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Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

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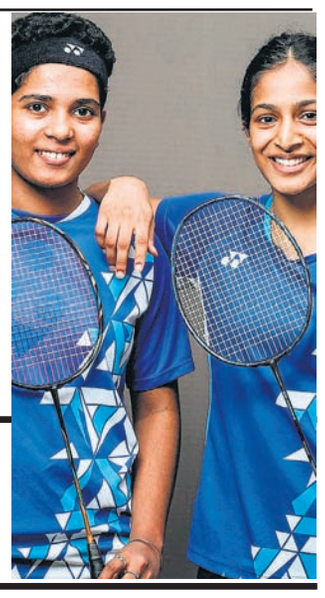

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AAREY METRO CAR SHED ROW: SC ALLOWS MMRCL TO SEEK PERMISSION FOR

DEFORESTATION

> *"We have arrived at the conclusion that MMRCL should be permitted to pursue its application before the tree authority for permission to fell 84 trees for the purposes of the ramp. We clarify that the tree authority would be at liberty to take an independent decision on the application and determine conditions, if any should be imposed."*
>
> *Supreme Court*

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL) to pursue its application before the tree authority for the felling of 84 trees, for the Aarey metro car shed project.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and comprising justice P.S. Narasimha said 84 trees can be cut subject to permission of tree cutting authority.

The top court modified its status quo order on the felling of trees at Aarey forest in Mumbai for the metro car shed project. The MMRCL contended before the 95 percent of the project was over and the remaining part of the project was held up due to these 84 trees.

The bench observed that in such projects, which involves large outlay of public funds, the court cannot be oblivious of the serious dislocation caused if the public investment which goes into the project is disregarded. It further added that the concerns relating to the environment are important, as all development must be sustainable.

The top court was informed that 2,144 trees have already been felled and what remains is the cutting of the trees for the ramp. The bench clarified that it will hear the main petitions at a later stage while disposing of the interlocutory applications.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing MMRCL, contended that 95 per cent of the work is over and the original cost of the project was Rs 23,000 crore.

He said due to the delay caused by the litigation, the cost has increased to Rs 37,000 crore and emphasized that there will be a huge impact on carbon emission going down, and also the traffic on the metro track would be reduced to a large extent.

Mehta pressed that serious prejudice would be caused to the public if due to 84 trees the entire project is stopped and nobody will gain anything, and also the trees will be transported or new trees will be planted.

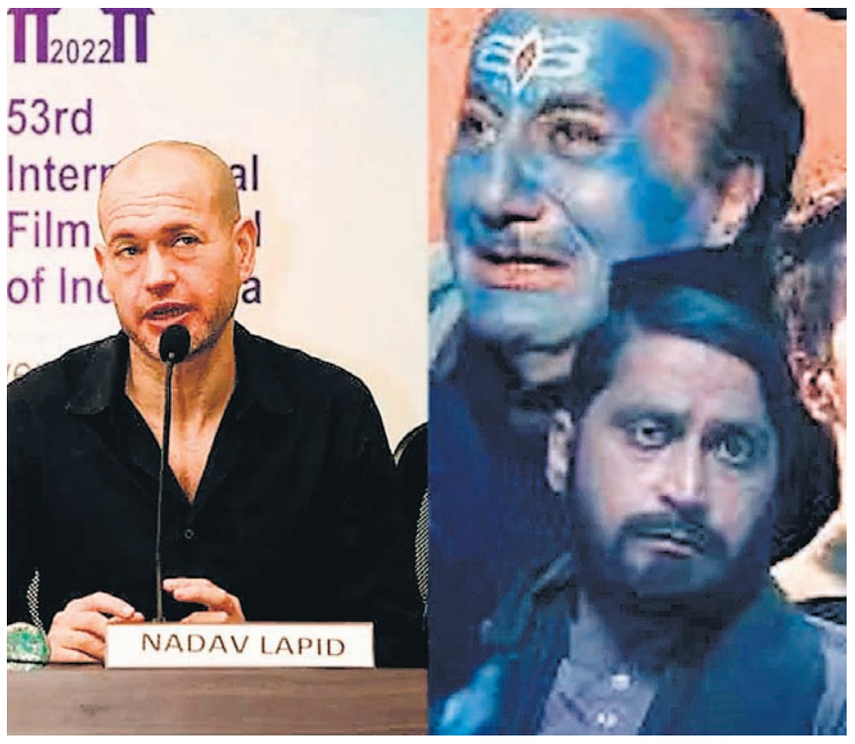
Senior advocate C.U. Singh, representing activists against felling of trees, said Rs 23,000 crore is the investment for the whole project and not for the car shed and cited committee reports which suggested Kanjurmarg as a more suitable site for the project in terms of technical feasibility, ability to cater to passenger needs, and impact on environment.

He added that at the metro car shed site, no construction has taken place, except for a pillar.

In November, MMRCL moved the Supreme Court to direct the tree authority of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to decide their plea for permission to cut 84 trees on the 33 hectares plot of the Metro car shed depot land in Aarey Colony.

The apex court had taken suo motu cognisance of the protests against the cutting of trees in the Aarey car shed plot in 2019.

IFFI jury head terms 'The Kashmir Files' as 'vulgar', 'propaganda' film



Team Absolute | Panaji

Nadav Lapid, IFFI's jury head, during the concluding ceremony of the festival, termed the movie 'The Kashmir Files' as 'vulgar' and 'inappropriate', and said that the spirit of the festival can surely accept a critical discussion as well, which is essential for art and life.

Earlier on Monday, Lapid said that the IFFI was disturbed about this film.

Sharing the experience of the jury, he said that 14 out of them (international films) had cinematic quality.

"All of us were disturbed and shocked by the 15th film 'The Kashmir Files'. That felt to us like a propaganda, vulgar movie, inappropriate for an artistic competitive section of such a prestigious film festival," Lapid added.

"I feel totally comfortable to openly share these feelings here with you on this stage. Since, the spirit of the festival can surely also accept a critical discussion, which is essential for art and life," he said.

Meanwhile, Vivek Agnihotri, the director of 'The Kashmir Files', challenged Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid to find an event in the movie that is not true.

"Today, I challenge all the intellectuals in this world and this great filmmaker from Israel to find one frame, one dialogue or an event in The Kashmir Files that is not true," Vivek Agnihotri said in a video.

The filmmaker said that if anybody finds a frame that is not true in 'The Kashmir Files', he would stop making movies.

Tanks on streets of China rekindles fears of Tiananmen Square

London | Agencies

Several military tanks have rolled through the streets of China as Chinese officials ramp up their crackdown against demonstrators who are protesting against Xi Jinpings disastrous zero-Covid policy, sccording to a media report.

A video shows a steady stream of tanks trundling through the eastern city of Xuzhou on Monday night, Daily Mail reported.

The footage will rekindle memories of the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989, when hundreds - if not thousands - of Chinese protesters were killed by soldiers in tanks, the report said.

Xi Jinping's Communist Party officials have ramped up their crackdown on demonstrators, with police officers seen wrestling with protesters before dragging them away.

Footage shows a huge crowd of protesters trying to stop a group of police officers from arresting two men in Hangzhou. But the officers were seen wrestling with the protesters and dragging the two demonstrators away while holding the scruff of their collars.

While police officers were dragging protesters away on Monday night, military tanks rolled through the streets of Xuzhou.

Locals questioned whether the tanks were heading to Shanghai, but others said it was possible the tanks were merely returning from military manoeuvres.

Hundreds of protesters have taken to the streets since the weekend in protest against China's harsh zero-Covid policy.

They mark the largest anti-government demonstrations China has seen since the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, Daily Mail reported.

TATA GROUP TO CONSOLIDATE AIR INDIA AND VISTARA

New Delhi: The Tata Group on Tuesday announced the consolidation of its airlines, Vistara and Air India. With this consolidation, Air India will be India's leading domestic and international carrier with a combined fleet of 218 aircraft, making it India's largest international carrier and second largest domestic carrier.

Air India, an airline fully owned by Tata Sons, has been the flag carrier of India. Tata Sons, via its fully owned subsidiary, Talace Private Limited (Talace), had acquired 100 per cent stake in Air India on January 27.

Vistara, a 51:49 Joint Venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines Limited ("SIA") was established in 2013 and is India's leading full-service carrier with international operations in the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

Vistara shall be merged with Air India post receipt of requisite approvals. As part of the merger transaction, SIA shall also invest Rs 2,059 crore in Air India. Post the consolidation, SIA shall hold 25.1 per cent shareholding in Air India.XXXXThe transaction is estimated to be completed by March 2024.

After 69 years as a government-owned enterprise, Air India and Air India Express were welcomed back into the Tata group in January 2022. The present management at Air India is driving the five-year transformation roadmap under the aegis of Vihaan.AI to establish itself as a world-class global airline with an Indian heart.

Adani Properties bags Dharavi slum's mega-makeover bid in Mumbai

Mumbai | Agencies

In a significant development, Adani Group's Adani Properties has offered the highest bid for the ambitious Dharavi redevelopment project in south-central Mumbai, a top official said here on Tuesday.

Adani Properties has offered to invest Rs 5,069 crore, the highest, against two other competitors -- DLF and Shree Naman Developers.

However, the financial bids of only Adani Properties and DLF were opened on Tuesday since the third bidder, Shree Naman Developers, failed to make it in the technical bidding process.

The Commissioner of Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority, S.V.R. Srinivas, said that now it will go for approval from the Maharashtra Government.

The mega-project - intended to change the face of what is dubious as Asia's largest concentrated slum pocket - was bedevilled by several problems and failed attempts for a makeover in the past over 15 years since it was first mooted.

The entire project, with an estimated timeline of over 15 years, will see construction of over 10 million sq ft in the 520-acre locality with wide roads, residential and commercial areas, schools, hospitals, gardens, playgrounds, and other amenities coming up. Dharavi - literally meaning 'quicksand' - is notorious as the dirty underbelly of Mumbai and houses over a million people crammed in a 2.1 sq km area, with the highest population density in the world.

INDIAN STOCK MARKETS TOUCH NEW HEIGHTS FOR 2ND DAY

Chennai: For the second day in succession, the Indian stock markets flared up with the Sensex of BSE and Nifty of NSE touching record highs on Tuesday. The Sensex of BSE on Tuesday touched a record high of 62,877.73 points after opening at 62,362.08 points and touched a low of 62,362.08 points during the day.

The Sensex closed at 62,681.84 points, up by 177.04 points.

On Monday, the Sensex had closed at 62,504.80 points after hitting an all time high of 62,701.40 points.

At the NSE, the Nifty opened 18,552.45 points after previously closing at 18,562.75 points.

Then the Nifty rallied up to 18,659.75 points, touched a low of 18,552.15 points and closed at 18,618.05 points.

Continued foreign portfolio investors buying in India has boosted the mainline indices which may continue to do well for the next two months with some intermittent corrections. The Sensex rose 0.28 percent to 62,681.84, while the Nifty rose 0.30 percent intraday to 18,618.05.

PROTEST MARCH TURNS VIOLENT IN PATNA, SEVERAL POLICEMEN INJURED

Team Absolute | Patna

A protest march by the Pasi community turned violent in Patna after the police did not allow the protestors to go towards the Vidhan Sabha on Tuesday.The protestors claimed that the police is unnecessarily arresting people of their community on the charge of selling tari. They also demanded that the state government remove the ban on tari.

Tari is a drink which is generally consumed by poor people in the rural areas of Bihar. It's effect is similar to liquor and hence it is popular in the rural areas. People of the Pasi community have a traditional business of farming tari from palm trees and earn their livelihood by selling it."After the Bihar government banned liquor in 2016, tari was also put in this category. The state government also banned the sale of raw tari. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on several occasions, appealed to the people of the Pasi community to purify it in the form of Nira and then sell it. As liquor is not easily available, the majority of the people in the rural areas drink tari," said a protestor Ravi Kumar.

On Tuesday, people from across the state assembled in Patna for the silent protest. They wanted to gherao (lay siege to) the Vidhan Sabha. When they reached a roundabout near it, the police barricaded the road and did not allow them to move further towards the Vidhan Sabha. This led to a scuffle between the two sides. The protestors who were in large numbers, broke the barricades and advanced towards the Vidhan Sabha.

When the situation seemed to be getting out of control, the police lathicharged the rallyists. The protestors retaliated by pelting stones and bricks at the police. Several policemen were injured in the clash. Some mediapersons were also hurt in the stone pelting.

HYDERABAD COPS TOW AWAY CAR WITH SHARMILA SITTING INSIDE

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

A car with YSRTP leader Y.S. Sharmila in it was towed away by police here on Tuesday when she was heading towards Chief Minister's official residence to protest the alleged attack by TRS supporters on her padyatra in Warangal district on Monday.The YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) leader herself was driving the car and proceeding towards Pragathi Bhavan as a mark of protest against the attack by ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).Police stopped her on the way. As Sharmila refused to get down from the car, the police called a crane which towed away the vehicle with YSRTP leader sitting in it.

Sharmila, who is sister of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, was arrested and taken to S.R. Nagar Police Station.

After reaching the police station, she refused to get down from the car. Police personnel forcibly opened the car door and whisked her away into the police station. Meanwhile, some YSRTP workers who reached the police station to stage the protest were arrested.A case was registered against her at Panjagutta Police Station. The case booked under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 353 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), section 333 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt to deter public servant from his duty) and section 327 (voluntarily causing hurt to extort property, or to constrain to an illegal act).Meanwhile, Sharmila's mother Y.S. Vijayamma was placed under house arrest by the police as she was leaving for S.R. Nagar Police Station to meet her.

PAKISTAN-CANADA BASED TERRORISTS BEHIND TARGETED KILLINGS IN INDIA, REVEALS NIA PROBE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Sleuths of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), who on Tuesday conducted raids at more than 13 locations belonging to gangsters across the country in connection with the terrorist-gangster nexus case, have recovered a number of incriminating documents along with various types of contraband and ammunition.

According to information, the NIA raided more than 13 locations in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, UT Chandigarh and the Delhi-NCR region.

The districts targeted were Fazilka, Tarn Taran, Ludhiana, Sangrur, Mohali in Punjab, Yamunanagar of Haryana, Sikar in Rajasthan and the Outer North District of Delhi.

"We conducted raids to dismantle and disrupt the emerging nexus between terrorists, gangsters and drug traffickers based in India and abroad," said a NIA official.

This was the third round of raids and searches by the NIA on organised criminal syndicates and networks, top gangsters, their criminal and business associates based in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan and arms suppliers based in Rajasthan and Delhi.

Other gangsters whose houses were raided included Kaushal Chaudhary of Gurugram-Rajasthan, Vishal Maan of Prahalpur-Delhi, Binny Gurjar of Sangrur-Punjab, Ravi Rajgarh of Ludhiana-Punjab and their associates.

The NIA said that it will continue to dismantle such terror networks as well as their funding and support infrastructure. The official said that preliminary investigations revealed that these gangs were carrying out targeted killings and were also raising funds for their criminal activities through smuggling of drugs and weapons.

"The recent sensational crimes and extortion calls by criminal syndicates and gangsters to businessmen, professionals, including doctors etc, had created widespread scare among the people. These gangs were using cyber space to publicise these crimes to create terror among the public at large," the NIA said.

The NIA has also learnt during the investigation that such criminal acts were not isolated local incidents but there was a deep rooted conspiracy amongst terrorists, gangsters and drug smuggling cartels and networks, who were operating from both within and outside the country. Many gang leaders and members had fled from India and are operating from foreign countries, including Pakistan, Canada, Malaysia, Australia. Most of these conspiracies were being hatched from inside the jails in different states and were being executed by an organized network of operatives based abroad.

"Do You Have 100 Heads Like Ravan?" Row over Congress Chief's remark on PM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi clapped back at a Congress leader's "aukat" comment, the party's new chief Mallikarjun Kharge has delivered a new controversy for the party, just before the Gujarat election, by targeting the Prime Minister with a "Ravan" reference.

The BJP has accused Kharge of "insulting Gujarat's son" repeatedly.Kharge made the comments while addressing a rally in Ahmedabad ahead of polls next month.

"Modi ji is Prime Minister. Forgetting his work, he keeps campaigning in corporation elections, MLA elections, MP elections, everywhere... All the time he's talking about himself - 'You don't have to see anyone else, just look at Modi and vote'. How many times do we see your face? How many forms do you have? Do you have 100 heads like Ravan?" Kharge said, drawing laughter and applause from his audience.

The Congress chief said in every election, candidates sought votes in the name of PM Modi."I've been seeing that votes are sought in the name of Modiji, be it municipality elections, corporation elections or state elections...Ask for votes in the name of the candidate. Is Modi going to come and work at the municipality? Is he going to help you in times of your need," the Congress veteran asked.

Amit Malviya, who heads the BJP's IT Cell, shared the video with a sharp comment.

"Unable to take the heat of Gujarat election, pushed to the fringe, Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge loses control over his words, calls Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ravan. From "Maut ka Saudagar" to "Ravan", Congress continues to insult Gujarat and its son...," Malviya wrote.

The tweet referred to former Congress president Sonia Gandhi's controversial "Maut ka Saudagar (merchant of death)" comment during the 2007 Gujarat election, targeting PM Modi - who was Chief Minister - over the 2002 riots.

Gujarat will vote on December 1 and 5 and the results will be declared on December 8.

Mother-daughter burnt alive in Bihar's Arwal district

Patna | Agencies

Woman and her 7-year-old daughter were burnt alive in Bihar's Arwal district on Monday night.

The accused, Nand Kumar Mahto, had his eye on the woman named Suman Devi (32) and had misbehaved with her several times in the past. On Monday night, under the influence of liquor, he barged into her house and tried to rape her."The victim resisted and forced him outside the house. Nand Kumar, who failed in the rape attempt, brought petrol, poured it on her house and set it on fire. The accused also locked the door from outside," said an official of Kaler police station.

Suman Devi and her daughter Radhika Kumari were rescued by the villagers and taken to Sadar hospital Arwal. Since their condition was critical, the doctors there referred them to PMCH Patna but they died on the way.

"In a dying statement in Sadar hospital, the victim revealed her ordeal and the sequence of events. We have registered an FIR against Nand Kumar Mahto and raids are on to nab him", said the police.

The deceased's husband Ajit Paswan was recently arrested for consuming liquor and sent to jail. The accused got a free hand after Ajit was jailed.

KERALA GIRL GANG RAPE

Accused posed as good samaritans, medical test revealed crime in K'taka

Bengaluru | Agencies

The investigations have revealed that the accused in the gang rape case posed as good samaritans and maintained that they gave shelter to the 22-year-old victim in their room when she was unconscious, police said on Tuesday.

Karnataka Police had arrested three friends including a girlfriend of the accused in connection with gang rape of the girl from Kerala in Bengaluru. The arrested persons are identified as Shahabuddin (26) and Akthar (24). The police are yet to give the identity of the female accused.

According to police, the incident took place in the limits of Electronics City police station and came to light lately.

After committing the crime, one of the accused had called his girlfriend to the room where the victim was taken by the accused in an unconscious state. The accused and one of the accused's girlfriends maintained that they rescued her.

They further stated that the victim was given shelter and protection when she went unconscious while riding with the accused bike taxi driver, police said.

The victim believed them and went home. After reaching, she developed body pain, sickness and went to the doctor. The doctor after diagnosis told her that she had been raped.

The girl had realised that she was gang raped by bike taxi driver and his friend. Later, she lodged a complaint with the Electronics City police station in Bengaluru.

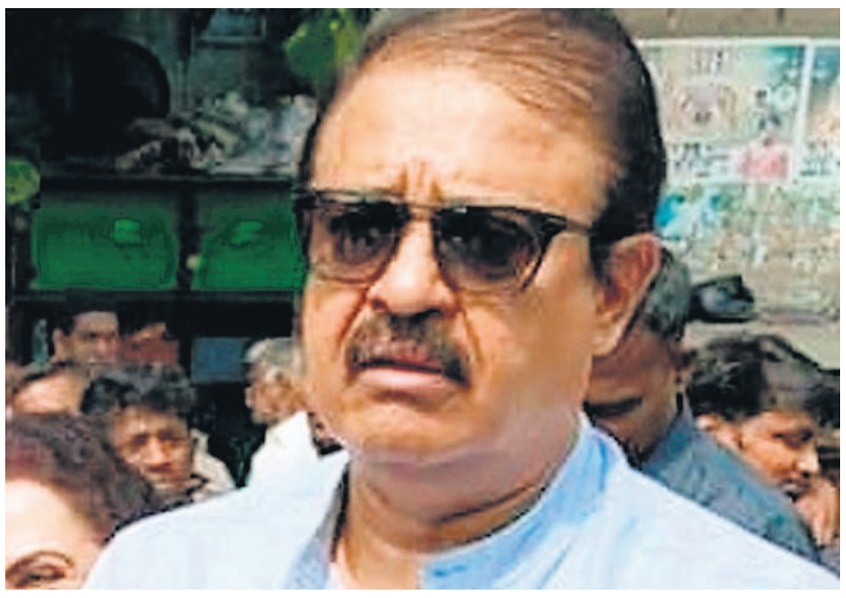
The victim worked as a freelance graphic designer in a company in BTM Layout in Bengaluru. On Thursday night, she had booked a bike taxi to reach her house.Police said that the girl was in an inebriated state when the bike taxi driver arrived on the spot. While travelling towards Neeladrinagar, she became almost unconscious.The bike taxi driver took advantage of the situation and took her to his room. Later, the accused called his male friend and both raped her.

When the victim regained consciousness, they acted and pretended that she was in grave danger that night when she went unconscious and they rescued her and gave her shelter, police said.

The victim after coming to know what had happened with her, lodged a complaint with the police. The police arrested the accused including the girlfriend who helped the accused. More details are yet to emerge in the case. Further investigation is on.

Hindu activists detained for giving boycott call against Muslim traders

Bengaluru | Agencies



The Karnataka Police on Tuesday took three Hindu activists into preventive custody for threatening to stage a protest against the decision to allow Muslim traders to do business in the Subramanyeshwara temple in Bengaluru's V.V. Puram locality.

The Hanumanthanagar police in Bengaluru detained Punith Kerehalli of Raastra Rakshana Pade and others in a preventive measure.

Chikpet constituency BJP MLA Uday Garudachar said that the Hindu traders could do their business in the vicinity of dargahs and mosques. "The Hindu community people do not trouble others. A few individuals create problems and raise objections," he said.

He clarified that there would not be any new rules because of the demands put forth by the Hindu activists. The permission was given to people of all religions.

He said, "The old rituals would be followed. Giving opportunities only to the Hindu traders is not tenable. If anyone tries to create problems in the fair, legal action would be initiated against them.""We are elected representatives and get elected after getting votes of people belonging to all religions. There is no room for discrimination. The tradition which has been followed for years will be carried forward," he said.

U'KHAND: TWO PRADHANS, BDC MEMBER QUIT AFTER BIRTH OF THIRD CHILD

Team Absolute | Almora

Two pradhans and a BDC member had to resign after the birth of a third child. Representatives with three children are ineligible for the post of pradhan, BDC and are disqualified according to the notification implemented during the 2019 panchayat elections.

In October, the government asked for a list of such seats whose representatives had more than two children, to remove them from their positions.

The village pradhan was elected in the 2019 elections in Selta chapar of Lamgara block in Almora, and had given birth to a third child this year.

She resigned soon after on August 12.In Lal Nagari of Syalde block, the pradhan resigned as she gave birth to her third child in 2019.

The BDC member elected in 2019 in Dol village of the district, resigned on July 22 after having a third child.

By-elections will be held for the vacant seats.

Gopal Singh Adhikari, DPRO, Almora, said that it was necessary for a representative to resign after the birth of a third child.

In 2021, an Assembly member was removed after the birth of a third child.

With server down, Delhi AIIMS sees high number of incoming patients

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences continued to work on a manual mode seven days after the server was hacked and on Tuesday witnessed a heavy rush of patients.

The number of incoming patients visiting the hospital increased significantly leading to a rush like situation as people trooped in directly after the online appointment service stopped working.

After the hacker's attack on the server system, the standard operating procedures (SOP) issued by the hospital underlined that the admission, discharge and transfer of patients would be done manually at the hospital till E-Hospital was down.

From the online appointment to the sharing of the patients' report was being done manually. It has also led the AIIMS authorities to deploy additional staff to run the OPD services, diagnostics and laboratory works.

After the alleged report of hacker's demand for Rs 200 crore from the AIIMS administration, the hospital on Monday said, "The data restoration and server cleaning is in progress and is taking some time due to the volume of the data and the large number of servers for the hospital services".

"Measures were being taken for cyber security. All hospital services, including Out patients, In patients and the laboratories continue to run on manual mode," AIIMS said in the statement. However, police have denied reports that hackers have asked for Rs 200 crore in cryptocurrency as ransom to restore the system at the AIIMS.

According to a source, the officials from the National Investigation Agency have also visited AIIMS and were working on the case. The AIIMS had said that to restore the digital services and support was being sought from Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) and National Informatics Centre (NIC).

Love story of five elderly men ends in murder in Bihar's Nalanda

Team Absolute | Patna

A case of love story involving four elderly men and a 30-year-old widow tea vendor turned ugly when a fifth old person also exhibited interest in the woman which led to his murder.

The sensational case was unearthed in Bihar's Nalanda district on Monday evening when district police arrested the four elderly accused along with the widow.

The deceased was identified as Tripit Sharma (75), a native of Awthawa village.

Dr Shibli Nomani, the DSP of Nalanda (Sadar) said: "Pino Devi (30), who is a widow, was running a tea stall at Asthawa village and four elderly persons, namely Krishna Nandan Prasad (75), Surya Mani Kumar (60), Banaras Prasad alias Loha Singh (65) and Vasudev Paswan (64) were the regular customers at Pino Devi's tea stall. They used to drink tea every day at her stall."

The four were attracted towards Pino Devi and they had expressed their feelings to her. They also used to visit her house. All was going well for them till a fifth elderly person, Tripit Sharma (75) also became a regular customer at the tea stall and expressed his love for Pino Devi.Pino Devi accepted his friendly proposal and she would give him priority over the other four. Soon jealousy creeped in and the situation turned to such an extent that they decided to teach Sharma a lesson. Those four elderly persons shared their plan with Pino Devi and asked her to come alongside them. Pino Devi initially hesitated but later she agreed.

As per the plan, Pino Devi invited Tripit Sharma to her house on October 19. When he reached there, the other four elderly lovers were already present there and a verbal argument broke out which soon turned violent and one of them smashed a brick on the head of Tripit Sharma.Sharma fell dead. After committed the murder, the other four smashed his face to hide the identity. The accused took the dead body and disposed of it in a water tank of an under construction building of the district polytechnic college.

The deceased's son Mithu Sharma along with other relatives started searching for him but then filed a police report. The local police were also searching for him and finally reached the water tank as the foul smell was coming from there. Sharma's body was found there.

"We have registered the FIR of murder against unknown persons and his son or any other relatives have not mentioned the names of any suspects. Tripit has no enmity with anyone. Initially, we were clueless about this case and there was no hint or lead about this case," Nomani said.

"Since the murder had happened on October 19 and accused get relaxed as police did not reach them and one month gone by. On Monday, the phone which was kept by Pino Devi, was switched on and the district police immediately found its location. We reached there and arrested her. When we strictly interrogated her, she broke down and revealed the entire sequence of events. Then we also arrested other four accused as well," Nomani said.

ELECTION COMMISSION CALLS BOTH FACTIONS OF SHIV SENA ON DECEMBER 12

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Election Commission will hear the warring factions of the Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde on December 12, official sources said.

They said the symbol dispute of the party has reached the stage of "substantive hearing". December 12 has been set as the date for first personal hearing of the two factions and the required order was issued today.

The poll panel has also directed both the groups to submit any further statement or documents by 5 pm, December 9.

Earlier this month, the Commission had asked the Shiv Sena factions to submit fresh documents to back their claim to the party's name and its symbol by November 23. The poll panel had also asked them to exchange the documents, submitted to the poll panel, with each other.

In an interim order in October, the Commission had barred the two factions from using the party name or its 'bow and arrow' symbol.

Later, it had allotted 'ShivSena - Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray' as the party name for the Thackeray faction, and 'Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena' (Balasaheb's Shiv Sena) as the name for the Eknath Shinde group of the party. The Election Commission had said the interim order will continue "till the final determination of the dispute".

Former MLA Krishna Hegde joins Eknath Shinde faction

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a major setback to Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray), former MLA Krishna Hegde on Monday joined the Eknath Shinde faction. The development comes weeks after Shiv Sena MP Gajanan Kirtikar recently joined the Eknath Shinde camp.

Eknath Shinde took oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra on June 30 earlier this year.

This came after a faction of Shiv Sena under Shinde shifted its alliance to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from MVA. Since then, Maharashtra has been witnessing a tussle between both the factions of Sena as to who is the real inheritor of the legacy of Bal Thackeray.

On October 11, The Election Commission of India alloted the 'Two Swords and Shield symbol' to the Eknath Shinde faction of Shiv Sena a day after the group was alloted 'Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena' (Balasaheb's Shiv Sena) as the name for the group of the party.

Shinde faction had submitted 'shining sun', 'shield and sword' and 'Peepul tree' as its election symbol options to the Election Commission (EC) for the upcoming bypoll in Andheri East assembly constituency next month.

Whereas the 'flaming torch' (mashaal) election symbol was allotted to the Uddhav Thackeray faction of Shiv Sena, rejecting their claim to the 'Trishul' citing religious connotation.

The Election Commission also allotted 'Shiv Sena - Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray' as the party name for the Thackeray faction

Meanwhile, the ECI rejected 'Trishul' and 'Gada' (mace) as election symbols claimed by the two factions of the Shiv Sena, citing their religious connotation.

Police takes underworld don Chhota Shakeel's relative Salim Fruit's custody

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Anti extortion cell (AEC) of the Mumbai Police on Tuesday said that it has arrested Underworld gangster and Dawood Ibrahim's close aide Chhota Shakeel's relative Salim Qureshi alias Salim Fruit in a fresh case of land grabbing. The police said a family based in South Africa had filed a complaint saying that their property in the Umerkhadi area of South Mumbai was allegedly grabbed by preparing fake documents. A case under relevant sections of the IPC was registered by the Economic Offence Wing of the city police and it was later transferred to the AEC.

Initial investigations revealed the involvement of five people including Salim Fruit in the matter following which the police arrested the suspects, an official said.

The police said the complainant had said that his property which is worth over Rs 25 crore was grabbed by making fake documents. The property was originally owned by his father.

"Salim Fruit was lodged in jail. He had been arrested by the NIA in a previous case. With the court's permission, we have taken him into our custody and he is arrested in the matter," said DCP Prashant Kadam. The police said the arrested suspects were produced before a court that sent them to police custody. Further investigations into the matter are going on.

MMRDA completes 58m-long FOB linking 2 metro lines in 15 days

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The MMRDA has constructed a 58-metre-long foot over bridge linking the Mumbai Metro 1 and Mumbai Metro 7 lines in a record 15 days, a top official said here on Tuesday. The project linking the two lines at Western Express Highway Station and Gundavali stations, respectively, is part of the project to integrate the Mumbai Metro network, said Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority Commissioner S.V.R. Srinivas.

The new FOB is 58 metres long, 4-8 metres wide superstructure which was built in just two weeks, and will help commuters interchange between the two lines with ease, said Srinivas. The FOB structure has used around 340 tonnes of steel including reinforcement and structural steel and it involved clearing several hurdles including shifting public utility lines from the site.

The MMRDA head said that the Gundavali Metro Station junction is a very congested one and the new FOB will provide people hassle-free interchangeable connectivity between the Lines 1 (Versova-Andheri-Ghatkopar) and 7 (Dahisar East-Andheri East).

At the same time, the infrastructural works on the second phase of Metro-7 and Metro 2A (Dahisar-DN Nagar) are completed and after the inspection by the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety, shall be fully opened to Mumbaikars, said Srinivas. The phase one operations of both these lines started in April 2022, while the trial runs for the second phase have been going on since the past nearly three months, officials said.

Measles Outbreak: 11 New Cases, One Suspected Death

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai has reported 11 fresh measles cases and one suspected death amid the outbreak of the viral infection in the city, a civic official said. With the latest cases, the infection tally in the metropolis so far this year has gone up to 303. The number of confirmed deaths from measles stands at eight and the suspected fatalities are three, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation official said on Monday.

The civic body in a statement said Mumbai will inoculate 1,34,833 children in the age group of nine months to five years. They will receive the additional dose (special dose) in 33 health posts from December 1. "A total of 3,496 children in the age group of six to nine months in 13 health posts, where measles cases in the age group of less than nine months have been reported, will also be given an additional dose of Measles-Rubella vaccine," the statement said. The BMC has surveyed 53,66,144 houses so far and 4,062 cases of fever with rash have been found, it said. One death reported on Monday was of an unimmunised one-year-old girl residing in Andheri in the western part of the city, the statement said. "It was a known case of congenital heart disease (ventricular septal defect and patent ductus arteriosus) and until two weeks back, the patient was admitted at a private hospital for treatment of the condition. She was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Kasturba Hospital here on Saturday with fever, rash and difficulty in breathing," the civic body said.

Her condition deteriorated and she passed away at 1.30 pm, with the cause of death being cited as acute respiratory failure, measles with bronchopneumonia in a case of ventricular septal defect with patent ductus arteriosus, the civic statement said.

'THE KASHMIR FILES' ROW

SANJAY RAUT BACKS IFFI JURY CHIEF NADAV LAPID

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Terming 'The Kashmir Files' as a propaganda by one party against another, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut came out in defence of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) jury chief Nadav Lapid who slammed the Vivek Agnihotri film, here on Tuesday.

"This is true about 'The Kashmir Files'... It was propaganda by one party against another... The maximum number of killings in Kashmir have taken place after this film. Kashmiri Pandits and security personnel were killed... But, a party and the government were busy with publicity," said Raut to mediapersons. He asked where 'The Kashmir Files' people were when the killings were going on in Kashmir, with even the children of Kashmiri Pandits launching an agitation.

"Nobody stepped forward then... and there were no plans for a 'Kashmir Files 2.0' then... Let them make it," said Raut. The Sena (UBT) leader's comments came a day after the 53rd IFFI-2022 jury head Lapid lashed out at the inclusion of 'The Kashmir Files' in the list labelling it as "a vulgar, propaganda film, inappropriate for an artistic, competitive section of such a prestigious film festival".

The Israeli film-maker also observed at the closing ceremony in Goa how the jury was "disturbed and shocked" that the film was screened at the festival, inciting a row in different circles.

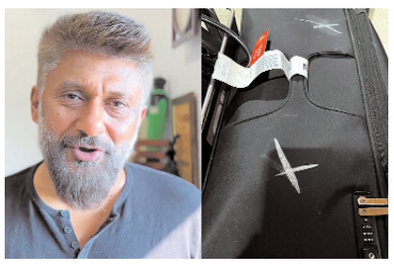
Lapid's comments attracted condemnation from the Israel Ambassador to India, Naor Gilon while a Delhi-based lawyer Vineet Jindal has lodged a complaint seeking action in the matter.

As storm rages over 'The Kashmir Files', 'X' on his luggage upsets Vivek Agnihotri

Mumbai: Vivek Agnihotri, whose film 'The Kashmir Files' is in the middle of controversy triggered by the Israeli filmmaker and jury chairman of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Nadav Lapid, has slammed the Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel, Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, after he discovered that his luggage was marked with an 'X' at the Mumbai airport. The director took to Twitter and shared his concern with the minister, saying, "Dear @JM_Scindia ji, Please stop this pathetic system of marking bags at Mumbai airport with an 'X' made with chalk."

He then added that how this practice projects India in a bad light globally as fliers from all over the world see their luggage on the conveyor belt marked with an 'X'.

Agnihotri tweeted that this was "very bad etiquette" and showed India as a "primitive and uncivilised country specially when PM @narendramodi is talking about making India a global leader".



What 'The Kashmir Files' helmer may not have known is that cross-marking luggage at airports is a worldwide practice because all bags are X-rayed by Customs authorities before they are released into the conveyor belts.

Usually, heavier-than-usual bags are singled out because the authorities may suspect that they have dutiable items that have not been declared by the persons to whom the bag belong.

PET KICKED, DOG WALKER BEATEN FOR REFUSING TO ALIGHT ELEVATOR IN SOCIETY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 24-year-old dog walker was allegedly beaten up and a pet dog was kicked for refusing to exit an elevator of a housing society in Sakinaka, the police said on Tuesday, reported the PTI. According to a police official, the incident took place at Arum housing society in Nahar Amrit Shakti area of Sakinaka on Monday night when the victim, Sunil Rathod was using the elevator to come to the ground floor to take a dog for a walk. "When the elevator reached 9th floor, a woman asked him to exit the elevator, as she was allergic," an official said. He added, the victim refused to alight and reached the building's lobby. Soon the woman's husband and a security guard allegedly followed him to the parking lot and started swearing at him. After slapping him twice, the accused snatched a stick from Rathod's hands and started beating him with it. He also kicked the dog twice, the official said. He later approached the Sakinaka police station and a non-cognisable report (NCR) under sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 504 (intentionally insulting) of the Indian Penal was filed against the suspects, he said.

BJP leaders spar over proposed hospital in Belapur

Team Absolute | Navi Mumbai

Two BJP leaders from Navi Mumbai are in a face-off over a proposed hospital and medical college in Belapur. One of them has been pushing for the hospital and has alleged that the other is behind the protest against the hospital.

Belapur BJP MLA Manda Mhatre has been following up on the proposed hospital, fow which the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) has chosen a land in sector 15 A, which is used as a playground. Villagers and local sports people have asked the NMMC can find another plot. "The local MLA is being unfair to the villagers and project affected people. We villagers lost our lands when they developed the city. Now they are forcing us to lose our playground, too," said Prakash Keni of Diva Koliwada.

Mhatre said, "This protest is politically motivated. Former minister Ganesh Naik is backing it. The city needs a super-specialty hospital. The City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) has suggested this plot. One needs at least 7 acres of land to construct a hospital and medical college. This land fulfills the criteria. Both authorities are ready to give another piece of land to villagers for a playground." Naik did not respond to calls and messages.

In the 2014 Assembly election, Mhatre defeated Ganesh Naik. He joined BJP before the 2019 assembly election. Now he is an MLA from the Airoli constituency. According to sources, the political dispute between Mhatre and Naik in Navi Mumbai is old. Sources said even when they were in NCP they had disputes. They still don't get along well.

BJP Mahamantri of Navi Mumbai Vijay Ghate said, "There is no dispute between the two MLAs about the hospital. Mhatre has been following up on it but the proposed land was chosen by the authority. Not Mhatre. Naik has demanded the villagers get a playground. The demands of both MLAs are in the interest of the citizens and the city."

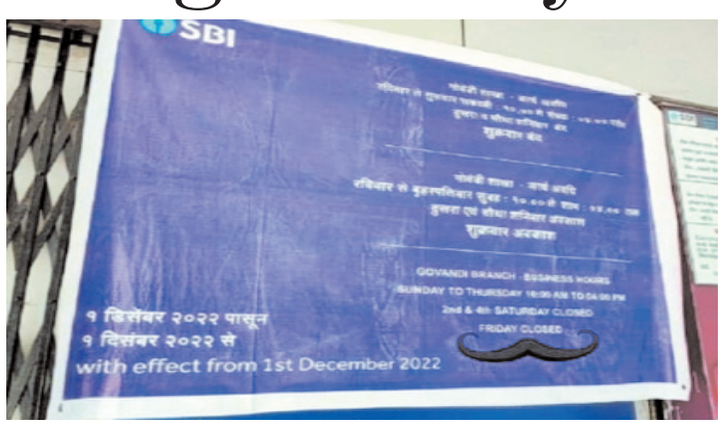
SBI Govandi suburban branch in Mumbai changes weekly off to Friday

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a move that has raised eyebrows in some quarters, the public sector State Bank of India's Govandi Branch is understood to have changed its weekly off from Sundays to Fridays, with effect from December 1.

A notice to the effect went up outside the branch premises this week and the move is purportedly intended to facilitate the local minority population living in and around Govandi, a north-eastern suburb.

Despite repeated attempts, top SBI officials were not available for their comments on the potentially controversial decision, ostensibly taken at the local levels. As per the notice, come December 1, the SBI Govandi Branch will remain shut on all Fridays, and the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month. From Sunday to Thursday, the business hours will be normal -- from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily -- as stated in the notice.



Apprehensions were expressed in some quarters that even the SBI Millenium Branch in Dadar would follow suit, but branch officials on Tuesday outright dismissed the claims.

Incidentally, branches of certain other banks in the city and some other parts of the country also provide a Sunday half-day working -- which is compensated by all Saturdays off, in view of local people's convenience.

The Govandi SBI Branch move has elicited strong reactions on social media with objections to the Friday closure to cater to "the demands of the local demographics", and called for regional coordination for uniformity in the concerned areas.

Banking circles pointed out that in the digital era, when most banking functions are conducted online, "there's little meaning to weekly offs or public holidays" as the bank operations continue irrespective of the calendar dates.

EDITOR'S SPECS

BJP leads in money power in Gujarat polls

The BJP leads the list of major political parties in Gujarat Assembly polls having the maximum number of 'crorepati (millionaire)' candidates. Moreover, two among the top three candidates with the highest declared assets, contesting in the Gujarat Assembly Elections 2022 are from the BJP. While Jayantibhai Somabhai Patel (BJP) has declared assets worth Rs 661 crore, Balvantsinh Chandansinh Rajput (BJP) has declared assets worth Rs 372 crore. A report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) showed that the share of crorepati candidates has gone up over the last five years. Out of the 1,621 candidates, 456 (28 per cent) are crorepatis in these polls as against out of 1,815 candidates, 418(23 per cent) were crorepatis. "The role of money power in our elections is evident from the fact that all major political parties give tickets to wealthy candidates. Among the major parties 154 (85 per cent) out of 182 candidates analysed from the BJP, 142 (79 per cent) out of 179 candidates analysed from the Congress and 68 (38 per cent) out of 181 candidates analysed from AAP have declared assets valued more than Rs 1 crore," said ADR report. Among the major parties, the average assets per candidate for 182 BJP candidates analysed is Rs 16.56 crore, 179 Congress candidates analysed is Rs 7.99 crore, 181 AAP candidates have average assets of Rs 3.68 crore and 26 Bhartiya Tribal Party have average assets worth Rs 21.68 lakhs. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Gujarat Election Watch have analysed the self-sworn affidavits of all 1,621 candidates, who are contesting in the Gujarat Assembly Elections Phase I and II. Out of 1,621 candidates analysed, 476 are from the national parties, 219 are from the state parties, 302 are from

EXODUS IS A POLITICAL WEAPON, BUT KASHMIRI PANDITS HAVE NO VOICE IN POWER PLAY

Deepika Bhan

The Assembly elections, as and when they are held in Jammu and Kashmir, do not have much significance for the beleaguered Kashmiri Pandit community. Their scattered population hardly counts in the vote arithmetic of the now defunct state.

Forced out of Kashmir, the community of over seven lakhs has shrunk to a few lakhs in the Union Territory with a major concentration in Jammu and a nominal presence in Kashmir, the place of their origin. Most of the community members are living in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru and other parts of the country and in other countries also. The scattering has totally reduced the community's significance in the political power play.

Before the 1989-1990 terror onslaught, the community had a sizeable presence in pockets of all Kashmir districts with a major concentration in Srinagar. Their leaders were given space in the political set up and were made ministers as well.

The major political parties, the National Conference and the Congress, had good representations from the minority community. Late Pyarelal Handoo was a minister in the Farooq Abdullah government and was an MP in the ninth Lok Sabha.

Khem Lata Wakhlu held important political positions in the National Conference, the Awami National Conference and later in the Congress. She also served as a member of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly for 12 years and was the state minister of tourism from 1984 to 1986. She was the chairperson of the state's social welfare board with the status of a minister of cabinet rank from 2010 to 2014.

Prior to them, there were stalwarts like D.P. Dhar, who was the Chairman of Policy Planning in the External Affairs Ministry and played a crucial role in the 1971 India-Pakistan war leading to the creation of Bangladesh.

He was a member of the Jammu and Kashmir State Constituent Assembly from 1951 to 1957 which endorsed Kashmir's accession to India. He was also a member of the state Assembly from 1957 to 1967, and was appointed as cabinet minister.

Makhan Lal Fotedar, who was initiated into the Congress by Jawaharlal Nehru, became a political advisor to Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

The Kashmiri Pandits had a big say in the Centre and the erstwhile state politics. But all this changed as the terrorists targeted the community in late 1980s which finally led to their exodus. The community fled to Jammu first, and from there they migrated to other parts of the country and world. With the dispersion, the community's political strength also nosedived.

Since their exodus in 1990, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed elections to Assembly, Parliament, Panchayat and the District Development Council (DDC) as well. In the elections held in the '90s, the community's participation declined both as contestants as well as voters.

Post exodus, only a few Kashmiri Pandits have managed to enter the political arena. Raman Mattoo, an independent candidate who won the elections in 2002, became a minister in the Congress-led PDP coalition government.

Former Vice Chancellor of University of Jammu, Amitabh Mattoo, served as an advisor to late J&K Chief Minister Mufti Muhammad Sayeed till his death and later to Mehbooba Mufti.

Then there is J&K BJP chief Ravinder Raina, who is seen more as a hardcore RSS man from Jammu than a Kashmiri Pandit.

With declining political voice, the

community also laments that since 1990, the Kashmiri Pandits have not been able to exercise their bona fide democratic right to vote as well. The members, who have been living outside the Valley, are registered voters from the constituencies they originated from in Kashmir, but they are unable to vote as they cannot go back to the Valley out of fear.

The Election Commission does have polling booths for the migrants in Jammu or New Delhi, where the Kashmiri Pandits can exercise their franchise. In Jammu, the Jagti camp sees a booth every time there is an election. The residents vote as voters from the constituencies they were registered in Kashmir. This means that they have to vote for a candidate who stays and works in that particular seat in Kashmir. And, he or she who finally wins is least concerned about the voters from who live in Jagti.

The Jagti migrants' camp has around 5,000 families, but they have no say in electoral power politics. Similar is the case with other migrant camps and the community members scattered all over.

In the 2000s, the community again tried to seek its space in the Valley. There are thousands of Kashmiri Pandits who want to return, and in the past decade many have taken up jobs and are living with their families in the Valley. The trend started during the UPA regime under Manmohan Singh when the Centre took a number of steps to create a conducive atmosphere in the Valley for the Kashmiri Pandits.

According to estimates, a few thousand migrant Kashmiri Pandit families, including the employees, are residing in the Valley.

The panchayat elections in 2019 and the DDC polls later saw participation of the community. But the intermittent targeted killings have ensured no major return of Kashmiri Pandits.

The Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre has also failed to come out with a rehabilitation plan, thus leaving the community to its fate.

The younger generation of Kashmiri Pandits, born after migration, have not been listed as voters in Kashmir. The government and the Election Commission have made no arrangements that could help enlist new voters from the community. This had added to the already dwindling numbers of the Kashmiri Pandit voters.

With no numbers to reckon with as a vote bank, the Kashmiri Pandits have no say in J&K's power politics. Their plight is a weapon for the political parties to whip the sentiments, but beyond that there is no significant plan for making the community an electoral force.

The community, which has scattered in pursuit of jobs and sustenance, has also failed to produce a leadership that could raise its voice on different platforms.

In the absence of electoral strength and lack of internal leadership, Kashmiri Pandits have no say in Kashmir's vote politics.

international

20 KIDS HOSPITALISED IN JAPAN AFTER SULFUR-LIKE ODOR LEAVES THEM ILL

Tokyo: Twenty children in Japan's Osaka prefecture were hospitalised on Tuesday after a sulfur-like odor at their school left some of them feeling unwell.

The fire department was called shortly after 9 a.m. after the odour in the elementary school in Osaka's Toyonaka City was noticed, Xinhua news reported.

In response to the emergency call, more than 10 ambulances and fire trucks were deployed to the school.

Firefighters entered the building in an attempt to locate the source of the sulfur-like smell, while 20 children aged between seven and 11 were reportedly taken to hospital for checkups as they were feeling ill.

WORLD'S LARGEST VOLCANO IN HAWAII ERUPTS AFTER NEARLY 4 DECADES

Honolulu | Agencies

The world's largest active volcano, the Mauna Loa in Hawaii, has erupted for the first time in nearly 40 years, authorities said.

The eruption began at Moku'aweoweo, the volcano's summit caldera, at 11.30 p.m. on Sunday, the first since 1984, Xinhua news agency quoted the US National Park Service as saying in an update on Monday.

The volcano's alert level has also been upgraded from an "advisory" to a "warning" -- the highest classification.

The eruption continues at the summit and all vents to the summit area remain restricted.

There is currently no indication of any migration of the eruption into a rift zone, according to the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

Lava flows in the summit region are visible from Kona, it added.

At this time, lava flows are contained within the summit area and are not threatening downslope communities, according to the Observatory.

Residents at risk from Mauna Loa lava flows should review preparedness and refer to Hawaii County Civil Defence information for further guidance, said the US Geological Survey (USGS) on Monday.

"Based on past events, the early stages of a Mauna Loa eruption can be very dynamic and the location and advance of lava flows can change rapidly," the agency warned.

If the eruption migrates beyond the walls of the summit caldera, lava flows could "move rapidly downslope", it added.

A series of recent warnings said that an eruption was possible after a spate of earthquakes in the region, including more than a dozen reported tremors on Sunday.

Mauna Loa, located inside Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, covers half of the US state's Big Island, the BBC reported.

The volcano rises 13,679ft above sea level and spans an area of more than 5,179 sq.km.

According to the USGS, Mauna Loa has erupted 33 times since 1843.

The previous eruption in 1984 sent lava flows within 5 miles of Hilo, the island's most populous town.

Mauna Loa is the world's largest active volcano. There are other larger volcanoes but these are classified as dormant, meaning they have not erupted for a long time, or extinct, meaning they are almost certain not to erupt in future.

The volcano shares the Big Island with Mauna Kea, which is the tallest mountain in the world when measured from its underwater base nearly 20,000ft below the ocean surface.

POLICE CLAMPDOWN IN CHINA AFTER DAYS OF PROTESTS

Beijing: China's protests against Covid restrictions which erupted over the weekend appear to have died down, as authorities begin clamping down, the media reported. A heavy police presence has been reported in several cities, and some gatherings were quelled or failed to materialise, reports the BBC.

Reports have emerged of people being questioned and their phones searched. But overseas Chinese have continued protesting, in at least a dozen cities across the world. The weekend demonstrations, a rare sight in China, had grown after a fire in a high-rise block in Urumqi, western China, killed 10 people on November 24. It is widely believed residents could not escape the blaze because of Covid restrictions, but local authorities have disputed this. As a result, thousands took to the streets for days, demanding an end to Covid lockdowns, with some even making rare calls for President Xi Jinping to stand down, the BBC reported.

But on Monday, planned protests in Beijing did not happen after officers surrounded the assembly point.

In Shanghai, large barriers were erected along the main protest route and police made several arrests.

On Tuesday morning, police could be seen in both cities patrolling areas where some groups on the Telegram social media app had suggested people should gather again. Many also gathered outside Chinese embassies in major cities around the world like London, Paris and Tokyo, and universities in the US and Europe.

15 killed as security forces end 20-hr hotel siege in Mogadishu

Mogadishu | Agencies

Somali security forces have said they have ended a more than 20-hour siege at a popular hotel in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, that left at least 15 people dead including six attackers.

Sadiq Dudishe, Spokesman of the Somali Police Force, on Monday said five of al-Shabab attackers were shot dead, one blew himself up after the militants stormed Villa Rosa Hotel in Mogadishu at 8 p.m. on Sunday.

Dudishe added that eight civilians and one soldier were killed and five were wounded in the attack which has been roundly condemned by the international community, Xinhua news agency reported."Sixty people were safely rescued from the hotel," he told a televised news conference in Mogadishu.

The heavily fortified hotel is a popular hangout spot for senior government officials, including the business community, and three Ministers were inside the facility at the time of the attack, the police said.

It was unclear how the extremists stormed inside the heavily secured hotel which is near the presidential palace but witnesses said they first heard gunshots at the gates of the hotel before the attackers stormed inside.

Al-Shabab, which has waged nearly two decades of insurgency to topple the internationally-backed government, claimed responsibility for the latest attack, saying its fighters were targeting a gathering of officials inside the hotel.

The latest hotel assault is the third attack by the al-Shabab since the new government took over in May.

The militants in August killed 21 people at Hayat hotel in a siege that lasted for 30 hours and an attack on Tawakal Hotel in the southern city of Kismayo in October where 11 people lost their lives.

The Villa Rosa Hotel attack came hours after the government announced that more than 100 al-Shabab extremists were killed in an operation backed by the international partners in the central region, two days over 60 militants were killed in the southern part of the country.

Al-Shabab extremist group was driven out of Mogadishu in 2011 but it is still capable of conducting attacks, targeting government installations, hotels, restaurants, and public spaces.

Pakistan holds talks with Afghanistan after TTP calls off ceasefire

Islamabad | Agencies

A high-level delegation headed by Pakistan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar is in Kabul to hold talks with Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Mutaqqi as the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) called off their months-long ceasefire, local media reported.

Khar arrived in Kabul on Tuesday on a day-long visit during which she discussed matters of bilateral importance with Amir Khan Mutaqqi focusing on political consultations between the two governments, Geo News reported.

Moreover, the issue of the TTP ceasefire is likely to come under discussion between the two sides.

"Hina Khar will certainly convey the concerns about attacks on Pakistan security forces emanating from Afghanistan, regulating the movement of people to and from trade matters in view of the increased trade. Improved clearance process and facilities on Afghan side and finally assure the Afghan side of Pakistan's humanitarian assistance," former foreign secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani told The News.

Announcing the end of the ceasefire, the TTP leadership cited the latest military operation against their fighters in the Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a reason.

According to a report published in The News, Pakistani militants had become active in southern parts of KP and particularly in South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan.

The government had to postpone the polio campaign in Lakki Marwat district on Monday due to frequent attacks by the militants on police and operation launched against them.

Several rounds of talks were held with the Taliban leaders in Afghanistan to find an amicable solution to the years-long armed conflict.

Religious leaders and tribal leaders were also involved and sent to Kabul to persuade the Pakistani Taliban to soften their demands.

DEMONETISATION, GST BROKE BACKBONE OF PEOPLE AND SMALL TRADERS: RAHUL GANDHI

Team Absolute | Ujjain

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said demonetization and the GST rollout by the Centre broke the backbone of the common people, especially small traders. Gandhi was addressing a public meeting in Ujjain after taking the darshan of Lord Mahakal in Ujjain as the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by him continued its onward journey in state. "Demonetisation (implemented in 2016) and GST broke the backbone of the people, especially those doing small businesses," Gandhi said. The Congress MP said labourers who walked long distances during the COVID-19 lockdowns, farmers, and small traders are the "real tapasvis" and not him.

"I have not done any tapasya (penance) by marching in Bharat Jodo Yatra. Labourers who walked long distances during COVID-19 lockdowns, farmers who are producing food grains for the people, and small traders are the real 'tapasvis' of the country," he said. Unfortunately, they are not getting their dues whereas only 4-5 industrialists are being benefited, he alleged. "Small shop owners and traders provide employment to a large number of people in the country, but their hard work is not recognized. The money is snatched from their pockets and given in the hands of the 4-5 industrialists," Gandhi said.

Referring to the VYAPAM scam, Gandhi said such frauds deprived youths of employment despite studying hard. "Media wanted to show reality to the people but they are unable to do so because their hands are tied," he added. The "VYAPAM" scam, known by its Hindi acronym of the Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board, involved alleged malpractices in the entrance examination, admissions and recruitment

Rahul Gandhi offers prayers at Mahakal temple in Ujjain

Ujjain: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday performed puja with rituals at the famous Mahakal temple of Lord Shiva in Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh after the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by him entered the holy city. Clad in a red dhoti, Gandhi performed all the rituals under the guidance of temple priests. He was offered a stole by the priests of the temple.

How BJY transformed my personality in 3 ways: Rahul

Indore: Rahul Gandhi has said he feels some changes in his personality during the ongoing Bharat Jodo Yatra, including more patience and the ability to listen to others. Asked about his most satisfying moment during the yatra, Rahul Gandhi told reporters, "There are many, but I instantly recall a few interesting ones, including that my patience has dramatically increased because of the yatra. Secondly, now I don't get irritated even for eight hours, if someone pushes or pulls me. It doesn't affect me, whereas earlier I used to get irritated even in two hours, and thirdly, my ability to listen to others has also become better now" he said.

FOURTH DENGUE DEATH REPORTED IN BAIRAGARH; TWO DEATHS IN SAME FAMILY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With another dengue death reported, the tally has now reached four in Bairagarh. On Tuesday morning, a youth died due to dengue. He was undergoing treatment in a private hospital in the city. Four days ago, his younger brother died of the same disease. So it is the second death due to dengue in the family and fourth in total. Two brothers of the Rajput family, residents of One Tree Hills area, have died of dengue. Tarun Rajput, an 18-year-old youth, succumbed to dengue late last night while his brother Rajeev Rajput died of dengue just four days ago. Tarun was admitted to a private hospital.

Pradeep Motiani,26, died on November 13, while Sanjay Giri, 35 years old died on October 29. Mayor-in-Council (MiC) member Rajesh Hingorani said, "Bhopal Municipal Corporation(BMC) is taking all precautions and measures to check mosquitoes borne disease. It is a matter of concern that four dengue deaths have been reported in Bairagarh."

Rs 9 crore scam in the name of students, BJP leader's shocking revelation

Team Absolute | Khargone

In Khargone, an incident of a Rs 9 crore scam has come to light in the education department. BJP's former MLA has made allegations of corruption worth crores of rupees. He has said that a scam of about Rs 9 crore has been done by showing fake bills in the name of children and other works including painting and painting in the school. The DPC of the district has a hand in this. Former MLA Babulal Mahajan has complained to CM Shivraj Singh Chauhan, School Education Minister and Khargone Collector regarding the matter and demanded action against the criminals and registration of FIR.

Babulal Mahajan, who was an MLA from BJP in Khargone, has disclosed corruption by discussing with the media in the local Gayatri temple complex. In a letter to the CM and the School Education Minister, former MLA Mahajan said, "Janshikshaks, BRCO, and DPC together have done corruption worth nine crore rupees." BRC and public teachers also have an important role in this. In 2,465 primary and secondary schools of all the development blocks of the district, crores of rupees have been taken from the government by stating that there are more students, fake bills for work, and fake bills for the purchase of goods. The amount of corruption is nine crores."

The former MLA alleged, "All primary and secondary schools in the district have been billed to have fire extinguishers ranging from Rs 2000 to Rs 5000. But, the surprise is that fire extinguishers have not reached any school to date." On the instructions of DPC Dongre, BRC has extracted the amount by raising the bills of fake firms. He further said, "Plastic toys were taken in the name of sports material. Painting and portrait were not done, but the bill for expensive paint has been imposed. The funds for the self-defense training of girls were relinquished to corruption. Along with this, there has also been a mess in the deputation of public teachers."

Efforts in the field of financial and PAM are commendable: Sitharaman

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that the efforts being made in the field of Financial and Public Asset Management (PAM) in MP are commendable. The growth rate of GSDP of the state has been higher than the national GDP growth rate in the last 10 years. In the year 2021-22, the economic growth rate of Madhya Pradesh was 19.74 percent, which is the highest in the country. States efforts towards fulfilling the target set by the PM Modi to make the country's economy 5 trillion dollars by the year 2025 are commendable.

Sitharaman said this after watching the presentation by the Finance Department at Mantralaya today. The Union Finance Minister said that Madhya Pradesh is making progress in every field. Especially in the matter of financial management, the state has presented exemplary examples by making many innovations. She said that the beneficiaries are being benefited by speeding up various schemes of the Central Government in the state. Along with this, self-employment efforts are also getting better, due to which startups are being encouraged. The Union Minister said that Madhya Pradesh is making its best contribution for self-reliant India.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that the Public Asset Management Department has been formed in the year 2020 for disposal and management of unusable government assets in the state. 8 confiscated assets were released by paying Rs 14.50 crore to EPFO. As a result of disposal and disinvestment of government assets, a target of Rs 600 crore has been set for this financial year.

It was told in the presentation that the revision of user charges in irrigation and auction of 12 mineral blocks has been completed and auction of 22 blocks is being done. The royalty rates of Limestone are being revised. The auction of timber has been started in the Forest Department from the current year, which is likely to generate additional revenue.

Working as a mission to increase employment opportunities in the state, approvals have been issued to recruit one lakh posts in the next one year. From 31 lakh 19 thousand in the last one year in Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, Chief Minister Rural Street Vendor Scheme, National Rural Livelihood Mission, PM Swanidhi Yojana, National Urban Livelihood Mission, Prime Minister Employment Generation Program, Chief Minister Udyam Kranti Yojana and Sant Ravidas Self-Employment Scheme More self-employment opportunities have been created.

MAN HELD FOR REPEATEDLY RAPING MARRIED WOMAN IN BHOPAL

Bhopal : A man was arrested for allegedly raping a 40-year-old married woman multiple times by blackmailing her in Kolar locality of state capital Bhopal, the police said on Tuesday. The accused is a neighbour of the married woman. Kolar police station in-charge Chandrakant Patel said that the accused had befriended the woman around a year and half ago.

According to the police official, the accused then raped the woman by mixing intoxicants her tea and clicked some objectionable photographs and videos. Later, he started blackmailing her and violated her several times. Fed up with the harassment, the woman accompanied by family members reached the Kolar police station lodged a complaint against the accused. Acting on the complaint, the police registered a case and arrested the accused. He will be produced before the court today, SHO Patel added.

CM PLANTS SAPLINGS WITH SOCIAL WORKERS, JOURNALIST AND LADLI BITIYA

Bhopal : Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Sarika Indica, Jungle Jalebi and Blue Gulmohar in the Smart City Park. Along with CM Chouhan, Sarvshri Upendra Sharma, Ankit Sharma, Praveen Shrivas and Sunil Yadav of Gwalior's "Phir Ek Prayas" organisation planted saplings. Along with CM Chouhan, three-year-old Ladli Laxmi daughter Akshita Sinha also planted a sapling.

PROBE LAUNCHED AFTER VIDEO SHOWS RAVEENA TANDON'S VEHICLE NEAR TIGER

Team Absolute | Narmadapuram

The Satpura Tiger Reserve authorities have started an investigation after a video showed a vehicle, in which Bollywood actor Raveena Tandon was allegedly travelling, close to a tiger during a safari, an official said on Tuesday.

The video, which surfaced on social media platforms, showed the safari vehicle reaching close to a tiger. In the clip, camera shutters are heard making sounds and a tiger is seen roaring at them in the reserve located in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram district.

Sub Divisional Officer (SDO) of Forest Dheeraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said following the directives of senior officials, he has started a probe into the alleged incident. He said during Tandon's visit to the reserve on November 22, her vehicle reached near a tiger. The vehicle driver and the officials on duty there will be served a notice and questioned, the official said. The probe report will be submitted to senior officials for further action, he said.

Tandon had shared the pictures of her visit to the Satpura Tiger Reserve on her social media handles. She had also shared the pictures of tigers which she clicked during her visit to the reserve.

Three journalists killed in road accident in Vidisha; CM announces ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh

Team Absolute | Vidisha

Three local journalists were killed when a speeding truck hit their motorcycle in Raisen district, police said on Tuesday. The accident took place at around 9 pm on Monday on a turn near Lambakheda, Salamatpur police station in-charge Devendra Pal said. The three persons, identified as Rajesh Sharma, president of Vidisha Press Club, Sunil Sharma and Narendra Dixit, died on the spot, he said. The truck driver fled with the vehicle after the accident. The police later seized the vehicle near Berkhedi, the official said. The victims were returning from Bhopal after placing a printing order for their weekly publication, according to sources. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed grief over the death of the three journalists and announced an ex-gratia of Rs four lakh to the families of each of the deceased.

A grand memorial will be built at the Sehore Shaheed Sthal: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan arrived at the Shaheed Sthal located at Saikdakhedi on the Gaurav Diwas (pride day) of Sehore city and paid tributes to the martyrs of the freedom struggle. CM Chouhan said that on January 14, 1858, 356 revolutionaries sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country in the first battle of independence in Sehore. CM Chouhan said that a grand memorial will be built at this place.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that this place of Sehore is a sacred place for all of us, which reminds us of the heroic saga of those bravehearts who did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of our country. We all are fortunate to have taken birth in the land where innumerable revolutionaries and freedom fighters sacrificed their lives to break the chains of slavery.

Dattopant Thengadi did a wonderful job in organizing the society: CM Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that India is an ancient, wonderful and great nation. India has given the light of knowledge to the world. India's place has been at the forefront of civilization and culture. Today, under the guidance of PM Modi, India's contribution to the global economy has reached 9.5 percent as compared to earlier times. Like the integral humanism of Deendayal Upadhyay, Dattopant Thengadi also did a wonderful job in the direction of organizing the society.

CM Chouhan was addressing the Dattopant Thengadi Memorial National Lecture Series-2022 on the topic "India's economic potential in the global scenario of the 21st century" at Ravindra Bhavan, Bhopal. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman took part as the keynote speaker. President of the Institute Ashok Kumar Pandey was also present.

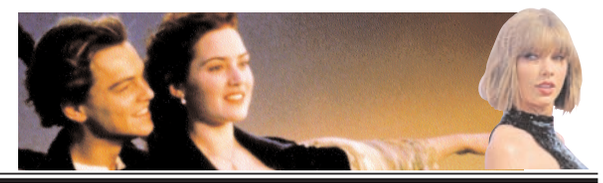
Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that today it is my good fortune to participate in the lecture series in the memory of Rashtrarishi Shri Thengadi. Thengadi will always be remembered for building various institutions in India and for the welfare of various sections. Sitharaman said that the work done by him even during the difficult times of the British rule is commendable. He fought for the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh. Dattopant did unprecedented work for economic reforms. She said that efforts are being made to follow the vision of Dattopant in the country. Dattopant has played a role in ending communism and capitalism. Startups in India are growing rapidly in the field of self-employment. The startup revolution belongs to the youth of India.

MISCREANTS LOOT 17 RIFLES FROM FOREST DEPT'S POST IN BURHANPUR

Team Absolute | Burhanpur

Unidentified persons looted 17 rifles from a post set up by the forest department in MP's Burhanpur district, an official said on Tuesday. The incident occurred at Bakdi post under Navra forest area of Nepanagar tehsil around 9.30 pm on Monday, Superintendent of Police (SP) Rahul Kumar Lodha said. A daily-wage employee was on duty at the post when 15 to 20 people arrived there and ransacked the place, he said. The miscreants looted 17 rifles that the forest department staffers had kept there, the official said. Two police parties have been formed to track down the accused and recover the stolen weapons, said the SP, who visited the post.

According to officials, teams from the forest department and police were conducting a drive to remove encroachments and check illegal cutting of trees in the area since the last few days.



ADAM SANDLER AND WIFE JACKIE SHARED KISS AT THE GOTHAM AWARDS

Los Angeles | Agencies

On Monday night, Adam Sandler and his glamorous wife Jackie looked happier than ever as they shared a kiss on the red carpet at the Gotham Awards in NYC.

The actor looked dapper in a sleek navy suit teamed with a baby blue shirt and slate grey tie as he posed for pictures with his better half. Jackie was effortlessly chic in a classic black midi dress, which she teamed with pointed stilettos. The actress styled her ombre tresses into gorgeous mermaid waves and opted for a burgundy manicure. Adam and Jackie have been married since 2003 and have two daughters together Sadie and Sunny.

The much-loved actor is currently recovering after undergoing hip surgery on Labor Day, September 5.

Earlier this month, Adam was seen walking without any aid for the first time after being seen with a cane on his recent outings. Back in September, his representatives confirmed that the surgery was not a result of a medical emergency or a sudden injury, but that it was planned to take place between projects.

The surgery was said to be a success, with Sandler reportedly looking forward to partaking in one of his favorite hobbies: pick-up games of basketball.

In June, Adam told of an injury he suffered on set while filming recent movie Hustle. In the film, Adam stars as a basketball scout who recruits a street player and use the opportunity to get back in the good graces of the NBA.

And while shooting, Adam played basketball with his NBA co-stars in between takes, with the actor going on to injure his groin.

He explained to the publication: 'We had some of that going, but that's before I popped my groin. There was one night my groin couldn't take it anymore. It's been a year already and I'm still limping around like a fool.'

Antonio Banderas thinks Tom Holland would make a perfect Zorro

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Antonio Banderas would love to have Tom Holland replace him as Zorro. The 62-year-old star portrayed the masked vigilante in the 1998 movie 'The Mask of Zorro' and the 2005 sequel 'The Legend of Zorro', and believed that his 'Uncharted' co-star Holland would be the ideal actor to take his place as the character. "I did 'Uncharted' with him, and he's so energetic and fun, and he's got this spark too. Why not?" Antonio said. The actor revealed he would consider returning for a third movie to deliver the mask to Holland - just as his predecessor Sir Anthony Hopkins did in 'The Mask of Zorro'.'

Banderas explained: "Yes, I would. I would consider that possibility. Why not?" "I think, during today's interviews, I said something like that to somebody. I said, "Well, if they called me to do Zorro, I would do what Anthony Hopkins did in the first (for) me, (which is) give the torch to somebody else'."

Meanwhile, Antonio previously revealed that he was approached by legendary director Quentin Tarantino about a "Zorro" and "Django Unchained" crossover film that would have seen him teaming up with Jamie Foxx.

The Spanish actor said: "He talked to me, I think on the Oscar night (in 2020) when I was nominated for 'Pain and Glory'. We saw each other at one of those parties. He just came up to me and I was like, 'In your hands? Yeah, man!' Because Quentin just had that nature to do those types of movies and give them quality."

'It is the first time I've ever felt beautiful on screen': Gwendoline Christie

Los Angeles | Agencies

Gwendoline Christie has spoken about how Wednesday made her feel 'beautiful' for the first time on-screen as she was given 'freedom' to create her own character. The actress, who has starred in big name projects including The Hunger Games and Game of Thrones, said it was the first time in her career she felt seen. Gwendoline's role in the Netflix series is as Nevermore Academy's principal, Larissa Weems, who director Tim Burton gave her creative freedom to invent. She said: 'It is the first time I've ever felt beautiful on screen. I cannot express my extreme gratitude more heartily to Tim and Colleen and our hair and makeup team.' During a recent interview, Gwendoline said: 'she said, 'You can do whatever you like with the character, feel free to make it whatever you want and we'll keep talking about it'. 'What kept coming to me was this idea of this Hitchcock-style heroin, this screen siren, that maybe that young woman would look to our mystic portal, the cinema, to be an incarnation of her fantasies. 'And weirdly, Tim had exactly the same idea and so did [costume designer] Colleen Atwood.'

Gwendoline revealed how she was inspired to create the classic idea of femininity, but with a twist, which she said was the opposite of herself. She said that Hitchcock heroines are often plagued by trauma but have a strong sense of ambition and are willing to risk high stakes situations.

The Brienne of Tarth actress, said: 'It is the first time I've ever felt beautiful on screen,' she added. 'I cannot express my extreme gratitude more heartily to Tim and Colleen and our hair and makeup team.

Why did you hit that man, Uncle Will? Smith recalls shame returning home to his nephew

Los Angeles | Agencies

Will Smith is continuing his press tour for his new movie Emancipation, giving his first talk show interview since his now-infamous Oscar slap of Chris Rock.

The actor appeared on Monday night's episode of The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, where he revealed there was a 'rage' inside him that night.

He also added that, when he got home after the ceremony, his nine-year-old nephew was waiting and had seen the slap, asking him, 'Why did you hit that man, Uncle Will?' Will revealed on the show, 'My little nephew Dom is nine. He is the sweetest little boy. We came home,' when the nephew asked him a question. 'He had stayed up late to see his uncle Will and we are sitting in my kitchen and he is on my lap and he is holding the Oscar and he is just like, "Why did you hit that man, Uncle Will?"' Smith said. He then took out his tissues and looked at Noah, joking, 'Damn it.

Why are you trying to Oprah me?' He added, 'It was a mess, you know. I don't want to go too far into it to give people more to misunderstand.'

After discussing his new movie, Noah joked they hadn't seen him for awhile, as Will began to open up about what he said was, 'a horrific night, as you can imagine.'

'There are many nuances and complexities to it. But at the end of the day, I just - I lost it, you know?' Will admitted. 'I was going through something that night, you know? Not that that justifies my behavior at all...' he admitted.

'It was a lot of things. It was the little boy that watched his father beat up his mother, you know? All of that just bubbled up in that moment. That is not who I want to be,' he said. 'I was gone. That was a rage that had been bottled for a really long time," Will said.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Dua Lipa

My new album is inspired by rekindled romance with Ben Affleck: JLo

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Jennifer Lopez, who has announced her new LP 'This Is Me Now', sat down with Zane Lowe to discuss the upcoming album.

The collection is an updated play of Lopez's 13-song 2002 album 'This Is Me... Then," which was heavily inspired by her and Ben Affleck's highly publicised romance.

Lopez told Lowe that the new record captures "me at this moment in time when I was reunited with the love of my life and we decided we were going to be together forever. The whole message of the album then is this love exists."

Lopez said she wants to share that "vulnerable" message with the world, despite it scaring her.

"I think parts of it scare Ben, too," she added. "He's like, 'Oh, do you really want to say all this stuff?' And I'm like, 'I don't know how else to do it, baby'."

The pair re-entered the relationship in 2021, nearly 17 years after they had called off their engagement in 2004. Reflecting on that time in her life, the Bronx native admitted she refused to perform the Affleck-inspired songs from her 2002 record, which included songs like 'Dear Ben', due to the pain of the breakup.

"Once we called off that wedding 20 years ago, it was the biggest heartbreak of my life, and I honestly felt like I was going to die," she said.

"It sent me on a spiral for the next 18 years where I just couldn't get it right. Couldn't get it right. But now, 20 years later, it does have a happy ending. It has the most would-never-happen-in-Hollywood ending. 'That would never happen. We're not going to write that because nobody would believe it'." Several song titles on the record reference the couple's reunion, including 'Greatest Love Story Never Told' and 'Midnight Trip to Vegas', which seemingly hints at the story of their summer wedding in Las Vegas.

FIFA WORLD CUP

PORTUGAL JOINS BRAZIL, FRANCE INTO KNOCKOUTS STAGE OF WORLD CUP

Armstrong Vaz | Doha | Agencies

A brace from Bruno Fernandes helped Portugal to a 2-0 win over Uruguay and a place in the knockout stage of the FIFA World Cup.

On Monday, in the last match of the day at Lusail Stadium in Qatar, Portugal's second successive win took them to six points and to the top of the Group H standings leaving Uruguay, Ghana and South Korea to fight for the second qualification spot from the group.

Portugal joins Brazil and France, the other two teams which have made it to the knockout stage so far.ortugal started well on the ball, enjoying the lion's share of possession but Uruguay fashioned the best chance. Rodrigo Bentancur worked his way brilliantly through Portugal's defence but squandering the game's best chance in the 33rd minute, firing straight at Diogo Costa from a one-on-one situation.

At the other end Bruno worked hard, winning 100 per cent of his tackles, registering a 93 per cent pass accuracy rate and generally stringing play together for his side and with Joao Felix looking lively for Portugal on the left, Uruguay had a handful to deal with.

An attempt from distance from Joao flew wide but marked a warning shot for Uruguay, from the 23-year-old Atletico Madrid star.

Portugal continued to dominate possession but could not create a clear-cut chance while Uruguay struggled to get any control of the ball.

In a breakthrough move Bruno's cross was travelling towards the net, Ronaldo tried to produce a glancing header but did not make contact which ended up in the back of the nets after eluding Uruguay keeper Sergio Rochet's reach. Ronaldo celebrated wildly, but Bruno was officially credited with the goal.Uruguay down by a goal pressed the panic buttons and shifted gears during which period they came close to scoring a few times with one of their efforts hitting the metal work.

Portugal celebrated the goal with a second one through a controversial injury-time penalty which was awarded after VAR review.

S.KOREA STILL HOPES; IFS AND BUTS IN TALKS

Doha: By losing to Ghana 3-2 in their second Group H match of the FIFA World Cup on Monday, South Korea dug themselves into a hole -- though it's not deep enough that they won't be able to get out of it. South Korea will not be able to control their own destiny when they take on Portugal for their final Group H match on Friday at Education City Stadium in Al Rayyan, west of Doha. The first part of the equation is straightforward. South Korea must win Friday. And then, if Uruguay beat Ghana that same evening, South Korea and Uruguay will end up tied at four points and a tiebreaker will come in to play, while Ghana will finish in last place. In this scenario, South Korea's margin of victory must be bigger than Uruguay's. If South Korea win and Ghana win Friday, South Korea will be sent home, with Portugal and Ghana moving on to the round of 16 at six points apiece. A tiebreaker will be necessary to determine the top seed. In case of a South Korean win and a Ghana-Uruguay draw, South Korea and Ghana will be deadlocked at four points, with Uruguay finishing last with two points.

Ghana currently hold a slight edge in goal difference at 0 to -1. But in the next tiebreak category, goals scored, Ghana enjoy a substantial lead at 5-2.

It will be a tall order for South Korea to score more than three goals against Portugal.

The Group H runners-up will face the Group G winners in the round of 16, and at the moment, world No. 1 Brazil are in a prime position to win Group G.

CASEMIRO IS 'BEST MIDFIELDER' IN THE WORLD: NEYMAR

Doha: Brazil's star Neymar termed Casemiro as "the best midfielder in the world" following another talismanic performance by the Manchester United footballer for Brazil in the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. The 30-year-old Casemiro scored a sensational winning goal in Brazil's 1-0 victory over Switzerland to secure their qualification to the World Cup knockout stages. Casemiro's delicious finish in the 83rd minute was applauded by a group of attending Brazil icons and former tournament winners, including Cafu, Roberto Carlos, and the incomparable Ronaldo. Neymar was watching the action from outside while recovering from an ankle injury that he sustained on matchday one. A delighted Neymar tweeted, "Casemiro has been the best midfielder in the world for a long time." Later, Brazil manager Tite was asked for his opinion on Neymar's claim and he couldn't help but agree:

ASIA JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Unnati starts on winning note as 7 Indian shuttlers win

Team Absolute | New Delhi

just 24 minutes. Her Japanese counterpart was no match for her. Unnati will face Indonesia's Dea Nur Fadilla in the round-of-32 match on Wednesday.

In the other U-17 women's singles match, Anmol Kharb won both her matches to move into the round of 32. First, she defeated Singapore's Chujei Jennifer 21-11, 21-14 before getting the better of Wening Sabrina of Indonesia 21-19, 21-10. Anmol will next play against Ratnacha Sompoch of Thailand on Wednesday.

Sampriti Pal faced a tough challenge from Keira Indriyan of Indonesia in the U-15 women's singles round of 128 match. The Indian shuttler won the first game 21-12 but lost the plot in the second game to lose 7-21 before making a comeback in the third game to win 21-15 and wrap up the match in 48 minutes. She will square off against Japan's Ria Haga in the next round on Wednesday.

Jiya Rawat went down fighting against Peeraya Wechawong of Thailand in the U-17 women's singles round-of-64 match as she lost 11-21, 21-14 and 21-10.

In the U-15 men's singles first round match, three Indian shuttlers- Abhinav Garg, Anish Thoppani and Mohammad Ali Mir won their respective matches and moved to the round of 64. While Abhinav and Anish won in three games against Thailand's Chinnapat Seangpan and Japan's Mahiro Matsumoto respectively, Mohammad defeated Srilanka's Mihila Jayaweeera 21-19-21-14. All three of them will play their next match on Wednesday.

In the U-17 men's singles section, Dhruv Negi defeated Singapore's Nge Joo Jin 21-19, 19-21, 21-17 in a close match that lasted 43 minutes while Ansh Negi lost 20-22, 21-16, 12-21 against Shota Natsuka of Japan in the round of 64 stage.

I-LEAGUE: REAL KASHMIR MAINTAIN UNBEATEN RUN WITH VICTORY OVER CHURCHILL BROTHERS

Srinagar: Real Kashmir continued their unbeaten run in the 2022-23 Hero I-League with a 1-0 win over Churchill Brothers at the TRC Stadium here.

A second-half header by the substitute Ibrahim Nurudeen proved enough for the hosts as they defeated Churchill Brothers for the first time in the I-League. Churchill Brothers maintained possession right from the first whistle, however, the first major chance of the game fell for the home side at the quarter-hour mark as midfielder Yakubu Wadudu's shot was deflected onto the post by goalkeeper Albino Gomes.

In the 18th minute, Real Kashmir's Lalnuntluanga Bawitlung took a powerful shot from 30-yards out but the Churchill custodian Albino Gomes made a great save, diving to his left to keep the ball out of his goal. The 28-year-old was called into action again in the 34th minute, making another acrobatic save, this time from Samuel Kynshi's effort.Five minutes before the half-time whistle, Tana curled in a corner for the visitors, which was punched away by Subhasish Roy Chowdhury in the Real Kashmir goal.

The second half began with Real Kashmir charging at the Churchill defence. Two minutes after the restart, Pulamte got a shot away from the top of the penalty area but it was comfortably collected by goalkeeper Gomes.

The visitors later received many opportunities to come back into the game with both Tana and Ciss taking free kicks just outside the Real Kashmir penalty area but their efforts were well off target. It just wasn't Churchill Brothers' day as they finished the game with no shots on target.

BWF RANKINGS

TREESA-GAYATRI PAIR MOVES INTO TOP-20; LAKSHYA SEN GAINS ONE SPOT TO SIXTH

Team Absolute | Kuala Lumpur

India's young women's doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand jumped two spots to break into the top 20 while Lakshya Sen remained the country's highest-ranked male player, moving up a spot in the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Rankings released on Tuesday.

Treesa and Gayatri pair made its maiden entry in the Top 20 and is placed No.19 while Sen is the lone entry from the country in the top 10 in men's singles.

Lakshya moved one spot to sixth place in the men's singles rankings while Srikanth Kidambi and H.S Prannoy remained at the 11th and 12th spots.

Among the other Indians in men's singles rankings, Sameer Verma, who participated in the Australian Open last week and withdrew in the second round, moved up two places to 34th; B Sai Praneeth was up one spot to 38th while Mithun Manjunath gained two spots and moved up to 41st position.in women's singles, P.V Sindhu, who withdrew from the BWF World Finals starting on December 7 as she is yet to recuperate from the injury suffered at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, stayed at the sixth spot while former World No.1 Saina Nehwal gained one spot to 32. Malavika Bansod held on to last week's 35th position while Aakarshi Kashyap moved up two spots to 36th. Anupama Upadhyay was among the top gainers for India as she climbed three spots to 53.

PKL 9 : PARTEEK DAHIYA POWERS GUJARAT GIANTS TO WIN OVER PUNERI PALTAN

Hyderabad | Agencies

Parteek Dahiya's brilliant raiding powered the Gujarat Giants to a 51-39 victory over the high-flying Puneri Paltan at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium here on Tuesday. The Giants victory broke a five-match winning streak for the Paltan.

A blistering start by the Paltan saw them race into an early lead, with the Giants finding it tough on the mat. However, it all changed within moments as captain Chandran Ranjit caught out Aslam Inamdar and Sanket Sawant to bring the Giants back into the game. Despite the resurgence, it was the Paltan who inflicted the first ALL OUT of the game, to take a 15-8 lead.

The All Out galvanised the Giants, Ranjit and Parteek Dahiya combining to not just engineer a comeback but also get the Giants an ALL OUT of their own, to make it a one-point game. From there, the match ebbed and flowed with both teams trading points constantly. The teams went into the break with Paltan leading 22-21.

The Giants, however, roared out of the blocks in the second half, Dahiya in particular was devastating on almost every raid he went for. They inflicted a second ALL OUT on the Paltan to take the lead for the first time in the game at 31-25. The Giants kept the pressure up with Dahiya in particular on a streak that was destroying Pune at regular intervals. A second ALL OUT followed as the Giants extended into a 44-32 lead.

They never let it slip, registering a morale-boosting and momentous win. For the Giants, it was Dahiya who starred yet again with a tally of 19 points and was the driving force for his side.

UMRAN BOWLS 155 KMPH AND MAKES THINGS EASY FOR ME: ARSHDEEP SINGH

Christchurch: India's young pace sensation Arshdeep Singh lavished praise on his bowling partner Umran Malik, saying the SRH fast bowler makes things easy for him in the field.

Arshdeep and Umran made their ODI debuts in the series opener against New Zealand in Auckland. Both young pacers enjoyed bowling in tandem and touring sites together on the New Zealand tour."It's an edge for me to play with Umran. He bowls 155 KMPH and makes things easy for me. We are loving our partnership on the field and off the field as well. Hope it continues for a long time. I don't think my journey is easy or challenging."We as players focus on playing, enjoying the process, and not thinking much about it being easy or challenging. When we perform our best, it feels good. We take the game match by match and don't really think too much that I want myself here in the next year or so," Arshdeep said in a pre-match conference.Arshdeep Singh had played 21 T20Is for India. He has taken 33 wickets for the Men in Blue in the shortest format.

Shooting: Arjun Babuta, Vivaan Kapoor win national crowns

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Arjun Babuta in Men's 10m Air Rifle and Vivaan Kapoor in Men's Trap, were crowned national champions at the 65th National Shooting Championship Competitions (65th NSCC) which are currently being held in Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram.

Punjab's Arjun overcame Assam's Hriday Hazarika 16-8 in the gold medal match at the Vattiyoorkkavu Shooting Range in Thiruvananthapuram where the Rifle nationals are taking place, while Rajasthan's Vivaan, got the better of Tamil Nadu's Prithviraj Tondaiman shooting 31 birds to the latter's 27, in the medal match at Delhi's Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range (DKSSR), venue of the Shotgun nationals.

Arjun made the gold medal match after topping the top eight ranking round with a score of 263.4. Hriday was second with 262.9 to earn his place in the title clash.In Men's Trap, Vivaan came second behind state-mate and Paris 2024 Olympics quota winner Bhowneesh Mendiratta in the second semi-final, shooting down 21 targets to the latter's 22. They were joined in the medal match by Prithivraj, who topped semi-final one with 23 hits and Bakhtyaruddin Malek, who was second with 21 hits.

Vivaan then edged out seasoned shooter Prithviraj in the 40-shot final even as Bhowneesh settled for bronze.

'I UNDERWENT DIFFICULT & COMPLEX PREPARATIONS TO PLAY A BLIND CHARACTER'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

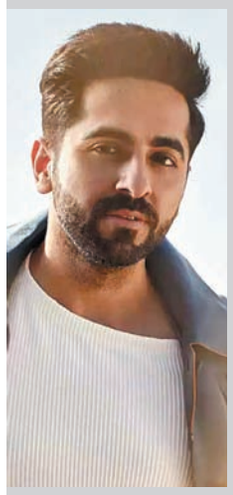
'Sacred Games' actor Luke Kenny shared how he prepared to play the role of a visually challenged character in the web series 'Dharavi Bank'. He said: "For Dharavi Bank's Michael, I underwent one of the most difficult and complicated preparations. You know when one of your senses is blocked; you take some time to work around with the rest of them. But the credit for my performance goes to Hemendra Singh, who was immensely instrumental in guiding me through this preparation. He is associated with an organisation working for blind people." Born in Kolkata, Luke's grandfather was Irish and grandmother was British' they had moved to India. His father Robert Kenny was a musician and Luke started his career as a dancer and made his acting debut with 'Bombay Boys' in 1997. Later he did the web series 'Sacred Games', 'Inside Edge' and was also seen in 'Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior' starring Ajay Devgn.

In 'Dharavi Bank', he plays a challenging character of a blind man Michael for which his eyes are completely shut by using prosthetics. He added: "Even though it was partial blindness and my eyes were completely shut with prosthetics, it took me through everything seamlessly. I'm really glad Samit and team pushed me to do this because this is an experience I will never forget."

Directed by Samit Kakkad and produced by Zee Studios, the series also features Suniel Shetty, Sonali Kulkarni, Vivek Anand Oberoi, Luke Kenny, Freddy Daruwala, Shanthi Priya, Santosh Juvekar, Nagesh Bhosle, Siddharth Menon, Hitesh Bhojraj, among others.

MALAIKA & NORA ARE INDIA'S BIGGEST DANCING STARS: AYUSHMANN

Team Absolute | Mumbai



Ayushmann Khurrana has danced his heart out for 'An Action Hero' with Malaika Arora and Nora Fatehi. "It has been an absolute pleasure to dance with two of the biggest dancing stars of India - Malaika Arora in the situational song Aap Jaisa Koi and Nora Fatehi in Jehda Nasha in my upcoming release An Action Hero."

"They are stunningly gorgeous performers and they are also beautiful human beings. I had the best time working with them for these dance numbers which I hope will be loved by audiences across the country," says Ayushmann.

He adds, "Essaying the role of a superstar from the Hindi film industry has been a fun ride for me as I not only got to do some hardcore action in the film but also got to dance with these sensational dancers who have got everyone hooked with their incredible talent."

Ayushmann further says, "I have tried to match steps with them and this experience will be forever memorable for me because I have danced my heart out for the first time in a film and had so much fun! Dancing like this in my films was part of my bucket list for sure and I'm amazed that it got fulfilled with Malaika Arora and Nora Fatehi."

I SPENT HOURS PERFECTING MY DANCING SKILLS AND EVEN FELL SICK: CHAHATT KHANNA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Bade Achhe Lagte Hain' actress Chahatt Khanna says that she has to put a lot of effort into learning the dance steps for her song 'Fursat Se Tu Naach Baby' from her movie 'Dhoop Chhaon'. She shares: "When I was shooting for 'Dhoop Chhaon', this was my first ever dance number. I was not much of a dancer since school and so it was a difficult task for me. My friends used to tease me and I felt like I needed to step up so for almost a year, I learned dancing." "And at the end of that period, almost like a miracle or a reward, I got the offer for 'Fursat Se Tu Naach Baby'," she adds.

She adds that she spended hours perfecting her dancing skills and even fell sick.

"We have spent rigorous hours training and shooting for it. In fact for 3 days, we trained for 12 hours each day nonstop and I fell sick at the end. So we had to postpone the shoot and when we got back to it, we shot it in 8 hours straight. But overall it was a beautiful experience and will always have a special place in my heart," says the actress.

KRISHNA MUKHERJEE BRINGS OUT A HEADSTRONG CHARACTER IN 'HASRATEIN'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' actress Krishna Mukherjee will be seen playing a strong girl, who decides to live life on her terms without caring about either family or society in the web series 'Hasratein'. She said that she relates to the story as it reflects what she has seen in her real life. Krishna said: "It's a story I relate to. During my college days, a friend of mine who was popularly known for her smile was hiding her pain behind that beautiful smile. She was not left with the option of choosing her partner and my story is along similar lines." The 30-year-old actor is known for her roles in 'Kuch Toh Hai', 'Yeh Hai Aashiqui', 'Shubh Shagun', and many more. She added how many times it is seen that women are forced to get married or choose their partner as per their parent's wish. "It is disheartening to see such practices still prevalent in our society. So, I channeled my personal experience to essay the role of Jyoti, a strong girl, who chose to have her way in a patriarchal society," she added.

The series features Monalisa, Adaa Khan, Krishna Mukherjee, Ravi Bhatia, Vin Rana, Shilpa Tulaskar, Sana Sayyad, Siddharth Sharma, Ayussh Anand and Sahil Uppal. It will be streaming on Hungama Play.

ZAKIR KHAN'S STAND-UP IS HIS VERSION OF GROWING UP IN A JOINT FAMILY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The trailer of comic artiste Zakir Khan's upcoming stand-up special 'Tathastu' was unveiled on Tuesday. Peppered with his trademark style of humour, the trailer shows the comedian giving the audience a glimpse of a more vulnerable and unedited version of his life.

The special will see Zakir Khan giving the audience a taste of what growing up in a joint family is in his uniquely comedic style.

Talking about the special, Zakir said in a statement: "'Tathastu' is particularly close to my heart. This set is partially dedicated to my grandfather (Khan-sahab) as I take the audience through a journey about growing up, becoming an adult, all the while imparting the very life lessons that I learnt from him. I am sure that the viewers will find it relatable and refreshing! I am looking forward to seeing their reactions to this!" "It has always been exciting to work with Prime Video, from my first stand-up special, Haq se Single, to now it has been a magnificent journey," Zakir added.

The movie taps into sensibilities of an individual

TAAPSEE ON HER PRODUCTION DEBUT

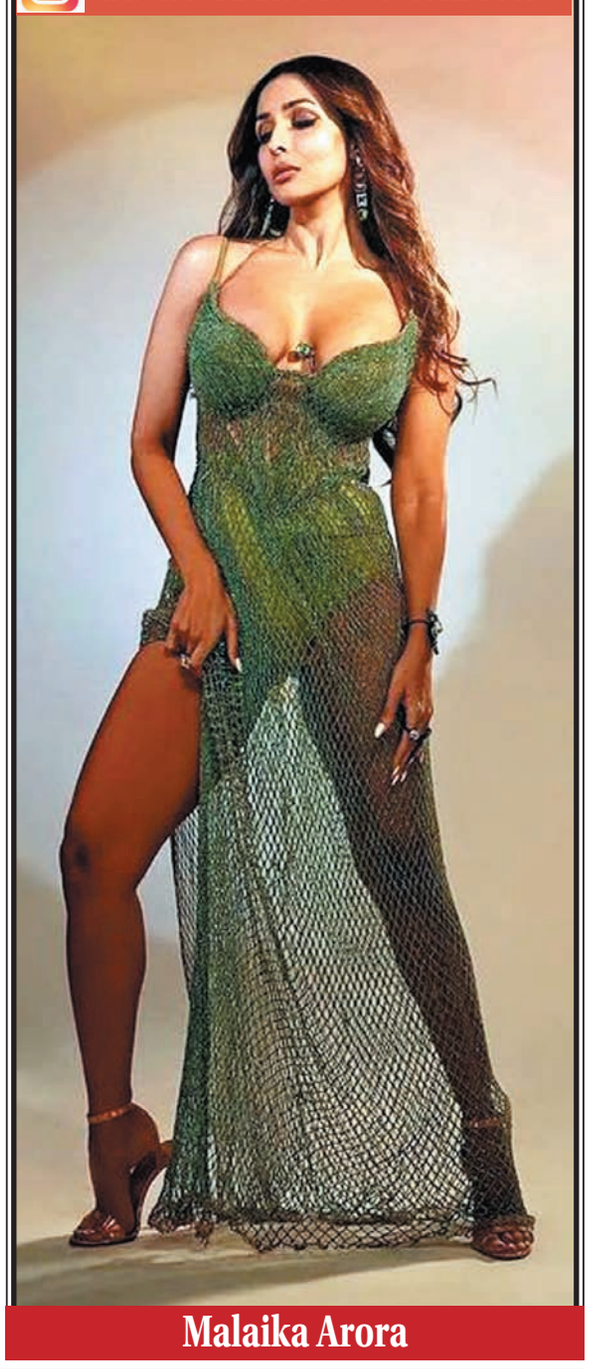
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Taapsee Pannu opened up on her first production venture, 'Blurr' in which she is seen in a double role. The actress got candid about why she decided to produce the film and how challenging it was to play twin sisters in the film.

Taapsee said: "'Blurr' taps into different sensibilities of an individual and that is purely why I decided to produce it as my first film. Donning the producer's hat has been a spectacular experience. Apart from acting, I wanted to be creatively involved in production, conception and various aspects of filmmaking which are seldom glamorised." "Essaying the character of a woman pushed to the brink of mental endurance due to her sister's death was vulnerable, raw, and clawing," she added. The two-minute-thirty-three-seconds trailer starts with the suicide of a girl, Gautami, who is Gayatri's twin sister (played by Taapsee). Though the forensic reports proves that she has committed suicide but Gayatri is not sure about it and she believes that her sister cannot commit suicide. She starts finding out the mystery behind her death and in the meantime, her eyesight also starts becoming weak and the doctor suggests she should operate on them. Furthermore, in her investigation she came to know about many truths and secrets related to her sister. However, in the process she goes through a lot and the trailer ends with Gayatri losing her eyesight completely.

Director Ajay Bahl added: "'Blurr' discovers angularities and depths of the human mind and the dark alleys it can traverse through.'Blurr' throws you into the murky waters where human needs intermingle with extreme delusional anger. The narrative and the plot of the film gave me a lot of different aspects to explore while directing." "With spectacular twists and character portrayal, 'Blurr' will satiate your craving for a mind-bending thriller," he shared.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Malaika Arora

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