hari Singh unprepared. Soon Pakistani troops were calling at the gates of Srinagar. It was then that the Maharaja made a wise decision and acceded to India. The Instrument of Accession was thus signed on October 26, 1947. Next morning Indian jawans began to land at the Srinagar airport. Soon the Pakistani intruders were forced to retreat and pushed across the River Poonch.

Had the Nehru government not made the mistake of seeking a ceasefire from the United Nation Security Council (UNSC), we, the people of Pakistan occupied Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan would have been free citizens of Bharat as well.

According to the UNSC resolution of August 13, 1948, the first step in the direction of restoring peace in the region demanded a total withdrawal of Pakistani troops and all (nonresident) tribal invaders. Did Pakistan comply? No, not to this day. Instead of following the conditions for restoration of peace laid down by the UNSC, Pakistan conducted Operation Grand Slam and Operation Gibraltar (1965), and the Kargil war (1999).

In 1990, Pakistan conducted one of the most outrageous terrorist campaigns in the Valley that we now know as the genocide of the aborigines of Kashmir; the Kashmiri Pandits. They were target killed, raped and persecuted which led to the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley of Jammu Kashmir. Hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits remain internally displaced to this day.

India cannot sprint into becoming a global player unless the pebble of Kashmir issue is removed from under her sole. Time has come, or so it seems, that a totally new treatment to a chronic ailment is found for the following reasons.

Firstly, the UNSC has not been able to make Pakistan follow its resolution thus undermining the authority of the institution to enforce its decisions. Secondly, numerous efforts made by various Indian governments to negotiate a settlement for Kashmir issue by peaceful means has always ended up in emboldening Pakistan, which has taken our restraint in wake of terrorist attacks on our motherland (such as the current one), as our weakness. And, finally, the change of seat of power in Kabul has diminished our chances of a collaborated pincer act of smothering of Pakistan by Afghanistan and India.

So, under the prevailing actuality what choices are we left with. What we should realise is that old choices we had so far available to us have become obsolete.

I am of the opinion that the time to hit Pakistan hard has come. And to hit Pakistan hard on all fronts simultaneously would be key to our success. Therefore, as Pakistan struggles to come to grips with its economic downfall and at a time when the State is at war with itself, as Bajwa-Imran wrestle over the appointment of the new director general of the spy agency ISI, we must strengthen the forces that are struggling to liberate themselves from the clutches of Pakistani military establishment, i.e., the Baloch and the Sindhi nationalists.We must also seriously consider to end the ceasefire and begin to pound on strategic targets inside Pakistan. And openly claim PoJK and PoGB to be a part of the Republic of India by allowing dissidents from the occupied territories into Rajya Sabha/Lok Sabha and in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. Internationally, we must find means to appoint able foreign representatives who can actively confront the ISI narrative on Kashmir and inform the world community of the atrocities committed by Pakistan's deep state that began on and since October 22, 1947.

Only by taking bold and controlled steps and by confronting evil by looking it in the eyes can we win the battle of Kashmir; a battle that has been laid off for far too long.

(Dr Amjad Ayub Mirza is an author and a human rights activist from Mirpur in POJK. He currently lives in-exile in the UK. The views expressed are personal)

international

S.KOREA FAILS TO LAUNCH 1ST HOMEGROWN ROCKET

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea on Thursday failed to put a dummy satellite into orbit with its first homegrown rocket, dealing a setback to the country's decade-long project to join the elite global space club.

The KSLV-II rocket, also known as Nuri, flew to a target altitude of 700 km but failed to place the 1.5-tonne dummy satellite into orbit, President Moon Jae-in said in a press briefing at the Naro Space Centre in the southern coastal village of Goheung.

"The test-launch of Nuri-ho was completed. I am proud of it... Regrettably, we did not perfectly reach the goal, but we made a very creditable achievement in the first launch," he said.

The failure underscores the challenges of sending a satellite into orbit, a space launch vehicle technology that South Korea has been seeking to acquire

for more than a decade for its space program. So far, only six countries -- Russia, the US, France, China, Japan and India -- have developed a space launch vehicle that can carry a more than 1-tonne satellite. Moon said South Korea plans to conduct another launch of the Nuri space rocket next year. South Korea's rocket launches ended in failure in 2009 and 2010. In 2013, South Korea successfully launched its first-ever Naro space rocket, though its first stage was built in Russia.

The three-stage Nuri rocket uses a clustering of four 75-tonne liquid engines in its first stage, a 75-tonne liquid engine in the second stage and a 7-tonne liquid engine in the third stage.

South Korea has invested nearly 2 trillion won ($1.8 billion) in building the three-stage Nuri since 2010.

The whole process of the launch was carried out with homegrown technology, including design, production, testing and launch operation.

The launch came amid tensions over North Korea's test-firing of a new submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) on Tuesday, the latest in a series of missile launches by the North.

POLISH HEALTH MINISTER REPORTS COVID 'EXPLOSION'

Warsaw: Poland has seen an "explosion" of the Covid-19 pandemic over the past two days, and the government will have to take "drastic measures" if the trend continues, Health Minister Adam Niedzielski said at a press conference here. The week-on-week increases in the number of new infections on Tuesday and Wednesday reached 85 per cent and 100 per cent, respectively, he said.

"If this continues, the situation will distort all our forecasts," Xinhua news agency quoted Niedzielski as saying. "The realization of a scenario that goes beyond the forecast path is certainly an important alert and a red light for us."More than one third of the new daily infections were reported in just two of Poland's 16 provinces - Lubelskie and Podlaskie in the east, where the vaccination rate is also the lowest, the Minister said.

Trump to launch new social media platform

Washington | Agencies

Former US President Donald Trump has announced plans to launch a new social media network, called TRUTH Social, media reports said.

According to the BBC, Trump said the platform would "stand up to the tyranny of big tech", accusing them of silencing opposing voices in the US.

Social media played a pivotal role in Trump's bid for the White House and was his favourite means of communication as president. But he was banned from Twitter and suspended from Facebook after his supporters stormed the US Capitol.

Social media firms were under pressure throughout Trump's presidency to ban him, with his posts criticised as insulting, inflammatory or peddling outright falsehoods, the report said. Last year Twitter and Facebook began deleting some of his posts or labelling them as misleading, such as one in which he said Covid-19 was "less lethal" than the flu.

They took the decision to ban or suspend

Trump after the January riots, which followed a speech in which he made baseless claims of electoral fraud. Responding to the riots, Trump called those at the Capitol "patriots" and showed no sign of accepting the result of the election, prompting Twitter and Facebook to rule that it was too risky to allow him to continue to use their sites.

Since then he and his advisers have hinted that they were planning to create a rival social media site. Earlier this year, he launched From the Desk of Donald J Trump, which was often referred to as a blog.

NZ passes world's first climate reporting legislation

Wellington | Agencies

New Zealand has become the first country in the world to pass a law that will ensure financial organisations to disclose and act on climate-related risks and opportunities, the government announced on Thursday.

The Financial Sector (Climate-related Disclosures and Other Matters) Amendment Bill has now passed its third reading. Once in effect, it is expected to make a significant contribution to New Zealand achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, reports Xinhua news agency.

"Financial services and markets play an important role in New Zealand's transition to a clean, green and carbon-neutral future," Commerce and Consumer Affairs Minister David Clark said. "This Bill will require around 200 of the largest financial market participants in New Zealand to disclose clear, comparable and consistent information about the risks, and opportunities, climate change presents to their business. In doing so, it will promote business certainty, raise expectations, accelerate progress and create a level playing field," Clark said.

Climate Change Minister James Shaw said the legislation is one of a number of actions the New Zealand government is taking to meet its international obligations and achieve the 2050 emissions targets required by the Climate Change Response Act 2002.

"Climate-related disclosures will bring climate risks and resilience into the heart of financial and business decision making. It will encourage entities to become more sustainable by factoring the short, medium, and long-term effects of climate change into their business decisions.

Global Covid-19 caseload tops 241.9 mn

Washington | Agencies

Navirus caseload has topped 241.9 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 4.92 million and vaccinations soared to over 6.69 billion, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

In its latest update on Thursday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload, death toll and the total number number of vaccine doses administered stood at 241,982,823, 4,921,316 and 6,695,082,674, respectively.

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 45,218,829 and 731,263, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 34,108,996 cases.

The other worst countries with over 3 million cases are Brazil (21,680,488), the UK (8,630,071), Russia (7,969,960), Turkey (7,744,109), France (7,202,840), Iran (5,821,737), Argentina (5,275,984), Spain (4,993,295), Colombia (4,984,751), Italy (4,725,887), Indonesia (4,237,201), Germany (4,417,771) and Mexico (3,762,689), the CSSE figures showed.Nations with a death toll of over 100,000 are Brazil (604,228), India (452,651), Mexico (284,925), Russia (222,320), Peru (199,928), Indonesia (143,077), the UK (139,444), Italy (131,688), Colombia (126,931), Iran (124,585), France (118,300) and Argentina (115,770).

N.Korea says its SLBM test-launch not targeting US

Seoul: North Korea said on Thursday that its recent test-firing of a new submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) was not targeted toward the US, adding there is no need for Washington to "worry" over it. A spokesperson for the North's foreign ministry expressed concerns over what it called "abnormal" reactions from the US and the UN Security Council as they convened an emergency meeting on its "rightful exercise of right to defence," Yonhap news reported, citing the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Two days earlier, North Korea fired an SLBM from the vicinity of Sinpo, where its main submarine shipyard is located. It marked the North's eighth known major missile test this year.

"To criticise the DPRK for developing and test-firing the same weapon system as the one the US possesses or is developing is a clear expression of double-standards and it only excites our suspicion about the 'authenticity' of its statement that it does not antagonize the DPRK," the spokesperson said.

DPRK stands for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

WHAT WAS NCB CHIEF DOING IN MALDIVES-DUBAI DURING LOCKDOWN, ASKS NCP MINISTER

Quaid Najmi | Mumbai

NCP leader and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on Thursday demanded to know what was the NCB's Mumbai region chief Sameer Wankhede doing in Dubai and the Maldives with his family during the pandemic lockdown and threatened him with jail for "concocting drug cases against Bollywood personalities".

In a dual attack, he shared photos of Wankhede's family holidaying in Maldives when the entire Bollywood was also there.

"Its very clear all this 'vasuli' (extortion) took place in Maldives and Dubai. I am releasing those photos. What was he doing in Maldives-Dubai, he must answer," Malik said at a public rally in Pune amid a thunderous applause.

Daring Wankhede to come clean on his Dubai-Maldives sojourns with family, Malik, who is the national Spokesperson of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), said attempts were made to implicate certain film folks in fake cases and parade them before the NCB.

"Along with some Bharatiya Janata Party people, Wankhede is threatening the film industry people... I am repeating - He keeps filing false cases and arresting people based on WhatsApp chats and without any evidence. I am going to reveal more on this," he warned.

The NCP leader declared that soon, he will "expose Wankhede with full proof on all the fake cases with which he's trying to instil fear in Bollywood," for which he would pay a heavy price.

"Within six months he will lose his job and within a year, he will be jailed. I am collecting evidence against him," he said.

He released some photos of Sameer Wankhede's sister Jasmeen Wankhede, ostensibly shot in Maldives with captions and tagging her friends, including Fletcher Patel who had called her the 'Lady Don'.

Malik's statements got angry reaction from the opposition Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS)'s film wing chief Ameya Khopkar who cautioned the NCP leader "to keep off and stop dragging" his party colleague (Jasmeen Wankhede) into his politics. Jasmeen Wankhede also hit back, asking whether "Malik is a judge", and said she was accountable to her family or friends and the NCP leader had no business to make public her private trip.

Sameer Wankhede, who had arrested Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan in January 2021 in an alleged drugs case, said in an anguished tone: "I fail to understand why the attacks on me, my sister, my retired father, my deceased mother, when I am merely doing my duty. The cases are sub-judice. I will give a fitting reply later."

Malik added that after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput (June 2020), Wankhede was brought to the NCB but the mystery continues whether Sushant committed suicide or it was a murder.

"But, thereafter, the NCB has started playing its games with the film industry. Dozens of stars were summoned on WhatsApp conversations. Rhea Chakraborty was arrested for some Rs 4,000 payment."

He reiterated his demand to probe the WhatsApp records of Sameer Wankhede which would reveal the "bogus" nature of the NCB's cases. Bharatiya Janata Party state President Chandrakant Patil said that Malik is rattled by the arrest of his son-in-law and has been slamming the NCB since the past two weeks. The war between the NCB-NCP erupted after the probe agency raided a rave party aboard a cruise ship and arrested 8 persons, including Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan - all now in judicial custody till October 30.

Later, the NCB nabbed 12 others, and on Thursday, actress Ananya Panday was summoned for probe, which will continue further on

NCB 'probes' SRK home, summons Ananya Panday, conducts raids

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a major development, teams of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) paid a formal 'visit' to the residences of Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan in Bandra west, and actress Ananya Panday in Khar west, and raided a location in Andheri on Thursday as part of the ongoing probe into the October 2 luxury cruiser rave party.

"The NCB Mumbai Zonal Unit officials visited 'Mannat', the residence of Aryan Khan in connection with the (Cr.94/21 case) for seeking certain material related to the investigation of the case from Shah Rukh Khan, by following due procedure of notice, etc.," said NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede in a statement later.

He also dismissed reports in sections of the media dubbing the NCB trip to the superstar's sea-facing bungalow as a 'raid'.

The development, which grabbed national attention, came shortly after the Bombay High Court this morning decided to take up his son Aryan Khan's bail plea on next Tuesday, October 26.

Simultaneously, Ananya Panday -- daughter of Bollywood actor Chunky Panday and granddaughter of the renowned heart surgeon, the late Dr. Sharad Panday -- has been summoned to the NCB offices this day for the probe and the actress.

The NCB has claimed that her name apparently figures in some WhatsApp chats of Aryan Khan recovered by the agency, along with others.

As part of its probe into the cruise ship party raids, the NCB has arrested a total of 20 persons so far, and more arrests are not ruled out.

It may be recalled that Nationalist Congress Party National Spokesperson and Minister Nawab Malik had last week claimed that among various Bollywood bigwigs targeted, Shah Rukh Khan was also on the radar of the central probe agency with sleuths keeping a watch on 'Mannat' in recent weeks.

Aryan's judicial custody extended, Bombay HC to hear bail next week

Spelling no respite for Aryan Khan, a special NDPS court on Thursday extended his judicial custody till October 30, even as his bail plea is expected to come up before Bombay High Court on October 26.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Along with Aryan Khan - the son of superstar Shah Rukh Khan, the other seven accused - arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau on October 3 after the October 2 raid on a rave party aboard a cruise ship - were also sent to judicial custody till October 30 by the court.

They are: Arbaaz Merchant, Munmun Dhamecha, Nupur Satija, Ishmeet Singh Chadna, Mohak Jaswal, Gomit Chopra and Vikrant Chhoker. Twelve others were arrested by the NCB during the subsequent investigations. Aryan Khan's judicial custody was set to expire on Thursday. Earlier on Thursday, Justice N. W. Sambre of the Bombay High Court posted to October 26 the hearing of the bail application of Aryan Khan, who was declined bail by the Special NDPS Court on Wednesday.The matter came up before Justice Sambre with Khan's lawyer Satish Maneshinde seeking an urgent hearing on Friday or Monday.However, Justice Sambre decided to take up the matter on Tuesday next only.Following a swoop on a cruise ship by the NCB, Aryan Khan, along with Merchant and Dhamecha and the five others, was detained and arrested on October 3, and has since remained in custody for the past 20 days.He was sent on a day's NCB remand by Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate R.M. Nerlikar till October 4, and this was extended till October 7. He was then sent to two weeks' judicial custody, till October 21.

Tiger Shroff becomes face of global campaign on urban forests, climate conservation

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rapid industrialisation, expansion of cities and encroachment of farmland and forests have thwarted the natural balance all across the globe. Add to that the reckless consumerism that has poisoned our ecosystem and has pushed many species to the verge of extinction. To say that the threat of climate change and environmental degradation looms large, would be an understatement.

The world is sitting on a ticking time bomb and, as members of the human species, we need to act now before the damage becomes irreversible. Recently, actor Tiger Shroff extended his support to Bhamla Foundation for the cause of urban afforestation.

The initiative is supported by Norwegian diplomat Erik Solheim. Bhamla Foundation has come up with a unique solution to counter the problem, to play a reverse card on the expansion of cities. They aim to strategically work towards creation and expansion of urban forests and bring the climate change under control. Tiger shared his thoughts on climate change and how we can tackle the bull by its horns with the help of this campaign.

The actor told reporter, "I feel really honoured to be a part of such an important global campaign with Bhamla Foundation because conserving the urban forests and slowing down climate change is the need of the hour if we want to build a sustainable future for us all." He feels that the road to salvation will emerge from the change in our lifestyles and consuming habits. He added, "Even a small change in your lifestyle at home can go a long way in protecting the environment so I hope to bring as much support from people, especially the youth as I can, for this campaign."

Solheim also spoke about the work by the foundation, he said, "I am glad to know about the excellent work Bhamla Foundation has done. It has been doing and immensely contributing towards protecting the environment, developing and conservation of urban forests."

He shared that having Tiger on board will help in bringing about a change as the campaign will reach out to more people. "Having Tiger Shroff as a youth icon as he is the perfect ambassador to drive people especially the youth towards the cause," he concluded.

Mumbai police arrest 'hawala' operator in extortion case against Param Bir Singh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai Police have arrested a 42-year-old 'hawala' operator from Gujarat in connection with an extortion case registered against former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh, an official said on Thursday.

The accused, identified as Alpesh Patel, was apprehended on Tuesday by a team of the Mumbai Police's crime branch unit-11 from Mehsana in Gujarat, he said.

Hawala denotes illegal transaction of funds by skirting the legal banking channels.

Patel's role came to light during an investigation into the extortion case, which was filed a few months back by businessman Bimal Agrawal at Goregaon police station here against IPS officer Param Bir Singh, the official said. Accordingly, the Mumbai police launched a search for Patel.

Acting on an information, a police team went to Mehsana and arrested Patel, the official said.

He was on Wednesday produced before a court which sent him in police custody till Friday, the official said, adding that a probe is underway into the case. Multiple cases of extortion have been registered against Singh at various police stations in Mumbai and neighbouring Thane.

A lookout notice had also been issued against the IPS officer, but investigation agencies have not been able to trace him so far.

SRK meets Aryan in Arthur Road Jail

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan on Thursday morning went to meet his son Aryan, currently lodged in a barrack with other criminals at the Arthur Road Central Jail (ARCJ) , after his detention and arrest by the NCB in a drugs case.

The pony-tailed senior Khan sporting dark shades and a black facemask over a grey half-sleeved T-shirt was virtually mobbed by the paparazzi and the hordes of policemen as he entered the menacing barred gates of the ARCJ in the congested south Mumbai. Accompanied by a couple of their lawyers, the father-son duo met ahead of Aryan Khan's bail plea, which is likely to come up before the Bombay High Court later in the day.

However, despite a volley of media queries, Khan moved around with folded hands but without response, as he emerged after a 10-minute tete-a-tete with Aryan.

CBI chief is 'potential accused' in Anil Deshmukh case: Maha govt

Team Absolute | Mumbai

CBI director Subodh Jaiswal himself should be considered a "potential accused" in the central agency's probe against former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh, the state government told the Bombay High Court on Thursday.

Senior counsel Darius Khambata, who appeared for the Maharashtra government, told a bench of Justices Nitin Jamdar and S V Kotwal that during 2019 to 2020, when Jaiswal was the state Director General of Police (DGP), he was also part of the Police Establishment Board.

The senior IPS officer was thus involved in decisions on transfers and postings of police officers which the CBI is now probing, the lawyer said.

The Maharashtra government has challenged before the high court summons issued by the CBI to state chief secretary Sitaram Kunte and present state DGP Sanjay Pandey to record statements in connection with the agency's probe against Anil Deshmukh.

Recommendations for transfers and postings were approved by Jaiswal in his capacity as DGP during Deshmukh's tenure, Khambata said.

"A CBI probe is ongoing into transfers and postings of state police officers made during former home minister Anil Deshmukh's tenure. Then the next in line (to be probed) is the Director General of Police, who is the fulcrum, who is at the heart of the issue of transfers and postings. So having the former DGP head the investigation is like having Anil Deshmukh investigate it himself," the state's lawyer said.

The CBI is probing allegations of corruption made by former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh against Deshmukh, an NCP leader.

Following an order of the Bombay High Court on April 5, 2021, the CBI conducted a preliminary inquiry into the allegations made by Singh against Deshmukh and later registered an FIR.

In September this year, the CBI summoned Maharashtra chief secretary Sitaram Kunte and the present DGP Sanjay Pandey for recording statements in the case. The Maharashtra government has moved the HC challenging the summons.

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Date : 20/10/2021.

Managing Director, (Procurement Cell), Haffkine Bio Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd., Mumbai invites tenders in two envelope systems from eligible bidders for following items for various Health Institutions in Maharashtra.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Name of Description	Date of Pre Bid Meeting	Period of Sale and Preparation of bid & bid submission	Bid Opening
1)	E- 4232	Endo Vascular Laser Ablation Machine	Bidders should send their queries by mail on or before 30.10.2021 upto 11:00 a.m.	From 22.10.2021 10.00 am to 11.11.2021 up to 14:00 hrs.	12.11.2021 at 14:00 hrs.

For detailed information, the interested bidders may visit the website https://mahatenders.gov.in
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(Dr.Vijay Bawiskar)
Genral Manager,
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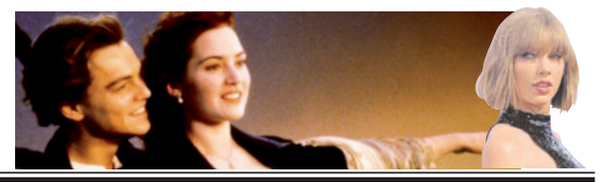


Ruby Rose claims misconduct on 'Batwoman' led to exit

Los Angeles | Agencies

Former 'Batwoman' star Ruby Rose aired several allegations of wrongdoing on the set of the show, which they say led to their exit in May 2020.

In a series of Instagram posts on Wednesday, Rose claimed they were forced to continue work on the DC series shortly after suffering a neck injury on set, reports variety.com.

After posting pictures and video in the hospital, Rose wrote: "To everyone who said I was too stiff on batwoman, imagine going back to work 10 days after this.

"10 DAYS!!!!!! (or the whole crew and cast would be fired and I'd let everyone down because Peter Roth said he wouldn't recast and i just lost the studio millions (by getting injured on his set) that is be the one who cost so many people their jobs."

Warner Bros. Television replied to Rose's allegations in a statement, saying: "Despite the revisionist history that Ruby Rose is now sharing online aimed at the producers, the cast and crew, the network and the studio, the truth is that Warner Bros.

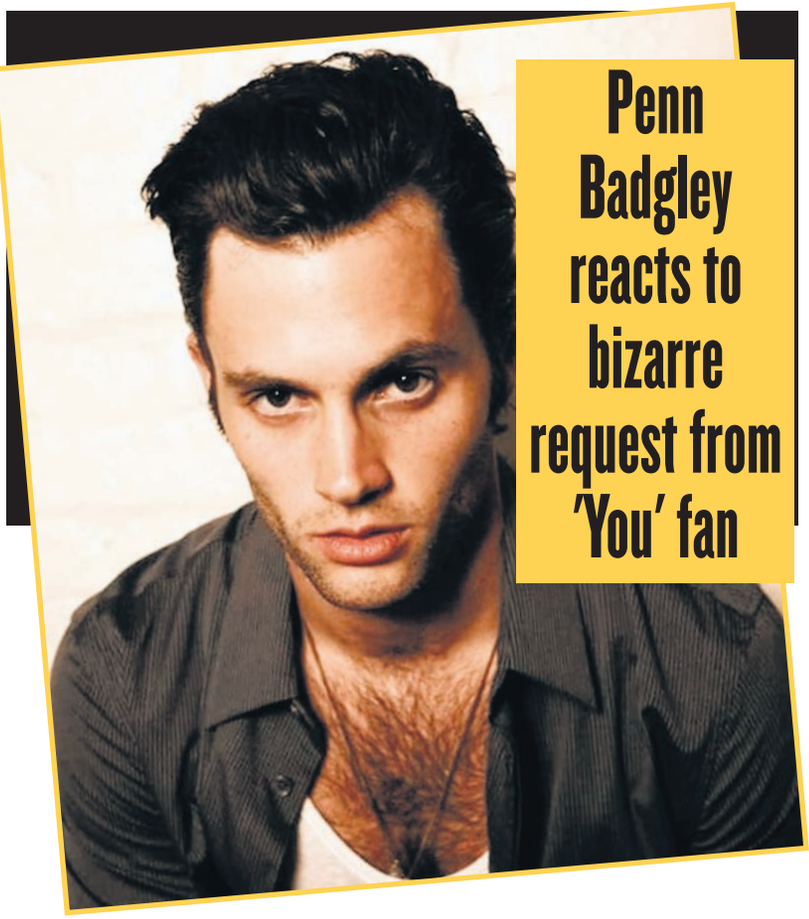
"Television had decided not to exercise its option to engage Ruby for season two of 'Batwoman' based on multiple complaints about workplace behavior that were extensively reviewed and handled privately out of respect for all concerned."

Rose also addressed their absence from San Diego Comic-Con in support of the show's first season, which surprised many fans.

"Imagine having to take a pay cut to play a passion project and being so excited about Comic-Con and then being told they would not adjust the schedule so I could attend but then saying 'we won't announce it, you have to'," they wrote.

Rose also leveled allegations at co-star Dougray Scott, who played Jacob Kane on 'Batwoman' for its first two seasons.

Rose says that Scott "hurt a female stunt double, he yelled like a little b****h at women and was a nightmare. He left when he wanted and arrived when he wanted. He abused women and in turn as the lead of a show I sent an email out asking for a no yelling policy, they declined".



Penn Badgley reacts to bizarre request from 'You' fan

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Penn Badgley has reacted to an outrageous request from 'You' fans.

Replying to a fan, who asked to be kidnapped, the actor, who plays Joe Goldberg on the hit series, said that he's "not mad".

On Tuesday, the former 'Gossip Girl' star took to his Twitter account to reply to a tweet from his fan that read, "Ayoooo kidnap me."

He jokingly wrote: "Idk why but when 'kidnap me' is prefaced by 'ayoooo', it has a completely different ring to it and I'm not mad."

The social media exchange continued when a user sent crying emojis in response.

Badgley replied: "This is growth, right? For everyone." The reporter then wrote back, "We're getting there! You know, as a society."

'Season 3' of the hit Netflix series debuted on October 15.

The 'Easy A' star previously revealed that he wasn't thrilled with fans rooting for his character, who repeatedly stalks and kills people.

After Season 2 was released on Netflix in December 2019, the actor said that Joe doesn't deserve any sympathy from the audience.

He said at the time: "Joe is not actually looking for true love. He's not actually a person who just needs somebody who loves him. He's a murderer! He's a sociopath. He's abusive. He's delusional. And he's self-obsessed."

GAL GADOT 'HAPPY' TO HAVE CATWOMAN ZOE KRAVITZ AS FEMALE 'COMRADE'

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Wonder Woman' star Gal Gadot has given a thumbs up to actor Robert Pattinson as the new Batman and ZoA Kravitz as Catwoman.

"Rob looks amazing," Gal Gadot said at Elle's Women in Hollywood event at the Academy Museum when she was asked if she had seen the new 'The Batman' trailer, reports variety.com.Gadot said: "I love his voice and I love the whole tone of everything. And I love Zoe. She looks incredible. She's a sweetheart. She's a talented woman. And I'm so happy to have another female as a comrade."So when does Gadot think we'll see an all-female superhero movie with 'Wonder Woman'?

"That's a good question," she said, reports variety.com."We should ask (DC Films president) Walter Hamada. Actually, I'm going to write that in my notes to ask him."

'NIGHT TEETH': FANGLESS BUT INTRIGUING

FILM REVIEW

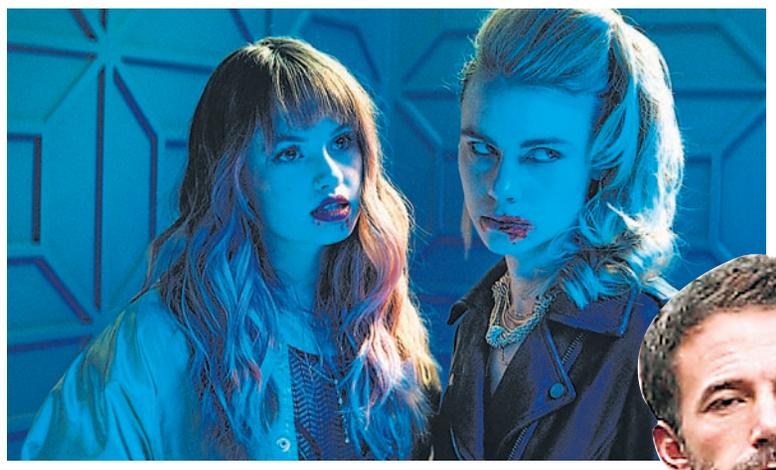
TROY RIBEIRO

Creator: Adam Randall

Cast: Jorge Lendeborg Jr, Debby Ryan, Lucy Fry, Raul Castillo, Alfie Allen, Marlene Forte, Alexander Ludwig, Ash Santos, Megan Fox and Sydney Sweeney.

Duration: 107 minutes.(Streaming on Netflix)

Ratings: **1/2 (two stars and half)



Set in Los Angeles, 'Night Teeth' is a young adult rom-com designed in the vampire-thriller genre.

The film starts with neon-soaked frames flashing portraits of vampire history, and we are told about the suburb of Boyle Heights, which is the only place in Los Angeles where vampires are forbidden because of a truce made some years ago. But now, one vampire in his quest for power breaks that truce, which results in a war not only between humans and vampires, but among themselves as well.

The story revolves around Benny (Jorge Lendeborg Jr.), a chilled-out college kid who loves his college and creates his own music. He lives with his grandmother (Marlene Forte) and his brother Jay (Raul Castillo).

One day, filling in for his brother as a chauffeur, he pulls up to a Beverly Hills mansion, where he picks up Zoe (Lucy Fry) and Blaire (Debby Ryan), who say they want to go party-hopping around the city.

As he drives them from one venue to another, it soon becomes clear to Benny that something is amiss, and when he walks in on them, he realises that these two are not mere girls but vampires feasting on fresh blood. Soon he is introduced to the dark side of his neighbourhood and realises that the girls he is driving around are on a power trip along with Zoe's boyfriend Victor (Alfie Allen).

The film is staged as a generic action crime thriller, but the narrative is kept afloat with romance brewing between Benny and Blaire, which makes this plot interesting. It certainly seems unrealistic to fall for a bloodsucker, but then, the film's makers have shown that vampires do have a heart, and you keep wondering if Benny will survive the night, especially after he is asked, "You give good blood, don't you?"

Every actor in the film is worth their salt and they deliver their chops with aplomb. Jorge Lendeborg as Benny is charming, Lucy Fry and Debby Ryan as taunting fashionistas are stereotyped and cliched, but they leave a bloodbath in their wake. We don't get to see much of the action until much later in the film.

The action-by-the-numbers scenes nudge the plot grudgingly. Perfunctorily mounted, they do not elevate the gore, horror or thrills. By the third act, the moderately paced tale loses steam, but not its intrigue value as to what will happen to Benny.

Ben Affleck excited by Ridley Scott's shooting style on 'The Last Duel'

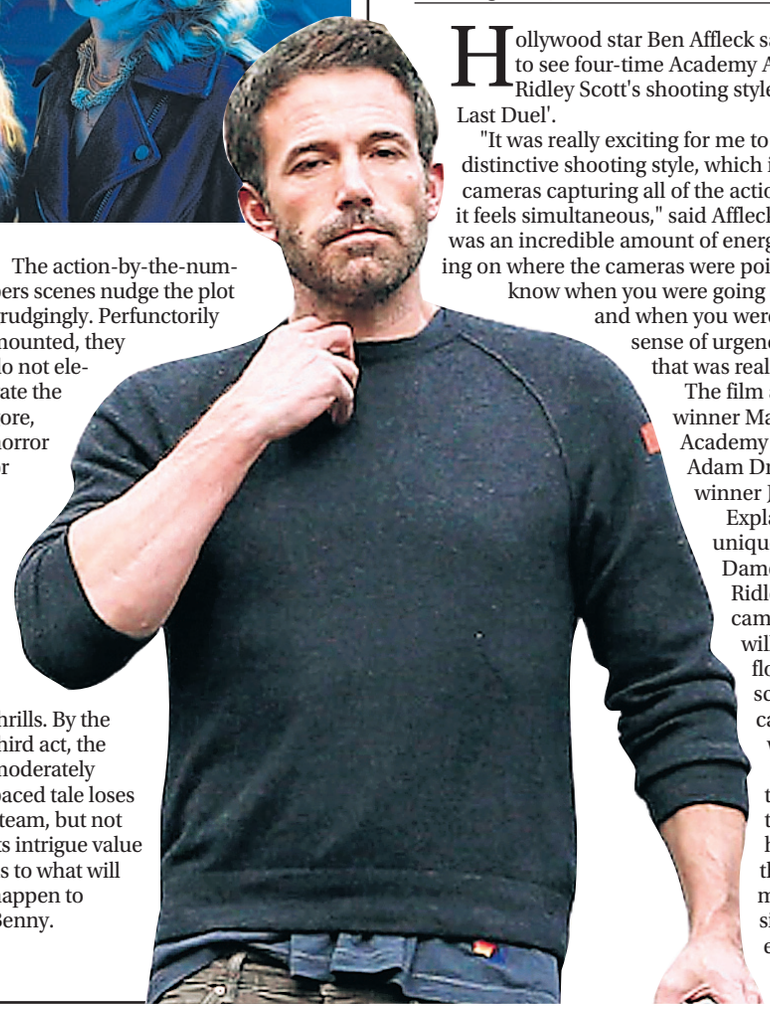
Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Ben Affleck says he was excited to see four-time Academy Award nominee Ridley Scott's shooting style while filming 'The Last Duel'.

"It was really exciting for me to see Ridley's very distinctive shooting style, which involves multiple cameras capturing all of the action in two parts, but it feels simultaneous," said Affleck. He added: "There was an incredible amount of energy present depending on where the cameras were pointing. You didn't know when you were going to be on camera and when you weren't, which created a sense of urgency and immediacy that was really great."

The film also stars Oscar winner Matt Damon, two-time Academy Award nominee Adam Driver and Emmy winner Jodie Comer.

Explaining Scott's unique work dynamic, Damon said: "When Ridley is setting his cameras in the trailer he will walk out on to the floor, rehearse a scene, and set four cameras, and Darius will light them. Then he goes into the truck and looks at those cameras as if he was operating them, which is just a more elaborate version of what he started out doing.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Karrueche Tran

2021 T20 WORLD CUP

BANGLADESH HAMMER PNG BY 84 RUNS, ADVANCE TO SUPER-12

Brief scores :

Bangladesh 181-7 in 20 overs (Mahmudullah 50, Shakib Al Hasan 46; Kabua Morea 2/26) beat Papua New Guinea 97-10 in 19.3 Overs (Kiplin Doriga 46 off 34; Shakib Al Hasan 4/9, Mohammad Saifuddin 2/21)

Al Amerat | Agencies

A clinical Bangladesh hammered Papua New Guinea by 84 runs in the 9th match of ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 at Al Amerat Cricket Ground, here on Thursday.

Riding on a quickfire fifty by skipper Mahmudullah (50 off 28) and a vital knock by Shakib Al Hasan (46 off 37), Bangladesh posted a total of 181/7 in 20 overs.

Apart from Mahmudullah and Shakib, the likes of Liton Das (29) and Afif Hossain (21) also made valuable contributions with the bat.

Chasing a challenging target for victory, PNG crumbled under the pressure and lost wickets in clusters. They never looked comfortable during the chase and were finally bowled for 97-10 in 19.3 overs, losing by a huge margin of 84 runs.

Kiplin Doriga (46 off 34) remained not out till the end and was the highest scorer for PNG while Shakib Al Hasan (4/9) and Mohammad Saifuddin (2/21) were the most successful bowlers for Bangladesh.

With this win, Bangladesh are now officially through to the Super-12 of the tournament.

Scotland cruise into Super 12 with an emphatic victory

Al Amerat | Agencies

Scotland cruised into the Super 12 stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with an emphatic eight-wicket victory over Oman in a Group B match of Round 1 at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the Al Amerat Cricket Ground here on Thursday. With this win, Scotland have now topped Group B and are placed in Group 2 of Super 12 while Bangladesh move to Group 1.

Chasing 123, Scotland had a great power-play with 45 runs for the loss of George Munsey (20). Kyle Coetzer took over from Munsey, carting Zeeshan Maqsood for a six followed by taking a six and four off Fayyaz Butt in the next over.

Coetzer slammed a 93-m six off Mohammad Nadeem in the ninth over before Khawar Ali beat him on the inside edge with a googly and hit the stumps off pads on the stroke of drinks break.

Richie Berrington soothed Scotland's nerves with massive sixes on both sides of the wicket off Khawar Ali in the 14th over. Berrington then smacked Mohammad Nadeem for a four over mid-wicket before sealing Scotland's spot in the Super 12 with a thumping six over deep square leg.

Brief scores

Oman 122 all out in 20 overs (Aaqib Ilyas 37, Zeeshan Maqsood 34, Josh Davey 3/25, Michael Leask 2/13) against Scotland 123/2 in 17 overs (Kyle Coetzer 41, Richie Berrington 31 not out, Fayyaz Butt 1/26, Khawar Ali 1/27) by eight wickets.

Sindhu in quarters, Srikanth loses in Denmark Open

Odense (Denmark) | Agencies

Sindhu in quarters, India's PV Sindhu has reached the women's singles quarter-finals of the Denmark Open on Thursday, beating Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan in three well-fought games at the Odense Sports Park here.

However, India suffered a setback as Kidambi Srikanth could not progress beyond the second round in men's singles, going down to top seed and World No 1 Kento Momota after putting up a tough fight in the first game. Srikanth lost 21-23, 9-21 to the Japanese star in a match that lasted 43 minutes. Sindhu, playing her first tournament since winning the bronze medal in the Tokyo Olympic Games in August, won the first game but lost the second before prevailing over the Thai player in a close decider to win in 67 minutes in the second round encounter.

The 26-year-old Indian from Hyderabad, who is seeded fourth here, eventually won 21-16, 12-21, 21-18 to reach the last-eight stage where she will take on South Korea's fifth-seeded An Seyoung. The Korean player beat Russia's Evgeniya Kosetskaya in two games, 21-9, 21-11.Sindhu is ranked seventh in the world while Busanan is 13th. The Indian started aggressively against the 25-year-old from Nonthaburi, Thailand, and established an early lead. She kept up the pressure as the Thai player tried to keep up with the pace and strokes of Sindhu. The Indian won eight consecutive points at one stage as she wrapped up the game on her second game point.

Champions League: Ronaldo saves Man United; big wins for Chelsea, Bayern

Manchester | Agencies

Cristiano Ronaldo capped a rousing comeback as Manchester United edged Atalanta 3-2 in an end-to-end thriller at Old Trafford while holders Chelsea cruised past Malmö while Bayern Munich put in an impressive late cameo against Benfica on another night of Champions League action in Europe.

Ronaldo. the competition's all-time leading scorer. scored the winner and completed another Manchester United turnaround on Wednesday night, Atalanta were irresistible for the first 45 minutes as Mario Pašalic and Merih Demiral opened up a 2-0 lead, but there was no stopping United after the break.Marcus Rashford quickly pulled one back and the momentum was really with the hosts when Harry Maguire levelled with 15 minutes to go. A header from Ronaldo finished the job as United claimed three points in Group F.

Things were far easy for defending champions Chelsea as they romped to a 4-0 win against Malmo in Group H.

In London, Andreas Christensen's emphatic half-volley, Jorginho penalties in either half and a neat Kai Havertz finish following a rapid counterattack left the holders three points behind group leaders Juventus.Apparent injuries suffered by Romelu Lukaku and Timo Werner were the only concerns for Chelsea, while Malmö are still seeking their first point. In Group E at Lisbon, a stunning late flourish brought Bayern four goals in 15 minutes to sweep aside Benfica and make it 20 away Champions League matches unbeaten for the German giants.

Robert Lewandowski and Thomas Müller both had goals ruled out by VAR before Leroy Sané bent in a free-kick. Substitute Everton then inadvertently turned into his own net, before Sané teed up Lewandowski for a tap-in and buried a cutback for his second. Clear chances were at a premium at the Gazprom Arena in Saint Petersburg, where Claudinho's first-half shot was kept out by Juventus goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny. At the other end of the pitch, Zenit goalkeeper Stanislav Kritsyuk's smart reactions denied Weston McKennie from Álvaro Morata's clever through ball after the break. Just as it looked as if both sides would have to be content with a point, Mattia De Sciglio's pinpoint cross from the left was expertly headed in by substitute Dejan Kulusevski to keep Juventus's perfect Group H record intact. Elsewhere, Lillie were held to a second home draw of the group stage against a Sevilla side who could have snatched an early lead; Suso was denied from close range and Rafa Mir had a shot cleared off the line by Tiago Djaló. The lively Renato Sanches came closest for the hosts, but his one-on-one effort was blocked by Yassine Bounou.

The result means Sevilla, who are yet to score from open play in this season's competition, stay second in Group G, while Lillie move up to third.

Junior Nationals

Big wins for Hubli, Salute, SGPC and MP Hockey Academies

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Hubli Hockey Academy, Salute Hockey Academy, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hockey Academy, SGPC Hockey Academy, Vadipatti Raja Hockey Academy and Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy earned victories in their respective matches on day four of the 1st Hockey India Junior Men Academy National Championship 2021 in Bhopal on Thursday.

Following a narrow 1-0 loss on day three, Hubli Hockey Academy bounced back with a clinical 5-1 win against Malwa Hockey Academy, Hanumangarh in what was the first match of Pool F. Darshan Yamanur Gayakavad (20', 25', 55') scored a hat-trick while Prajwal Shashikanth Bekkinkannavar (32') and Dhanush BH (47') contributed a goal each for Hubli Hockey Academy. Rakesh (41') scored the only goal for Malwa Hockey Academy, Hanumangarh.

In another Pool F match, Salute Hockey Academy beat Republican Sports Club 10-0 to register their second win of the tournament. Gurnoor Grewal (8', 59'), Ankush (40, 53') and Manish (42', 47') each scored a brace of goals while Vipin (17'), Sawarnik Kumar (28'), Captain Parveen (30+') and Ramkesh (41') scored a goal each for Salute Hockey Academy. In Pool G, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hockey Academy defeated Jai Bharat Hockey Academy 3-0. Manpreet Singh (31'), Sagar Singh (56') and Gurpreet Singh (60') scored a goal each in what was their team's second win of the tournament.

In the second Pool G match of the day, S.G.P.C Hockey Academy registered a comprehensive 12-0 win against Thirumalvalavan Hockey Academy. Sarabjinder Singh (13', 16', 25', 51', 55') starred with five goals, Arshdeep Singh (19', 52') bagged a brace and Roban Singh (21'), Onkar Singh (34'), Ravneet Singh (50'), Jagpreet Singh (56') and Husanpreet Singh (59') contributed a goal each in what was their team's yet another dominating win in the tournament.

In Pool H, Vadipatti Raja Hockey Academy edged out Tamil Nadu Hockey Academy 3-1 in a thriller. Deepak (23', 55') scored two goals, while Harmandeep Singh (10') chipped in with one goal for Vadipatti Raja Hockey Academy. Logesh S (17') scored the only goal for Tamil Nadu Hockey Academy.

In the last match of the day, Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy beat Lakshmi Ammal Sports Academy 9-0 to register their second win in Pool H. Abdul Ahad (4', 56'), Anil (17', 22') and Rajat (30', 58') each netted twice, while Khasif Khan (24'), Thounaojam Ingalemba Luwang (37') and Himanshu Sanik (41') scored a goal each for Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy.

Manchester United owners pick bid documents for IPL franchise

Mumbai | Agencies

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is attracting attention of foreign investors as it gets ready to add two new franchises in the upcoming season.

The Glazer family, which owns many sports properties including Manchester united, one of the world's most famous football clubs, has shown interest in owning an IPL team and has picked up the bid documents. The Glazer family, which also owns the famous American football club Tampa Bay Buccaneers that plays in the National Football League (NFL), has picked up the Invitation to Tender (ITT) document from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the purchase of one of the two teams for the upcoming season of the cash-rich league, according to a report in the Times of India.Though picking up the OTT document is no guarantee that the US-based Glazer family will make a formal bid for the franchise, it will have to set up a company in India if it plans to do so. The ITT document makes it clear that a foreign entity will have to set up a company in India if their bid is to succeed. Among others that have picked up the bid document are Adani Group, Torrent Pharma, Aurobindo Pharma, RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group, Hindustan Times Media, Jindal Steel (led by Naveen Jindal), entrepreneur Ronnie Screwvala and three private equity players, the report said.

Women's National Boxing

Maharashtra's Aarya dominate on Day 1

Hisar | Agencies

The Women's National Boxing Championships got off to a blistering start on Thursday, with Delhi's Hemlata defeating her opponent PS Mantasaha Kumari from Assam 4-0 in the 50kg category.

Hemlata gave Mantasaha no chance whatsoever as she connected her jabs to precision and won the contest on a unanimous basis here.

Another highlight of the Day 1 was the flawless performance from Maharashtra's Aarya Kulkarni, who outclassed Yape Bamang of Arunachal Pradesh 5-0. It was a display of total domination from Kulkarni, evident from round one, and she did not let up till the final round to register an easy win.

Dominating the 50kg category on Day One were Goa's Priti Chawan, who beat Monika Pandey of West Bengal by referee stopping the contest (RSC) verdict, and Punjab's Komal, who blanked Sonia Gauni of Uttarakhand 5-0.

It was in the 52kg category that witnessed an edge-of-the-seat contest between Madhya Pradesh's Anjali Sharma and Tamil Nadu's V Vinodhini. Both boxers stood toe-to-toe throughout the fight, with Anjali just edging out Vinodhini 3-2 in the final verdict.

T20 World Cup

I think India are probably the favourites, says Brett Lee

Dubai | Agencies

Former Australia pacer Brett Lee has considered India to be the favourites for winning the ICC men's T20 World Cup. Lee has also picked opener KL Rahul and pacer Mohammed Shami to be the top run-scorer and wicket-taker of the tournament.

"But saying that, I think India are probably the favourites with their top four or five batters and their bowling attack. I have KL Rahul down as the top run-scorer in the tournament and Mohammed Shami to be the leading wicket-taker, purely going on the last few months. So if they deliver and India have one of the leading run-scorers and wicket-takers, it's a good start," wrote Lee in his column for the ICC on Thursday.Rahul, who will open the batting with Rohit Sharma in the tournament, scored 295 runs from six matches in the second leg of IPL 2021 in the UAE for Punjab Kings. He also had two half-centuries to his name with the highest score of an unbeaten 98 against Chennai Super Kings in his team's last league match.

In two warm-up matches against England and Australia, Rahul scored 51 and 39 respectively.

Shami, on the other hand, scalped 11 wickets in six matches for Punjab Kings in the UAE leg of IPL 2021, including two three-wicket hauls. In the warm-up match against England, Shami took 3/40 in his four overs, taking out Jos Buttler, Jason Roy, and Liam Livingstone.

"The teams who have had success on these wickets are generally from the sub-continent, so they normally have that advantage. But because we have just had the back end of the IPL played on these pitches, I think it brings the playing field a lot closer and both the Aussies and Proteas will be thinking that," added Lee.

Lee expressed his happiness over the marquee event happening amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. "First and foremost, it is great to be back at a big tournament again. The ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 is huge and it is so good to have this event because so many people have been locked down around the world."

'Bigg Boss 15': Karan, Tejasswi grow close, contest intensifies

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The earlier episodes of 'Bigg Boss 15' saw housemates turning into 'Junglewasis' and a deduction in prize money was the only solution left to get back to the main house. Now the contest is becoming more interesting as every contender is playing their own mind games.

The game is on in the 'Bigg Boss' jungle as 'Sanchalak' Nishant Bhat starts going tough on every contestant aiming to win a ticket to the main house. When some contenders hope to get a thumbs up from him, he still manages to find a flaw in their performances. Infuriated by his judgment, former 'Sanchalak' Shamita scorns Nishant.Nishant retorts, "Whatever you say. Doesn't matter!"

On the other hand, it seems that the temporary truce between Jay Bhanushali and Pratik Sehajpal has come to an end. Jay is determined to win the full prize money without facing any deduction by going into the house. He is so adamant that he even refuses to let others win. Pratik calmly tries to change Jay's mind at first, but the discussion soon escalates into a big fight.

After Meisha and Ieshaan, another love story is brewing in the wild. The air around Karan and Tejasswi is brimming with romance as they start spending more time together. Tejasswi also supports him like a rock. 'Bigg Boss 15' airs on Colors.

Emraan Hashmi reveals why Indian horror films haven't done well

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actor Emraan Hashmi, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming film Dybbuk: The Curse is Real', has spoken about why horror films in India are not up to speed like other genres.

"(It's) because not too many people have worked in the genre. Not too many people have explored it. Not too many filmmakers have been daring to do something new and different and it is a genre that people have not been able to tap good aesthetics... but when done well, the audience has sat up and noticed," Emraan said during a conversation with reporter.

The film marks Emraan's return to his favourite genre as he'll be seen leading the film with Nikita Dutta and Manav Kaul in key roles. The film helmed by Jay K. is the official remake of the blockbuster Malayalam film 'Ezra'. T-Series and Panorama Studios have joined forces to produce the film.

Asked as to why he wanted to star in a horror film again, he said: "After 'Raaz' I wanted to take a pause from the genre but the story of 'Dybbuk' and the way Jay had constructed the narrative and how he wanted to really revamp the horror genre for our country got me excited. That's why I wanted to revisit the genre."

The actor shared that the film "is a fresh take on horror, scares, the unpredictability and the introduction of a new culture that we don't know about..."

He added: "The packaging, the way it is shot. It is shot very internationally so that is something I feel is very different from the horror films that have come out from our country."

'Dybbuk' is all set to premiere on Amazon Prime Video on October 29.

SHAHID KAPOOR TO STAR IN 'FULL-BLOWN' ACTIONER TITLED 'BULL'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Shahid Kapoor will be starring in the upcoming high-octane actioner titled 'Bull'. The film marks the directorial debut of Aditya Nimbalkar, who has worked extensively with filmmaker Vishal Bharadwaj.Shahid said: "'Bull' is a full-blown action film inspired by real events from the life of Brigadier Bulsara. It is a privilege to play a paratrooper who leads his boys through a historic and selfless mission that has now become iconic for its precision and bravado. The opportunity to play a paratrooper is exhilarating and truly an honour."

Set in the 1980s, the film is inspired by real-life events. The principal photography is slated to begin in 2022.

Producer Bhushan Kumar will collaborate with producers Amar Butala and Garima Mehta for 'Bull'.

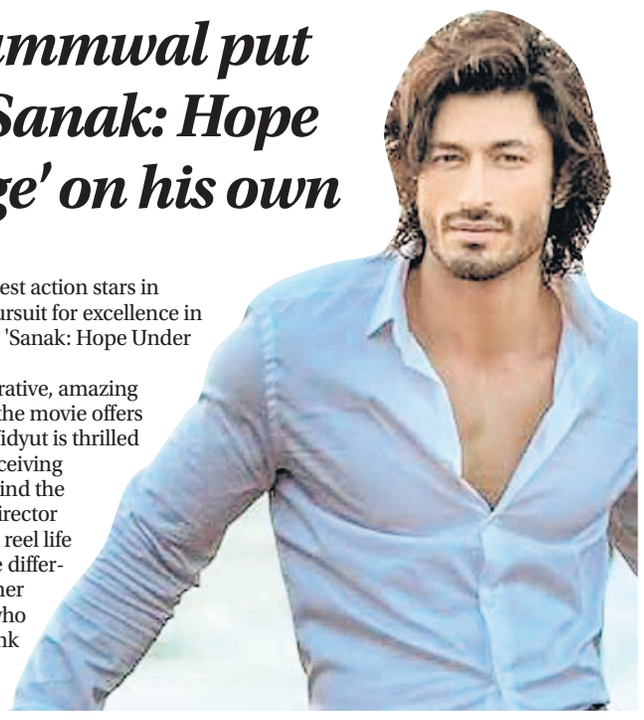
Bhushan Kumar, Managing Director, T-Series said: "We're all set to bring the audience an action extravaganza with our second collaboration with Shahid after 'Kabir Singh'."Gulshan Kumar and T-Series presents 'Bull', a Guilty By Association production starring Shahid Kapoor, with story and screenplay by Aseem Arrora and Parveez Shaikh. The film is directed by Aditya Nimbalkar and produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Amar Butala and Garima Mehta. It is slated to hit the floors in 2022.

Vidyut Jammwal put together 'Sanak: Hope Under Siege' on his own

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Vidyut Jammwal is undoubtedly one of the biggest action stars in Bollywood. His stunts, grit and the constant pursuit for excellence in action is unparalleled. His latest action thriller 'Sanak: Hope Under Siege' has garnered much love from the audience.

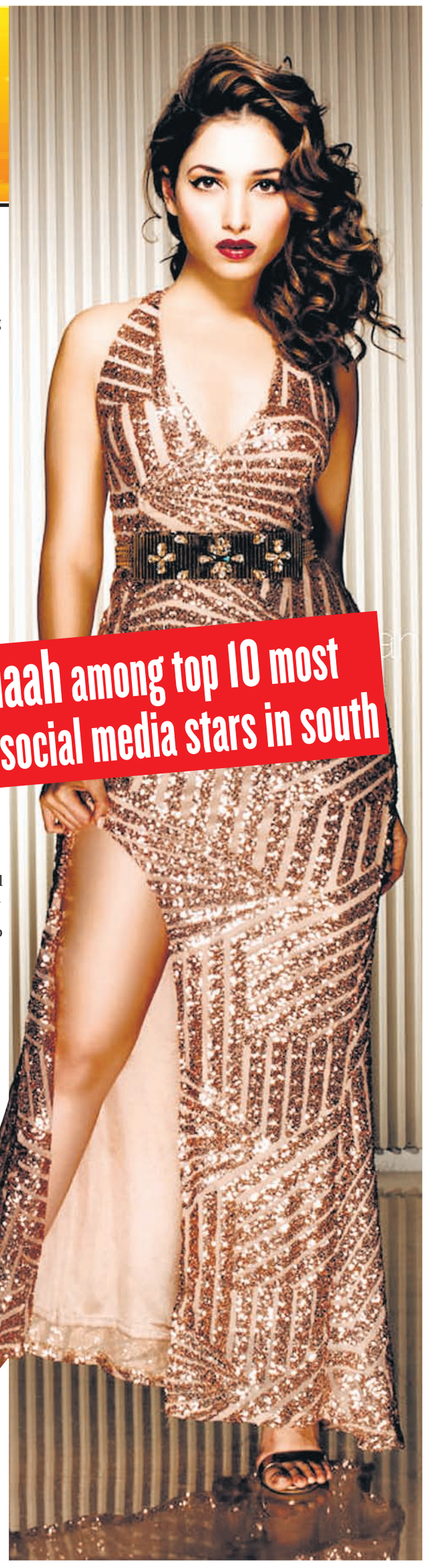
The novel action sequences, edge-of-the-seat narrative, amazing performances and the nerve - wracking experience the movie offers seem to have clicked with the audience. Naturally, Vidyut is thrilled with the amazing response that the film has been receiving across the globe.But, there's an interesting story behind the making of Sanak - Hope Under Siege. Generally, a director casts the actors to translate the story on paper into a reel life experience. However, with Sanak, things were a little different. Here the lead actor got the director to put together the film. Not many people know but, it was Vidyut who had fixed a meeting between Sanak's director Kanishk Varma and the film's producer Vipul Amrutlal Shah.Shedding light on the incident, the actor said he has known the Kanishk for quite some time. He said, "Kanishk has been a friend since our Delhi University days. He used to study with my brother. I have known him for more than a decade now."He adds that having known the director for such a long time and having spent time with him, he had complete faith in his capabilities and that's what pushed him to take the matter further with the producer.



'AILA RE AILLAA' SONG ADDS TO HYPE AROUND 'SOORYAVANSHI'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

As the release of Rohit Shetty's 'Sooryavanshi' draws closer, the excitement for the film is soaring to new heights. And why not, it is the biggest film of the year and promises to light up theatres with the thorough entertainment that it has to offer. The makers of the film have now released a new song.The freshly released song titled, 'Aila Re Aillaa' is a recreation of a blockbuster track from the last decade which too featured Akshay Kumar dancing to the thumping beats. From cars flying off, vibrant colours, thrilling chase sequences, perfectly crafted action sequences, quirks and references to old Rohit Shetty movies, the video is filled with visuals that can be best described as the trademark Rohit Shetty style of entertainment.The track undergoes chord changes twice during its course to make way for theme tracks of 'Simmba' and 'Singham' as Ranveer Singh and Ajay Devgn make dramatic entries in the visuals. The song soon turns into a full blown extravaganza as it brings together the three men from Shetty's cop universe; Akshay Kumar who plays the lead in 'Sooryavanshi' along with Ajay Devgn and Ranveer Singh, both of whom have extended cameo appearances in the film.While the original track was composed by Pritam Chakraborty, the new version is recreated by Tanishk Bagchi, who is known for rendering new colours to original songs. The track has been sung by Daler Mehndi with lyrics penned by Shabbir Ahmed. The film which also stars Katrina Kaif is all set for its release on November 5.



Tamannaah among top 10 most influential social media stars in south

Hyderabad | Agencies

Tamannah Bhatia is one of the most famous actresses of the South. With her alluring personality and mesmerising presence, Tamannah has gained a vast section of fandom. Her social media profiles indicate the kind of followers the actress has gained over the years.

In a recent survey by Forbes India, Tamannah stands in the tenth position in the list of the most influential social media stars (South India). Forbes India has released the results of their recent survey, by calculating the Instagram influence using various metrics. They released the list of Top 30 Most Influential South Actors on Social Media.

Tamannah, who topped as the tenth most influential social media star, expressed her happiness over achieving the feat. The actress also shares the credit with her fans and followers, who she thinks is the main reason behind her success.

Forbes India considered the Instagram activity of celebrities from Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam film industries over the most recent 25 posts. The influence is represented through Qoruz Score, using a digital tool which calculates the score based on the likes, number of followers, video views, and other social media activity.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY

Shama Sikander

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