

absolute india

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PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHPAL AND NEW DELHI

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Amit Shah stresses on equal responsibility of states... "Margot Robbie as the eponymous fashion doll"... India edge closer to victory, despite Zakir's century...



GST COUNCIL RECOMMENDS DECRIMINALISE CERTAIN OFFENCES

It recommended reducing the compounding amount from the present range of 50 per cent to 150 per cent of tax amount to the range of 25 per cent to 100 per cent.

Measures for facilitation of trade also included recommendation on decriminalising certain offences including obstruction or preventing any officer in discharge of his duties; deliberate tempering of material evidence and failure to supply the information.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The GST Council on Saturday recommended decriminalising certain offences and doubled the threshold for launching prosecution from Rs one crore to Rs two crore, except for the offence of issuance of invoices without supply of goods or services or both.

Speaking on the deliberations at the Council's meeting, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that no new taxes have been brought.

The 48th GST Council met under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman via virtual mode in New Delhi on Saturday. The meeting was also attended by Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary besides Finance Ministers of States & UTs (with legislature)



and senior officers of the Ministry of Finance and states/ UTs.

Moreover, the Council has clarified on what constitutes an SUV and the tax applicable for such categories of automobiles. The council clarified that vehicle SUVs with an engine capacity exceeding 1,500 cc and length exceeding 4,000 mm with a ground clearance of 170 mm or above will

attract a 22 per cent compensation cess.

It was also clarified that goods falling in the lower rate category of 5 per cent under schedule I of notification No. 1/2017-CTR imported for petroleum operations will attract a lower rate of 5 per cent and the rate of 12 per cent shall be applicable only if the general rate is more than 12 per cent.

As a relief measure, the Council decided to regularise the intervening period starting from the date of issuance of Circular (3.08.2022) in respect of GST on 'husk of pulses including chilka and concentrates including chuni/churi, khandal' on 'as is basis' on account of genuine doubts.

It also said that no GST is payable where the residential dwelling is rented to a registered person if it is rented in his/her personal capacity for use as his/her own residence and on his own account and not on account of his business.

BARS, PUBS ALL SET FOR GRAND FINALE AS FOOTBALL FEVER HITS A CRESCENDO

Messi or Mbappe?

Football fever is all set to hit a crescendo on Sunday when people from across the globe will have their eyes glued to their television screens to see whether Messi has the last hurrah, or Kylian Mbappe spoils his swan song in World Cup by helping France become only the second country after Brazil to defend the coveted title.

Durga Chakravarty | New Delhi

The big screens are set, the chairs are aligned and the beers are ready to flow as bars and pubs in Delhi-NCR and Mumbai gear up for the mother of clashes when Lionel Messi's Argentina take on defending champions France in the final of the FIFA World Cup in Doha on Sunday night.

Celebrities from different corners of the world have already reached Doha to be a part of history. The night will also see Shah Rukh Khan and Nora Fatehi participate in the closing ceremony.

The pubs in India are also decked up to make the most of the memorable night, as they prepare to welcome football fanatics with great fervour and stadium-like atmosphere.

Rahul Yadav and his team from Kasa Kai Mumbai, an



event management company, are putting up big screens in Mumbai, Delhi, Gurugram, Kolkata, Chandigarh and Hyderabad, among many other places.

In Mumbai, they have put up screens at bars and pubs in as many as eight places, including at Kamala Mills, Andheri East, Khar and Borivali.

In Gurugram, the newly-launched Orale Skybar has made special arrangements for football fans.

Hemnat Nautiya, owner of

Orale Skybar, told reporter: "We are screening the match live on giant screens. We are also encouraging people to come wearing the jersey of their favourite team. The first drink will be on the house."

Prathi Tandon, Owner of Effingut, a BrewPub, agrees that "sports brings everyone together to celebrate and enjoy".

From beer on tap to '2+1' offers for three whiskey brands, BrewPub is all set to make the final special for its patrons.

Ferozepur first district in Punjab to clean legacy waste



Team Absolute | Chandigarh

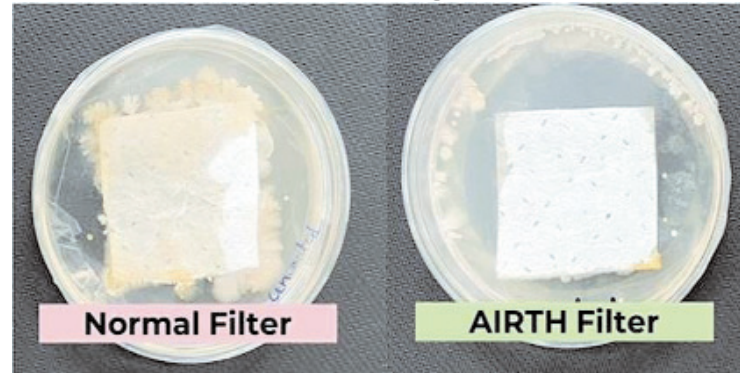
Punjab Local Government Minister Inderbir Singh Nijjar on Saturday said Ferozepur has become the first district to clean all its legacy waste by disposing 7,911 metric tons

(MTs). Nijjar said Ferozepur comprising eight urban local bodies including Ferozepur, Zira, Guruharsai, Talwandi Bhai, Mallanwala, Mudki, Makhu and Mamdot have cleared all its waste. The minister said now daily waste is being recycled. He said door-

to-door segregation is around 85 per cent, while the remaining mixed waste is segregated daily and disposed of simultaneously. Now efforts are being made to get 100 per cent door-to-door waste segregation, he said.

IISc research team develops germ-destroying air filters

Resuspension of these germs can infect people in the vicinity. The novel antimicrobial air filters were tested at the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories and were found to deactivate SARS-CoV-2 (delta variant) with an efficiency of 99.24 per cent. This technology was transferred to AiRTH, a startup that is replacing the existing germ-growing air filters with germ-destroying air filters for commercialisation, said the Ministry of Science and Technology on Saturday.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Newly-developed air filter supported by special grants from Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) can deactivate the germs, 'self-cleaning' them out of the system, using ingredients commonly found in green tea.

A research team led by Suryasarathi Bose and Kaushik Chatterjee at the

Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, developed germ-destroying air filters that can inactivate germs using ingredients like polyphenols and polycationic polymers commonly found in green tea. These 'green' ingredients rupture the microbes through site-specific binding.

borne contaminants leading to respiratory diseases, adversely affecting physical health as well as mental health, according to a report by University of Chicago.

The research was supported by special grants from SERB during the challenging Covid-19 pandemic and SERB-Technology Translation Awards (SERB-TETRA) funds and a patent has been filed on this.

Over continuous usage, the existing air filters become a breeding ground for captured germs. The growth of these germs clog the pores of the filter, reducing the life of the filters.

As this innovation holds promise to develop antimicrobial filters that can prevent epidemics caused by air-borne pathogens, a patent was granted in 2022. These novel antimicrobial filters in our ACs, central ducts and air purifiers can play a crucial role in our fight against air pollution and mitigate the spread of air-borne pathogens like coronaviruses.

YASH OBLIGES 700 FANS WITH INDIVIDUAL SELFIES

Patience Personified



Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Pan-India super star Yash who proved his mettle at the box office is also known for his love and affection for fans. Recently, he proved yet again that he's a sovereign when it comes to winning hearts. At an event, Yash clicked selfies/pictures with more than 700 fans present. The organisers of the event suggested that it may be a good idea to shoot group pictures, but the star disagreed and opted to click a picture with each one of the fans present in the event. This warm yet huge gesture took another one hour for the event to actually get over. The kind and warm act of Yash was hugely appreciated by his fans in Bangalore who came from far off distances to catch a glimpse of him.

The event speaks volumes about Yash who doesn't take his stardom for granted. The actor who comes from humble background, is a self-made star who despite the massive stardom, chooses to remain grounded.

5 ways to stay safe from financial frauds during year-end sales

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The year-end is just around the corner, and with that, comes the plethora of sales from fashion houses and e-commerce websites trying to make our holiday season ready. The year-end clearance sales and discounts and customers looking to indulge in some retail therapy give scammers ample avenues to carry out their fraudulent activities. Here are five tips from Truecaller on how to stay protected against financial fraud during the year-end sales:

Be vigilant about suspicious logins and messages

Most shopping and e-commerce websites ask their users to create an account to access their collection or place orders. When creating an account, users have to provide an e-mail address or a phone number on which they receive updates on the latest offers, the orders they have placed, and exciting deals they can avail of.

Only browse secure and authorised websites

One of the most common tactics being used by scammers to steal information is by providing a link to a website that looks similar to a secure and authorised website, with slight modifications that are unnoticeable at first glance.



Never share OTPs with others

To combat scammers from using the payment information of others, banks all over India have initiated a two-factor authentication model. While this has helped combat scams and misuse of financial information to a certain extent, it can still be exploited if a user shares their OTP with others. It is incredibly important to never share your One-time password with anyone and only use it if you are in the process of placing an order, and on a trusted website or app.

Don't save your payment details on e-commerce websites for future use

While you may trust certain commonly used websites or platforms, it is always advised to never save your payment details, even if you plan to purchase products from them in the future. This is because if a site is compromised

in any way, saved cards and payment information can easily be exploited and accessed by those trying to gain access to mass information. Only pick up calls from verified e-commerce businesses or trusted numbers

Phone scams have been some of the most common tactics that scammers often employ because of the lack of security systems with regard to telephonic conversations. It is also important to make sure that you do not pick up calls from foreign registered numbers or suspicious-looking numbers like the ones that start with digits other than 8 or 9.

Staying safe when shopping online is important for your own personal and financial safety, and by adopting these practices, you can stay away from those who are trying to compromise millions of people every year.

Gel with QR code can accurately detect Covid in hundreds of people at one go

- This test was performed on approximately 500 patients, because they had Covid-like symptoms or because they were asymptomatic but had been in close contact of a positive case.
- They had to rub their hands with the gel and then smell them after three seconds. The result was considered negative if they recognized a citrus fruit, and positive if they couldn't smell the gel or could not detect a citrus aroma.
- Once this had been done, the participants in the study had to fill in a short questionnaire with the result of the smell test and other data such as age, gender and the presence or absence of different symptoms.
- Once the participants had their answers given, they were given a PCR test to check the result.

LONDON | Agencies

Researchers have developed a hydroalcoholic gel with a QR code that enables people to access a test that assesses their ability to identify the smell of the product and eight symptoms of Covid, instantly evaluating the risk of having the deadly respiratory disease.

The team from Spain's Universitat Rovira i Virgili, in conjunction with the Pere Virgili Health Research Institute, developed this method, which is based on artificial intelligence (AI) techniques.

The AI model instantly determines which people have a low, medium or high risk of having the disease at that moment with a sensitivity of 97 per cent. The first prototype of this device has been installed at the entrance to the Sant Joan University Hospital in Reus and the research results were published in the journal Scientific Reports.

Citrus fruits and apples are two of the first aromas that people with the SARS-CoV-2 virus stop detecting. Also, a high temperature, a headache, a cough, discomfort and a sore throat are all signs of the coronavirus but also of a cold or flu. The AI system that has been patented is based on a hydroalcoholic gel to which a particular concentration of a citrus essence has been added.

The data ensured almost total sensitivity (97 per cent), which makes it useful as a method for screening the population.



Thomas Sowell

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AFTER PUNJAB, IT'S NOW THE TURN OF 'UDTA DELHI'

THE INVESTIGATION

Easily available at various hotspots, which include JJ clusters and parks, at prices ranging from Rs 100 to Rs 5,000, anyone can get ganja in the quantities that they require. Correspondent and team visited several places across the city, including JJ clusters and found that these drugs and illicit liquor are sold openly in these colonies without any fear of authorities.

- On December 5, Delhi Police said that they have arrested two drug peddlers and recovered over 100 kgs of cannabis from their possession. On interrogation of the accused, it was revealed that the said consignment was procured from Tripura, a North East state.
- On December 12, with the arrest of three people, the Delhi Police claimed to have busted an interstate drug syndicate involved in supplying narcotics contrabands in Delhi and its peripherals. A total of 22,400 kg of cannabis was recovered from them.
- In March this year, an interstate drug peddler was nabbed with 109.7 kg ganja worth Rs 1.02 crore packed in 51 small cartoons in a vehicle which was intercepted by the police near Mahipalpur in South Delhi.



Shekhar Singh | New Delhi

Cannabis or ganja, 'babaji ki booti' or 'maal' (what peddlers call it) has spread its roots across the national capital, which is evident as it is being openly sold at some places across the city. The team first visited the JJ cluster built on both sides of the railway lines near Jal Vihar area in Lajpat Nagar. The team asked about the 'maal' from one of the men sitting outside the one of the shanties, who then said to go in third alley, and ask for 'Anna'. The team then reached the third alley and after entering it

just left, and the second single room shanty was Anna's 'office', where he was sitting on a chair watching a movie on TV. The correspondent asked him about the cannabis to which he said you can buy Rs 100, 500 and Rs 1,000 packets from here. He kept the cannabis rolled in newspapers and all the rooms were filled with those packets. He calls it his 'office'. The team then visited JJ cluster in Chattarpur near 100 ft road where narrow lanes led to a woman who was sitting on a cot and used to openly sell ganja and illicit liquor. The ganja is sold in packets starting from Rs 100 per pack whereas alcohol quarter is sold for Rs 50. "We don't have any other business to do. This is easy earning and once a buyer is here, he will come again to buy the stuff," said the woman on anonymity, adding that most of the people who come to buy drugs are youngsters. She also said that whenever there is a shortage of ganja, other peddlers in the area specifically reduce quantity and sell drugs by mixing 'Avil' tablet and other chemicals. The team then visited Neb Sarai, Freedom Fighter Colony, gate no-4, where the correspondent spoke to people who pointed out towards a general store which sells these drugs. Posing as a buyer, the correspondent asked the shop owner to give a packet of ganja. The shopkeeper pointed towards a street near his shop and asked to wait there. As the peddler returned, he asked what would we like to buy - ganja or heroin, adding: "Heroin would cost you Rs 300 for 1 gram and a small packet of ganja would cost Rs 100 while a quarter of illicit liquor is sold for Rs 100." Madan Giri, Subhash Nagar, RK Puram, INA, Khirki Extension, Malviya Nagar, Munirka and JJ clusters in Jahangirpuri, Dwarka, Uttam Nagar and Rohini are also the hotspots for drug peddlers and distributors. Most peddlers and distributors also operate in areas close to North Campus such as Majnu Ka Tila, Kashmir Gate, Indra Vikas opposite Nirankari colony and Shastri Park.

Bilkis Bano case

SC dismisses review against May judgment on remission policy



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court has dismissed a review petition filed by Bilkis Bano challenging the apex court's May 13 judgment, which held that remission of accused, convicted for gangrape and multiple murders, should be considered as per the policy existing at the time of conviction in Gujarat, where the crime was committed. A bench comprising

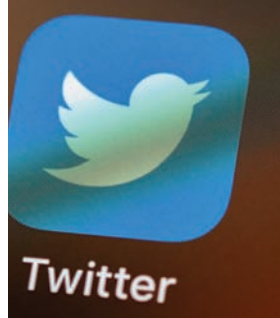
Justices Ajay Rastogi and Vikram Nath dismissed the review petition filed by Bano through advocate Shobha Gupta. In the review petition, Bano said that Maharashtra's remission policy should be applied in the present case, instead of the 1992 remission policy of Gujarat since the trial had happened in Maharashtra. The top court's judgment came on a petition filed by

one of the convicts, Radheshyam Bhagwandas Shah seeking direction to Gujarat to consider his application for premature release under the 1992 policy, which was existing at the time of his conviction. Bano has also filed a separate petition against the release of 11 men convicted of gang raping her in the 2002 Gujarat riots, and also accused of multiple murders, saying the release of all the

Twitter suspends Koo's user query account

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Elon Musk-owned Twitter has suspended the official user queries account of the homegrown microblogging platform Koo, @kooeminence, which now shows that the account has been suspended, and its tweets are no longer visible. Reacting to the ban, the co-founder and CEO of Koo, Aprameya Radhakrishna, tweeted: "One of the Koo handles on Twitter just got banned. For what? Because we compete with Twitter? So? Mastodon also got blocked today. How is this free speech and what world are we living in?" Additionally, Koo co-founder Mayank Bidawatka



took to Twitter to express the loss of the account, emphasizing that the platform is the best alternative to Twitter. "I've said this before. We run Koo and the journalists should just migrate. Migrate tools are available. Koo is the best alternative to Twitter. This place is what it is because of you and millions

of other users like us. Let's not fuel this guy's ego," he tweeted. This comes after Musk recently suspended the accounts of several prominent journalists who had been covering him, including those from the Washington Post, the New York Times, Mashable, and CNN, without warning. However, Musk lifted the suspension of some journalists on the micro-blogging site after running a poll on the platform, asking if he should "Unsuspend accounts who doxxed my exact location in real-time". Koo has over 50 million downloads and is actively leveraged by over 7,500 eminent personalities across fields.

INDIA IS READY IF ANYONE CASTS EVIL EYE IN IT: DEFENCE MINISTER

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday commended the Indian Army for showing unmatched bravery during the Galwan and Tawang incidents.



Addressing the 95th Annual Convention of Federation of Indian Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in New Delhi, Singh asserted that India has no intention to capture the land of other countries, but will always be ready if anyone tries to cast an evil eye. India aims to become a superpower which works for the welfare of the world, he said. He stated that India is touching newer heights of success and has entered the category of 'fabulous five' from 'fragile five', coined by investment firm Morgan Stanley, in 2014. "India is now among the top five economies in real-time". It took us 31 years from 1991 to become a three trillion USD economy. I am confident that the next three trillion dollars are going to be added in the next seven years," he said.

J&K bureaucrats, cops, retd judges, politicians lose excess security cover

Jammu | Agencies

In a significant development, authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have withdrawn excess security from politicians, retired judges and both serving/retired IAS, IPS and J&K cadre police and civil officers. The withdrawal was necessitated after a security audit was held during which it was pointed out that excess security needed to be withdrawn based on categorisation of protected persons, top sources said. They said that the exercise had to be undertaken because those falling in 'Y' security category had been given security cover of 'Z' category and those of 'Z' category were enjoying the cover of 'Z Plus' category. "This disparity has now been removed," the top sources told reporter. In addition to the with-



drawal of personal security officers (PSOs) of 20 politicians, two excess PSOs of former DGP S.P. Vaid and three of former ADGP Munir Ahmad Khan have also been withdrawn. SPOs of retired police officers, who were holding excess PSOs, have now been recalled by

the security headquarters. The retired IGP's are Mubarak Ahmad Ganie, Rouf-ul-Hassan, A.S. Bali, Mohammad Amin Anjum, Ghulam Hassan Bhat, Mohammad Amin Shah, Jagjeet Kumar, Javid Ahmad Makhdoomi and Shamas Ahmad Khan.

'THOSE WHO VOTED AGAINST BJP BETRAYED NATION': GUJARAT MINISTER

Palanpur: Gujarat MoS Cooperative, Salt industry, Printing and Small Scale Industry Jagdish Vishwakarma on Saturday said that people who voted against the BJP in Vadgam constituency in the state Assembly polls "have betrayed the nation".



Congress leader Jignesh Mevani got elected from Vadgam for the second consecutive time. Addressing people at his native village Varnawada, which falls in the Vadgam constituency, the minister said: "I thank you for the warm welcome, but all those who have voted against the BJP have betrayed the nation. I would have been more pleased if instead of this warm welcome today, you would have voted for the party." "The villagers should understand that development is possible only if the MLA is from the ruling party," he claimed. He even reminded that all villages falling under the Vadgam taluka are connected with good roads, and as far as filling water in the Karmavat lake is concerned, it is a big project. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel is monitoring the project and it is likely to be completed soon, he said.

Shanghai schools to go online as Covid cases soar in China

Beijing | Agencies

China's largest city, Shanghai, has ordered most of its schools to conduct classes online as Covid cases soar, according to a media report. Nurseries and childcare centres will also shut from Monday, according to Shanghai's education bureau, BBC reported. Restrictions were eased by Chinese authorities earlier this month following a wave of protests targeting China's zero-Covid strategy. But the easing of strict lockdown measures has led to growing concerns over the spread of Covid in China, BBC reported. Significant changes in the country's Covid testing and reporting systems have made it difficult to know just how widespread the virus has become. But hospitals and medical facilities have come under increasing strain, with temporary health centres and intensive care facilities being set up across the country, BBC reported. In Shanghai, it has been reported that an extra 230,000 hospital beds have been made available. Some schools in the city have already stopped in-person classes



because teachers and staff are ill. In a statement posted on Chinese social media site WeChat on Saturday, Shanghai's education bureau announced that most year groups in primary and secondary schools would move to online learning from Monday. Students and children who do not have alternative childcare arrangements can apply to attend school. The statement said the measures were being put in place in order to protect the health of teachers and students in line with current coronavirus prevention measures.

RUSSIA REPORTS 7,531 NEW COVID-19 CASES

Moscow: Russia has registered 7,531 new Covid-19 cases in the past 24 hours, bringing the nationwide tally to 21,708,852, said the official monitoring and response centre on Saturday. The centre added the nationwide death toll increased by 58 to 392,949, and the number of recoveries grew by 7,269 to 21,103,330, Xinhua news agency reported. Meanwhile, Moscow reported 1,396 new cases, taking its total to 3,280,301. LOS ANGELES HOSPITAL BEDS AT LOWEST AVAILABILITY SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN Los Angeles: The number of available Los Angeles County hospital beds has fallen to its lowest level in the pandemic, according to LA County Public Health Department. Based on data collected from 90 hospitals, there were 242 adult beds available countywide as of Monday, LA County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer told reporters on Thursday, Xinhua news agency reported. The result shows not only the enduring threat of Covid-19 and the reemergence of flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), but also the needs of a populace that put off non-emergency care, the news agency reported, citing the Los Angeles Times. Surveillance data show the coronavirus concentration in LA County wastewater exceeded the peak of the summer Omicron wave during the latest week ending December 3.

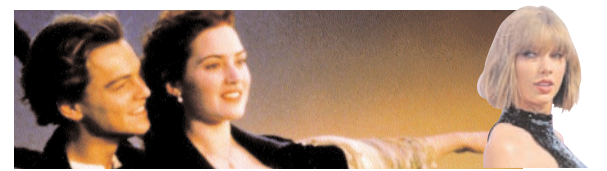
Governor's rule imposed in Mizoram tribal autonomous body



Aizawl | Agencies

After 56-months of instability, Governor's rule has been promulgated in the politically important Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), one of the three tribal autonomous constitutional bodies in Mizoram, officials said here on Saturday. The Governor's rule was imposed by the state government for 6 months and the Deputy Commissioner of Lawngtlai district has been appointed as caretaker on behalf of the Governor to exercise such functions or powers vested in or exercisable by the CADC with immediate effect. Officials said that the CADC's Chief Executive Member (CEM) Buddha Lila Chakma resigned from his post earlier and the Mizoram governor Hari Babu Kambhampati accepted his resignation on November 17 and then Rasik Mohan Chakma staked claim to be the CEM of the CADC. "The Governor is of the firm opinion that this constant change of administration due to political maneuvering is extremely damaging for the welfare of the CADC and its people, and is certainly not what is intended by the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which envisions the effective administration of the tribal areas," said a notification issued on Friday night. It said that a Commission, constituted earlier, has submitted its report recently, stating that in the absence of recruitment rules, a number of irregular activities have occurred in the CADC without following proper procedures. Tribal leaders criticised the state government's decision.





When one woman is attacked, it is an attack on us all:

Jessica Chastain

Mumbai | Agencies

Actress Jessica Chastain thinks people prefer to talk to her about the war in the Ukraine instead of women's rights in Iran as the war-ravaged country contains "mostly white people."

Insisting she is "fiercely protective" of the fight for female rights, the actress said she knows her comments may be controversial, reports.

"I'm going to say something controversial right now, and I've had a margarita, so no one's stopping me," said Chastain, who travelled to Ukraine this year where she met its President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and who wore a T-shirt with "Mahsa Amini" written on it during a recent press tour in memory of the late Iranian woman also known as Jina Amini.

"I've done a lot of press recently, and a lot of people want to talk about Ukraine. But when I bring up Iran, no one wants to talk about that. I think because it's a women-led revolution, and I think because Ukraine is mostly white people."

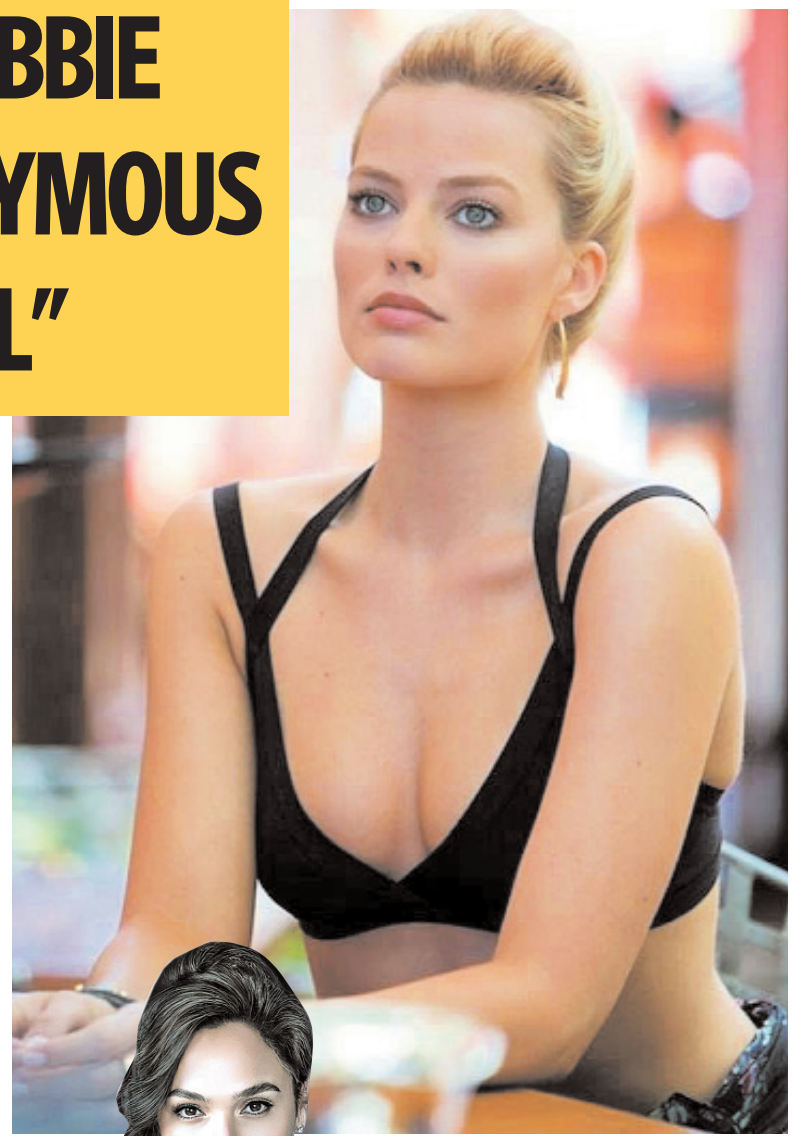
"I'm fiercely protective of women. To me it is my great fight. I use my job to try to celebrate women, but also celebrate women as human beings. Which means, yes, I can play characters that are flawed and do terrible things sometimes. It's like my job is to constantly remind society that women are human beings." Chastain has tweeted in support of demonstrators for women's rights in the nation in the wake of the tragedy, "I stand with the women of Iran and will amplify their voices from afar. When one woman is attacked, it is an attack on us all."



"MARGOT ROBBIE AS THE EPONYMOUS FASHION DOLL"

Los Angeles | Agencies

Warner Bros. has released the official trailer for Greta Gerwig's 'Barbie', starring Margot Robbie as the eponymous fashion doll, reports. Plot details have been kept tightly under wraps, but the film does find Barbie and Ken stuck in the real world, where the former discovers the challenges of being a live woman. Robbie stars opposite Ryan Gosling, who plays Barbie's longtime boy-toy Ken, adds reports. Along with Robbie and Gosling, the star-studded cast includes Will Ferrell, Emma Mackey, Connor Swindells, Nicola Coughlan, Emerald Fennell, Kate McKinnon, Michael Cera, Simu Liu, America Ferrera, Ncuti Gatwa, Issa Rae, Kingsley Ben-Adir, Rhea Perlman, Sharon Rooney, Scott Evans, Ana Cruz Kayne, Ritu Arya and Jamie Demetriou. Exclusively reported that the transgender actress Hari Nef ('And Just Like That', 'You') and 'Tick, Tick... Boom!' star Alexandra Shipp also have supporting roles in the film. Back in 2019, Robbie shared the importance of bringing Barbie to life on screen. "I think it's a great opportunity to put some positivity out in the world and a chance to be aspirational for younger kids," she said.



MACHINE GUN KELLY GOT NEW 'BEST FRIENDS'

- LEECHES ON HIS BELLY BUTTON!

Los Angeles | Agencies

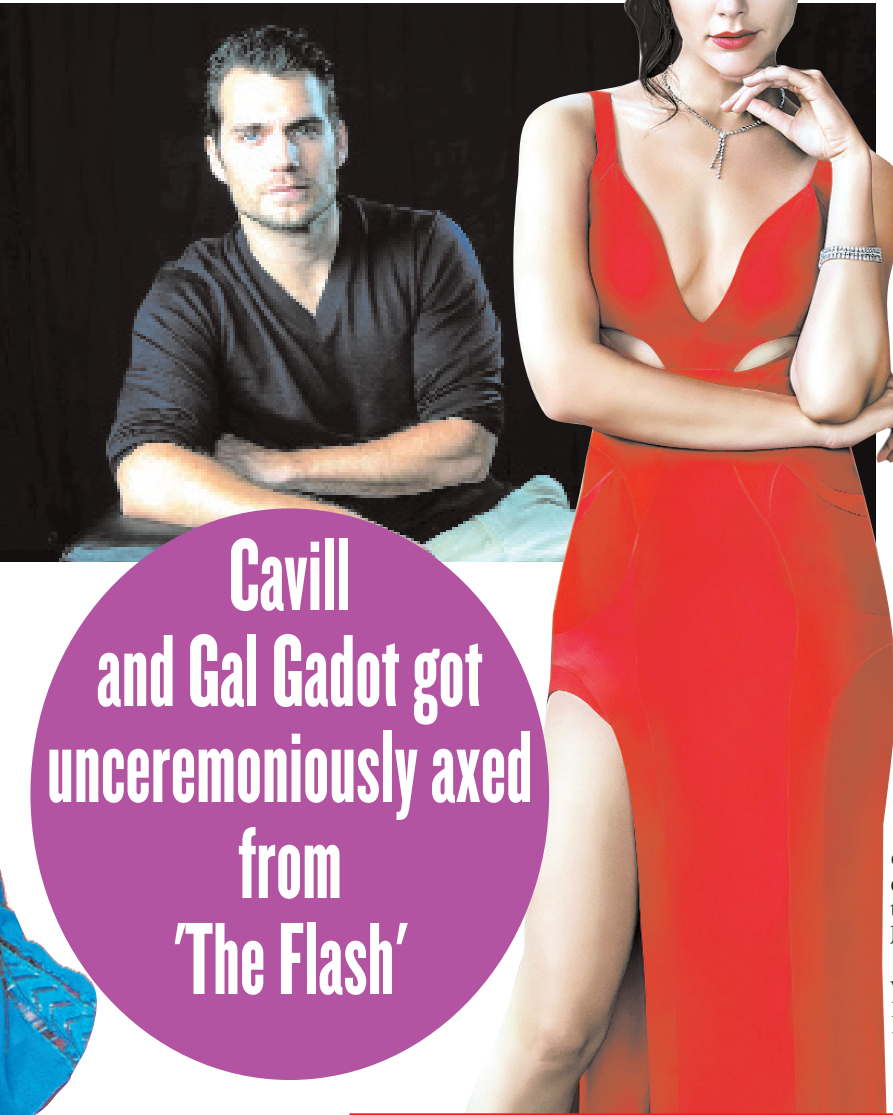
American rapper Machine Gun Kelly has a bizarre approach to wellness. The first-time Grammy Award nominee, 32, shared a short video on his Instagram story of his tatted abs with a puddle of slithering leeches covering up his belly button.

"My best friends," he wrote on the clip. With roots in ancient Egypt, leech therapy on the navel is believed to help to detoxify the liver and digestive system, while improving blood flow, reports.

MGK's fiancée Megan Fox should be pleased to hear it, as the couple has been known to drink each other's blood. "I said yes, and then we drank each other's blood," she wrote with their engagement announcement in January.

"So, I guess to 'drink' each other's blood might mislead people or people are imagining us with goblets and we're like Game of Thrones, drinking each other's blood," she said in April. "It's just a few drops, but yes, we do consume each other's blood on occasion for ritual purposes only."

"I read tarot cards and I'm into astrology and I'm doing all these metaphysical practices and meditations. And I do rituals on new moons and full moons, and all these things. And so, when I do it, it's a passage or it is used for a reason. And it is controlled where it's like, 'Let's shed a few drops of blood and each drink it,'" Fox explained.



Cavill and Gal Gadot got unceremoniously axed from 'The Flash'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actors Henry Cavill and Gal Gadot have been unceremoniously axed from upcoming film 'The Flash'. The two stars had been tipped to appear in next year's controversial movie - but have now reportedly been left on the cutting room floor.

British star Henry was expected to reprise his role as Superman, aka Clark Kent, in the upcoming superhero movie with the cameo due to be his final appearance in the role having first donned his cape back in 2013.

But reports claims that both cameos have been cut from 'The Flash' movie - which is expected to hit cinema in June next year.

According to the reports: "Cavill also shot a cameo in 'The Flash', one of four DC movies set to release in 2023, but sources say that cameo, along with that of Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, is now being cut given that the studio chose to not go forward with director Patty Jenkins' version of 'Wonder Woman 3'."

Fans of the DC universe have reacted with fury over news that Henry has been axed as Superman.

Gal Gadot enjoyed two blockbuster outings as Wonder Woman and was expected to reprise her role in a third film that had been due to be directed by Patty Jenkins, who directed the first two.

'The Flash' has been steeped in controversy in recent months after lead star Ezra Miller has been arrested numerous times and has faced accusations of harassment. However, the film is expected to continue being released in 2023.

Donald Glover to produce 'Spider-Man' film on villain Hypno-Hustle

Los Angeles | Agencies

Donald Glover is set to join Sony Pictures' universe of Marvel characters, as the star and producer of a movie based on the Spider-Man villain the Hypno-Hustler.

The project is in its earliest stages, with no script or director, but Myles Murphy (the son of Eddie Murphy) is attached to write the screenplay, reports.

The Hypno-Hustler, who first appeared in Marvel comics in 1978, is one of Spider-Man's more obscure villains, with the ability to hypnotise his victims with his guitar.

By day, he's known as Antoine Desloin, lead singer of a band called the Mercy Killers - they use their music to rob their audiences.



As is the case with all of Sony's live-action Marvel movies, Spider-Man himself almost certainly won't be a part of the project. But Glover's involvement is noteworthy for Spidey fans, as the actor-musician has been a fan-favourite to play the web-slinger ever since a 2010 article by writer Marc Bernardin that pointed out there is no reason why Spider-Man has to be white.

Glover eventually appeared in 2017's 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' as Aaron Davis, the uncle of Miles Morales - the Black teenager introduced in Marvel comics in 2011 who eventually becomes Spider-Man. Glover also voiced Miles in the 2015 Disney XD series 'Ultimate Spider-Man'. Glover will next appear opposite Maya Erskine in the Amazon Prime Video series 'Mr. and Mrs. Smith', which he co-created and executive producer.

Tarantino confirms Adam Sandler was top choice for 'Inglourious Basterds'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Filmmaker Quentin Tarantino confirmed a long-standing rumour regarding Adam Sandler and 'Inglourious Basterds' during his latest appearance on Bill Maher's 'Club Random' podcast. Joined by host Maher and co-interviewee Judd Apatow, Tarantino finally went on record saying he wrote the role of Sergeant Donny 'The Bear Jew' Donowitz for Sandler, reports.

"(Judd and I) met each other through Adam Sandler during the time that I did 'Little Nicky,'" said Tarantino, referring to his cameo in Sandler's 2000 comedy.

"I was like hanging out with that crew for a while. We went to a bunch of different things together. But also 'Freaks and Geeks' had just went off the air or it was on its way to go off the air and I had missed it, but that whole 'Happy Madison' crowd was like crazy for it." "I feel bad because when I did 'Funny People' with Sandler, I wasn't aware that that was the exact time you were trying to use him for 'Inglourious Basterds,'" Apatow cut in. "Obviously he should've done yours because of the whole thing of it," Tarantino replied. "I mean, you start with the fucking video cassette of you guys as kids. But yeah, I wrote the Bear Jew for Adam Sandler." "When I was doing 'Little Nicky', he's telling me like, 'Oh man, I get to fucking beat up Nazis with a bat? Fucking script! Fucking awesome! I can't fucking wait! I can't fucking wait!' He was like telling every Jewish guy, 'I'm going to fucking play this guy who beats up Nazis with a fucking bat.'"



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Anais Gallagher

CHITRANGDA BEGINS SHOOTING FOR HER INDO-ITALIAN FILM

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Chitrangda Singh, who is known for films like 'Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi', 'Yeh Saali Zindagi', 'Baazaar' and 'Modern Love Mumbai', is playing the lead role in Goutam Ghose's next Indo-Italian yet-to-be-titled film, which

also stars Italian actor Marco Leonardi, known for his work in the acclaimed movie 'Cinema Paradiso'.

The film is being made in English, Hindi, and partly in Italian with its story revolving around issues of human displacement, through the story of a couple and their child. The first look of the film has been released and it shows the actress in a de-glam look. Donning a plain orange saree and minimalist make-up, Chitra looks sharp and beautiful.

The official statement from the production house Life Journey Films Production LLP stated, "Chitrangda is that rare combination of beauty with talent. She has proved her mettle as an actress. We are thrilled to work with her. The role is quite challenging but we are confident that Chitrangda will bring a unique singularity to the role."

The film's shooting had started back in 2019 but had a major setback due to the pandemic. The team has resumed work now and a major portion of the shoot is scheduled for Mumbai and Jabalpur.

The film's script has been written by Goutam Ghose and Jagannath Guha, along with two Italian scriptwriters Amedeo Paganini and Sergio Scapagnini.

SALMAN KHAN LAUGHS ABOUT GETTING 'DROPPED' BY GIRLS



Team Absolute | Mumbai

In the latest episode of 'Bigg Boss 16', Bollywood superstar talked about getting "dropped" by girls along with guests Vicky Kaushal and Kiara Advani in the show. "Kiara and Vicky came on the sets of 'Bigg Boss 16' to promote their film 'Govinda Naam Mera' on the show. Vicky asked Salman Khan: "Did any girl use any pick-up line on you? And if yes, what's the worst pick-up line you have heard?" Salman replied jokingly as he laughed: "Pick up ka toh pata nahi lekin ladki ne drop zaroor kiya hai mujhe." He then added: "Well, to be honest, I don't remember any such pick up line." Directed by Shashank Khaitan, Govinda Naam Mera also stars Bhumi Pednekar and Renuka Shahane in lead roles. The film is a murder mystery and it landed online on Disney+ Hotstar on December 16.

Salman will next be seen in 'Tiger 3' and 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan'.

Deepika Padukone getting trolled for a song is misogyny: Ramya

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Kannada popular actress and former MP Ramya aka Divya Spandana has come out in support of Deepika Padukone after 'Besharam Rang', a song from the latter's upcoming movie 'Pathaan', sparked a controversy. The Hindutva activists across the country have raised objections to the song and stated that the attire of actors encourages love jihad. Ramya, a lead actress who is making a comeback to the Kannada film industry after a long gap, has blamed misogyny for Deepika being trolled for clothes.

"Samantha trolled for her divorce. Sai Pallavi for her opinion, Rashmika for her separation, Deepika for her clothes and many, many other women for pretty much 'EVERYTHING'. Freedom of choice is our basic right. Women are embodiment of Maa Durga- misogyny is as evil we must fight," Ramya stated on her social media account.

Apart from producing Kannada movie 'Swathi Muttina Male Haniye', she will also be playing a prominent role in it. Chetan Ahimsa, a Kannada actor and activist, had called opposition to 'Besharam Rang' song as trivial. On the other hand, Sri Rama Sena founder Pramod Muthalik had warned that if the song is not withdrawn, they will start nationwide campaign for banning 'Pathaan'.

I had to play Vasya and Vardaan simultaneously: Bhuvan on his character

Team Absolute | Mumbai

YouTube sensation Bhuvan Bam, who is currently gearing up for his streaming series 'Taaza Khabar', has shared that his character of Vasant Gawde was a smooth sail for him as he comes from a Maharashtrian background.

Elaborating on the same, he said: "For Vasya, I had to know how he feels and reacts under different situations. In the show, Vasya goes through a lot of emotions: misery, greed, power, selfishness. It was a difficult shoot because on some days, I had to play Vasya and Vardaan simultaneously. Vasant Gawde is a Maharashtrian boy who sits in a public convenience."



He further mentioned: "I thought that he must be dealing with so many customers on a daily basis who speak different languages. So, he didn't have a particular accent but being a Maharashtrian helped".

The show also sees him doing some action. Sharing about his preparations for the part, he added: "Apart from doing some basic exercise, I had no other option than to let them beat me up! Script just wanted me to scream in pain."

Produced by Rohit Raj and Bhuvan Bam under the banner BB Ki Vines productions, directed by Himank Gaur and written by the duo Hussain & Abbas Dalal, 'Taaza Khabar' will release on Disney+ Hotstar on January 6, 2023.

Disha Pattani makes Tamil debut



Suriya plays double role in the movie

Team Absolute | Chennai

Tamil superstar Suriya is reportedly playing a double role in the upcoming movie tentatively titled 'Suriya 42' because it is the actor's 42nd film. Directed by Siruthai Siva, the fantasy-action movie also features Bollywood actress Disha Pattani in a leading role.

The first schedule of the shoot was completed in Goa and the crew has begun shooting in Chennai. Thereafter, they will move across Tamil Nadu. The shoot is on at a brisk pace and the movie is likely to be released also in the 3D format.

According to the sources Suriya is playing a double role -- the two characters he plays live in the present and the past, respectively.

In a statement, Disha Pattani, who is making her debut in the

Tamil film industry, said: "I am super kicked to announce my next with Suriya Sir and Siva sir. It feels great to be a part of such a huge project that has got all the larger-than-life elements for the audience to experience on the big screen."

She added that the character she's playing is "quite unique" and that she was excited about bringing "my never-seen avatar to the audience".

The star cast includes Yogi Babu, Kovai Sarala, Kingsley and Anand Raj. Vetri rolls the camera and the music is by the redoubtable Devi Sri Prasad.

The movie is riding high on anticipation as it is a big-budget movie and a prestigious project for both Suriya and Siruthai Siva. According to sources in the industry, it an action-packed film with dollops of romance thrown in.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Akanksha Sharma