

absolute india

VOL. 5, ISSUE 31, NEW DELHI | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM NEW DELHI, MUMBAI AND BHOPAL

NATION >02
Nothing can stop Pandits from returning to valley: ...

HOLLYWOOD > 06
Jason Momoa says 'Aquaman' sequel has wrapped production...

SPORTS > 07
Indian women's football team don't feel pressure against...



India successfully tests multi barrel rocket launcher system Pinaka-ER & Stand-Off Anti-Tank missile

LETHAL WEAPONS

Pinaka-ER

The DRDO, along with the Army, conducted series of performance evaluation trials of these industry produced rockets at Field Firing Ranges in the last three days. In these trials, enhanced range Pinaka rockets were test fired at different ranges with various warhead capabilities.

All the trial objectives were met satisfactorily. A total of 24 rockets were fired for different ranges and warhead capabilities to meet the objectives of accuracy and consistency.

With this, the initial phase of technology absorption of Pinaka-ER by the Industry Partner has successfully been completed making the Industry Partner ready for series production of the rocket system.

The Pinaka-ER is the upgraded version of earlier Pinaka version which has been in service with the Indian Army for the last decade.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

India successfully tested multi barrel rocket launcher system with extended range at Pokhran range and successfully flight tested the indigenously designed and developed helicopter launched Stand-Off Anti-Tank (SANT) missile from Pokhran ranges, on Saturday, an official said. The flight test was jointly carried out by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and Indian Air Force (IAF).

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in a statement said that successful tests of Pinaka Extended Range (Pinaka-ER), Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and indigenously developed fuzes have been carried out at various test ranges.

The system is jointly designed by laboratories of DRDO - Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE), Pune and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune.

The DRDO, after establishing the performance efficacy of the enhanced range Pinaka, transferred the technology of the system to the industry.

The Industry Partner has manufactured enhanced Pinaka Mk-1 rockets with DRDO's hand holding during the production and Quality Assurance.

In continuation of the Transfer of Technology absorption, rockets developed by the industry have



undergone the performance evaluation and quality certification process. The hand holding during the production, quality assurance and launch coordination for bulk production is being provided by the DRDO design team and quality assurance agencies nominated for the system.

The system has been designed in the light of emerging requirements

with advanced technologies enhancing the range.

The flight-test was successful in meeting all its mission objectives. The release mechanism, advanced guidance and tracking algorithms, all avionics with integrated software, performed satisfactorily and tracking systems monitored all mission events, a government release said.

Stand-Off Anti-Tank (SANT) missile

The SANT missile is equipped with a state-of-the-art millimetre wave (MMW) seeker which provides high precision strike capability from a safe distance. The weapon can neutralise targets in a range up to 10 km.

The SANT missile has been designed and developed by Research Centre Imarat in Hyderabad, in coordination with other DRDO labs and participation from industries.

This is the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons to be tested in recent times after long range bomb and smart anti airfield weapon for strengthening the arsenal of IAF.

With protests behind them, 'triumphant' farmers start returning home

The 'Fateh March'

SOME ELDERLY FARMERS WERE SEEN CLEANING THE PLACE WHERE THEY HAD SET UP TENTS. THE ROADS ARE ALSO BEING CLEARED OF THINGS TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE WHAT IT WAS BEFORE THE AGITATION. IT MAY TAKE DAYS TO COMPLETELY VACATE THE ENTIRE BORDER AREA AS THE PROTESTERS ARE LARGE IN NUMBERS.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Tikri and Ghazipur borders of Delhi on Saturday witnessed the end of a long protest as farmers who have been camping in the national capital for over a year started heading back homes in a busy manner celebrating their success of repeal of the farm laws. Farmers were seen packing their bags and moving in tractors used in their fields -- which they have been using for commuting and protesting. They hugged each other and bade good bye. Some were seen distributing sweets and rejoicing with dancing steps.

Their makeshift homes were dismantled almost 15 months after farmers' agitation began against the (now scrapped) farm laws and other issues. The majority of the farmers started returning to their villages in Punjab from the Singhu and Tikri borders, which they made their homes since November last year. Hundreds of tractors are queued up at Delhi borders to take the farmers back home. While the farmers have started dismantling the tents, some have already left for their villages after the government on Thursday sent a letter promising to meet the demands.

Journey hits traffic movement

Chandigarh: Traffic slowed down on the Delhi-Sonipat-Karnal National Highway (NH) today as farmers began returning to their home states of Punjab and Haryana in large convoys of tractors and other vehicles, officials said. Vehicles were moving in long queues on the highway. In view of the large convoy of tractor-trolleys and other vehicles, traffic snarls could be witnessed at many places on the NH. Families of farmers along with fellow villagers at many places enroute were welcoming the peasants from Punjab and Haryana with garlands, "laddoos", "barfi" and other sweets upon their return to their homes after the suspension of the one-year-long agitation against the centre's three farm laws. "Langar" arrangements had also been made at some places enroute. A traffic police official from Sonipat said that traffic on the Sonipat-Karnal NH was moving slowly.

Russia to ban Chinese TikTok, launches 'homemade Tiktok'

New Delhi/Moscow: Russia is on the verge of throwing out TikTok, the short-video making app owned by China-based ByteDance Ltd. The Russian government has launched homemade TikTok, called Yappy to cash on TikTok's popularity. Currently, there are 70 million monthly TikTok users in Russia. Russian government which enjoys friendly relations with China, appears to be going slow over the imminent move to throw out TikTok because of its foreign connection. Russia fears that foreign technological companies can ruin the mindset of its people.

Russia's leading media conglomerate recently launched a domestic rival to the hugely popular video-sharing app TikTok. Russian media called it Russia's campaign to reduce the influence of foreign websites and technology advances. Gazprom Media, a subsidiary of state-owned gas giant Gazprom, launched the service, named "Yappy", which can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Developed with the support of the Innopraktika foundation, an organization run by Katerina Tikhonova, one of President Vladimir Putin's alleged daughters, the Yappy app began beta testing in September, with early access given to 300 bloggers ahead. The service has a number of similar functions to TikTok and is based on sharing short vertical video clips of up to 60 seconds in length.



Acid attack survivors reopen their cafe in Agra

Sheroes Hangout Cafe

The cafe not only gives survivors employment but also acts as a platform to raise awareness about acid attacks and in taking this issue to an international level through the tourism that the cafe attracts.

The survivors said the pandemic brought huge challenges as their main source of revenue was the cafe, which was shut. It was mainly dependent on the attention it received from the tourists.

Brij Khandelwal | Agra

Sheroes Hangout Cafe, run by acid attack survivors, has reopened in Agra and Lucknow, after almost two years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Sheroes Hangout Cafe, Agra was launched on December 10, 2014. After a gap of two years, it opened on its seventh anniversary day, in the presence of a large number of social activists and well wishers in



the Taj Nagari area. The initiative is supported by the Chhanv Foundation. Talking to correspondent, Ajay Tomar, associated with the project said: "With the onset of the 'Stop Acid Attacks' campaign in 2014, the waves of change began, and many survivors got associated with the Chhanv Foundation. But due to the exclusion from society, the betterment of the survivors was neglected. To necessitate the changes and to empower the survivors, 'Sheroes Hangout Cafe' in Agra was started."

Roopa and Gita said, the "Cafe is based on the module which helps survivors in rehabilitation and empowers them with the platform from which they can raise their voices. Cafe has a different revenue module i.e. 'pay as u wish' concept, and contributes towards bringing people together for a noble cause."

The cafe, close to the Taj Mahal attracts tourists from all over the world. The visitors can visit Sheroes Hangout Cafe and interact with survivors, appreciating their world of courage and strength, Dolly and Khushboo said. Ashish Shukla, the coordinator, said: "The revenue model of Chhanv Foundation and its different projects extensively depends upon the cafe in Agra. The rent of Sheroes Home (a rehabilitation centre) is paid by the revenues generated from the cafe. The Educational Project for survivors is also aided by the cafe, as are other campaigns and projects of the foundation."

THE THOUGHT OF FREEDOM IS THE HERO OF 'RRR': RAJAMOULI

Bengaluru: The thought of 'freedom' is the hero of the film 'RRR', star director S.S. Rajamouli said on Friday. The star cast of one of the most anticipated movies -- Telugu superstars Junior NTR, Ramcharan, and Bollywood actress Alia Bhat were here for the promotion of 'RRR' which would also be released in Kannada language. Answering a question on who is the hero of the film, Rajamouli said: "The thought of freedom is the hero of the film... the thought that we should be independent, and rule ourselves." Talking about the role of Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn in RRR, Rajamouli said, his character will create a huge impact. "I think the source of the film starts from that character and you will see that in the film. It will be difficult to take it out of your heart," he said while interacting with the reporters here. Rajamouli said: "Traditionally, Ramcharan and Junior NTR belong to superstar families and their fans have the feeling of rivalry. It was a challenge to make a film casting both. Alia Bhat said her dream has come true and she came to the film sets as a "clean slate". She explained that for one and a half years, she worked on her language to act in this film.



India's historic lows in clean energy prices set to transform power sector

India, with a population of more than 1 billion people, and the world's third-largest energy consuming country, owing to rapid industrialization and rising incomes, has set ambitious clean-energy targets to reduce pollution and battle climate change, all while meeting growing electricity demand.

India has committed to installing 175 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy capacity by 2022, up from 100 GW currently, and rising to 500 GW of non-fossil electricity capacity by 2030, per Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement at the recently concluded UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.

Berkeley Lab researchers found that by 2030, nearly 50 per cent of India's electricity supply could come from carbon-free sources compared to only 25 per cent in 2020. This would require a near quadrupling in total renewable energy capacity over the decade.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Dramatic cost reductions over the last decade in battery storage, wind and solar energy position India to leapfrog to a more sustainable system for delivering affordable and reliable power to serve near a doubling in electricity demand by 2030, says a new study by researchers at the US Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Berkeley Lab).

Using state-of-the-art computer models and simulations, the researchers examined a least-cost investment pathway to reliably meet India's electricity demand through the year 2030 in the publication, "Least Cost Pathway for



India's Power System Investments". The study demonstrates that if India achieves its target of installing 500 GW of non-fossil electricity capacity by 2030, it could reduce electricity costs by eight to 10 per cent, provided the renewable energy and battery storage prices continue to decline. From 2020 levels, the carbon emissions intensity of its electricity supply would reduce by 43

to 50 per cent by 2030. The study shows that by 2030 coal consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector can almost hold at 2020 levels. Transitioning to clean energy sources to meet electricity demands is therefore unlikely to lead to a loss of coal-mining and transportation-related jobs in the near to medium term, giving India time to plan for a longer-term transition.

No pressure against big teams anymore: Manisha

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian women's footballer Manisha Kalyan has said that the team doesn't feel the pressure against big teams anymore after facing a number of quality opponents in the last few years. The Indian women's team has played against higher-ranked teams like Turkey, Uzbekistan, UAE, Bahrain and Sweden in the last few years and have gained a lot of confidence and learned so much from them.

"We gained a lot of experience against the higher-ranked teams and we got to learn so much from them," said Manisha who registered her name in the record books by scoring India's first-ever goal against Brazil at the senior level in November. "We used to be nervous facing tough opponents, but



after having faced such big teams, we don't feel that pressure anymore. We don't fear any team and just want to play good football against them and give them tough competition," she added.

The 20-year old, who herself has been an avid fan of Brazil since childhood, has

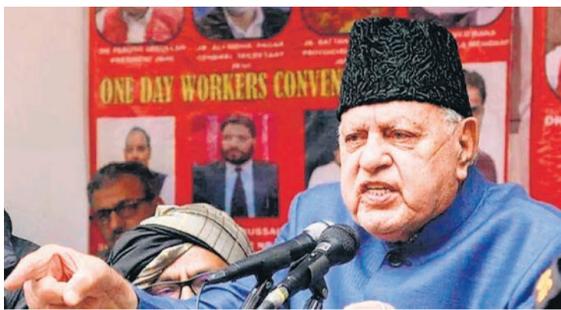
gained a lot of self-confidence after scoring against them. A resident of the Mugowal village in the Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, Manisha got a warm reception over the phone from her family and friends from the other side of the globe after her historic feat.



NOTHING CAN STOP PANDITS FROM RETURNING TO VALLEY: FAROOQ ABDULLAH

Jammu | Agencies

Nothing can stop the displaced Kashmiri Pandits from returning to their native land and the conspirators of their "ethnic cleansing" will never get Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference (NC) chief Farooq Abdullah said on Saturday. He, however, said that the time was not right for their return because of the hatred between two communities in the valley that is "deliberately created" over the years by the "vested interests" for political gains. "(Kashmiri) Muslims did not drive you out from your homes those behind it were thinking Kashmir will be theirs by this ethnic cleansing. I repeat from this stage... even if the sky and the earth meet, Jammu and Kashmir will never be theirs," the former chief minister said in an apparent reference to Pakistan. Kashmiri Pandits migrated from the valley in the wake of Pakistan-



sponsored militancy in early 1990s. Addressing a gathering largely comprising migrant Pandits at a one-day convention organised by National Conference's minority cell, Abdullah said the community was being used as a "vote bank" by a political party that only claims to be its sympathiser. Without naming any party, Abdullah said, "Big promises

were made to you by those treating you as just a vote bank. They have not fulfilled a single promise." Abdullah, who recalled his long association with the Kashmiri Pandits, said the hatred which has crept into the hearts needs to be removed. "We have to identify those who want to divide us for their petty political interests. Our culture, lan-

guage and way of living is the same and we are one. I have never distinguished between a Hindu and a Muslim," the National Conference leader said. Referring to the migration of the Pandits, he said, "Nobody wants to name (former governor) Jagmohan who arranged transport (for their migration) and promised to ensure their return within two months... instead allegations are levelled against me." "I am praying to my Allah not to take me away till I see the return of those old days when there was communal harmony and peaceful atmosphere in the valley and the people moved freely without being asked to show their identity," he said. The former chief minister said he had made several attempts during his government to bring back the community but had to stop the process in the wake of massacres in Ganderbal and Budgam as, "I do not want the blood of innocents on my hands."

Modi, Akhilesh trade barbs over Saryu canal project

Lucknow | Agencies

The PM inaugurated the Saryu canal national project in Uttar Pradesh's Balrampur on Saturday, hours after Yadav claimed that it was his government that had completed three-fourth of its work and the BJP only cuts ribbons of projects initiated by them. "The BJP government in Uttar Pradesh took five years to complete the remaining work of the Saryu nahar national project," Akhilesh tweeted in Hindi, hours before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival to inaugurate the project. "There are basically two types of people in the world, some who really work and some who appropriate others' work. This is the difference between the government of the SP and today's kainchiji (ribbon cutting) government. That's why in the 2022 elections, the BJP is going to be completely wiped out," Akhilesh said in another tweet. Later at a rally, the PM without taking Yadav's name said he was waiting that 'someone' will claim credit for the project. "When I started from Delhi, I was wait-



ing for someone to say that he had cut the ribbon of this project and started this scheme. This is the habit of some people. Maybe in their childhood they had cut its ribbon," he said, without taking any name. "For some people cutting ribbon is a priority while for us completing schemes in time is the priority. In 2014, when I came to power, I was amazed to see that 99 irrigation projects were lying (incomplete) for decades in the country," he said. The project will provide water for irrigation of 14 lakh hectares, benefiting around 29 lakh farmers.

Will remove AFSPA from Manipur if we win: Congress

Imphal | Agencies

The Congress in Manipur has vowed to push for "the immediate and complete removal of AFSPA" from the entire state if it is elected to power in the 2022 Assembly polls. Till then, the Congress urged the ruling BJP and Chief Minister N Biren Singh to press Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the centre for the law's immediate removal. "... the Congress demands the Manipur Chief Minister and government press PM Modi and GoI for repeal of AFSPA in this winter session of Parliament, and (calls on the) Manipur cabinet for immediate removal of Act from the state," the party said. The Congress also reminded the BJP that AFSPA had been repealed from seven

Assembly constituencies (including state capital Imphal) when it was in power. "Congress rule removed AFSPA from seven Assembly constituencies. If Congress comes back to power in 2022, the first Cabinet meeting will decide on the immediate and complete removal of AFSPA from the entire state..." the party declared. The controversial Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, or AFSPA, which gives sweeping powers to military personnel in "disturbed regions", has come under increasing scrutiny after the horrific killing of 14 innocent civilians in Nagaland last week. Under AFSPA, armed forces may arrest, or shoot to kill, on mere suspicion. AFSPA is in place in Nagaland, Assam, Manipur (excluding capital Imphal) and parts of Arunachal Pradesh, as well as Jammu and Kashmir.

2 HELD FOR OBJECTIONABLE POSTS ON CDS CHOPPER CRASH

Jaipur | Agencies

The Rajasthan police on Saturday arrested two persons for making objectionable remarks on the social media about India's first Chief of Defence Staff, Gen Bipin Rawat and others who were killed in an IAF helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8. The arrested individuals have been identified as -- Manish Kumar Meena and Jeevan Lal. Pratapgarh SP Amrita Duhan said Meena made objectionable remarks on Facebook on December 9 on those who were killed in the helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu.



Jeevan Lal shared the post and broadcasted it to the general public. As soon as the matter came to the notice, a team led by ASP Chiranjilal Meena was formed. The police arrested both the individuals with the special cooperation of cyber cell against whom legal action was taken, a police officer said. Meanwhile, Pratapgarh SP Duhan has appealed to the people to not post and share any such remarks and messages on the social media which create disharmony and resentment among the general public. Similar strict legal action will be taken against the persons who make such posts.

VIJAYAWADA GOLD SHOP EMPLOYEE ARRESTED FOR RS 60 LAKH THEFT

Vijayawada | Agencies

Vijayawada police cracked the case of a major theft in Attica Gold Company shop in the city within two hours by arresting the accused and recovering the stolen cash of Rs 60 lakh and gold and silver jewellery. Police arrested S. Jaya Chandrasekhar working as an executive in the same showroom and recovered the entire stolen property including 47 gram gold and 1.5 kg silver jewellery. Vijayawada Police Commissioner Kanthi Rana told reporters that the police arrested the accused within two hours after receiving the complaint. The police identified the accused on the basis of clues including fingerprints, CCTV footage and the way



the lock was broken. The police commissioner said the accused entered the shop by opening shutters with a duplicate key around 1.30 a.m. He covered CCTV camera with a piece of cloth, opened the locker and took away the valuables. He broke the lock to make it look like a theft committed by some outsider.

Chandrasekhar came to the shop for duty in the morning. He was present in the shop when the management of the company lodged a police complaint around 10.30 a.m. A police team visited the scene of the offence and on the basis of clues gathered, they found that it was the handiwork of some insider. After questioning the employees and matching the finger prints, police identified and arrested the accused. Police found during the investigations that the accused had been planning to commit theft for 45 days and was waiting for the right time when there will be huge amount of cash will be available. The police commissioner said Chandrasekhar had made duplicate keys of shutter and locker and was waiting for appropriate time to commit the offence.

Accident kills 2 Punjab farmers returning from protest site

Chandigarh | Agencies

Two farmers from Punjab were killed in a road accident on Saturday in Haryana's Hisar district while they were returning from the protest site at Tikri border, police said. The victims -- Sukhdev Singh (40) and Ajaypreet Singh (32) -- belonged to Assa Buttar village in Gidderbaha in Muktsar district. Another youth from the village, identified as Raghbir Singh, suffered injuries in the accident. They were returning to their village in two trailers



attached to a tractor, when a tanker hit a trailer at around 5 a.m. The deceased along with others had gone to the Tikri border on Thursday.

TMC promises Rs 5K to every woman head of house in Goa

Panaji | Agencies

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Saturday made a major pre-poll promise in Goa guaranteeing the payment of Rs 5,000 to every woman head of the household, if the party comes to power in the 2022 state Assembly polls. According to the party's Lok Sabha MP Mahua Moitra, the scheme, which has already been implemented by the party in West Bengal, would benefit nearly 3.51 lakh households in the coastal

state. "The 'Griha Laxmi' initiative is a pioneering and transformative scheme for the people of Goa. The scheme has already been implemented in West Bengal," Moitra said on Saturday. "The monthly benefit of Rs 5,000 will be made available through direct benefit cash transfer. As many as 3.51 lakh households will be covered under the scheme," Moitra said. She also said that the scheme would be universal in nature irrespective of caste, community or economic criteria. "Nobel laure-

ate Abhijit Banerjee's study says that demonetisation and Covid have shrunk the economy. The best thing is to kickstart the economy and local economy is to pump in money. If a woman gets Rs 5000 in her hand, she can buy clothes for the children and medicines. That money goes into the economy faster. The Multiplier effect is faster," Moitra said, adding that the party would be taking the scheme "door to door" during the ongoing state Assembly election campaign.

'LIKELY TO CAUSE UNREST AMONG POPULACE', PUNJAB MOVES SC AGAINST INCREASE IN BSF'S JURISDICTION

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Punjab government has moved the Supreme Court against the Centre's decision to increase the territorial jurisdiction of Border Security Force (BSF) from 15 km to 50 km off international border for states including Punjab. The original suit filed by the Punjab government under Article 131 of the Constitution challenged the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notification dated October 11, 2021. The state government contended that the notification violated the of Entries 1 (public order) and 2 (police) of List II (State List) of Schedule VII of the Constitution. The suit, filed through advocate Ashok K. Mahajan, said: "The plaintiff



submits that the effect and consequence of the aforesaid notification dated October 11, 2021 is that it amounts to encroachment upon the powers and role of the plaintiff - the state of Punjab - by the Centre in as much as more than 80 per cent area of the border districts, all the major towns and cities including all the district headquarters of these border districts of Punjab, fall within 50 km area from the Indo-Pakistan international border." The suit contended that the notification is ultra-vires the Constitution, as it defeats the purpose of Entry 1 and 2 of List-II of Schedule 7 of the Constitution and encroaches upon plaintiff's plenary authority to legislate on issue which relate to or are necessary for the maintenance of public order and internal peace.

DELHI REPORTS SECOND CASE OF OMICRON VARIANT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Second case of Omicron variant of the coronavirus has been reported in the national capital. As per Delhi government sources, the person -- fully vaccinated, came from Zimbabwe and had travelled to South Africa. The B.1.1.529 variant was first reported to World Health Organization (WHO) from South Africa on November 24, 2021. The first patient to have tested positive for Omicron in Delhi is a resident of Ranchi and had travelled from Tanzania to Doha and from there to Delhi on a Qatar Airways flight on December 2. The person



also stayed in Johannesburg, South Africa, for a week. The patient was isolated at Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Narayan Hospital. With the fresh case, India has so far reported 33 cases of the new variant that has sparked worries worldwide. On Friday, Delhi recorded 41 fresh cases of coronavirus, taking the total case tally in the national capital to 14,41,610. The positivity rate stands at 0.07 per cent, according to the data shared by the city health department. Till December 10, a total of 2,38,58,032 people have been vaccinated in the national capital.

7.3 kg gold recovered from 4 Sudanese at Hyderabad Airport

Hyderabad | Agencies

The Customs officials at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport here on Friday recovered 7.3 kg gold from four Sudanese who had concealed it in their rectum. The passengers, including two women, had arrived from Dubai by flight no AI 952. On suspicion, the Customs officials checked them. According to the department, they had concealed 7.3 kg gold valued at

about Rs 3.6 crore in their rectum. This was recovered and seized. Meanwhile, the Hyderabad Customs has handed over 25 kg to the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd (SPMCIL). This was done as part of the tripartite MOU between the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and the SPMCIL. Member, Inv, Balesh Kumar, Chief Commissioner

Sivanagakumari, Commissioner Customs, the DRI ADG, and senior officers of customs were also present at the event. Earlier this week, the Finance Ministry decided that hereafter seized or confiscated gold will be sold to the RBI only. This does not include gold ornaments or jewellery. The ministry amended the guidelines in this regard. The CBIC consulted the RBI and the SPMCIL and also signed a tripartite MoU.



Victory for BJP in 4 states; hung Assembly in Punjab with AAP in lead

OPINION AS OF NOW

BJP to witness historic defeat in 2022: SP

"We will fight the polls together with the RLD and form the next government in the state. Red colour is the symbol of change. That is why the ruling party is afraid of it. The SP will show them (the BJP) the exit door."

We are confident of victory in UP: BJP

"The people of the state have seen all sorts of alliances -- 'Bua-Babua' (Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav), 'Do Babuon Ki Jodi' (Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi) etc. The people of the state have also seen and understood how anarchy and corruption prevailed in the state for 15 long years before the BJP returned to power in 2017."

Priyanka will be harbinger of change in UP politics: Congress

"Samajwadi Party may have the numbers, but we have the moral force so to say that we are the main opposition party raising people's issues under the leadership of Priyanka Gandhi. The Congress is fighting for every section of the society in the state. We will play a decisive role when people vote for change."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The third ABP News-CVoter Battle for the States Tracker predicts closely-fought victories for the BJP in Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Goa and Uttarakhand, the four states which along with Punjab will go to the polls early next year.



The current projections are based on CVoter daily tracking poll conducted between November 13 and December 9, among 18+ adults, including likely voters. As for the methodology and survey

Uttar Pradesh

As per the opinion poll, in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav remain the two leading candidates for the CM's post. As per the latest figures, BJP is retaining the state with 212-224 out of 403 seats, followed by SP with 151-163 seats, with the Bahujan Samaj Party a distant third with 12-24 seats.

In terms of vote share, BJP is in pole position with 40.4 per cent votes, followed by SP at 33.6 per cent and the BSP at 13.2 per cent.

Punjab

The tracker suggests that Punjab is heading towards a hung Assembly with no party being able to cross the majority mark. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) remains in the leading position, followed by the incumbent Congress.

In Punjab, the repeal of farm laws and suspension of protests by the farmers promise to make an exciting finale to the elections. This month's Tracker puts AAP in the lead, maintaining its earlier position with 50-56 seats. The incumbent Congress is second with 39-45 seats, followed by SAD with 17-23 seats.

In terms of vote share, AAP is leading with 38.4 per cent votes, followed by Congress at 34.1 per cent and SAD at 20.4 per cent.

Goa

In Goa, BJP continues to remain the most popular party as it is winning 17-21 seats. AAP and Congress are in a tight battle for the second spot with AAP winning 5-9 seats and Congress winning 4-8 seats. Other regional parties and new entrants in Goa politics are also going to be major factors, winning 6-10 seats.

In terms of vote share, BJP is leading with 30 per cent votes, followed by others at 25.9 per cent and AAP and Congress at 24.4 per cent and 19.7 per cent, respectively.

Manipur

In Manipur, BJP is set to win a closely-fought contest against Congress. The saffron party is winning 29-33 seats, while Congress is winning 23-27 seats.

In terms of vote share, BJP will get 37.9 per cent votes, followed by Congress at 34.3 per cent.

Uttarakhand

In Uttarakhand, BJP is consistently maintaining its lead position with 33-39 seats and is set to retain power in the state. The Congress is a close second with 29-35 seats, followed by AAP in a distant third with 1-3 seats.

In terms of vote share, BJP is leading the way with 39.8 per cent votes, followed by Congress at 35.7 per cent, and AAP 12.6 per cent.

Centre asks states to buckle up amid Covid surge in 27 districts



Team Absolute | New Delhi

As many as 27 districts have registered a surge in the Covid-19 positivity rate in the past two weeks and are being monitored closely, the Central government told the states, adding that the country is critically placed in its fight against the pandemic.

The letter informed that a framework based on the test positivity rate or bed occupancy rate (test positivity rate more than or equal to 10 per cent or more than 60 per cent bed occupancy on either oxygen supported or ICU beds) was provided to the states.

The strategic containment interventions in identified areas with test positivity rate of more than or equal to 10 per cent or more than 60 per cent bed occupancy on either oxygen supported or ICU beds include night curfews, restricting the intermingling

of people, prohibition of congregations, curtailment of attendees in marriages and funerals and last rites, etc.

Testing and surveillance interventions include ramping up testing and active case search, testing of all influenza-like illness and severe acute respiratory infection cases through rapid antigen tests and re-testing by RT-PCR of symptomatic rapid antigen negative tests. Strict adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour at all places and times must be rigorously enforced and aggressively monitored.

Adequate advance information to the community highlighting the need for stringent containment actions to achieve community involvement and support are also mandated in the framework issued by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the letter added.

"With the recent trend of sustained and overall decline in Covid-19 cases in the country, we are critically placed in our fight against the pandemic. Eight districts in three states have been reporting more than 10 per cent positivity rates in the past two weeks. As many as 19 districts in seven states and union territories (UTs) have been reporting positivity rates between 5 per cent and 10 per cent in the past two weeks. Thus, these 27 districts need to be monitored closely."

Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary

At minus 3.6, Srinagar records coldest night of season so far

SRINAGAR | Agencies

At minus 3.6 degrees Celsius as the minimum temperature on Saturday, Srinagar recorded the coldest night of the season so far.

An official of the MeT department said Srinagar city witnessed the coldest night of the season so far.

Pahalgam had minus 6.4 and Gulmarg minus 5.5 degrees Celsius as the night's lowest temperature.

Drass town of Ladakh had minus 18.0, Leh minus 14.6 and Kargil minus 10.6 degrees Celsius as the minimum.

Jammu city had 6.7, Katra 7.2, Batote 4.4, Banihal 6.8 and Bhandarwah minus 0.1



degree Celsius as the minimum temperature.

The MeT has forecast mainly dry weather during

the next one week and the minimum temperatures are likely to drop further during this period.

At least 70 are killed by eighteen tornadoes in Kentucky

WASHINGTON | Agencies

At least 70 people are thought to have been killed in Kentucky, and there are multiple fatalities at an Amazon distribution center in Illinois, after at least 18 tornadoes ripped across the South and Midwest of the US on Friday, reports daily-mail.co.uk.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear said at a briefing midday on Saturday the death toll was now 'north of 70' and that 'it may in fact end up exceeding 100 before the day is done.'

One tornado among the dozens that struck is estimated to have a damage path of more than 200 miles, which would approach or exceed the all-time global record.

The epicenter of the destruction was the town of Mayfield, a small city of about 10,000 people in the far western part of Kentucky, where the Bluegrass State borders Illinois,



Missouri and Arkansas. Entire blocks

buildings ripped apart, and twisted metal, shattered tree limbs and bricks

scattered across streets.

The roof of a candle factory collapsed in Mayfield, resulting in 'mass casualties' according to Beshear. He said 110 people were working in the factory, and that only 40 had been rescued alive from the rubble as of midday Saturday.

Elsewhere, in southern Illinois, authorities said at least two were dead and up to 50 people were trapped after a roof collapsed at an Amazon warehouse near St. Louis late on Friday, when tornadoes and strong storms blew through the area.

At least two were killed and five were injured when a tornado shredded the roof of a nursing home in Monette in northern Arkansas and another person killed in Missouri.

A further three people were killed in the severe weather in Tennessee, Dean Flener, spokesman for the state's Emergency Management Agency said.

Football legend Maradona's stolen watch recovered in Assam



Guwahati: A heritage Hublot watch of football legend Diego Maradona has been recovered by the Assam Police, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Saturday.

The police in Assam's Sivasagar district during an operation recovered the luxury watch, worth around Rs 20 lakh, from the house of one Wazid Hussain on Saturday. Hussain was arrested from his in-law's house in the adjoining Charaideo district later in connection with the case.

The recovery was made in coordination with Dubai Police. "In an act of international cooperation, Assam police coordinated with Dubai police through Indian federal LEA to recover a heritage Hublot watch belonging to legendary footballer Late Diego Maradona and arrested one Wazid Hussain. Follow up lawful action is being taken," Sarma tweeted. Sivasagar District Superintendent of Police Rakesh Roushan referring to the information received from the Dubai police said that Hussain had been working at the place Maradona used to stay in Dubai and he had stolen a box containing many of the soccer legend's belongings and returned to home in Assam in August 2020.

Faster melting of Himalayan Glaciers

Is it climate crisis at tipping point?

- ▶ Consisting of largest concentration of frozen water on Earth after North and South Pole, The Himalayas are also known as The Third Pole.
- ▶ The Himalayan glaciers have lost quarter of its ice in the last four decades. Rise in temperatures is melting glaciers and pollution is making it worse.
- ▶ The Himalayas and the Tibetan Plateau are a vital source of water to approximately 2 billion people apart from livelihood to millions living in the region.
- ▶ Flash floods in the Uttarakhand region of India in February 2021 to the increased flooding of the Brahmaputra, are extreme events that seem to be coming faster every year.
- ▶ Not only India but the situation impacts people of Pakistan, China including Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and eventually the world.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The world is divided by borders leading to conflicts, but the call of the climate crisis demands that it works together, else destruction is inevitable. One such climate crisis is the changing face of the Himalayas.

Speaking at The Open Forum webinar on December 9 on the topic 'Melting of Himalayan Glacier: Is it a global crisis at tipping point?' Dr Martin A. Mills, Director, Scottish Centre for Himalayan Research informed that, "we have missed the boat on this one." The other speaker at the webinar Joydeep Gupta, South Asia Director of The Third Pole further said, "the Himalayas are warming faster than the global average." He is of the opinion that this process is

"irreversible." Attempting to bring some hope along with need for urgent action the third panelist on the webinar Jennifer Tollmann, Senior Policy Advisor for Climate Diplomacy and Geopolitics, E3G said, "we might have passed the tipping point, but we don't want to add many other tipping points."

Climate diplomacy has a crucial role to play. Owing to such contentious situation, scientists are unable to acquire exact satellite images of the region. In the absence of such information planning mitigation and adaptation policies becomes a far bigger challenge than it should be. Third Pole has half the world's population sitting at their doorsteps. To address the crisis of a region as a whole which is "undergoing a complete ecosystem shift," requires collective efforts.

496 rocket kits' launch creates Guinness Record at Goa Science Fest

Panaji: As many as 496 rocket kits -- which are prototypes of Gaganyaan, India's proposed manned mission to space -- assembled and launched by students from Goa schools created a Guinness World Record for 'Most People Sending Rocket Kits Simultaneously in Single Venue', here on Saturday. Part of the science popularisation exercise among students under the aegis of India International Science Festival (IIFS) 2021, the event was sponsored by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Soon after the inauguration of IIFS, a total of 550 students sat in neat rows maintaining social distancing and embarked on assembling the kits. After the two-hour assembling session, the students took their respective rockets to the Gymkhana ground nearby, from where these rockets were launched via eight launch pads.

Amid cheering students, the rockets were launched in batches, culminating in the evening when Guinness World Records (GWR) adjudicator Swapnil Angrekar announced that 496 attempts were successful which qualified for the record.

The organisers are planning another Guinness record on Sunday on 'Water Harvesting' and yet another on Monday on 'Space Exploration Lesson at a Single Place'.



OMICRON SPREAD: WEEKEND RESTRICTIONS CLAMPED IN MUMBAI

The orders, which came into effect from midnight (Friday-Saturday), were issued by Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), and shall be in force till midnight (Sunday-Monday).



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police has clamped prohibitory orders under Sec 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) banning the assembly of five or more, protests, marches or rallies by people or vehicles till Sunday night, officials said here on Saturday.

The orders, which came into effect from midnight (Friday-Saturday), were issued by Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), and shall be in force till midnight (Sunday-Monday).

"The order has been issued to prevent danger to human life from Omicron, new variant of Covid-19, as well as a threat to the law and order situation against the backdrop of the violence that took place in Amravati, Malegaon (Nashik) and Nanded," said the notification.

Violators shall attract action under Indian Penal Code Sec. 188 and

other legal provisions, it added.

The prohibitory orders are likely to restrict the movement of the "Tiranga Rally" with over 300 buses and other vehicles starting from different parts of the state to Mumbai, organised on Saturday by the All India Majlis-e- Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM).

Led by AIMIM MP Syed Imtiaz

Jaleel, the vehicle rally to Mumbai will press for the pending demands of the Muslim community including reservations and other issues, with participants likely to reach here from Pune, Nashik, Beed, Jalna, Nanded, Wardha, Parbhani, Latur, Osmanabad and other places.

However, the Mumbai Police has made it clear it will not permit the rally inside the Country's financial capital in view of the restrictions imposed here and the Omicron concerns. With seven new patients detected on Friday, the number of Omicron cases has shot up to 17 in Maharashtra, or nearly half the known cases in the country.

Of these seven, three were found positive in Mumbai, all males, aged 25, 37 and 48, with a recent travel history to the United Kingdom, South Africa and Tanzania. The four new patients, including a three-and-half-year-old child, in Pune, are the close contacts of the Indian-origin Nigerian woman who was detected Omicron positive last Sunday.

'Pawar said BJP divisive in 1996, we realised it in 2019,' admits Shiv Sena

Describing Pawar as a visionary and thinking politician who has given the state and country a direction, Raut recalled the NCP leader's warning a quarter of a century back as to how the Bharatiya Janata Party adopted divisive methods, which hampered the unity of the country.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a candid admission, Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said on Saturday that NCP President Sharad Pawar had termed the BJP as a 'divisive' party, but the Sena realised this fact only in 2019.

Describing Pawar as a visionary and thinking politician who has given the state and country a direction, Raut recalled the NCP leader's warning a quarter of a century back as to how the Bharatiya Janata Party adopted divisive methods, which hampered the unity of the country. "Unfortunately, this realisation dawned on us only a couple of years ago," Raut said, referring to the decision of Sena to dump the BJP after the 2019 Assembly elections and join hands with the NCP

and Congress to form the Maha Vikas Aghadi government headed by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

The Sena chief spokesperson also remembered Pawar's statements in 1996 calling the BJP's policies 'regressive', which would push the country backwards, but it was the Sena which failed to gauge it then.

Raut's comments came during the launch of a Marathi book, "Nemkechi Bolane" -- a collection of 61 speeches by Pawar at various political meetings over the years, on the eve of his 81st birthday on Sunday (December 12). Taking a swipe at the BJP, Raut said that the book title ("Precise Talk") is so apt that its copies should be gifted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who

can learn how to speak concisely from it. At one point, the Sena MP said the Central Hall of Parliament was famed for meeting between leaders of different parties, and even journalists met top politicians who would talk on various issues facing the country. "However, in the past few years, we have witnessed how those who attempt to ask questions are opposed and gagged. Such a tendency to deny the rights to raise questions can strengthen majoritarianism," Raut said, showing praise on Pawar's 'far-sighted thinking', 'broad-mindedness' and 'political acumen.' Also present on the occasion were Pawar's daughter and NCP MP Supriya Sule, and several top leaders from the Congress, NCP and Shiv Sena.

OMICRON: 1-Year-Old Maharashtra Girl Recovers, 3-Year-Old Asymptomatic

A three-year-old boy, who was also found infected with the new strain in the area, is asymptomatic and keeping well, health officials said on Saturday.

Pune:

A one-and-a-half-year-old girl, who had tested positive for the Omicron variant of coronavirus in Pimpri Chinchwad area of Pune district of Maharashtra recently, has been discharged from hospital after recovering from the infection, while a three-year-old boy, who was also found infected with the new strain in the area, is asymptomatic and keeping well, health officials said on Saturday. The three-year-old boy is among the four new

patients in Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) area. The three others are all adults - two males and one female. They are all contacts of the Indian origin woman and her two daughters from Nigeria, who were earlier found infected with the Omicron variant on their arrival. The woman from Nigeria had come to meet her brother in Pimpri Chinchwad. However, apart from the woman and her two daughters, her brother, his two daughter, including the one-and-a-half-year-old, had tested positive for the Omicron strain, officials said.

"Out of the six Omicron patients found earlier, four patients, including the one-and-a-half-year-old have been discharged from the hospital after they tested negative during their repeat test," an official said. "Barring one

female, who had dry cough, all the patients, including the baby, are asymptomatic and keeping fine. The woman, who had dry cough, also tested negative in the repeat test and was given discharge along with three others. The other two females tested positive in the repeat test and that is why they are currently in hospital, but they are also keeping fine," he said. The three-year-old boy, who is among the four new patients, is asymptomatic and keeping fine at the paediatric care. The other three patients are also asymptomatic and there is no cause of worry, Dr Laxman Gophane, medical officer of PCMC, said. Meanwhile, the only Omicron patient from Pune city, who has now tested negative, was also given discharge on Friday. He had returned to Pune from Finland, officials said.

Maharashtra Reopening Schools in Nashik from Monday, Pune, Mumbai From Dec 15

All teachers and staff of the school have been asked to get a negative RTPCR report 48 hours before attending school.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the coming week, the Maharashtra government is all set to reopen schools in physical mode. Schools across the state were set to reopen from December 1, however, the reopening was postponed amid scare of Omicron - the new variant of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) in an official notice has said that it will reopen schools for classes 1 to 7 from Monday - December 13 onwards. There are 1,85,279 students in classes 1 to 7 in 504 schools in the NMC area and at least 60 per cent of parents have given their consent to resume physical classes, said NMC.

Nashik Municipal Corporation has also issued guidelines on health, hygiene and other safety measures before reopening schools. All teachers and staff of the school have been asked to get a negative RTPCR report 48 hours before attending school. Teaching and



non-teaching staff will be allowed in schools only after the submission of a certificate to the school management. Symptomatic children will also not be allowed to attend physical classes.

Students should bring parental consent before attending school. Covid appropriate behaviour including wearing masks, following social distancing, sanitization should be followed at all times, as

per the guidelines. Only one student will be allowed on a single bench and benches should be kept at a six feet distance.

In other regions of Maharashtra including Mumbai, Pune among others, schools are likely to reopen from December 15 amid strict precautions. "Schools for classes 1-7 will now reopen from December 15, instead of December 1, in view of the emergence of Omicron variant of COVID19 in the world," Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had told media. There are 2,20,000 students studying in Classes 1 to 7 in the BMC schools. Announcing the reopening guidelines, Maharashtra Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad had earlier said, "The government is sensitive to the possibility of a third wave and no laxity in implementation of SOPs will be permitted. Our students are our future. Let us all come together to ensure their health, wellbeing and continued education." At that time, however, school reopening was deferred.

OMICRON ALERT: OVER 1,300 PASSENGERS ARRIVE IN MAHARASHTRA DISTRICT FROM ABROAD

The Raigad district health officer Dr Sudhakar More said that while the Covid-19 test reports of these travellers have come out negative, they have been advised to remain under home quarantine. Of the 1,349 travellers, 594 arrived in Panvel, 150 in Mangaon, 116 in Panvel rural, 105 in Mahad, 83 in Shrivardhan, 170 in Mhasala, 28 in Alibaug, among other parts of the district, he said. The airport authority has been regularly sharing the details of passengers with the local administration for monitoring purposes, the official added. Meanwhile, the country has reported 7,992 fresh Covid-19 cases and 393 deaths in the last 24 hours, informed the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Saturday. As per the Covid bulletin, India's active caseload currently stands at 93,277, the lowest in 559 days. The active caseload accounts for less than one per cent of total cases and is currently at 0.27 per

cent, the lowest since March 2020. Union Health Ministry's Joint Secretary Lav Agarwal on Friday said that the active cases were highest in two states - Kerala and Maharashtra with over 43 per cent and over 10 per cent active cases, respectively. With 9,265 new recoveries reported across the country in the last 24 hours, the total recoveries mounted to 3,41,14,331. The recovery rate is at 98.36 per cent, the highest since



March 2020. With the addition of new fatalities, the death toll mounted to 4,75,128. The daily positivity rate at 0.64 per cent remained less than two per cent for the last 68 days. The weekly positivity rate is 0.71 per cent and remained below one per cent for last 27 days. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), 12,50,672 samples were tested for the presence of the virus on Friday. A total of 65,46,27,300 Covid-19 tests have been conducted in the country so far. Meanwhile, in the ongoing nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive, 131.99 crore vaccine doses have been administered so far. As per the ministry, over 140 crore (1,40,07,00,230) vaccine doses have been provided to States and UTs so far through the government's free of cost channel and through the direct state procurement category.

Will oppose use of MESMA against MSRTC employees: Padalkar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

BJP leader Gopichand Padalkar on Saturday criticised state Transport Minister Anil Parab, claiming that the latter was blaming employees of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) to hide his own "incompetence." Padalkar asked why the minister has failed to earn the goodwill of employees. Notably, the employees have been on an indefinite strike.

Sympathizing with the employees, Padalkar said, "Even after three weeks, Parab has not been able to resolve the issues raised by MSRTC employees. Instead of taking the employees into

confidence, the Shiv Sena minister is threatening to evict the Maharashtra Essential Services Maintenance Act (MESMA)." The Ryat Kranti Paksha chief Sadabhau Khot and I will take to the streets if the Maha Vikas Aghadi government enforces the MESMA against MSRTC employees, Padalkar added.

Padalkar said, "In the past, we have seen how textile mill agitation led to the closure of the units rendering employees jobless. But it benefitted certain people, paving the way for them to buy textile mill land. Similarly, the ongoing agitation by MSRTC employees is being used by some to unlock the land owned by

the state transport corporation." The main demand of the agitating employees is the merger of the MSRTC with the state government. The state transport corporation operates a fleet of 16,000 buses and has around 90,000 employees. Meanwhile, some 20,000 employees have resumed work. On Friday, Parab appealed to the remaining employees to end the strike. He assured that suspension orders against striking workers would be withdrawn if they reported to work by Monday. The transport minister added that the state government would evict the MESMA against employees if they failed to resume work by Monday.

MAHARASHTRA CELLPHONE TOWERS Panel to bring uniformity in property tax

The moves comes post complaints received from telecom operators about disparity in taxes that have to be paid to different corporations and councils.



ing additional chief secretaries of revenue and rural development department and secretary (Information Technology) as members, will also suggest ways to regularise illegal towers and recover pending taxes. The moves comes post complaints received from telecom operators about disparity in taxes that have to be paid to different corporations and councils. "The state has scores of illegally erected cellphone towers and the committee has been told to suggest ways for regularising them. It will also fix access and restoration charges," said an official.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The State urban development department on Friday set up a committee headed by Principal Secretary (Urban Development II) Mahesh Pathak to come up with a policy that will bring uniformity in the property tax to be paid for cellphone towers in the state. The committee has to submit a report within a fortnight. The committee, compris-

MAHARASHTRA LOCAL BODY POLLS After SC stay, concerns over lack of coordination between departments over OBC quota issue

Earlier this week, the apex court said the 27% OBC quota could not have been implemented without setting up a commission and without collecting data regarding inadequacy of representation in local bodies.

Earlier this week, the apex court said the 27% OBC quota could not have been implemented without setting up a commission and without collecting data regarding inadequacy of representation in local bodies.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After the Supreme Court put on hold elections to seats reserved for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the upcoming local body polls in Maharashtra, sources in the state government said there are concerns about a lack of coordination among Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) ministers and related departments on the issue. Earlier this week, the apex court

said the 27% OBC quota could not have been implemented without setting up a commission and without collecting data regarding inadequacy of representation in local bodies. Subsequently, the State Election Commission deferred elections to the seats reserved for OBCs in the local body polls scheduled for December 21. In all, elections on 386 seats from two Zilla Parishads, 15 Panchayat Samitis, 106 Nagar Panchayats and one municipal corporation have been put on hold.

Subsequently, the state government decided to file an affidavit requesting the Supreme Court to allow polls on the OBC seats or defer all the elections, but passing of the buck has reportedly begun among the MVA alliance partners.

Rural and urban local bodies come under departments headed by NCP minister Hasan Musrif and Shiv Sena minister Eknath



Shinde, respectively, while the OBC department is headed by Congress minister Vijay Wadetiwar, which deals with the Maharashtra State Commission for Backward Classes. However, Chhagan Bhujbal, NCP minister and a senior OBC leader, is being seen as following up on the OBC

reservation issue, while the Shiv Sena has maintained silence.

"The reservation issue is with the general administration department (headed by the CM). However, since multiple departments are involved in the OBC quota issue, there is no proper coordination. The issue of lack of coordination was raised by Congress and NCP ministers in the state cabinet meeting earlier this week," said a cabinet minister requesting anonymity.

The minister further said that the cabinet has now asked Bhujbal and Wadetiwar to follow up on the legal issues concerning OBC reservation.

A source said that the government also did not set up a cabinet sub-committee, as it had done in the case of Maratha reservation and for reservation in promotion. "The committee could have ensured coordination among all

the departments and on all issues related to OBC reservation," said the source.

Another minister said that differences among MVA allies on the issue have affected the cause of OBC reservation. "Funds are not being released to the Backward Class Commission for collecting empirical data," said the minister, claiming that the NCP-led finance department has not been reciprocating. Hari Narke, a former member of the Maharashtra State Commission for Backward Classes, said, "The stay by the SC is one of the expected outcomes as all possibilities were considered while promulgating an ordinance. Now, the CM should pay attention to ensure proper coordination between the OBC department, rural development department and urban development department and give justice to the OBC community."



CM seeks information of preparations to deal with Corona

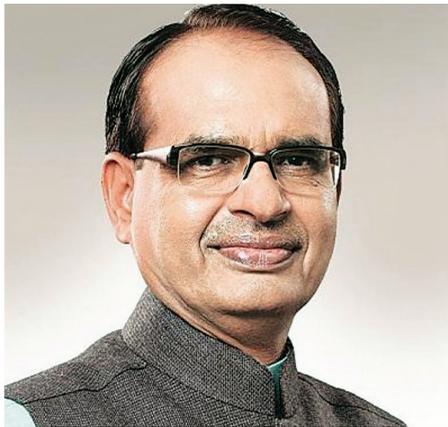
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SHOULD BE ENSURED TO PREVENT CORONA INFECTION

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday received information about the necessary preparations being made by the district administration and Health Department in view of the possible third wave of Corona in Ratlam district. Chouhan said that joint efforts with proper co-ordination and cooperation of common people should be ensured to prevent Corona infection. We will be able to stop the possible third wave of Corona with public participation.

Collector Kumar Purushottam informed Chief Minister Chouhan about the arrangements made in local medical colleges, medical centers located at district and block level, availability of oxygen plants, medical equipment and medicines. He said that along with all the preparations to deal with the possible Corona wave, a public awareness campaign is also being conducted.

Talking to media representatives, Chouhan said that in Ratlam city, the vaccination work of both the doses has been 100 percent completed. Members of social organizations and media along with MPs, MLAs, all public representatives, administrative and health staff have actively supported in this achievement. Congratulations to all of them. Chief Minister said that it is a matter of immense joy that 90 percent people in the rural areas of Ratlam district have been given the second dose of the vaccine. Very soon Ratlam will



be the first district of the state, to have 100 percent completed the work of both the doses of the vaccine.

Chouhan said that in view of the possible third wave of Corona, all necessary steps are being taken by the state gov-

ernment. Oxygen plant is also fully ready. The purity of oxygen is also coming to 96 percent. All necessary equipment is also available in sufficient quantity. Chouhan said that Ratlam is a growing metropolis. I will come to Ratlam next month to see the status of implementation of government schemes and programmes in Ratlam district and to review the progress. Member of Parliament Gumansingh Damor along with MLAs, public representatives and officials were present.

Chief Minister sought information from the Dean of the Medical College, Dr. Jitendra Gupta, about the preparations to deal with the third wave of Corona, the status of the hospital building of the Medical College and the CT scan machine. Dean Dr. Gupta apprised Chief Minister Chouhan about the health facilities and preparedness ensured in view of the possible third wave of corona and new variants.

The Dean informed that CT Scan machine will be installed in the next 20-25 days. The hospital building of the medical college will also be ready for dedication to the public by the coming month. College professors and students warmly welcomed and greeted Chouhan. The medical college students blessed for their future by Chief Minister Chouhan.

Chouhan also attended the marriage ceremony of Payas Pandey, son of Javra MLA Rajendra Pandey and blessed the newly married couple.

NOC of liabilities will have to be submitted to Panchayats along with nomination papers

Team Absolute | Bhopal

For the three-tier Panchayat election, it will be mandatory for the candidates of Sarpanch, Janpad Panchayat and Zila Panchayat members to submit no dues certificates of all the liabilities (dues) to the Panchayats along with their nomination papers. The nomination paper will be cancelled if no dues certificate is not produced along with the nomination paper. The no dues certificates can be presented to the Returning Officer concerned for scrutiny of nomination papers by the stipulated date and time.

Secretary State Election Commission Shri BS Jamod has informed that no dues certificate will have to be submitted till the financial year preceding the announcement of election. The no dues certificate in the prescribed format will be issued by the Secretary for Gram Panchayat, Chief Executive Officer Janpad Panchayat and Chief Executive Officer Zila

Panchayat for Zila Panchayat. The no dues certificate of that Panchayat will have to be attached for the Panchayat for which the nomination form is being filled by the candidate. If the candidate has been an officer / member of any other Panchayat in the past, then it will be mandatory for him/her to produce the no-dues certificate of the previous Panchayat as well. That is, if a candidate has been a sarpanch in the past and now wants to contest the election of a member of the Janpad / District Panchayat, then he/she will have to submit the no dues certificate of the village panchayat along with the Janpad / District panchayat. Similarly, if a former Janpad Panchayat member or Zila Panchayat member wants to contest the election of Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, then it will be mandatory for him/her to present the no-dues certificate of the concerned District / Janpad Panchayat along with the Gram Panchayat.

DEAD MAN GETS COVID-19 VACCINE CERTIFICATE

According to the dead man's son Phool Singh Shakyawar, they received the message on December 3 and were also able to download the vaccine certificate

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A dead senior citizen allegedly received a message about having taken the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and got a certificate for the same in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district, an official said today.

The authorities have cited computer error as a reason for the goof-up, in which Purushottam Shakyawar (78) of Biaoara town, who died in May, received a message on his mobile phone number that he was administered the second dose of the vaccine on December 3.

According to the dead man's son Phool Singh Shakyawar, they received the message on December 3 and were

also able to download the vaccine certificate. Shakyawar said his father had taken the first dose of the vaccine on April 8. He had died on May 24 while undergoing treatment in Indore.

When asked about the goof-up, District Vaccination Officer Dr PL Bhagoria said he had received information about the matter and was inquiring into it. A glitch in the computer might have generated such a message, he said.

Biaoara's block medical officer Dr Sharad Sahu said that since vaccination is being carried out on a large scale, someone might have entered the wrong mobile phone number while making an entry, and the mistake will be rectified.

Meanwhile, Congress MLA from Biaoara Ramchandra Dangri alleged that the state government was misleading people by presenting the wrong data of vaccination.

Such incidents were exposing the government's claim and a high-level inquiry should be conducted into all such cases, he said.

NCC CADETS DONATE BLOOD



Bhopal: A selection camp is being organized in Bhopal from 8 to 17 December 2021 for the Republic Day parade -2022. Deputy Camp Commandant Major Gayatri K Nair has told that a blood donation camp was organized on Saturday in which 80 boys and girls NCC cadets donated blood for the blood bank of Hamidia Hospital.

Major Gayatri informed that various inter group competitions have been organized in Pre RDC Camp and CATC Camp organized under the joint aegis of NCC Group Headquarters Bhopal and 4 MP Girls Battalion. More than 400 NCC cadets from Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are involved in the camp. Various types of training are being given to the cadets.

E-vehicles will be encouraged to protect the environment and reduce fuel consumption

E-vehicles road-show organised on National Energy Conservation Day

Team Absolute | Bhopal

E-vehicles are being encouraged to prevent environmental pollution and to control the expenditure on petrol and diesel. The Chief Engineer of the Corporation Bhuvnesh Kumar Patel informed that on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day, a road-show of electric vehicles was organised by the Corporation. The objective of the e-vehicles road-show is to make every citizen aware about energy-conservation, management and its utilisation under the energy literacy campaign started by the state government.

On the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day (14th December), a road-show was organised in Bhopal on Saturday with a view to develop people's responsiveness about the utility of electric vehicles and to create awareness among the general public towards them. A large number of e-rickshaws, e-scooters and e-four wheelers etc. were included in the road-show. The e-vehicles included in the road-show started from



Urja Vikas Nigam premises and passed through different areas of the city, Tiidi Chowk, Link Road No.-1, New Market, Minto Hall, Police Control Room, Shaheed Smarak and returned to Urja Bhawan while passing through 6 Number E-mobility mission has been launched by the Government of India with a view to encourage electric vehicles. Apart from this, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) Government of India has started "Go-Electric Campaign" to promote electric vehicles. The main



objective of organising this road-show is to encourage more and more people to use electric vehicles.

Patel informed that 18 percent of the total energy is spent in the transport sector, in which about 94 million tonnes of oil is consumed. Promoting "electric vehicles" will save oil as well as save foreign exchange. The Government of India has also launched Vishesh FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) to promote electric vehicles.

CM expresses grief at the accident

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has condoled the untimely death of four persons in a road accident in Mandla district. Chouhan has prayed to God to grant peace to the departed souls and strength to the family members to bear this loss.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO BALASAHEB DEVRAS



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Balasaheb Deoras on his birth anniversary. Chouhan garlanded his portrait in the auditorium at his residence office. Tweeting on the birth anniversary of revered Madhukar Dattatreya Deoras, one who was dedicated to the service and upliftment of the nation, Chief Minister Chouhan said that - "The strong thoughts of a great man who selflessly served the country and humanity, will continue to inspire the coming generations to work for upliftment of the nation and public welfare."

Balasaheb Deoras was the third Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Deoras was born on December 11, 1915 in Nagpur. His family belonged to Karanja, a village near Aam gaavn in Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh. His entire education took place in Nagpur itself. He assumed the responsibility of Sarsanghchalak on 6 June 1973 after the death of Guru Ji. Sangh work got a new direction during his tenure. He laid emphasis on service. Consequently, thousands of works of service were started in the Vanvasi region of the country including North Purvanchal. He died on 17 June, 1996 in Nagpur.

3 SIBLINGS DROWN IN WATER-FILLED QUARRY

Raisen: The incident took place at Kunwarkhedhi on Silwani Road, on Friday evening, said Sub Divisional Officer of Police PN Goyal. Two girls aged eight and four and their six-year-old brother died while bathing in a pool of water formed in a stone quarry in Raisen district, police said on Saturday. The incident took place at Kunwarkhedhi on Silwani Road, 110 km from here, on Friday evening, said Sub Divisional Officer of Police PN Goyal. The stone quarry had been dug up on a piece of farmland by a road contractor. The victims, two girls aged eight and four and their six-year-old brother, were children of the watchman appointed to guard the farmland, the police official said.

Couple held for 'luring' tribal women to convert to Christianity

The action was taken based on a complaint filed by Prakash Chouhan, a resident of Madil village. As per the complaint, the couple had been luring the tribal women for conversion to Christianity by offering money, free education, free medicines, employment and other facilities after inviting them to their residence

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Police have arrested a couple in Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh for allegedly trying to lure tribal women to convert to Christianity, an official said on Saturday.

The accused, identified as Anar Singh Jamre (35) and his wife Laxmi Jamre (32), residents of Navalpura village, were booked and arrested on Friday under the provisions of Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, Rajpur police station in-charge Rajesh Yadav said.

The action was taken based on a complaint filed by Prakash Chouhan, a resident of Madil village, he said. As per the complaint, the couple had been luring the tribal women for conversion to Christianity by offering money, free education, free medicines, employment and other facilities after inviting them to their residence, Yadav said.

Police have also seized some related literature, pen drives and other material from the couple's house, he said, adding that they were released after a local court granted bail to them.

The amended Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act penalises religious conversions through fraudulent means including those for the sake of marriage.

In cases involving religious conversion of members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minors, a provision has been made for imprisonment of two to 10 years and Rs 50,000 fine. Last month, police had arrested 11 persons, including seven from Rajasthan and Gujarat, in two cases of religious conversion in Khargone and Jhabua districts.

Make children aware of environment from an early age: Chief Minister

Three and a half year old girl child Khushi plants sapling with CM
CM plants Karanj and Jamun saplings in Smart Udyan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted a Jamun sapling in Smart Udyan on Saturday along with three and a half year old girl Khushi. Chouhan also planted a sapling of Karanj. Dheeraj Soni, Megha Soni and Achala Sabyasachi of Nar Seva Narayan Seva Samiti who were actively involved in plantations and distribution of food packets and ration kits to the needy during the Corona crisis also accompanied him.

While planting the saplings Khushi said to Chief Minister Chouhan, that she felt happy while planting saplings. Chouhan said that he was happy to see Khushi's love for the environment at



such a young age. Efforts to make children aware of the environment from an early age, will be helpful in making the coming generation aware and active towards environmental protection. It may be noted that Chouhan plants saplings every day in fulfilment of his resolve. Constant efforts are being made by Chouhan to encourage community participation in the activities of environmental conservation by planting saplings with social organizations and people active in the field of environmental protection. A campaign is being run by Nar

Seva Narayan Seva Samiti for generating awareness towards plantation. The committee distributed 80 thousand food packets and 5 thousand ration kits to needy people during the Corona period. The committee has also been distributing blankets to the needy during winters for the last five years. Free

Tiffin service is being provided twice daily by the committee to the financially and physically weak senior citizens since two years. In addition, free health camps are also organized for the elderly. The Karanj sapling planted today is considered important in Ayurvedic medicine. Karanj plant is also used for religious purposes. Jamun is an ever-green tree whose fruits are popular for their unique taste and medicinal properties. This tree is found in India and other countries of South Asia and Indonesia etc.

5 CASES RESOLVED WITH MUTUAL CONSENT IN LOK ADALAT ORGANISED AT REAT

Bhopal: In the National Lok Adalat held on December 11 at Madhya Pradesh Real Estate Appellate Tribunal, REAT Bhopal, 5 cases were resolved with mutual consent. The resolved cases were related to the liability of one crore 56 lakh 56 thousand 448 rupees.

Registrar Madhya Pradesh Real Estate Appellate Tribunal has informed that 16 cases were presented in Lok Adalat. Out of these, the cases of MP Housing Infrastructure Development Board vs. Balbir Singh Raghuvanshi, Kanakbali Developers and Builders Pvt Ltd vs. Rekha Sawale, Kunwar Uday Singh vs. Chinar Builders and others, Sarthak Innovation vs. Piyush and Himanshu Infrastructure Pvt Ltd vs. Prakash Lonare and others were resolved with mutual consent. The Division Bench constituted for the National Lok Adalat was headed by AM Saxena and the members were advocates Rahul Ganeshe and Shri Sambhav Sogani.

CM pays tribute to former President Late. Pranab Mukherjee

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan remembers former President Late. Pranab Kumar Mukherjee on his birth anniversary. Chouhan paid floral tribute by garlanding Mukherjee's portrait in the auditorium of his residence office. Chief Minister Chouhan tweeted - saying that "I pay tributes to the Aajatsatru of politics, former President of India, Bharat Ratna, Late Pranab Mukherjee on the birth anniversary. The service you have rendered to the nation and society through politics will always serve as a guide for the generations to come."

Former President Pranab Kumar Mukherjee was born on 11 December, 1935 in Mirati village of Birbhoom district of West Bengal. Pranab Mukherjee was awarded the Bharat Ratna on 26 January, 2019. He took the oath of



office and secrecy on 25 July, 2012 as the 13th President of India. Pranab Mukherjee authored the book 'The Collision Years: 1996-2012'. Mukherjee contributed for a long time in the Ministries of Finance, External Affairs and Defense. Mukherjee also got a lot of respect in the field of social policies. Mukherjee also worked as an advocate and was engaged in teaching work besides being involved in the field of journalism in his early life. He was also a trustee of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and president of All India Banga Sahitya Sammelan. He died on 31 August, 2020 in Delhi.



Marvel's 'Eternals' heads to Disney Plus in Jan 2022

Los Angeles | Agencies

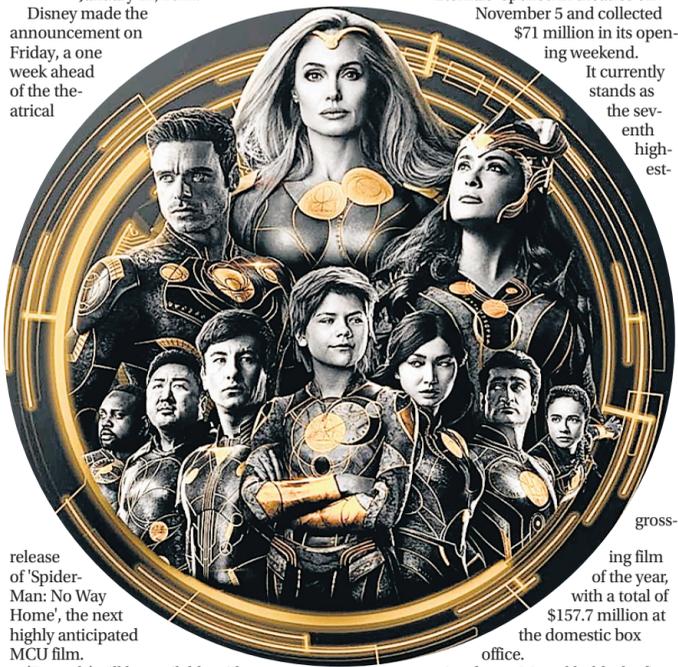
The most recent chapter in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) -- 'Eternals', will land on Disney Plus in just over a month on January 12, 2022.

Disney made the announcement on Friday, a one week ahead of the theatrical

as the super-fast Makkari, Barry Keoghan as aloof loner Druig, Don Lee as the powerful Gilgamesh, Kit Harington as Dane Whitman, Salma Hayek as the wise and spiritual leader Ajak, and Angelina Jolie as the fierce warrior Thena.

'Eternals' opened in theatres on November 5 and collected \$71 million in its opening weekend.

It currently stands as the seventh highest-grossing film of the year, with a total of \$157.7 million at the domestic box office.



release of 'Spider-Man: No Way Home', the next highly anticipated MCU film.

'Eternals' will be available with an Imax-enhanced expanded aspect ratio, like 13 other MCU films on Disney Plus.

Directed by Oscar winner Chloe Zhao, the super-powered ensemble film includes Gemma Chan as the humankind-loving Sersi, Richard Madden as the all-powerful Ikaris, Kumail Nanjiani as cosmic-powered Kingo, Lia McHugh as the eternally young, old-soul Sprite, Brian Tyree Henry as the intelligent inventor Phastos, Lauren Ridloff

As of now, Marvel holds the first and third spots on the chart, with 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings' and 'Black Widow'.

Like 'Shang-Chi', the Disney Plus launch of 'Eternals' comes just over two months after it debuted in theatres.

'Black Widow', released over the summer while the pandemic raged on, had a simultaneous release in cinemas and on Disney Plus under its paid Premier Access feature.

Ariel Winter: I was fat-shamed at the age of 13, it was rough

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Ariel Winter, who gained fame when she began playing Alex Dunphy in 'Modern Family' at the age of 11, has said that just two years after she began appearing on television screens, she was receiving hate messages from people who body-shamed her.

The 22-year-old actress added, "I got called a fat s*** when I was 13. That was rough. Because I gained weight and my body changed, I had to wear different outfits and I wore a dress that had a cut-out (on my chest). And the headlines were dark. 'Fat s***' was rough for me, and it continued." Winter said that some hate comments even came from people claiming to be her fans, because they wanted her to be more like the character she played on TV, reports femalefirst.co.uk. She added: "It was the fans, some of them... We have lovely, lovely fans, but some of them were also hard on me in the way they loved Alex Dunphy. And because I wasn't Alex Dunphy and didn't look like her, I didn't want to dress like Alex, I was just different in that way. I'm not my character.

"From them, they're like, 'How did you go from Alex Dunphy to being, like, a w****? You're trying to be sexy, you're 13, you're a horrible role model. What are you showing people? You got so fat on TV, now you look so fat'."

As she got older, the negative comments continued, especially after she gained weight as a result of the anti-depressants she was taking.

Jason Momoa says 'Aquaman' sequel has wrapped production

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Jason Momoa has confirmed on social media that the superhero sequel 'Aquaman 2' has wrapped production.

In a video, Momoa said: "Aw man, that's a wrap. That's a wrap, 'Aquaman 2'. I have so much to share with you, I wish... I could tell you so much. What an epic day. I love you."

"So good to have been home to finish this, so many good surprises. Love you and... it's been a long time. I'm taking a break. Aloha."

The 'Game of Thrones' star went through a gruelling shoot for James Wan's upcoming blockbuster that will also see the return of cast members Amber Heard, Patrick Wilson and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and film chiefs were concerned when he tested positive for Covid-19 recently, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

An insider said at the time: "It's a real headache for the film's bosses, who are now worrying about having to delay their tight filming schedule." Of course the safety of



everyone working on the film is the most important thing and everyone is tested regularly. They are hoping this is a one-off and that they can work around Jason and continue filming on the production. "Momoa previously said that filming for the new blockbuster had been a lot more physically demanding than in the past. The 'See' actor explained: "I'm getting old. I messed up my eyes. I just got something in it that kind of cut it up, and then I've got to get surgery, I have a hernia, I've got ribs out. I'm just -- getting beat up." I just kind of give it. I love my job and I get a little, too, excited, then the age thing, you know, I'm an ageing superhero right now."

KIM FILES TO BE MADE LEGALLY SINGLE AMID KANYE WEST DIVORCE



Los Angeles | Agencies

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian has filed to become legally single amid her divorce from rapper Kanye West, as she asks a judge to separate issues of child custody and property from her marital status.

The papers filed by Kim ask the judge in her divorce case to separate issues of child custody and property from her marital status, meaning she and Kanye would be able to be legally single while they continue to work out the terms of their divorce, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

According to TMZ, the 41-year-old reality star has also asked to have her maiden name restored, which would see her known as just Kim Kardashian.

The news comes as Kanye has made several public comments about his intentions to try and win Kim back.

Earlier this week, the music mogul dedicated his song 'Runaway' to Kim while performing at the Free Larry Hoover concert at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

But sources said after the concert that Kim, who is reportedly romancing Pete Davidson, has "moved on" from West and has no interest in rekindling their romance.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Alec Baldwin's wife Hilaria has said that the Hollywood star has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after they were flooded with messages from trolls who want to "poke at him", following the fatal shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of 'Rust' in October. She wrote on her Instagram Story: "Now, my husband is suffering from PTSD right now. It's something that's not just from what happened recently, but he's been suffering from this for a

very, very, very long time." And these people know this and they want to poke at him and they want to upset him."

The mother-of-six added that it is difficult to just "ignore" negative comments but it's also impossible to respond to every "crazy" story, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She said: "The issue is, if you don't say anything, you're giving them the space to speak for you, and your silence

sometimes speaks enough to them to be able to commandeer your story." It's tricky because you don't want to be constantly responding to every single crazy, crazy thing." Hilaria said trolling isn't just a problem for famous people and she urged her followers to "reclaim" their voices and stick to their boundaries.



Hilaria Baldwin: Alec has post-traumatic stress disorder

Camila Cabello used her own experiences to prepare for 'Cinderella'



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Camila Cabello stars in Amazon's adaptation of the fairytale 'Cinderella' and also contributed to the soundtrack and said that she used her own mental health struggles to help her write the song 'Million to One'. She told The Hollywood Reporter, "I don't think I know how to write in any way that isn't personal to me. When I was working on 'Million to One' for 'Cinderella', to be totally honest, I was going through a really hard time with my mental health." Cabello added, "It was just a period of a lot of anxiety and sadness for me, and that song had me feeling like, 'I can overcome this. I know that I can make my life better.' I feel like I channelled my personal journey into one of the character. The character was super confident that "everybody was telling her no, but she knew". "She revealed she has always wanted to act.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Ana De Armas



ASHES, 1ST TEST: AUSTRALIA CRUSH ENGLAND, WIN GABBA TEST BY NINE WICKETS

Brisbane | Agencies

Australia clinched a strong nine-wicket victory over the Joe Root-led England on Day 4 to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match Ashes series.

After a tricky Day 3, where Joe Root and Dawid Malan showed grit and perseverance in pulling England back in the match after conceding a large first-innings deficit, Australia came out in a strong fashion on the fourth morning, bowling England out for 297, with the last eight wickets falling for 77 runs.

Australia, requiring just 20 for victory, raced to the target early into the second session of the day, to take a 1-0 lead. Resuming from 220/2 in 70 overs, England added just three runs to their overnight score when they lost their first wicket of the day, with Malan hitting a bat-pad catch to Marnus Labuschagne at silly mid-off for Nathan Lyon's 400th Test wicket, ending the 162-run partnership. Off-spinner Lyon became the 17th bowler to reach the milestone, and the third Australian, after Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath.

After his agonising wait of 326 days to reach the milestone, Lyon got his 401st wicket in a matter of few minutes, dismissing Ollie Pope, who gloved a catch to first slip, for just four. But the most vital wicket of the day was wedged between Lyon's double-blow. Cameron Green, brought on before the new ball, forced a false shot from England skipper Joe Root on 89, with Alex Carey taking one of his eight catches in his first Test. Carey's eight is a record for catches on Test debut,



Brief scores

England 147 & 297 in 103 overs (Joe Root 89, Dawid Malan 82; Pat Cummins 2/51, Mitchell Starc 1/77; Nathan Lyon 4/91, Cameron Green 2/23) lost to Australia 425 and 20/1 in 5.1 overs (Marcus Harris 9 not out, Ollie Robinson 1/13) by nine wickets.

and was excellent behind the stumps, backing up the work of Australia's quicks, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc, who showed little respite, according to icc-cricket. Root fell 11 short of his first Test hundred in Australia. His dismissal triggered a collapse from which England never recovered though Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes did try to resurrect the innings.

After the new ball came into play, Cummins squared up all-rounder Stokes, who fell for 14, while the Buttler came off with him being dismissed by Hazlewood, as the right-handed batter fiddled outside his off-stump on 23. Lyon, finding the rhythm that brought his tally to

the 400-mark, cleaned up the tail, adding two more wickets against his name to end with figures of 4/91 in 34 overs. Green brought the curtains on England's implosion by having Chris Woakes nicking behind to Carey. Requiring just 20 for victory, after the lunch break, Carey joined Marcus Harris to open, with a rib injury cloud looming over opener David Warner. Carey edged to keeping counterpart Buttler for nine in the chase off Ollie Robinson, with Harris finishing off the job in four days with a boundary through point off Mark Wood. Cummins was undoubtedly a happy man with his team's performance. "Really proud of everyone. A really complete per-

formance, the bowlers did everything on day 1 and Marnus Davey with a big partnership and the way Travis played, it is a sign of a really positive group." Root, on the other hand, rued that his partnership with Malan couldn't go on for long. "We worked really hard to get back in the game last night and we knew that if we got through the new-ball unscathed and carried that partnership forward, we would really give ourselves a good opportunity to go on and post some sort of total which would've kept us in the game."

Focus now shifts to the second Test at the Adelaide Oval for the day-night affair with the pink ball, starting from December 16.

ALL-INDIA POLICE HOCKEY

Punjab Police beat ITBP 7-1 to win title

Bengaluru | Agencies

Dominant Punjab Police defeated a fighting ITBP Jalandhar 7-1 to win the final encounter at the 70th All India Police Hockey Championships which concluded here on Saturday. Sans their star striker Ramandeep Singh, who was forced out of the match due to an injury, Punjab Police did well to begin the match in an attacking mode. Punjab scored goals at regular intervals through Hardeep Singh (14'), Karanbir Singh (17', 39'), Kanwarjeet Singh (20'), captain Dupinderdeep Singh (41') and Jagmeet Singh (53') and Balwinder Singh (55'). A consolation goal was scored by Sunil Kijjir (27') for ITBP Jalandhar.

In the women's final, Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) secured a scintillating 3-1 victory against CRPF Delhi in a match between two equally matched teams. While it was SSB who opened the scoreboard through Ranjita Minj (15'), CRPF fought back with a goal by Bharti Thakur (34') to equalize. While the next few minutes remained tense, SSB won back the lead through goals by Maxima Ekka (44') and Rajni Barla (45'). They held strong in defence all



through the last quarter as they held onto the 3-1 lead till the final hooter.

In the men's bronze medal match, Tamil Nadu Police registered a convincing 6-0 win against hosts Karnataka State Police to end their campaign on the podium. After a hard-fought semifinal yesterday against the ITBP Jalandhar, Karnataka Police lacked steam in today's match and failed to play on-par with a younger and fitter Tamil Nadu squad. Though the hosts did well in the first two quarters with defensive play, they couldn't stop the

TN attackers from going on a goal-scoring spree in the third and fourth quarter. For TN, goals were scored by M Vijay (27', 45'), B Arunachalam (34', 47'), M Balamurugan (55', 60'). Meanwhile, Odisha Police took home the bronze medal in the women's category as they beat Maharashtra State Police 6-0. Odisha's captain Rashmita Minz (6', 23', 37', 39') scored four incredible goals to star in the match for her team. Pramita Toppo (38') and Elin Lakra (56') too scored in Odisha Police's fine win.

ISL 2021-22

FC Goa register 2-1 win over Bengaluru FC

Fatorda | Agencies

Bengaluru FC were pushed near the bottom place as FC Goa handed the Blues a third consecutive defeat, registering a 2-1 win in an Indian Super League 2021-22 match at the Athletic Stadium, here on Saturday.

This was a second consecutive victory for the Gaurs in a match that saw two red cards and eight yellow cards.

Ashique Kuruniyan (16' OG) scored his second own goal of the season, sending the Gaurs in an early lead before Cleiton Silva (45') pegged them back with a sublime free-kick. Devendra Murgaoankar (70') helped his team regain the lead and scored the winner after going down to 10-men.

Jorge Ortiz started the game on a bright note, being the source of several attacking opportunities. He seemed to have got on the scoresheet in the 16th minute but the



goal was credited to Ashique Kuruniyan who got the last touch on a rebound. Glan Martins was the first player to go in the referee's book as he got a yellow card early in the match.

Sunil Chhetri's woeful start to the season continued as he missed an open goal from 12 yards in his 100th appearance. Roshan Naorem then

picked up a yellow after the drinks break. Gurpreet Singh Sandhu fumbled an easy backpass a few minutes later but managed to clear it to avoid conceding an embarrassing goal. Against the run of play, just before the half-time whistle, Cleiton Silva scored the equaliser with a curling free-kick from the left flank.

COMMONWEALTH WEIGHTLIFTING C'SHIPS: HAZARIKA POPY CLINCHES SILVER MEDAL

Tashkent (Uzbekistan): Indian weightlifter Hazarika Popy clinched the silver medal in the women's 59 kg category at the 2021 Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships, here on Saturday. Hazarika lifted 84kg in snatch and 105kg in clean and jerk for a total of 189kg to take the second spot on the podium. Niger's Rafiatu Lawal stood on top with 207kg (92+115) while Sri Lankan N Rajapaksa lifted 164kg (74+90) to complete the top three. However, Popy's lifts were only enough to put her 17th in the World Weightlifting Championships 2021, which are being held concurrently. Tokyo Olympic gold medalist Kuo Hsing-Chun of Chinese Taipei was crowned the world champion for the fifth time. She lifted a total of 230kg to stand on top of the overall leaderboard and also won gold in clean and jerk for her effort of 130kg, an olympics.com report said.

Impressive Chaitanya, Shambhavi, Mahreen win for 4th time in a row at US Kids Golf India

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian women's footballer Manisha Kalyan has said that the team doesn't feel the pressure against big teams anymore after facing a number of quality opponents in the last few years. The Indian women's team has played against higher-ranked teams like Turkey, Uzbekistan, UAE, Bahrain and Sweden in the last few years and have gained a lot of confidence and learned so much from them.

"We gained a lot of experience against the higher-ranked teams and we got to learn so much from them," said Manisha who registered her name in the record books by scoring India's first-ever goal against Brazil at the senior level in November. "We used to be nervous facing tough opponents, but after having faced such big teams, we don't feel that pressure anymore. We don't fear any team and just want to play good football against them and give them tough competition," she added. The 20-year old, who



herself has been an avid fan of Brazil since childhood, has gained a lot of self-confidence after scoring against them. "I used to follow some of the Brazilian players like Ronaldinho since I was a kid so playing against Brazil gave me an immense boost. It was a great opportunity for everyone, and especially for me as I went and scored for my team," she said. "I feel I have gained a lot of confidence after scoring that goal

and feel that I can score more goals in the future," she added. A resident of the Mugoval village in the Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, Manisha got a warm reception over the phone from her family and friends from the other side of the globe after her historic feat. "My family and friends were happy and proud that I scored that goal. It is such a great feeling to have when your parents are proud of

you. There were so many calls and messages I had received that day which I will be forever grateful," the attacker said. "Firstly, playing against Brazil was such a huge thing, so was scoring. But that does not change our main aim, which is to do well in the AFC Asian Cup. All of that was done so that we could prepare better for the tournament, and we want to do well in Asia," she concluded.

Sr National Hockey: Record 74 goals on Day 1 as Manipur thrash Tripura 21-0

Pune | Agencies

Manipur Hockey scored at will and ended up recording a 21-0 victory over their north-eastern neighbours Tripura Hockey on a day when goals were aplenty at the 11th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship at the Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium, Nehrunagar-Pimpri near here on Saturday. While Manipur set a record of sorts, the day overall was all about counting goals with three matches in the morning session producing 39 goals while 35 goals were scored in two matches in the afternoon. At the end of the day, 74 goals were scored in five matches played. Hockey Karnataka, Le Puducherry, Hockey Punjab, and Hockey Chandigarh were the other big-score winners on the opening day of the event. In other matches, Hockey Andhra Pradesh earned full points after Hockey Andaman and Nicobar failed to show up for the championship. In Group C, Hockey Karnataka began the day with a 14-0 win over Hockey Jammu and Kashmir. Hockey Karnataka had nine players getting their names on the scoresheet. Mohd Raheel (2nd) gave the Southern side the lead and likewise became the first scorer of the 2021 edition. Thereafter, Hockey Karnataka opened the floodgates with Mohd Raheel (14th); Somanna BP (4th, 47th); Punith R (20th, 55th); Bharath



KR (23rd, 30th); S Deekshith P (27th); Chiranth Somanna N.D (42nd); Likhith BM (43rd, 60th); Kumar Yashith B (52nd); Shamanth CS (60th) scoring the goals. Hockey Karnataka led 7-0 at half-time. Le Puducherry downed first-timers Hockey Arunachal Pradesh 14-0 while Hockey Punjab thrashed Hockey Uttarakhand 11-0 in a Group D match. With the presence of 2020 Tokyo Olympian Rupinder Pal Singh, all eyes were on the star drag-flicker to make an impact. However, it was off a penalty stroke that he made his mark in the 50th minute of play. Hockey Punjab went about their business with ease with Lovepreet Jainth (4th, 46th, 56th, 58th) leading with four goals. Paramjeet Singh (6th), Sudarshan Singh (7th, 18th), Vishal Yadav (21st), Singh Gursahzad Pirzada (30th), Gautam Kumar (35th) added to the tally. In Group E, Hockey Chandigarh scored a 14-0 victory over Hockey Rajasthan with Mohit (6th, 42nd, 55th) and Amandeep (23rd, 25th, 57th) scoring the most goals. Adding goals were Rajveen Singh (12th), Bir Angad Singh (14th, 28th), Harpreet Singh (14th, 39th), Harmanpreet Singh (21st), Yograj Singh (35th), and Jaspreet Singh (37th). In the last match of the day, Hockey Manipur recorded the top score of the day downing Tripura Hockey 21-0 in Group-E with Mantosh Laishram Meitei contributing four goals.

RESULTS

Pool-C: Hockey Karnataka: 14 (Mohd Raheel 2nd, 14th; Somanna BP 4th, 47th; Punith R 20th, 55th; Bharath KR 23rd, 30th; S Deekshith P 27th; Chiranth Somanna N.D 42nd; Likhith BM 43rd, 60th; Kumar Yashith B 52nd; Shamanth CS 60th) bt Hockey Jammu and Kashmir: 0. HT: 7-0 Pool-C: Le Puducherry: 14 (Arun T Kumar 1st, 3rd, 25th, 35th; Veerathamizhan V 10th, 43rd, 56th, 58th; A Tamilarasan 12th, R Ranjith 12th, 22nd, 42nd, Pooviyarasan 23rd, Sellamuthu N 34th) bt Hockey Arunachal: 0. HT: 8-0 Pool-D: Hockey Punjab: 11 (Lovepreet Jainth 4th, 46th, 56th, 58th; Paramjeet Singh 6th; Sudarshan Singh 7th, 18th; Vishal Yadav 21st; Singh Gursahzad Pirzada 30th; Gautam Kumar 35th; Rupinder Pal Singh 50th) bt Hockey Uttarakhand: 0. HT: 6-0 Pool-D: Hockey Andhra Pradesh bt Hockey Andaman and Nicobar - 5-0 Match forfeited Pool-E: Hockey Chandigarh: 14 (Mohit 6th, 42nd, 55th, Rajveen Singh 12th, Bir Angad Singh 14th, 28th, Harpreet Singh 14th, 39th, Harmanpreet Singh 21st, Amandeep 23rd, 25th, 57th; Yograj Singh 35th, Jaspreet Singh 37th) bt Hockey Rajasthan: 0. HT: 8-0

National Car Racing C'ship: Chirag Ghorpade, Arjun Balu cruise to victory

Chennai | Agencies

Teenagers, spearheaded by Bengaluru schoolboy Chirag Ghorpade, took the honours in the MRF F1600 race in the second round of the MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Car Racing Championship at the Madras Motor Race Track (MMRT), here on Saturday. Chirag held off another 17-year-old, Agra's Shahan Ali Mohsin, for his maiden win in this category while Rishon Rajiv, 16, also from Bengaluru, finished third in the eight-lap race. The trio was in a league of its own in a field that had quite a few experienced drivers. "It was a tough race initially when Shahan caught up with me, but I realized that he was unable to narrow the gap any further and I managed to dictate the pace," said Chirag, who had earlier qualified for pole position. Meanwhile, Coimbatore veteran, defending champion Arjun Balu (Race Concepts), at 47, and in his 29th racing season, was in an imperious form easily winning the premier Indian Touring Cars race from pole position, while two Rayo Racing drivers from Hyderabad, Anindith Reddy and Jeet Jhabakh finished a distant second and third, respectively. "Honestly, I was quite surprised by the pace of the car (Honda City), and by the end of the first lap, I was comfortably ahead. Thereafter, I decided to back off a bit and scaled-down on my aggression. Yes, I am quite pleased with the performance," Balu was quoted as saying by the organisers in a press release on Saturday. Performance Racing's Deepak Ravikumar from Chennai

and Bengaluru's Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) topped in the Super Stock and Indian Junior Touring Cars category, respectively. MRF F1600 (Race-1): 1. Chirag Ghorpade (Bengaluru) (13mins, 32.919secs); 2. Shahan Ali Mohsin (Agra) (13:34.252); 3. Rishon Rajiv (Bengaluru) (13:35.164). Indian Touring Cars (Race-1): 1. Arjun Balu (Race Concepts, Coimbatore) (15:19.312); 2. Anindith Reddy (Rayo Racing, Hyderabad) (15:46.386); 3. Jeet Jhabakh (Rayo Racing, Hyderabad) (15:54.693). Super Stock (Race-1): 1. Deepak Ravikumar (Performance Racing, Chennai) (16:09.974); 2. Ritvik Thomas (Race Concepts, Bengaluru) (16:12.079); 3. RP Raja Rajan (Performance Racing, Chennai) (16:17.578). Indian Junior Touring Cars (Race-1): 1. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts, Bengaluru) (16:04.162); 2. Charen Chandran (Pvt, Coimbatore) (16:25.674); 3. Hatim Shabbir Jamnagarwala (Performance Racing, Chennai) (15:30.132, 7 laps) Formula LGB 1300 (Race-1, 5 laps): 1. Viswas Vijayaraj (DTS Racing, Nellore) (11:14.406); 2. Arya Singh (DTS Racing, Kolkata) (11:15.966); 3. Deepak Ravikumar (Momentum Motorsport, Chennai) (11:20.775). MRF Saloon Cars (Toyota Etios - Race 1): 1. Fahad Kutty (Red Line Racing, Mumbai) (17:08.849); 2. Jamie Shaw (Red Line Racing, Mumbai) (17:09.332); 3. Chandresh Tolia (Red Line Racing, Mumbai) (17:11.833). Race-2 (10 laps): 1. A Balaprasath (Quest Motorsport, Coimbatore) (21:17.190); 2. Justin Singh (Quest Motorsport, Haryana) (21:17.925); 3. Fahad Kutty



'I'm just a character actor in it'



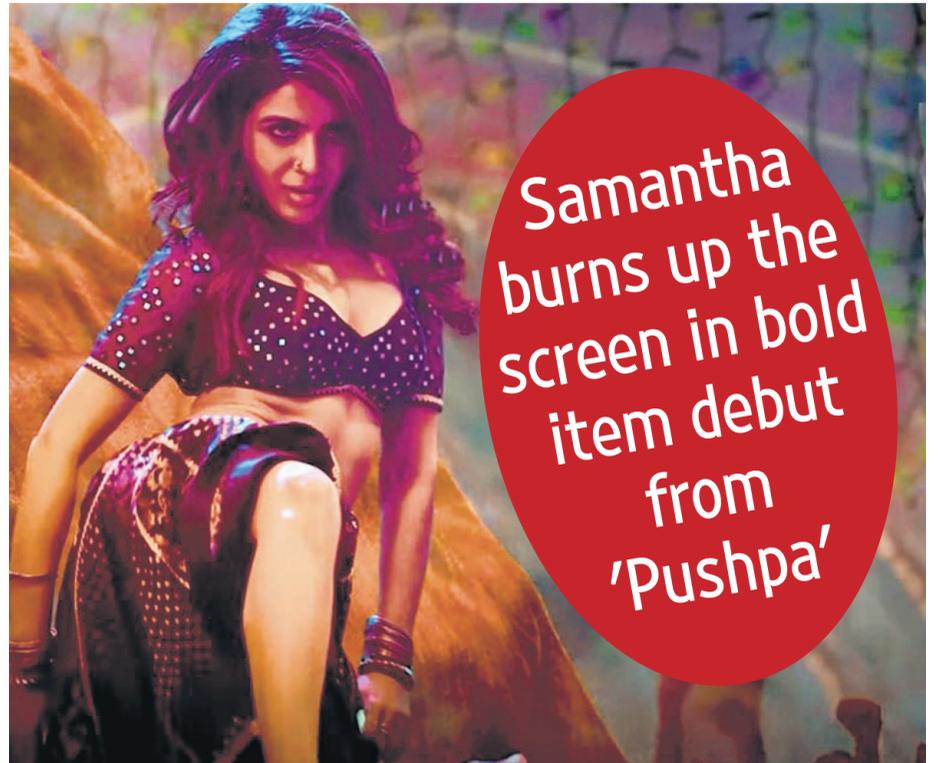
AKSHAY KUMAR ON HIS 'ATRANGI RE' ROLE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Superstar Akshay Kumar is all set to enchant the audience with his latest role in the upcoming film 'Atrangi Re'. Crediting it as a complete Sara Ali Khan and Dhanush movie, the 'Khiladi' of Bollywood says he is just a character actor in the Anand L. Rai directorial. Not much is known about Akshay's role in 'Atrangi Re', which is slated to release on December 24 on Disney+ Hotstar.

Talking to reporter in a candid chat in the capital, Akshay said: "I am just a part of the film but this is actually Dhanush and Sara's film. They are the main lead and I am just a character in it. So, when this film came to me I liked the story." The 54-year-old star revealed why he said 'yes' to such a character. "The character was small but I liked it so much that I told Anand L. Rai that I will do it and he was also shocked to hear how I said 'yes' to this," said Akshay, who in 2020, was ranked as the highest-paid Bollywood actor by Forbes.

"For me, if I like the script even if I have a small role like how I did a film like 'Khakee', my character dies after the interval but I did it. I have done so many films like 'Mujhse Shaadi Karogi' I didn't have a heroine even in 'Hera Pheri'. I do such films because I like them...I was also excited to get a chance to work with Anand L. Rai." The actor, who has been feted with a Padma Shri, the fourth-highest civil honour by the government of India, credits Sara and Dhanush if 'Atrangi Re' does well. On a concluding note, he said: "I am not a magician and I can't tell you what it is. There is a lot of fun in the film. There is a love story which in its own 'Atrangi' way has been shown."



Samantha burns up the screen in bold item debut from 'Pushpa'

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Samantha Ruth Prabhu's first item song 'Oo Antava Oo Oo Antava' was unveiled by the makers of 'Pushpa' on Saturday.

Tagged as the 'sizzling song of the year', Samantha's bold moves with the peppy music left her fans dizzy.

The makers who teased a few posters earlier, unveiled the bold lyri-

cal video with Samantha's performance. The song's lyrics written by Chandra Bose carry a bold message about how in general, men look at women.

"This winter is going to get heated up with Queen @samantharuthprabhuoff's moves", Mythri Movie Makers wrote on social media.

Samantha's attire and the blingy set give a dizzy effect, for the song

crooned by Indravathi Chauhan. Being the first-ever item song Samantha has lived to, it has got huge hype. "To rope in Samantha for the special song was a team decision. A unanimous decision to get her to groove for the song," one of the producers said.

'Pushpa' is all set for release on December 17 in multiple languages across the country.

Karan Deol: I'm always going to be compared to my dad



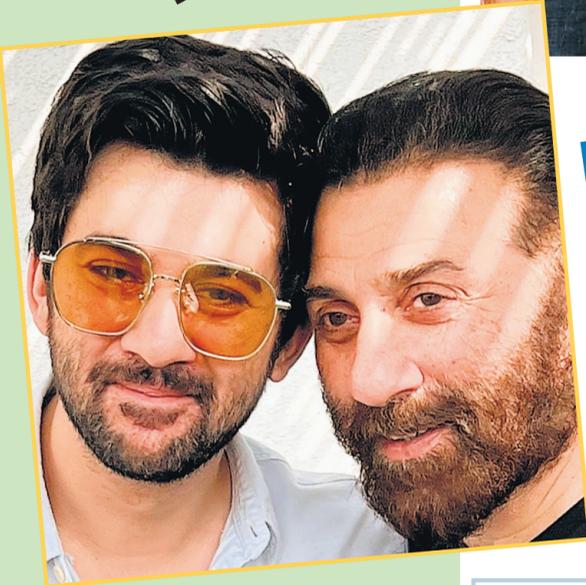
ALIA BHATT 'COMPLAINS' RAM CHARAN AND JR NTR IGNORED HER ON SETS OF 'RRR'

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Director S.S. Rajamouli's upcoming epic 'RRR' has been in the limelight for quite some time and a highlight of the film is the character of Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt in a Telugu language role. With the movie team aggressively promoting the film, the anticipation has doubled. After unveiling the visual spectacle's trailer, director S.S. Rajamouli, along with his team are now participating in a whirlwind of promotions.

As the 'RRR' team addressed the Tollywood media on Saturday in Hyderabad, Alia Bhatt who was also present, shared her experience working with Rajamouli, and co-stars Ram Charan and Jr NTR.

During her interaction with the Telugu media, Alia impressed everyone as she spoke in Telugu. "Ela Vunnaru? 'RRR' trailer pag-ilipoini," started off Alia, which conveys her greetings, and her views on the trailer.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Karan Deol has spoken up about the pressures of coming from a star family. The actor, whose latest release is 'Velle', knows he will always be compared to his father and Bollywood star Sunny Deol and said that eventually he will have to find his own identity and pave his own path.

When asked what according to him is the pressures of coming from a star family, Karan in a conversation with reporter said: "I am always going to be compared to my dad and he is always legendary at what he does but eventually I have to find my own identity and etch my own path for myself which eventually I'd do when more work I do."

Talking about him trying his hands in the action genre, just like his father Sunny, the grandson of veteran star Dharmendra said: "Dad is exceptionally good at what he does and I would love to do something in that genre (action) if the character has to be right. It should engage me and excite me."

He added that he is "open to pretty much everything as long as the character is right, the script is good then the genre doesn't matter to me".

ADF presents 'Velle', an Intercut Entertainment Pvt. Ltd production, produced by Nandini Sharma, Aarushi Malhotra and Rajnish Khanuja, co-produced by Suniel Saini, Abhishek Nama, and directed by Deven Munjal.

AYUSHMANN, VAANI-STARRER 'CHANDIGARH KARE AASHIQUI' MINTS RS 3.75 CR ON DAY 1



ASHI SINGH, SHAGUN PANDEY THANK FANS AS DAILY SOAP 'MEET' COMPLETES 100 EPISODES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Meet' actors Ashi Singh and Shagun Pandey are on cloud nine as their show has completed 100 episodes. Ashi and Shagun have expressed their gratitude for fans and makers of the show.

Expressing her happiness on being part of the show, Ashi Singh said: "I still don't believe that we've crossed 100 episodes because it still feels like yesterday. The journey so far has been really amazing and I'm glad I've got such supporting cast members who have constantly been helping me grow every day. And I think had it not been for our beloved fans, it would not have been possible to come this far. I hope our audience keeps showering their love and bless-

ings the way they have so far and let us deliver our best through 'Meet'."

Adding to Ashi's excitement, her co-actor Shagun said that it feels like a beginning to him and he has all words of appreciation for the producers Sumeet Hukamchand Mittal and Shashi Mittal. For him working with them has given a comfort zone and even on the sets he felt like being at home.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actors Ayushmann Khurrana and Vaani Kapoor's latest release 'Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui' has raked in Rs 3.75 crore on the first day of its release. Trade analyst Taran Adarsh shared the figures on Twitter. He wrote: "#ChandigarhKareAashiqui - targeted at metro multiplexes - records better numbers in #Delhi, #NCR, #Chandigarh on Day 1a Other metros ordinary/lowa Mass circuits dulla Should catch speed at remaining metros for healthy opening weekend totala Fri a, 3.75 cr. #India biz."

Directed by Abhishek Kapoor, 'Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui' is a romantic drama, where Ayushmann plays a bodybuilder and Vaani essays the role of a zumba teacher.

The story of the film revolves around Ayushmaan's character Manvinder Munjal 'Manu', a body builder from Chandigarh, who falls in love with a zumba teacher named Maanvi.

Things take a turn when he finds out that Maanvi is a transgender woman.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Mohan Shakti