



absolute india

VOL. 10, ISSUE 43, MUMBAI | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

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HAMLEYS WONDERLAND

With Flying Santa, who will speed about the venue on his jolly sleigh and spread holiday cheer, visitors will experience the holiday charm of the city. The event's highlight will be the Hamleys Grand Parade, and kids can meet Hamley & Hattie Bear and the Wonder Friends in the Hamleys Village, two of their favourite cartoon characters.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Wonderland will introduce the popular Peppa Pig at the Peppa Pig Play and a massive Monster Ride for the first time.
- Wonderland will feature a Carnival Game Zone presented by boAt, Hamleys Play Area, Arcade Games.
- A massive and fun Lego Playground and Haunted Circus is absolute thrill in the Wonderland.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

From December 22 to January 1, 2023, India's largest family festival, Hamleys Wonderland TM, presented by Jio will take place at Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai's Jio World Garden. It promises to be a thrilling experience for the whole family with more than 100 events, including rides and entertainment zones, to engage families and create holiday

memories. Jio's philosophy of making life beautiful for every Indian was kept at the forefront of the event's design. The spectacular is held every day, but on the 24 and 25 of December, there is a special Christmas Blast, and on the 31st of December there is a wonderful New Year's Party. Children will be able to enjoy the wonders of Cloud Gaming, Artificial and Virtual Reality, and much more thanks to Jio True 5G. Specially curated stage acts will take place on the Maruti Suzuki Arena Wonder

Stage. A giant Ferris wheel called Ajo Luxe Wonder Eye is a star attraction among other amazing Rides for adults (Carousel and Techno Jump) and kids (Aeroplane, Paddle Boat Pool). Sports For All, a fully integrated digital plus on-ground multi-sport platform, also includes a 200 feet long obstacle race course that challenges players' fitness. Creative Lab, World Food Festival among other amazing entertainment avenues. Topps, the American collectibles company will be hosting the finals of

the TOPPS ATTAX National Championship 2022 on 30th Dec. The other activity hosted by them is 'minute to win it' where participants will undergo 60 second challenges to complete an activity to be gratified. Taking place over the expansive 1.40 lakh sq.ft open space at the Jio World Garden in the heart of Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), is has been instrumental in positioning BKC as the epicentre of cultural events within Mumbai by hosting some of the best, biggest and premium events in the city.

30-FT CHRISTMAS TREE ADDS TO YEAR-END GLITTER OF PARK STREET IN KOLKATA

Kolkata | Agencies

A 30-foot tall Christmas tree has added to the sparkle of Park Street, the year-end festival hub of Kolkata, which will be illuminated till January 3 next year. Next to the Christmas tree, which has a diameter of 18 feet, is a replica of baby Jesus Christ in his crib. There is also an eight-foot tall Santa Claus with glowing snow bears standing next to the dazzling Christmas tree, wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, with an eight-foot tall snowman watching from the other side. The entire area is illuminated with star lights, rice lights, light-up balls and upside-down umbrella lights. The concept has been put together by Apeejay Real Estate and has been concep-



tualised and designed by Priti Paul, director of Apeejay Surrendra Group and promoter of Apeejay Real Estate. The centre was inaugurated by the state minister Sashi Panja on Friday evening. "Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee initiated the Christmas decor in Park Street and Apeejay House's

beautiful Christmas tree adds to the festive cheer. All these efforts have converted Park Street into the focal point of Christmas celebrations. Apeejay has undertaken an excellent initiative, which has become an integral part of the Christmas spirit on Park Street," Panja said.

DGCA APPROVES GARUDA AEROSPACE'S KISAN DRONE

Chennai | Agencies

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued the Type Certification for the Kisan or farmer drones made by Garuda Aerospace, the company said. Garuda Aerospace also said it has an order book of 5,000 drones. According to Garuda Aerospace, the DGC Type Certification is provided on the basis of the quality check of the drones and is issued after a rigorous testing process for the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). The Type certification was introduced by the Indian government in August 2021



under Drone Rules. Following the Type Certification for the GA-AG model, Garuda Kisan Drone - priced at Rs.4.50 lakh - is now eligible for Rs.10 lakh unsecured loan from Agri Infrastructure Fund at five per cent and 50-100 per cent subsidy from the Government of India. "We are powered and blessed with strong demands of manufacturing 5,000 drones in the next five months catering to many opportunities. With receiving approvals we are certain that the necessary utilization of skills with significant sector growth will be seen," Agnishwar Jayaprakash, Founder and CEO, Garuda Aerospace said. The company is also a DGCA authorised Remote Pilot Training Organisation (RPTO) to train people to operate drones.

'RRR' heroes to return; draft of sequel in process

LOS ANGELES | Agencies

'RRR' director S.S. Rajamouli says the sequel to his blockbuster action hit is well underway, reports a website. The filmmaker, who's at this moment in the throes of his campaign for an Oscar, informed that his father and screenwriter Vijayendra Prasad is "seriously working on the story", with his revolutionary heroes set to return for another epic battle with the colonising Brits. The three-hour action-musical epic has been in the news for earning two Golden Globe nominations last week, for original song for the track 'Naatu Naatu' as well as best non-English language film. Rajamouli was also awarded best director by the New York Film Critics Circle. The 'RRR' helmer informed that a sequel wasn't initially on the cards, but has become more



of a prospect as the film has found international success. "When we were making it, we didn't have an idea about [a sequel]," he said. "With the initial success of it, we discussed a little bit and threw out some good ideas, but we didn't feel there was a great idea that was worth pursuing, so we left it at that." Rajamouli continued: "Then, after the international success, when the topic came up again, my cousin [Golden Globe-nominated music composer M. M. Keeravani] -- who is also a part of my core team -- gave

an idea which we felt like, 'Oh my God, this is a great idea. This is the idea that is worth pursuing.' The director, said he asked his father -- who narrates the story to Rajamouli and others, who then write up the first draft -- to "immediately sit on it and expand the idea." "At present, he's seriously working on the story; he's getting it done," Rajamouli said. "But once this script is done is when we will really look into how to make it, when to make it, and how to bring it onto the screen."

Kashmiri woman starts frozen food venture, becomes inspiration for others

Srinagar | Agencies

The youth of Kashmir Valley now believe in self-employment. A good number of females have left a unique mark by breaking all the taboos. A good example of this can be taken from Kashmir's Dr. Rukhsar Saeed, who started her own business after completing her PhD in Food Technology and emerged as the first woman from the Kashmir Valley to start a frozen food venture. Today Dr. Rukhsar is not only earning herself but also providing employment to many other women. This achievement of Dr. Rukhsar is also important because after marriage she nurtured her hobby along with raising her two children. Dr. Rukhsar says that her in-laws helped her in every possible way. This venture called 'Khalis' was started by Dr. Rukhsar in 2019. "Pure Food" offers a wide range of frozen chicken products, ready to fry / bake. Each product is carefully manufactured using quality ingredients, she says. According to Dr. Rukhsar, the idea came to her while raising her two children when she felt the need for food that was easy to prepare and of good quality. "I came up with this name because I wanted to make my food pure, food that is easily available and doesn't compromise on quality and taste," she said. Talking to reporter, Dr. Rukhsar said, "Starting a



small food business at home after obtaining a doctorate in food technology has always been my dream. I was always surprised by the concept and preservation of frozen food. I tried to prepare such frozen snacks in which the freshness and taste could be maintained and with God's grace I succeeded in this. "After a lot of hard work and effort I have made them easily available for the foodies while retaining the freshness and taste without compromising on quality. The aim was to provide easy to cook and ready to eat snacks."

IPL Auction: Sam Curran hadsleepless night

Kochi: After becoming the most expensive buy as well as player in the Indian Premier League (IPL) history, England all-rounder Sam Curran revealed that he didn't sleep much on Thursday night and was a bit excited and nervous about the 2023 mini player-auction of the cash-rich tournament. There was intense bidding between MI, CSK, RR, LSG, and PBKS for Curran, who was Player of the Tournament at the 2022 T20 World Cup in Australia. However, PBKS eventually got the England all-rounder for a whopping Rs 18.50 crore at the auction. "I didn't sleep much last night, was a bit excited, also nervous about how the auction was going to go. But yeah, absolutely overwhelmed and incredibly humbled that I managed to get what I did. I never had any expectations to receive that," Curran said on Star Sports show 'Cricketer Live -- Auction Special'. The all-rounder, who has been part of Punjab's team in the past as well, mentioned that going back to the old team will be fantastic and how his role has changed over the years. "Obviously, going back to where it all started for me in the IPL with Punjab, where I did my debut season four years ago. So, to be going back there seems fantastic and I am looking forward to joining a few English team mates as well," said Curran. "Yeah, I think it will be very different, but like I said, I know the stadium. I know Mohali pretty well, so that obviously is a little bit of an advantage, having some familiar team mates who'll help me. And yeah, I feel confident going into this tournament, where I've come off a fantastic world cup" he concluded.

INDIAN-AMERICAN WINS OKAWA PRIZE FOR INNOVATIVE IMAGING TECHNIQUES

New York | Agencies

An Indian-origin Columbia University professor has been awarded Japan's prestigious Okawa Prize for his seminal work on computer vision and computational imaging. K. Nayar, the T.C. Chang Professor of Computer Science at Columbia Engineering, is being recognized for "the invention of innovative imaging techniques and their widespread use in digital photography and computer vision". "I am grateful to the Okawa Foundation for this honor," said Nayar, who directs Columbia's Computational Imaging and Vision Laboratory. "Over the last three decades, I have had many close and productive collaborations with Japanese researchers and companies. These have enabled my laboratory to translate our results into imaging technologies that are currently being used in consumer devices and factory automation systems, Nayar said in a statement. Hailing from Thiruvananthapuram, Nayar heads the Columbia Vision Laboratory (CAVE), which develops advanced computer vision systems. His work is motivated by applications in the fields of digital imaging, computer vision, computer graphics, robotics, and human-computer interfaces. Nayar's work has changed the way visual information is captured and used by both machines and humans.

WITH 600 VARIETIES OF ORCHIDS

Northeast's first ex-situ orchid conservatory ready in Arunachal

Appreciating the scientists at the centre for their efforts to turn the almost barren complex into a vibrant and green centre, Arunachal CM Pema Khandu said with the new Orchidarium, the centre is working towards conservation and propagation of highly-valued orchid species besides developing orchid-based entrepreneurship.

Itanagar | Agencies

Northeast India's first ex-situ orchid conservatory has been established at Kimin in Arunachal Pradesh's Papum Pare district with financial support from the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology. The 600 sq mt orchid conservatory houses about 600 varieties of orchids. Ex-situ conservation involves maintenance and breeding of endangered plants and animals under partially or wholly controlled conditions in specific areas. It means conservation of selected plants and animals in selected areas outside their natural habitat. Arunachal Chief Minister Pema Khandu inaugurated the state-of-



the-art conservatory at the centre of excellence for bioresources and sustainable development at Kimin. Khandu lauded the centre's efforts in constantly working for conservation and multiplication of

priority orchid species along with its satellite units in villages with a view to promote orchid-based entrepreneurship in the rural areas of Arunachal Pradesh. "With such a world-class facility

at our disposal, our focus should now be on the potential of a revenue-generating model of orchids for the national and international audience. We should emphasise more on scientific research activities to take our state on the path of self-sustainability," Khandu said. The primary aspect of an orchidarium is to conserve as well as propagate economically important varieties of orchids and thus providing economical avenues to the local populace of the state for developing orchid-based entrepreneurial ventures. The centre has also established orchid production units each measuring 80 sq mt in Kimin, Ziro, Deed, Pasighat and Namsai, each with 350 commercial orchids and planting materials and equipment.



RAGHAV CHADHA DARES BJP TO FIGHT DELHI MAYORAL POLLS DIRECTLY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Accusing the BJP of 'fielding' an independent candidate for MCD mayoral election, the Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday dared the saffron party to contest the polls directly.

AAP leader Raghav Chadha said that the BJP must fight the mayoral election themselves, what is the point of hiding behind an independent candidate like a coward?

"The BJP had announced that it will not contest the mayoral election, but is now fielding an independent candidate, who will be supported by all BJP councillors. It does not suit BJP to contest elections from the backdoor..." said Chadha addressing the media.

Rajya Sabha MP Chadha said that the BJP should come forward and contest the election, the people of Delhi will decide who will be the mayor of MCD.

The public threw BJP out of Delhi's political rings in MCD elections, it



neither has any significance in the Delhi assembly nor in the municipal corporation, he said.

"Joblessness is at its peak in Delhi BJP, their leaders now looking for jobs on naukri.com," he said, adding that

after the results for the MCD elections were declared, and because they had lost and not reached the majority mark, the BJP had later announced that they would not fight the election for the post of the Mayor of the MCD.

"But now we are getting to hear from the opposition camp that the BJP has decided to support an Independent candidate for the post of the Mayor. All the BJP candidates are going to support this Independent candidate for the election of the Mayor and basically try and challenge the Aam Aadmi Party candidate. I welcome this decision of the BJP, but at the same time I also want to give them a little bit of advice."

He said, "Everyone and every party has the right to fight an election. Now it is their decision whether they want to come out onto the battlefield and directly face the challenger and fight, or whether they want to enter the battlefield through the backdoor using an Independent candidate."

"But I would like to ask them a question? Why do they fear AAP so much? If they really want to fight the election to the post of the Mayor, then come forward and do it. Why try and fight the election through a backdoor candidate," asked Chadha addressing the media.

NIA conducts raids in terror case related to banned Khalistani outfits

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at 14 different locations in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi in connection with a terror related case.

The case relates to terror activities of chiefs of proscribed terrorist organisations, such as the Khalistan Liberation Force, Babbar Khalsa International and International Sikh Youth Federation, among others.

"Such activities include smuggling of arms, ammunition, explosives and IEDs across international borders for use by operatives of terror outfits and organised criminal gangs operating in various parts of the country for carrying out terrorist acts like explosions, targeted killings etc.," an NIA official



said. This case was registered suo-moto by the NIA on August 20 this year.

During the searches conducted on Saturday, incriminating materials, including digital devices and documents, were seized by the NIA.

Further investigation is underway.

Arrested ISI spy in Bengal trapped by Pakistani agency through porn site: Police

Kolkata | Agencies

Guddu Kumar, a suspected ISI-spy, who was arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) from New Jalpaiguri in north Bengal on December 21, has informed the interrogating sleuths that he was trapped by the Pakistani intelligence agency through a pornographic website.

Kumar, an original resident of Champaran in Bihar, is currently under the custody of STF, whose sleuths are interrogating him to get additional information about his nexus.

State police sources said that during interrogation, Kumar had admitted to the police that during his days in Bihar, despite being married, he was keenly addicted to pornographic websites especially those having explicit Indian content.

"As confessed by him, through one such website, he got acquainted with a woman, who included him in a WhatsApp group reportedly meant for sharing pornographic content and videos. There he got slowly trapped and he shared the details of his identity documents like AADHAR card, Pan card and EPIC Card among others. Subsequently, he was blackmailed and forced into the task of gathering information about the different units of Indian Army in north Bengal and as per the



instructions of the ISI handlers, he came to north Bengal from Champaran," a state police official associated with the investigation process in the matter said. He has also confessed that these ISI handlers opened an online payment portal account through which he was made the payment. His task was mainly to collect information, pictures and videos of the important bases of the Indian Army in north Bengal like Sukna, Jalapahar, Sevak and Bagdogra. He has also admitted that he used to send the information, pictures and video through WhatsApp and net calling was the medium of his interaction with the ISI handlers. On December 21, the STF arrested Kumar based on inputs sent to the state police by a central intelligence agency. To hoodwink the local people of New Jalpaiguri and Siliguri, he worked as the driver of a battery-operated Tuto. He also rented a one-room apartment at a busy locality in Siliguri.

GREATER NOIDA SHO'S WIFE BREAST-FEEDS INFANT FOUND IN BUSHES

Noida: The wife of a Station House Officer in Greater Noida breast-fed a baby found inside bushes in the Knowledge Park area. The infant, wrapped in a cloth, was left in the cold by her parents in bushes near Sharda hospital on December 20.

According to a senior police official, after receiving information about the baby, a police team rushed to the spot. "She was taken to the police station where the SHO's wife, Jyoti Singh, volunteered to breast-feed her. The baby was hungry and cold and we knew that the baby could not be fed anything other than breast milk," said the official. Police said that the baby girl is in stable condition now. Police teams are also scanning CCTV cameras in the area to identify the person who had abandoned her.

Mathura court orders survey of Shahi Idgah from Jan 2

Mathura | Agencies

Mathura district court on Saturday, ordered the survey of the Shahi Idgah mosque, which is said to be built on the birthplace of Lord Krishna, by the Archaeological Survey of India from January 2.

The court passed the order on a lawsuit filed by Vishnu Gupta of the Hindu Sena.

The report will be submitted on January 20.

The lawsuit is one of the many by Hindu outfits demanding the removal of the 17th century Shahi Idgah Masjid from the Katra Keshav Dev temple, claiming that the mosque has been built on the birthplace of Lord Krishna.

The Shahi Idgah mosque was reportedly built on Krishna Jambhoomi on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1669-70.

The civil court in Mathura had earlier dismissed the case saying it cannot be admitted under the Places of Worship



Act of 1991, which maintains the religious status of any place of worship as it was on August 15, 1947.

The only exception to the law was the Ayodhya temple-mosque case involving the 16th century Babri mosque, razed in 1992 by Hindu activists who believed it was built on the ruins of an ancient temple. The Supreme Court in 2019

handed over the mosque site to Hindus for a grand Ram temple and ordered alternative land for a mosque.

The petitioners argued in their suit that as devotees of Lord Krishna, they have a right to approach the court. They say they have the right to worship at the actual birthplace of Krishna.

The Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha had earlier this month given a call for reciting Hanuman Chalisa inside the Shahi Masjid Idgah to mark the anniversary of the Babri Mosque demolition. One of the outfit's leaders was arrested and seven or eight were detained.

On February 19, 2021, a civil suit titled "Bhagwan Sri Krishna Virajman and Others Vs UP Sunni Central Waqf Board and Others" was filed before the court of the civil judge (senior division), Mathura, for removal of encroachment and structure illegally raised by the 'committee of management' of the Trust Masjid Idgah with the consent of the Sunni Central Board of Waqf.

ALL GOVT OFFICES IN KASHMIR TO HOIST NATIONAL FLAG ON R-DAY

Srinagar: All the government offices and institutions in the Valley have been directed to hoist the national flag on Republic Day by the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole, who held a review meeting on Saturday to oversee the arrangements being made for next month's Republic Day celebrations.

Pole said the main venue of the Republic Day function will be the S.K. Cricket Stadium in Srinagar, as he asked all the departments to make the necessary arrangements.

The Divisional Commissioner passed several directions to the concerned officials for the smooth conduct of the event.

He also directed the officials of the line departments to play a comprehensive and active role with a close synergy.

FAKE CALL CENTRE BUSTED IN DELHI, 6 HELD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the nabbing of six persons, Delhi Police on Saturday claimed to have busted a fake call centre indulged in duping people on pretext of 20 per cent cashback return on online shopping from credit card in the national capital.

Police said that Kundan Kumar and Babloo Kumar, both residents of Shakurpur area were arrested and four women callers were apprehended.

According to Harendra K. Singh, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer), on December 16, a case was registered after a complaint from Ekjot Kaur, a resident of Paschim Vihar East, was received at Cyber police station, Outer district.

"The complainant reported that she had received a call from a mobile number regarding the credit



card cashback scheme. The caller lured her stating a scheme of cashback of 20 per cent of amount spent for shopping on her credit card and told her that she would need to pay Rs 7,444 yearly or Rs 620 monthly for cashback condition," said the official.

Later on, after inducing Kaur for credit card cashback benefits, a link

was sent to her and through this link she lost Rs 7,444 from her Axis Bank credit card. "After enquiring from customer care, the complainant found that she has been cheated as no cashback facility is available on her card," stated the official.

"During investigation, the call detail records of the alleged numbers were obtained and analysed. The location of the mobile number was found near Sri Nagar in Delhi. A raid was conducted in the area and a fake call centre was found operating in the name of Aron Enterprises," said the official adding that Kundan and Babloo were arrested while four women callers have been nabbed.

Further, after a search on National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP), police also found seven more complaints related to cheating and connected to the same mobile number.

Rape accused from Rajasthan posing as priest in Junagadh arrested

Junagadh | Agencies

A rape accused wanted by Rajasthan police, who was residing in Gujarat's Junagadh posing as a priest for nearly two years, has been arrested.

The accused Devnarayan alias lal Baba alias Chunilal was arrested from Mahakali temple in Keshod on Friday evening.

In January 2021, the rape victim lodged a complaint against the accused after which the Rajasthan police had announced a Rs 25,000 award on him.

In her complaint the woman said that when she failed to conceive after marriage, she was taken to doctor by her in-laws.

During the check up, her family learnt that she could not conceive due to complication that developed after her abortion before marriage. When questioned, she narrated her plight to her husband, after which the complaint was lodged, police said.

Acting on technical surveillance a joint



team of Rajasthan and Gujarat police reached the temple and arrested him.

The victim in her complaint said that the accused used to visit her aunt's place during which he repeatedly raped her and threatened to kill her if she revealed about it to anyone.

Man held for killing live-in partner, dumping body in Kullu forest

Ghaziabad | Agencies

The Ghaziabad police have arrested a man for allegedly killing his live-in partner while they were on their way to Kullu in Himachal Pradesh seven months ago.

The accused, who has been identified as Raman, had even lodged a missing complaint on May 20.

According to the police, after killing his live-in partner, the accused lodged a police complaint that his 'wife' is missing following which a case was registered at the Indrapuram police station and investigation was taken up.

"During investigation, it was found that the duo had an argument over their wedding," said the official.

A police officer privy to investigation said that Raman had strangled the woman while going towards Kullu and then threw her



body in a nearby forest area.

The body of the deceased has been found from the forest area, and further the probe is underway.

The case follows the shocking Mehrauli murder

case, wherein Aaftab Poonawalla killed his live-in partner Shradha Walkar in May and then chopped her body into 35 pieces and dumped the body parts in a nearby forest area.

Political slugfest erupts as Trinamool councillor's name figures in list of tampered OMR sheets

Kolkata | Agencies

A fresh political slugfest erupted in West Bengal on Saturday after the name of a Trinamool Congress councillor appeared in the list of 952 optical mark recognition (OMR) sheets published by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC), which were allegedly tampered with to accommodate ineligible candidates as teachers in state-run schools.

After the WBSSC published the full list as per the direction of the Calcutta High Court, it was found that one of the names in the list is that of Kuheli Ghosh, the Trinamool councillor from Ward No. 18 of Rajpur-Sonarpur municipality in South 24 Parganas district. Ghosh is also a secondary teacher of history in Sonarpur Chowhati High School, which comes under the ward where she is the councillor. Her name is in the 474th position in the list of 952 tampered OMR sheets published by the WBSSC.

After her name was identified in the list, the opposition parties in the



state launched a scathing attack against the state government and the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Ghosh herself was reluctant to make any comment in the matter,

saying that since the matter is in court, it would be unwise for her to make any comment on it at this point of time. CPI(M) central committee mem-

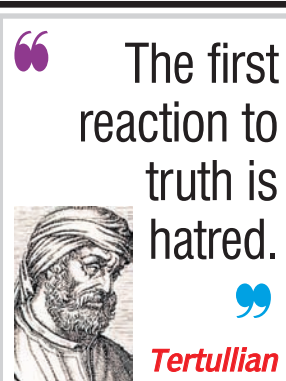
ber Sujan Chakraborty said the fresh revelation proves what massive irregularity had taken place in the recruitment process of teachers in the state under the current regime.

"This is not possible without endorsement from the highest political-administrative level of the state," he said.

State BJP spokesman Samik Bhattacharya said that the current government has turned the recruitment process into a total farse and a medium for minting money for the ruling party leaders.

"More scandals will be tumble out of the closet in the days to come," he said. As per the records of the WBSSC, Ghosh joined Sonarpur Chowhati High School as a history teacher in January 2019 after clearing the recruitment examination and interview. Prior to that, she was a primary teacher at a state-run primary school.

Recently, following an order from the high court, the WBSSC sought all her details from the authorities of the school where she is currently employed.



absolute india

VOL. 10, ISSUE 43, MUMBAI | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHOPAL AND NEW DELHI

NEW COVID WAVE: INDIA, PAK, SL AMONG LEAST HIT; JAPAN WORST

Team Absolute | Mumbai

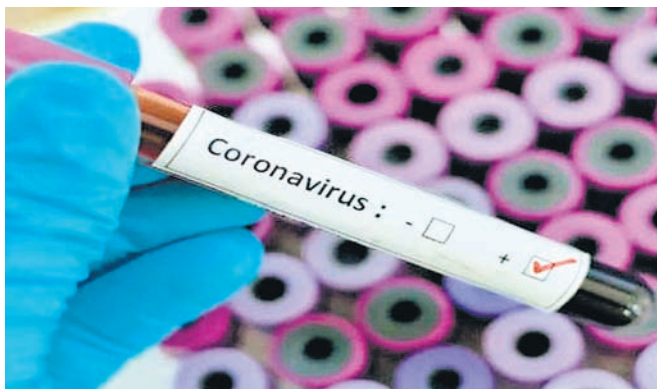
Amid the ongoing new Covid-19 global scare, the Christmas Eve figures show that India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan are among the lowest hit in the South Asian region, while Japan leads the world in terms of new infections.

According to Worldometer, India notched 188 fresh cases till Friday and in the immediate neighbourhood are Pakistan with 15 cases, 11 in Afghanistan and five in Sri Lanka.

However, other neighbours like Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh had zero infections, and the same was with Thailand, a popular tourist destination for Indians. However, Japan is at the top now with 173,336 new cases recorded on Friday, followed by Brazil (70,415), South Korea (68,168), with a total of around 75 countries coming in the grip of the fresh outbreak, with a total of 532,142 new cases logged worldwide. From the start of the pandemic in late 2019, the US has recorded the highest infections -- 10,22,03,321 -- as well as deaths -- 11,15,913.

India stands second in terms of total infections till date -- 4,46,78,008, but with much less fatalities, at 530,691, compared with some other countries.

Globally, from the start of the pandemic, the world has registered a total of 66,10,36,294 Covid-19 cases and 66,84,312.



RT-PCR MANDATORY FOR ARRIVALS FROM CHINA, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, HONG KONG & THAILAND

New Delhi: The Centre has made the RT-PCR test mandatory for international arrivals from the countries experiencing a surge in Covid cases.

"The RT-PCR test will be mandatory for international arrivals from China, Japan, S. Korea, Hong Kong and Thailand", Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Saturday. The Centre has said that if any passenger from these countries on arrival is found symptomatic or tests positive for Covid-19, then he/she will be put under quarantine. Meanwhile, the states have also been asked to be on alert mode and ramp up the genome sequencing to track the new variant in positive cases.

JAPAN LOGS HIGHEST SINGLE-DAY COVID DEATHS

Tokyo: As Japan is grappling with an ongoing eighth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the country registered 371 deaths due to the virus, the highest single-day tally since the outbreak began in early 2020, health authorities said.

The previous high of 347 Covid-19 deaths was reported on September 2 during the seventh wave, Xinhua news agency quoted the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare as saying.

The new figure has pushed up the overall death toll to 54,680 as of Saturday morning.

ENSURE AVAILABILITY OF UNINTERRUPTED SUPPLY AT HEALTH FACILITIES: CENTRE TO STATES

New Delhi: In a letter on Saturday, the Centre has asked all states and UTs to ensure the availability of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) in all health facilities and uninterrupted supply chain for their refilling.

"The availability of LMO in the health facilities and uninterrupted supply chain for their refilling should be ensured. Adequate inventory of oxygen cylinders along with backup stocks and robust refilling system is maintained", said Dr. Manohar Agnani, Additional Health Secretary, in the letter to the states.

The letter further says that though the Covid cases in the country are low and not surging as of now, but to face any challenges arising in future, the operationalisation and maintenance of these medical infrastructure is of utmost importance.

Therefore, you are requested to direct all the concerned departments to ensure availability functional Life Support Equipments such as Ventilators, BipAp and SpO2 systems along with their consumables is there, said the letter.

The Centre has also asked that Oxygen control rooms should be reinvigorated at States/UTs level for prompt resolutions of oxygen related issues and challenges.

On-boarding of all healthcare facilities utilizing oxygen to oDAS platform for daily oxygen demand and consumption be monitored for implementation, said Dr Agnani in the letter.

Medical Oxygen is an important and vital resource in all clinical setting, particularly during pandemic management.

Reliable oxygen supply is critical for saving lives during patient care and Covid-19 management, the letter reads.

Chanda Kochhar, husband sent to CBI custody till Monday

The CBI on Saturday said that former ICICI Bank CEO Chanda Kochhar, an accused in the alleged ICICI bank-Videocon loan fraud case, got a flat in Mumbai, and financial gain through the fraud.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A special court in Mumbai on Saturday sent former ICICI Bank CEO Chanda Kochhar and her husband Deepak Kochhar to CBI's custody till Monday in connection with a loan fraud case involving bank officials and Videocon Group.

Both were produced before the court by the CBI which had sought their custodial remand.

The CBI has alleged that Chanda Kochhar hatched a criminal conspiracy and released loans of Rs 1800 crore to six different companies. Kochhar pressurised other banks to pass their loans. After receiving a complaint, a case of fraud was filed by the CBI with Mumbai branch in January 2019. The probe agency also moved an application to invoke IPC 409 against Kochhar.

According to a CBI official, the arrests were made based on the January 2019 FIR filed against Chanda Kochhar, her husband and Venugopal Dhoot of Videocon Group.

Nupower Renewables, Supreme Energy, Videocon



KOCHHAR CHEATED BANK BY SANCTIONING RS 3250 CR

New Delhi: Chanda Kochhar duped the bank and helped Videocon in getting a loan of Rs 3,250 crore by violating the rules, and in return her husband Deepak Kochhar's firm was given Rs 64 crore, revealed the CBI which is probing the loan fraud case.

"It was alleged that the ICICI Bank sanctioned credit facilities of about Rs 3,250 crore to Trend Electronics Ltd, Century Appliances Ltd, Kail Ltd, Value Industries Ltd and Evan Fraser & Co India Ltd, all companies belonging to Videocon Group promoted by Venugopal Dhoot. The officials of ICICI Bank Ltd sanctioned credit facilities to these companies in violation of Banking Regulation Act, RBI Guidelines and Credit Policy of the bank," read the FIR accessed.

International Electronics Ltd and Videocon Industries

Limited were also made as an accused in the FIR.

PAN not linked with Aadhaar by March 31, 2023 to be rendered inoperative

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Income Tax department Saturday issued an advisory that those permanent account numbers (PAN) which are not linked with Aadhaar by the end of March next year will be rendered "inoperative".

"What is mandatory, is necessary. Don't delay, link it today!" the department said in a public advisory. "As per Income-tax Act, 1961, it is mandatory for all PAN holders, who do not fall under the exempt category, to link their PAN with Aadhaar before 31.3.2023. From 1.04.2023, the unlinked PAN shall become inoperative," it said.

The 'exempt category', according to a notification issued by the Union Finance Ministry in May



2017, are those individuals residing in the states of Assam, Jammu and Kashmir and Meghalaya; a non-resident as per the Income-tax Act, 1961; of the age of 80 years or more at any time during the previous year and a person not a citizen of India. A circular issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on March 30 said once a PAN becomes inoperative, an individual shall be liable to all the conse-

quences under the I-T Act and will have to suffer a number of implications.

The person shall not be able to file I-T return using the inoperative PAN; pending returns will not be processed; pending refunds cannot be issued to inoperative PANs; pending proceedings as in the case of defective returns cannot be completed once the PAN is inoperative and tax will be required to be deducted at a higher rate.

INDIAN ARMY HONOURS MAJ RALENGNAO KHATHING WITH BUST AT YANGSTE

Kolkata: In a significant move, the Indian Army's Gajraj Corps unveiled a bust of Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khathing at Yangste in the Tawang Sector of Arunachal Pradesh on Friday. This is close to where a scuffle between Indian Army soldiers and personnel of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) occurred on December 9.

According to a tweet by the Tezpur-based Gajraj or IV Corps under the Army's Eastern Command, the bust was unveiled at an altitude of 16,000 feet by Corps commander Lt Gen DS Rana. Few people know of Maj Khathing - India's first diplomat from the tribal community. It was in 1950 that Maj Khathing, then in charge of the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA), took over the Tawang region and the Bum La area and formally incorporated them with India. NEFA is what Arunachal Pradesh was called at that time.

Rahul Gandhi attacks BJP, RSS as BJY enters Delhi

Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra joined Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in the national capital on Saturday. They were accompanied by Priyanka's husband Robert Vadra.

New Delhi | Agencies

As the Bharat Jodo Yatra entered the national capital on Saturday, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi launched a scathing attack on the BJP and RSS, saying that their policies are to spread hate but the common people want harmony.

"The policies of the BJP and RSS are to spread fear and hatred, we will not allow it. I have opened a shop of love in the hatred market," he said.

The yatra, which entered the Badarpur border in the early hours of Saturday, will reach Ashram at 10.30 a.m. After a short break, the mega walkathon will resume at 1.30 p.m. and reach the Red Fort via Hazrat Nizamuddin and India Gate.

After reaching the Red Fort, Rahul Gandhi will pay tributes at Rajghat, following which the yatra will halt until January 3, 2023.



'SHARING LOVE I RECEIVED FROM HER'

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has shared an emotional picture with his mother Sonia Gandhi as she joined him in the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Delhi. The yatra, which has completed 100 days now, kicked off on September 7 from Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu. Sharing the photo on Twitter, Rahul Gandhi wrote that he is spreading the love he got from his mother in the country.

LARGE CACHE OF ARMS & AMMUNITION SEIZED IN J&K



Srinagar: The J&K Police along with the Army have recovered a large cache of arms and ammunition in a joint operation at Uri in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said on Saturday. The police said that the arms and ammunition recovered include eight AK 74 assault rifles with 24 magazines and 560 rounds, 12 pistols (Tokarev type) with 24 magazines and 244 rounds, 14 grenades and 81 balloons with Pakistani flag imprint. The police have launched a probe into the matter after registering a case.

Christmas spirit grips northeast after 2 yrs of Covid restrictions

Aizawl/Shillong/Kohima | Agencies

After celebrating Christmas either behind closed doors or in a restricted manner due to Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the festivities began since earlier this week with great enthusiasm in the northeastern region. Pre-Christmas celebrations, shopping, decorations of churches and other places were witnessed in many places across the region.

Christmas celebrations across the northeastern region in 2020 and 2021 were relatively low key due to the various Covid-related restrictions.

Wishing the people on the occasion, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio tweeted: "God be thanked for loving us and sending His only begotten son. He is the Light of the world, the Light that fills us with love, faith and hope. I wish you all a Merry Christmas."

In Kohima, the Planning and Coordination Department has requested the people to celebrate a sustainable and environment-friendly Christmas.

Tagging some photographs of Christmas decorations, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma tweeted: "Moolamyllyiang village in East Jaintia Hills district, Meghalaya take Christmas decorations to a whole new level! Every year they lead by example to show how the community can come together to make Christmas season beautiful & meaningful."

Mizoram Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati has sanctioned Rs 4 lakh from his discretionary fund to 40 orphanages and homes across the state covering all 11 districts.



- This year, exchange of advance Christmas greetings and mini celebrations have started two days ago in different government, non-government offices and localities in most of the eight northeastern states.
- All the thoroughfares and shopping malls at Police Bazar, Shillong's main commercial hub, wore a heavy crowded look as men and women busy buying their favourite items ahead of Christmas.
- Assam Rifles troopers have arranged various events and decorated some places to share the Christmas favour among the people.
- Over six million Christians live in Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya while there are significant numbers in the other northeastern states of Manipur, Tripura, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim.

Sikhs in US Marines can now keep beard, wear turban

New York | Agencies

In a historic move forward, a federal appeals court has ruled that Sikhs recruits in the US Marine Corps can keep a beard and wear turbans.

Judges from the District of Columbia's federal appeals court on Friday cited the Apparent Corps' boot camp rule of cutting hair and shaving beards as a violation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

The ruling came after three Sikh Marine Corps recruits -- Aekash Singh, Jaskirat Singh and Milaap Singh Chahal -- fought for an emergency appeal in District of Columbia's federal court to get an immediate exemption to the Corps' boot camp rule.



"Now, three Sikh recruits, who had previously been denied religious accommodations, can enter basic training," Eric Baxter, senior counsel who represented the Sikh trio, tweeted. In Sikh faith, men wear turban and they do not shave off their beards or cut hair. The Marine Corps previously denied all these requests, due to which the trio for years have remained poolies -- an individual who has already signed up to become a Marine but has not yet left for the recruit training at boot camp. Further, the Marine Corps argued that allowing Sikhs to wear religious beards would disrupt troop uniformity and appearance among the recruits, ultimately threatening national security. This despite other branches of the US military -- the US Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard -- already accommodating the religious requirements of Sikhism.



VHP ASKS SCHOOLS NOT TO MAKE HINDU CHILDREN SANTA CLAUS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

On the eve of Christmas Day, right wing Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP) unit in Madhya Pradesh wrote a letter to school principals asking them not to make Hindu children Santa Claus during the celebration.

Letters were written to all school principals in Bhopal amid reports that students are being made Santa Claus in the Christmas celebrations in the school and they are also being asked to bring Christmas trees. "This is an attack on our Hindu culture, it is a conspiracy to inspire Hindu children to Christianity," VHP's letter read. The VHP also questioned on celebrating



Christmas Day in non-missionary schools asking, is the schools promoting Christianity by making Hindu children Santa? "Our Hindu children should become Ram, become Krishna,

become Buddha, Gautam, become Mahavir, become Guru Govind Singh, all these should become, become revolutionary, and become great men, but should not become Santa." It has also warned that

if students were made Santa Claus without the permission of the parents, the VHP will take statutory legal action against that school.

On the other hand, the archbishop asked community members to help the needy and move forward on path shown by Jesus Christ.

Churches in Bhopal have been decorated and the people of Christian community are preparing for the festivals as they attend special prayer services, set up cribs, prepare sweets and decorate their homes. "Pope Francis has laid stress on simplicity and conservation of environment from the different traditions, which we follow during Christmas," Archbishop A.A.S Durairaj said in his Christmas message.

MUSIC TEACHER BOOKED FOR SEXUALLY ABUSING 15-YEAR-OLD STUDENT

Indore: Police have registered a case against a 31-year-old music teacher for allegedly sexually abusing his teenage girl student in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, an official said on Saturday. The incident occurred on Friday, he said.

"As per the complaint lodged by the 15-year-old girl, she went to the music teacher's house in Ayodhyapuri Colony around 3 pm on Friday to attend the class. However, he took her to a room on the ground floor instead of their classroom located on the second floor," Rau police station in-charge N S Raghuvanshi said. There, the accused started touching the girl inappropriately and held her hand, he said. "Scared, the girl rushed out of the room and ran towards her residence. After reaching home, she narrated it to her mother, who took her to the police station and lodged the complaint," he added. A case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was registered against the music teacher, he said.

Sanchi milk costlier by Rs 2 in Bhopal: New rates applicable from Today

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Sanchi milk has again become expensive in Bhopal. Sanchi has increased the rates of milk of all varieties except 200 ml packet. Diamond, Full Cream (Gold), Standard (Fresh), Double Toned (Smart), Skimmed Milk Light, Chaah and Chai Special milk have been increased by Rs 2 each per litre.

Bhopal Cooperative Milk Union Maryadit has issued new rates of milk. The existing rates will be applicable only till the evening of 24th December. Milk will be available at the new rate from Sunday morning. Sanchi milk has become costlier by Rs 8 in four and a half months. Sanchi milk rates have increased 4 times this year. In such a



situation, the economic burden on the common people has increased. On the other hand, Jabalpur and Bundelkhand Cooperative Milk Union Sagar have made preparations to increase the price of milk. This has been confirmed by the officers of both the milk unions. Price of all varieties of milk increased. Half liter packet of Diamond milk was earlier available for Rs.32, now it will be available for Rs.33. Similarly, the rate of half a liter of full cream milk

(Gold) was Rs 31, which has now become Rs 32. At the same time, the rate of one liter packet has increased from 61 to 63 rupees. The price of 200 ml packet of Double Toned Milk (Smart) has not been increased. First of all, the prices were increased in April.

Prices will increase in Jabalpur from next week

CEO of Jabalpur Milk Union DP Singh said that at present milk is being sold at Rs.62 per liter in the market. Soon the prices will be increased by Rs 2 per litre. Due to this, consumers will get milk at Rs 64 per litre. Probably orders to increase the rate of milk will be issued on Monday.

Ex-Congress MLA Brij Bihari Pateriya joins BJP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Brij Bihari Pateriya, a former Congress MLA from Madhya Pradesh, joined the BJP on Saturday.

Pateriya, is considered a strong leader in Sagar district, joined the saffron party in Bhopal in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Political turmoil in Sagar has escalated after Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh held a meeting with district leaders and workers last week.

Sources told Pateriya was sidelined and he was planning to contest the 2023 Assembly elections on a



Congress ticket. However, there were minimal chances of his candidature, they added. Reacting to Saturday's development, the state's Urban Development Minister

Bhupendra Singh said: "We welcome Brij Bihari Pateriya and believe that his long political will be a crucial for the party."

TWO BOYS DROWN IN RESERVOIR IN CHHATARPUR

Chhatarpur: Two boys drowned in a reservoir in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district, police said on Saturday. The incident took place on Friday evening at a stop dam on Urnil river, under Banchhon police post, some 140 km from the district headquarters, police post in-charge Surendra Dwivedi said.

The boys, aged five and seven years, were playing in the vicinity and drowned in the reservoir, he said.

The bodies were fished out by the police and sent for post-mortem, the official said.

'Drunk' cop takes off uniform, throws it at onlookers, suspended

Team Absolute | Harda

A police constable in Madhya Pradesh's Harda district was suspended after a video purportedly showed him taking off his uniform and throwing it towards onlookers on a road, apparently in an inebriated condition, an official said. The video of the incident, which occurred on Friday evening, surfaced on social media.

"The constable, identified as Sushil Mandavi, was suspended after the video of his act emerged," Harda Superintendent of Police (SP) Manish Kumar Agrawal said.

The video shows the allegedly drunk police constable and a shirtless man arguing with each other on a road in Harda town with onlookers around them. During their argument, the constable sits on the road on his knees and starts removing his uniform.



Initially, he removes his shirt and throws it towards the onlookers and later also takes off his pair of pants and then continues to argue with the man.

SP Agrawal said that six months back, Mandavi had met with an accident in a drunken state and was advised to undergo counselling at that time.

Digvijaya cites Centre's letter to BJY, points at MP Govt's investors summit

Against the backdrop of the Union government sending a letter to Rahul Gandhi over the Bharat Jodo Yatra citing COVID-19 concerns, senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh has questioned the holding of an investor's summit in Madhya Pradesh next month.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Earlier this week, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya had written to Gandhi requesting him to suspend the yatra, which has been drawing sizable crowds, amid the scare from the BE7 variant of Omicron and chances of a spike in COVID-19 cases. Hitting out at the Centre, Singh tweeted, "Is the biggest threat to the Modi government from the citizens of our country? Is there no danger of spreading COVID-19 from foreign nationals coming to the Global Investors Summit to be held in Indore?"

He also asked why such a "notice" was not sent to MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan over the investors summit and sought to know if COVID rules were different for everyone.

While Singh in his tweet said the summit would take place on January 2, as per the state government it will be held in Indore on January 11-12.

Prior to this, a three-day 'Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas' (NRI



Day) convention will be organised from January 8 to 11, with President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to take part.

BACKWARD CLASS POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP GIVEN TO 7.50 LAKH STUDENTS IN THE STATE

Bhopal: This year a scholarship of about Rs one thousand crore is being distributed to students of Class XI, XII and college under the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme of the Backward Classes Welfare Department in the state. The benefit of post matric scholarship is being given to 7 lakh 50 thousand students. Educational institutions have also been asked to ensure 75 percent attendance of students availing post matric scholarship.

About Rs 222 crore is being spent this year in another scheme of the department, which is the backward class state scholarship. In state scholarship, students from class 6th to class 10th studying in backward class schools are being given the benefit of scholarship every month. The process of scholarship approval and distribution is being done by the School Education

National Mathematics Day Celebrated at Sant Hirdaram Girls College



Team Absolute | Bhopal

From 19th to 24th December 2022, Department of Mathematics in joint association with Institution's Innovation Council celebrated Mathematics-National Mathematics Day in the remembrance of great Mathematician Srinivas Ramanujan and his contributions to the field of mathematics. The entire event was sponsored by M. P. Council of

Science and Technology. The objective behind celebrating this was to enhance the logical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills of the students. Dr DalimaParwani, Principal said that Maths is integrated in life in each and every domain.

Various activities were held as part of Mathematica celebrations. Five days of non-stop math buzz continued in each and every class and students participated

with full zeal. An online Quiz competition was organized on 19th December. The quizzing was of a high standard and elicited an enthusiastic response from the participants and more than 100 students took part in quiz.

The Management appreciated the commendable efforts of the Department of Mathematics and Institutions Innovation Council and extended best wishes for future endeavours.

MAN TRYING TO MEDIATE BETWEEN COUPLE, BEATEN TO DEATH BY HUSBAND

Jabalpur: A man was killed while trying to mediate between a couple in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur on Saturday. The incident pertains to Samad Pipariya village of Bargi police station area. A man named Bablu was having a dispute with his wife. Seeing the dispute escalate, Sunil, who was present there, tried to calm the situation down. However, this only angered Bablu and he started beating Sunil up with a stick. Sunil died on the spot due to severe blows from the stick. The accused Bablu along with his wife is said to be absconding from the village after the murder.

After getting the news of the incident, police reached the spot and sent the dead body to the Medical College Hospital, Jabalpur for postmortem. Police have registered a case and started searching for the accused.

Bargi ASI Ramkaran Mishra said, "Injury marks were found on Sunil's head and back. At present, we are searching for the accused."

Bedi Lal, the father of the deceased Sunil Patel, said that his son works at a dairy. "Last night he had gone to the dairy for some work, where Bablu, who was living there, was arguing with his wife after getting drunk. The people of the village were also trying to mediate, seeing the dispute between husband and wife for a long time. The villagers later went to their respective homes, meanwhile Sunil went there and tried to talk to Bablu", Bedi Lal said.

Efforts are being made to provide better life & provide all opportunities for development - CM Chouhan

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that every possible effort is being made to provide better life to the people of the state and provide all opportunities for development.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The meaning of good governance is to ensure quality implementation of public welfare schemes and development activities within the time limit. Those involved in corruption in government work will not be spared. Strict action should be taken by adopting a policy of zero tolerance towards drug peddlars and persons involved in anti-social activities. Those guilty of destroying young generation through drugs should not be spared. Chief Minister Chouhan was conducting a virtual review of public welfare schemes, development activities along with law and order in Agar-Malwa district. Chief Minister Chouhan also gave necessary instructions to the District officers.

On Covid, Chief Minister Chouhan said that there is no need for people to panic, but caution is necessary. Therefore, he stated the need to create mass awareness among the general public towards the importance of Covid-appropriate behavior by wearing masks, getting booster doses



and maintaining other caution. Chief Minister Chouhan instructed to take mock drill in hospitals very seriously. He also directed to take special initiative for

setting up pre-processing units of orange identified in one district-one product in the district. Minister in-charge, Collector & other officers joined the meeting virtually from the district headquarters.

Chief Minister Chouhan congratulated the District officers for the remarkable achievement against the target in Pradhan Mantri Awas Rural and Awas Plus Rural. He expressed concern over 59 percent progresses in Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban. He inquired about the non-commencement of the construction work even after receiving the housing installment.

It was told that 94 percent of the 18 thousand 8 houses sanctioned under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Rural have been completed. Out of 13 thousand 87 houses approved in Awas Plus Rural, 5 thousand 328 houses have been completed. More than 50 thousand connections have been given under Jal Jeevan Mission. The work of distribution of letters of approval of 93 thousand applications received under the Mukhya Mantri Janseva Abhiyan is in process.

FOUR KILLED AFTER CAR RAMS INTO TRUCK ON HIGHWAY IN BETUL

Betul: Four persons were killed when their car ramed into a truck on a highway in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district, police said on Saturday. The accident occurred on Bhopal-Nagpur Highway in Bhalai village, about 50 km from the district headquarters, around 12 am on Saturday, Multai police station in-charge Sunil Lata said.

Prima facie, it appears that the truck driver suddenly turned the vehicle to the left causing the car to ram into it, he said.

Two women were among three occupants who died on the spot, while the driver of the car died on the way to a hospital in Nagpur, he said.

Two men killed in the accident were railway employees, the official said, adding that a case has been registered and a manhunt has been launched for the absconding truck driver.



AFTER 2 YEARS, COVID TESTS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIERS START AT MUMBAI, NAGPUR AIRPORTS

Team Absolute | Mumbai/Nagpur

After over two years, free random Covid-19 tests for incoming passengers have been launched again at the Mumbai and Nagpur international airports from Saturday, officials said here.

At the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport, two per cent of all international arrivals are being tested at random as per the latest Central and state guidelines.

The passengers are being identified by the respective airlines they have flown and



guided to dedicated areas in the terminals for their RT-PCR tests, passengers must submit their samples and continue with their onward journey.

The testing labs will arrange to send the digital copy of the Covid-19 test results free of cost to the passengers directly, said the officials. For convenience, the

CSMIA testing facility is situated in the international arrival concourse, in the pre-immigration area and after the health-screening counters, which work 24x7.

The CSMIA has appointed an ICMR approved and NABL accredited lab for the testing, and provided 6 registration and 3 sampling booths for the testing process.

Besides, both the airports are sending out preventive measures, the details of the latest advisories at strategic points across the termini and their digital platforms, and all stakeholders have been sensitised to adhere to the periodic guidelines issued by the authorities concerned.

TWO HELD FOR THEFT OF VALUABLES WORTH MORE THAN RS 5 LAKH

Mumbai: Two persons have been arrested for allegedly breaking into a house and stealing valuables worth more than Rs 5 lakh Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Saturday.



The theft had taken place on December 17 when some unidentified persons broke into a house and stole cash and gold jewellery worth more than Rs 5 lakh, senior inspector Aviraj Kurhade, of Crime Unit I, Kashmiria said. Based on a complaint, a case under sections 454 (housebreaking) 380 (theft) and other relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code was registered with Navghar police station.

Based on the CCTV footage and intelligence inputs, the police zeroed in on the accused who were from Kurla area of neighbouring Mumbai, the official said.

At least 115 gm of gold jewellery worth Rs 4.75 lakh and Rs 1.53 lakh cash were recovered from the accused, he added.

Candidate defeated gram panchayat polls threatens villagers with sword



Akola, Maharashtra | Agencies Angered by his defeat in the recent gram panchayat polls, a 45-year-old man allegedly threatened residents of a village by brandishing a sword in Maharashtra's Akola district, police said on Saturday.

A video of the incident, which took place in Khamkhed village in Patur taluka of Akola on Friday, has surfaced on social media, an official said. The accused had contested the elections to become a member of the

gram panchayat, but did not get elected, he said. Upset about the loss, the accused went around the village brandishing a sword and threatened and verbally abused the villagers, the official said. Members of the accused man's family had been elected to the gram panchayat since the last 30 years and this was a sudden loss, he said. Based on a complaint, the police registered an offence under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Arms Act against the accused who is absconding, the official said.

Teen Girl Gang-Raped By 6, Including Friend

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 16-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by six persons, three of them minors, in Lower Parel area of central Mumbai, police said on Saturday.

The police have arrested three of the accused and detained the minors involved in the assault that took place in a chawl on Friday night, an official said.

One of the accused was the victim's friend and the duo had gone to the chawl to celebrate another friend's birthday, he said.

The other five accused were also there for the celebration. Later in the night, residents of the chawl heard the girl's cries and alerted the local police station, the



official said. On reaching the scene, personnel from N M Joshi Marg police station found the minor girl and the accused, he said.

Based on a complaint lodged by the girl, an offence under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Protection of Children from

Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was registered against the accused, the official said. Three of the accused, who are minors, were detained and sent to the children's home in Dongri, he said, adding that further probe is underway.

Five held for cheating Malad-based angadiya of Rs Twenty lakh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Five members of a gang who allegedly cheated a Malad-based angadiya or courier of Rs 20 lakh have been arrested by the Dindoshi police. The police are on the lookout for the mastermind of the scam, who is hiding in Rajasthan, said a cop. As per police sources, the five men used to study the social media activities of an Indore-based garment trader, Ujjwal Chandak, and his friend. According to Chandak, who is the complainant, the accused called him via WhatsApp on December 20. The caller-whose WhatsApp profile's display photo was that of Chandak's friend-claimed to be the friend's son and stated that he was in urgent need of Rs 20 lakh. He also claimed that someone would repay the amount that evening itself. Falling for the ruse, Chandak called a trusted angadiya in Indore and asked him to tell his counterpart in Malad to hand over the amount to his 'friend's son'. He also



shared the contact number of the 'son' with the angadiya. Later, one person came to the office of the Malad angadiya and took the money. But when nobody came to repay the amount, he called the accused. As, the

latter's phone was switched off, he called Chandak and told him about what had occurred. The businessman too failed to get through to the accused. Realising something was amiss, Chandak called his friend but

was shocked to learn that no one from the latter's family had called him, the cop added. "We obtained the call detail record (CDR) of the number and finally caught the accused who took the amount from the Malad angadiya.

BJP MLA JAYKUMAR GORE INJURED AFTER HIS CAR FALLS OFF BRIDGE



Pune: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA from Maharashtra, Jaykumar Gore, was injured after the car he was travelling in fell off a bridge near Phaltan in his native Satara district early on Saturday, police said.

Besides Jaykumar Gore, three other occupants of the vehicle, including his bodyguard and driver, also suffered injuries, they said. "The accident took place in the wee hours of Saturday. The driver of the car apparently lost control over the vehicle, due to which it veered off the Lonand-Phaltan road and fell from a bridge around 30 feet down," a senior police official said. "MLA Gore and three others were injured in the accident. While one was admitted to the Pune-based Ruby Hall Clinic, other injured persons are undergoing treatment in some other hospitals," he said. Gore represents the Man Assembly constituency in Satara district.

Maha & MP Governors press for concerted efforts to strengthen coordination between border districts

Team Absolute | Nagpur

At a time when Maharashtra and Karnataka are at the loggerheads over the border dispute, the Governor of Maharashtra BS Koshiyari and Governor of Madhya Pradesh Mangubhai Patel on Saturday met at Amravati in Vidarbha region and expressed that there is a good mutual coordination of local administration in all the border districts of the two states. At the joint meeting of border districts of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, both Governors however, directed that concerted efforts should be made to strengthen and expand the coordination.

According to the statement issued by the Raj Bhavan, on this occasion, the inter-state common issues were discussed in the presence of the governors and border district administrations of both the states. Collectors and Superintendents of Police of Maharashtra's Amravati, Nagpur, Bhandara, Gondia, Buldana and Balaghat, Chhindwara, Sivani, Baitul, Burhanpur, Khandwa and other districts of Madhya Pradesh were present.

Governor Koshiyari said that the issues



in the border areas of both the states should be resolved amicably and harmoniously. "For this, consistent mutual coordination should be maintained. Problems

related to flood situation and irrigation projects should be resolved at the local level in coordination. To solve the problem of migrant laborers, their records

should be made regularly by creating a special app so that their information can be shared with the administrations of both the states and they can benefit from various schemes," he added.

To stop illegal cattle traffic, human traffic, mineral extraction and weapons, gutkha, liquor sale, drugs, the administration should be equipped with adequate manpower at the border checkpoints and security system of the districts. Also, CCTV system should be installed there and close monitoring should be maintained.

Governor Patel said that to solve the problems of the border districts mutual discussion is necessary between the administration of both sides. "Discussions between the officials of both the states will be communicated to the state government for the issues to be resolved at the state level. It is necessary to get early warning from each other in time during calamity as well as flood situation. Every district should implement such coordination system," he added. He also suggested that some important projects like Storks birds conservation activities can be implemented in the border districts.

FOUR BOOKED FOR FORCING MINOR INTO PROSTITUTION

Mumbai: An offence has been registered against four persons for allegedly trafficking and forcing a girl into prostitution in Maharashtra's Thane city, police said on Saturday. The Mumbai police on Friday registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, an official said. According to the FIR, the victim alleged that she came in contact with a woman associated with an organisation during the COVID-19 pandemic when she was facing a financial crisis, he said.

The victim claimed that she was pushed into prostitution by the woman through three other accused for Rs 5,000 a day, between May and July 2020, the official said, adding that further probe is underway.

Fans set to return to Tata Open Maharashtra; tickets to be sold online from Monday

Pune | Agencies

After a gap of a year, fans will return to the Tata Open Maharashtra as action will unfold in front of spectators in the stands during the fifth edition of South Asia's only ATP 250 tournament.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the tournament was held behind closed doors last year but fans can now join the grand celebration of the fifth edition of the tournament, scheduled to be held from December 31 to January 7 at the Balewadi Stadium in Pune, the organisers informed in a release on Saturday. "We are delighted to welcome the fans back to the stadium. We had allowed some restricted public entry for the last few days of the competition last year by taking necessary safety precautions but this year the stadium is fully open for the fans. This is a celebration year and I hope fans will come in numbers to



cheer for their favourite stars and will make this edition even more special," said Prashant Sutar, Tournament Director of Tata Open Maharashtra and Chairman of Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association. "Fans are a crucial part of any sport. No event is complete without the support of the fans. Next sporting heroes are built in the

stands as the live action motivates many youngsters. Tata Open Maharashtra is the top tennis event in India and this year many big players will enthral the fans with their skills. It's a great opportunity for young players to watch star players live and learn from close quarters," said Sunder Iyer, Joint Secretary of the All India Tennis Association and

Secretary of Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association.

The tickets will be available for Blocks A, B, C, D, E, F, and G - with the lowest price for preliminary rounds being INR 150 and the highest being INR 750. On the other hand, the lowest ticket price will be INR 250 for the semi-finals and INR 500 for the finals while the highest set at INR 1500 (semifinals) and INR 1750 for the final.

Entry will be free for the qualifying rounds. The 2014 U.S. Open champion and World No. 17 Marin Cilic will lead the highly-competitive singles field whereas the three-time Grand Slam champions Rajeev Ram and Joe Salisbury will be the key attraction in the doubles.

The Tata Open Maharashtra will be conducted by the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association in association with the Government of India. The qualifiers will begin on December 31 while the main draw will be played from January 2-7.

Actress Tunisha Sharma dies by suicide at the age of 20

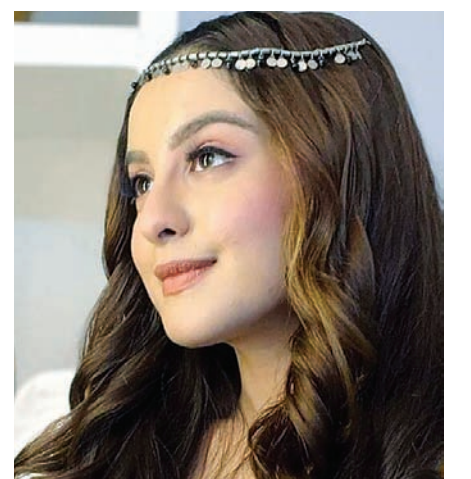
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Tunisha Sharma, who played the character of Shehzaadi Mariam in Ali Baba Dastaan-E-Kabul, died by suicide today (December 24). According to reports, the actress attempted suicide today on the sets of the TV show. She was 20 years old.

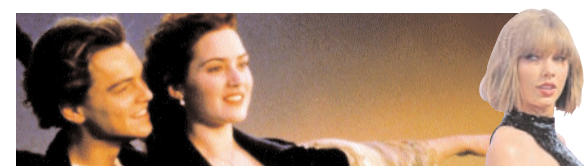
The police have reached the sets of the show for further investigation. As per reports in a news portal, she was in her co-star Sheezan Mohammed Khan's make-up room. When Sheezan returned after his shot, he found the room locked. When, despite repeated calls, Tunisha did not open the door, it was then the people on set broke the door and found her hanging. She was immediately rushed to hospital and declared dead.

Tunisha was quite active on social media. The actress posted a story on her social media handle earlier today (24 December). She has 1 million followers on Instagram and the actress' social media account is filled with some of the cutest pictures of her. She had posted an Instagram story on Saturday from the sets of her show, with the hashtags #BTS and #Staytuned.

She also posted a photo, with the caption, "Those who are driven by their Passion Doesn't stop."



On the work front, Tunisha was a child actor. She shared the screen with stars like Katrina Kaif and Vidya Balan. Tunisha made her debut with Fitoor, where she played the younger Katrina Kaif. She did the same in Baar Baar Dekho. She shared the screen with Vidya Balan in Kahaani 2. She was a popular face on TV as well and was a part of shows like Internet Wala Love, Ishq Subhallah, Gayab, and Sher-E-Punjab: Maharaja Ranjit Singh.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress-singer Selena Gomez lip-synced to an old clip of Drew Barrymore, and she has got the actress's seal of approval. The clip in question is of Barrymore, taken from a 'Tonight Show' appearance she made in 1984 when she was nine years old. It resurfaced when the Drew Barrymore Show host shared it on TikTok in May, reports.

In the video, which the '50 First Dates' actress captioned "#TBT," the child actress says: "I love New York!"

When guest host David Brenner asks her why she loves the city, Barrymore stumbles over her words for a second before responding: "I mean, I love L.A. but I don't like to dress up in bikinis and go to the beach."

The 'Only Murders in the Building' star lip-synced to the hilarious moment in a now-deleted TikTok, which Barrymore shared on Instagram.

Selena Gomez 'lip-synced' to an old clip of Drew Barrymore

"I love this so much," Barrymore captioned the post. "I love you. I'm so honoured you used this sound of me from an interview when I was younger!"

The two actresses last interacted publicly at Britney Spears' wedding back in June, where they cuddled up with each other - and the new bride - on the dance floor.

The former child stars also sang a verse of 'Vogue' with Spears, Paris Hilton, Donatella Versace and Madonna herself.

Frank Grillo, who is known for working on projects such as Captain America, was also pictured serving yummy meals to those in need. The Purge star opted for casual comfort in a gray button up and a pair of camouflage pants.



'ATTENTION'

Tamar Braxton in hospital after breathing-related health scare

Los Angeles | Agencies

American singer Tamar Braxton had a health emergency amid the holiday season. She shared an update on Instagram, telling her followers that she was rushed to the hospital after spending some time with her friends ahead of Christmas.

"This isn't an attention post... this is an ATTENTION post," she wrote, reports. "Literally I was with my best friends @normankyamfi and @wardellmalloy shopping and doing Christmas fun s--- and the VERY NEXT DAY I had to be taken to the hospital by AMBULANCE, needed oxygen cause I thought God was taking me home cause I could not breathe and my chest was on FIRE!!" Braxton continued: "I was taken to @northsidehosp and was met by the BEST nurses and doctors including @therealdrjackie to find out what's wrong Yall. I have the FLU and let me tell u it's worse than COVID in my opinion," she explained.

She added: "I'm on 5 different medications..please be careful.. I wasn't around a lot people and have NO IDEA where it came from.. enjoy y'all holiday AT HOME.. u don't want this .. oh yeah I'm completely isolated cause it's hella contagious I love y'all for real."

One clip from the post shows Braxton laughing while hanging out with her friends seemingly prior to the health scare. In another selfie, Braxton can be seen wearing her mask while sitting in a hospital bed.

Her mother Evelyn Braxton responded to the post by commenting, "Love you. Get well soon Tamar."

According to the reports, in 2020, Tamar was hospitalised after being found unresponsive in her room at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in downtown Los Angeles. She later revealed in a lengthy and raw statement on Instagram that she had attempted suicide after suffering "pain" for the past years while working in the entertainment industry as a reality star.

Nick gets festive, shows charitable side by providing meals at a Christmas event

Los Angeles | Agencies

Nick Cannon stopped by to give a helping hand at the Los Angeles Mission Christmas event, alongside Brittany Bell and two of their children, Powerful Queen, and Golden. The television host, 42, dressed up for the special occasion wearing a holiday elf hat as he joined other celebrities, such as former Nickelodeon star, Josh Peck, and The Purge actor, Frank Grillo. The actor, who will soon welcome his twelfth child with Alyssa Scott, assisted in providing Christmas meals to those experiencing homelessness. Nick opted to wear a pair of comfortable black sweatpants along with a printed, hooded sweatshirt for the day's festivities. While serving food to those in need, the former America's Got Talent host threw on a vibrant red apron with Los Angeles Mission printed on the front. The star, who has currently fathered eleven children with six different women, also donned a red and green elf hat to embrace the festive season.

In a few photos taken during the event, Nick could be seen posing with Brittany Bell, and two of their children, daughter, Powerful Queen and son, Golden. Their other son, three-month-old Rise Messiah Cannon, was not in attendance. Brittany also opted for a monochromatic look for the day, and wore a form-fitting, black pantsuit with cutouts on the knees. She added a thin, black puffer jacket on top of her ensemble for an added layer of warmth, and sported white leg warmers along with sneakers of the same color for a stylish flare. To accessorize her look, the model added a pair of glittering Christmas tree glasses with the holiday weekend just around the corner. Their daughter was dressed up in a Minnie Mouse outfit, while Golden wore a Christmas Mickey Mouse sweater. Along with pausing to take a few memorable snaps with his family, Nick was also pictured dishing food for those in need at the event.



OLIVIA OLSON FACED CRUEL COMMENTS ABOUT HER WEIGHT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Love Actually child star Olivia Olson claims gaining fame in the Christmas movie almost caused her to have 'a mental breakdown' after cruel comments about her weight. Love Actually's Olivia Olson has revealed rising to fame in the Christmas classic almost caused her to have 'a mental breakdown'. The actress who played American schoolgirl Joanna, said she was forced to deal with cruel comments about her weight was challenging and saw her turn to voice-over acting instead. She said: "I thank my parents for being such a support system, because it's kind of a miracle I didn't have a mental breakdown."

Olivia explained: "The auditioning process is constant rejection and at that age, having casting directors saying literally to your face, when you are 12 years old, 'Oh, we would like you if only you dropped 10lbs,' it's like, 'What?' She also revealed that felt like an 'outcast' when returning to school after filming Love Actually, saying she was picked on by her classmate because of being 'famous'. 'I did have friends, but I didn't always feel like I belonged there, I felt like an outcast,' she added. She went on to reveal this was the reason she went in to voice-over acting, because she felt physical appearance didn't matter. Since its release in 2003, Love Actually, which follows the intertwined stories of various characters in the build up to Christmas day, has become a bona fide festive classic. 20 years after their beloved pre-pubescent romance stole the show in the iconic romantic comedy Love Actually, Thomas and Olivia looked back on their experiences. Thomas and Olivia made their feature film debuts in the film as the lovestruck Sam and his American crush Joanna.

Zachary Levi defends DC co-chiefs James Gunn, Peter Safran

Los Angeles | Agencies

'S' hazam!' star Zachary Levi weighed in on the recent drama surrounding DC Studios and its new co-chiefs, James Gunn and Peter Safran. Last week, Gunn and Safran "who became co-chairmen and CEOs in October" ruffled some feathers when it was revealed that Gunn was writing a new Superman film, but Henry Cavill might not return as the iconic hero. However, Levi came to Gunn and Safran's defense on Thursday night during an Instagram Live, encouraging DC fans to give the new CEOs "time to make something special." "You have no idea of the reasoning behind any of the decisions that are going on. The amount of conjecture and rumour mill and drama and nonsense that keeps getting spun around out there on Instagram and Twitter is laughable. It is unbelievably laughable," said Levi. "So I would just say be patient, and give them some space and some time to try and really make something special. And I think something that DC

deserves to have, and something that (Zack) Snyder tried to do and it just didn't ultimately materialise, guys."

He added that, in crafting their vision for the DC universe, Gunn and Safran are "not just making decisions because they like someone or don't like someone. They're making decisions based on what is best for Warner Bros., DC, that entire studio and entity and trying to make as many fans, as much of an audience, happy as they can."

Levi continued: "If you're out there and really like what happened before, you can do that, that's fine. But realise that there's a lot of people who didn't like those things, and we should always be trying to tap into as much audience as possible, make as many people happy as possible." "That's what we're in entertainment for, and that's what I think Peter and James are trying to do. And it's not an easy position, they got handed all these things that were already in a lot of conflict. So guys, just fucking give 'em a break. Take it easy. Take a breath. It's the holidays, for god's sake. Just go enjoy what the holidays are, give them some time to enjoy the holidays, and let's see what happens on the other side of this."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kiki Morris



IND vs BAN Test Series

INDIA'S TOP-ORDER COLLAPSES IN CHASE OF 145



Dhaka | Agencies

Mehidy Hasan Miraz picked three wickets in a stunning spell as India suffered a top-order collapse in a chase of 145 to end day three of the second Test at 45/4 in 23 overs. The visitors still require 100 more runs with six wickets in hand on a deteriorating pitch against Bangladesh to win the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

Bangladesh was reeling at 113/6 in their second innings. But Litton Das's counter-attacking 73 helped the hosts' get 118 runs off the last four wickets. He led a spirited fightback with crucial partnerships of 46 with Nurul Hasan, who made 31 and 60

with Taskin Ahmed, who was unbeaten on 31, as Bangladesh made 231 in 70.2 overs.

In defence of 145, Bangladesh's bowlers often attacked the stumps, were accurate with their line and length. The spinners hit the rough patches constantly and reaped rewards with persistent pressure as India's top four batters went on an ultra-defensive approach and lost their wickets in the process.

Bangladesh were given an early breakthrough by captain Shakib Al Hasan, who drew his Indian counterpart KL Rahul for a forward defence, but the thick outer edge was caught by Nurul Hasan behind.

Cheteshwar Pujara danced down the pitch to defend off Mehidy, but he

was beaten on the outside edge and was stumped by Nurul after an initial fumble. Shubman Gill's struggle came to an end when he came down the pitch to play against Mehidy, but missed the delivery and was easily stumped. Virat Kohli survived an lbw appeal off Taijul Islam as replays showed an inside edge. But three overs later, Kohli pressed forward to defend against Mehidy and the inside edge was caught by an alert short leg.

Axar Patel, promoted to number four, was proactive at the crease, punching and pulling against the spinners to be unbeaten on 26 with Jaydev Unadkat not out on three. A see-saw day of Test cricket on Saturday has set the stage for a riveting climax to the match on day four.

Earlier, Das began the final session with a lovely lofted drive over cover for a boundary off Mohammed Siraj, before punching off Axar through backward point for four more.

Brief scores

Bangladesh 227 in 73.5 overs and 231 in 70.2 overs (Litton Das 73, Nurul Hasan 31; Axar Patel 3/58, Mohammed Siraj 2/41) lead India 314 in 86.3 overs and 45/4 in 23 overs (Axar Patel 26 not out; Mehidy Hasan Miraz 3/12) by 100 runs.

DON'T NEED TO WORRY TOO MUCH: SIRAJ ON INDIA'S WINNING CHANCES



Dhaka Despite India suffered a top-order collapse in a chase of 145 to end day three of second Test at 45/4 in 23 overs, pacer Mohammed Siraj feels that there isn't much to worry about, citing a well-set Axar Patel unbeaten on 26 and Rishabh Pant as well as Shreyas Iyer yet to come out to bat. "According to me, we shouldn't be thinking too much as till now, four wickets have fallen and still 100 more are needed. We have one of our batters in Axar, who has shown positive intent and has played well till now. When one of the batters is set at the crease, then we don't need to take too much pressure."

ISL 2022-23

Mumbai City beat Chennaiyin FC 2-1

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Mumbai City FC beat Chennaiyin FC 2-1 in an Indian Super League 2022-23 match at the Mumbai Football Arena.

Chennaiyin's Petar Sliskovic struck the opening goal of the match in the 34th minute before Lallianzuala Chhangte (38th) and Greg Stewart (57th) scored for Mumbai City.

Chennaiyin were awarded four corners in the first quarter for their continuous attack in the opposition half, putting pressure on Mumbai City's defence line straightaway. It was Chennaiyin's in-form striker Sliskovic, who broke the deadlock when he brilliantly converted Julius Duker's pass inside the box. It was the Croatian star's sixth goal of the season and first non-headed strike.

Mumbai City took four minutes to level the scores in the 38th minute when Chhangte struck the opening



goal for the hosts to take them 1-1 into the break.

Stewart put the Islanders in the lead for the first time in the night when he netted their second goal in the 57th minute. Six minutes later, Anirudh Thapa, who replaced Sourav Das, had almost produced an equaliser for the visitors but his

strike missed the target by a whisker.

This was Mumbai City's second win of the season against Chennaiyin. Chennaiyin will now take on Jamshedpur FC in an away game on January 7 while Mumbai City will be up against Odisha FC on January 2 in their next match.

Argentina's Angel Di Maria to reconsider retirement

Buenos Aires | Agencies

Angel di Maria could extend his international career after playing a key role in Argentina's dramatic penalty shootout victory over France in the FIFA World Cup final, according to the reports.

The Juventus winger had previously announced he would retire after football's showpiece event in Qatar but his performances throughout the tournament have prompted him to reconsider the decision. It added that Di Maria is now open to the possibility of continuing until the 2024 Copa America.

Di Maria, who has been capped 129 times for the Albiceleste since his international debut in 2008, struggled for fitness in the latter stages of the 2022 World Cup after suffering a thigh strain during the group stage,



reports.

But he played a pivotal role in last Sunday's final, earning the penalty that Lionel Messi duly converted before scoring his team's second goal as the Albiceleste raced to a 2-0 lead in Lusail.

Argentina's next competitive fixtures will be two 2026 World Cup qualifiers in late March.

Just like Di Maria, Argentina Captain Lionel Messi too is reconsidering his international retirement after winning the World Cup. Messi had announced that Qatar 2022 will be his last event for Argentina but after the event said that he would like to play more for Argentina as a "World Cup winner".

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The 2020 Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain, reigning World Champion Nikhat Zareen and 2019 World Championships silver medalist Manju Rani produced scintillating displays to secure their berths in the semi-finals of the 6th Elite Women's National Boxing Championships here on Saturday.

Representing Assam, Lovlina was contesting the 75kg quarter finals bout against Meena Rani of Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB). The 2022 Asian Champion's superior technical ability saw her cruise through the entire bout, hardly giving her opponent the chance to have a go at her. Ultimately, Lovlina won 5-0 by unanimous decision and sealed her spot in the semi-finals of the tournament where she will face Jigyasa Rajput of Madhya Pradesh.

Nikhat who was facing Taniksha Chawar of Goa in the 50kg quarter-



finals hardly had to break a sweat and was on the front foot since the

get go. The Telangana born boxer's swift movement and strong punch-

es helped her overpower her opponent and emerge victorious after the referee stopped the contest towards the end of the second round. Nikhat will now face Shvinder Kaur Sidhu of All India Police (AIP) in her semi-finals bout.

Manju Rani of RSPB prevailed in the 48kg quarter-finals against Simran of Chandigarh. Brimming with confidence, Manju was at her attacking best and defeated her opponent 5:0 by unanimous decision. She will go head to head against Anjali Sharma of Madhya Pradesh in her semi-finals bout.

Along with Manju, Jyoti (52kg) and Shashi Chopra (63kg) who are also representing RSPB won their respective bouts and ensured that their team had a successful day at the office. While Jyoti earned a hard fought 4-3 win against the 2022 Asian Championships silver medalist Minakshi Hooda of AIP, Shashi secured a 4:1 victory against Niharika Gonekka of Telangana.

Happy to come back and be playing with Mumbai Indians: Cameron Green

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Five-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians signed Australia's young all-rounder Cameron Green, making him the second-most expensive player in the history of the tournament and the most expensive deal bagged by any player from his country.

"Obviously, I'm pinching myself. I think joining such a great team in Mumbai, we obviously got such a history, all the past players that have played for them, and how great they are and how good the team is at the moment," he said.

"I think you can look through all the players, playing with them, Rohit, Bumrah, Suryakumar Yadav to name a few. Yeah, having Tim David, and Jason Behrendorff also from Australia, so I'm so



excited."

"We've got so much talent that you can learn from them and improve your own game. I loved my time in India for the two weeks then, so I'm happy I'm going to come back and be playing with the Mumbai Indians," he added. "We have been following and tracking Cameron Green for the last two-three years and with his recent performances, we thought that he is exactly what we needed. We were looking for a younger player and he fits the right age profile for us."

"If you have noticed, over the last two auctions, we have deliberately picked players that are on the younger side and give us more lifetime value and that are why we thought that Cameron is the perfect guy for us to come in. We are very happy to get Cameron Green."

AUS v SA

Warner hungry and eager to play red-ball cricket beyond his 100th Test

Melbourne | Agencies

Going through his longest sequence of innings without a hundred in the longest format of the game, opener David Warner says the drought is a distraction as he gets ready for his 100th Test for Australia.

The player has been going through difficult times, struggling for form and distracted by the controversy with Cricket Australia over overturning his captaincy ban after pulling out of the process, unhappy with the federation's handling of the process.

Warner's last three Tests have seen him make scores of 5, 48, 21 and 28 against the Windies, before 3 and 0 during the two-day Test at the Gabba against South Africa. That has seen his century drought extend to 29 innings, though he did manage a ton in his most recent ODI innings -- against England at the MCG last month. "Leading into the Perth Test, my mental health probably wasn't where I needed it to be at to be 100 percent," Warner said. "And that was challenging. If I had it my way, we would have had it all sorted (by then). From the

CA's point of view, I didn't really have any support. My teammates and the staff in our team were absolutely amazing, and my family and friends -- they really got me through that period. I'm in a great headspace now I'm pumped to play another Boxing Day Test, and more importantly we've got a series that's on the line." The left-hander is adamant he still has the hunger for tours of India and England, Australia's two overseas Test assignments in 2023 that captain Pat Cummins has labelled as "career-defining", says reports.

Stokes can replace M.S. Dhoni as captain at CSK: Scott Styris

Kochi | Agencies

Former New Zealand cricketer Scott Styris sees the Chennai Super Kings' decision to buy England Test skipper and all-rounder Ben Stokes in the Mini-Auction for the 2023 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) as an attempt to find a successor to skipper MS Dhoni.

Dhoni, who had relinquished captaincy in the 2022 edition but was forced to take back the reins as the team fared miserably under Ravindra Jadeja, will probably be leading the CSK for the last time this season as he wants to bid farewell in front of home fans at Chennai. With the player four-time



IPL-winning skipper set to retire for the final time soon, CSK are desperately looking for someone to take charge of the team and Styris believes Stokes is that man.

In his comments during a post-auction programme on Jio Cinema, Styris suggested that Dhoni would straight away pass on the captaincy to

Stokes. "I think so, I think he will be captain. We have seen MS Dhoni try and pass the captaincy on, he has not been playing cricket regularly in between the IPL. It's just an opportunity for MS Dhoni to pass the baton. I think yes, they will do it straight away. Ben Stokes will be captain," Styris said.

PAK vs NZ

Match moved from Multan to Karachi due to poor weather conditions

Karachi | Agencies

The second and final Test between Pakistan and New Zealand, scheduled to start on January 3 in Multan, has been moved to Karachi -- and to January 2 -- because of poor weather conditions.

The deteriorating weather conditions in Karachi have disrupted flight operations and may also potentially result in the loss of playing hours. Severe fog has been forecast over Multan, resulting in talks between the Pakistan Cricket Board and New Zealand Cricket, before the Test was moved out of the venue.

"The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and New Zealand Cricket have mutually agreed to shift the second Test in Multan to Karachi due to deteriorating weather conditions, which have already disrupted flight operations and may also potentially result in the loss of playing hours," PCB said in a statement.

There is also a change in dates with the boards agreeing to move the second Test and the three ODIs forward by a day. The second Test will now commence on 2 January instead of 3 January.





SARA PENS A HEARTFELT NOTE ON FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF 'ATRANGI RE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Director-producer Aanand L. Rai and his team are celebrating the first anniversary of his streaming movie 'Atrangi Re'. The film featured Akshay Kumar as the lead along with Sara Ali Khan and Dhanush, and told the story of a girl who becomes mentally ill after suffering a child-

hood trauma.

Taking to his Instagram, the director shared pictures of himself with Akshay Kumar, Sara Ali Khan and Dhanush. He wrote in the caption, "Some memories are unforgettable, remaining ever vivid and heartwarming."

Sara also took to her social media to share some BTS clips and fond memories from the sets of 'Atrangi Re'. She also penned down a heartfelt note, thanking the team, director Aanand L. Rai, choreographer Vijay Ganguly and her co-stars.

In the caption, she wrote: "A year ago, today, I shared Rinku Suryavanshi with all of you. Can't believe how time has flown. It feels like just yesterday that aanand irai sir was making me swing soda bottles in Bihar and vijay ganguly was trying to teach me 'heroine wali ada' in Madurai."

She added in her caption, "I wish I could just go back and do all those 2 hour drives on the outskirts of UP-Bihar, late nights baarish shoots in Varanasi, sunrise drives in Delhi with sir, long steady cam shots with sprints and thumkas, and of course the idlis and sambar that dhanush kraja would feed us and the sarson ka saag that akshay kumar sir got us all."

"Seema Ji I so miss being beaten by chappals by you because every moment after that you've just been so loving, helpful and giving to me. Missing aanand irai and his laad-pyaar a lot today."

'Atrangi Re' received a positive response overall, although many netizens objected to the portrayal of mental health in the film.

AKASHLINA, ARADHANA PLUNGE INTO A CATFIGHT OVER SHIVAM IN THE SHOW

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shivam Sharma recently made an entry in the dating-based reality show 'Splitsvilla X4' as a wild card contestant. Though his entry has created a huge fight between the contestants Akashlina Chandra and Aradhana Verma as they both like him, he is more attracted to Aradhana. Talking about her equation with Shivam, Aradhana said: "I and Shivam had a nice conversation, I even told him that we have a friendly connection. I don't want to comment on his bond or connection with Akashlina. There is nothing happening between me and Shivam, we just have a friendly connection." In the meantime, Shivam is seen bonding with Akashlina and developing a connection with her. However, during a task where contestants paired up with their connections, a huge fight took place between Akashlina and Aradhana.



Rupali Ganguly danced on the tune of 'Jingle Bells'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

TV star Rupali Ganguly of 'Anupamaa' fame shared a video of her dancing to the tune of 'Jingle Bells'. With her curled hair, Christmas cap, and red top, the actress made her fans go gaga with her dance moves. She was seen enjoying the music and ringing in the yuletide spirit with full gusto. The actress wrote in the caption: "Time of the year to go lil extra dancing, as the Santa comes with his bag full of joy and makes us happier! Merry Merry Christmas..". After her post, many of her fans admired her dance moves and shared their best wishes. One of her fans commented: "Rupali Santa looks too cute!" Another fan reiterated: "Looking so cute..." Rupali is known for her TV shows such as 'Sarabhai vs Sarabhai', 'Baa Bahoo Aur Baby', 'Parvarrish, Kuchh Khattee Kuchh Meethi', 'Sanjivani', and many more. She has become a household name with her titular role in the show 'Anupamaa'.



Vicky Kaushal reveals Rajkumar was first choice for 'Masaan'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Vicky Kaushal spilled some beans about how he bagged his film 'Masaan' and revealed that he was not the first choice for the film. Taking a trip down memory lane, Vicky said: "This dates back to 2010 when I wanted to become an actor and Neeraj Ghaywan wanted to pursue direction. We both started our journey together as assistant directors in 'Gangs of Wasseypur'."

"So, post that I started doing theatre to enhance my acting skills. In 2013, we met again while travelling to Pune and we started talking about life and work."

"During the conversation, I got to know that he is making a film and is in search of a producer but is struggling with it. He then shared that he has made a pilot promo on the film with Rajkumar Rao. Owing to Masaan's tight budget, they could not create a mela, but had to wait to shoot a real one."

"The mela in Benaras usually happens in the month of October and there were some issues with Raj's dates so there was a vacancy for that role, and I jumped right into it. After giving auditions, I was finally selected for that role." Vicky recalled how while shooting a scene, he started crying in reality: "In the scene 'Yeh dukh kaahe khatam na hota be', I cried a lot. I was not supposed to cry, but somehow, I ended up crying and wailing." "Also, I had to act drunk for the scene, so to make it look natural, I got drunk for the first time in my life. I knew it was an intense scene and I had to give my best." The 'Uri: The Surgical Strike' actor continued to reveal: "So, the scene ended and in the background, there was a bridge on which a train was leaving, I heard the horn and automatically said 'tu kisi rail si guzarti hai ... main kisi pul sa tharharaata hoon'.

After just completing the sentence, I could not hold back my tears." "It looked so natural that Neeraj said that we have to keep this scene. After shooting the film, the whole crew left, only Neeraj, Avinash (the DOP), and I were left. We three took a stroll in the ghats of Banaras and Neeraj tells us that he does not want me crying in two scenes and asks if we can shoot the ring-throwing scene again." "Luckily, Avinash had his small camera, so we reshot that scene under a lamppost. The best part was that Neeraj used his white shirt as a reflector as there was not enough light. And that's how the picture was made," Vicky concluded.



Aahana Kumra



Honey Singh and Mouni Roy unites for a 'Party Track'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh has been in news of late. First, it was his chiselled look after he gained extra pounds that made waves on the Internet and now, it's his new song 'Gatvidhi' which also features actress Mouni Roy.

The song is a party number and is best suited for this time of the year when the Holiday season is in full-swing. Talking about the song, Honey Singh said: "Like the

name

suggests, 'Gatvidhi' is going to be a hep party song and Mouni Roy's charm in the video has lifted the song to the next level. The video is killer and I can't wait for the people to see and listen to 'Gatvidhi'."

Musically, the song somewhere reminds of another Honey Singh song 'Manali Trance'. The visuals of the song present Honey and Mouni grooving to the beats of the song in an underground set-up.

Mouni Roy said: "It is the perfect song for this time of the year."

What better way to celebrate the year ending with a Badass song. It was a perfect collaboration with Yo! Yo! and Namoh Studios."

'Gatvidhi' is available for streaming across all leading music platforms.

