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IPL 2023



Sam Curran becomes most expensive player so far

KOCHI | Agencies

England all-rounder Sam Curran on Friday became the most expensive player in the Indian Premier League (IPL) history after Punjab Kings bought him for a whopping Rs 18.50 crore at the 2023 mini-auction of the cash-rich tournament. Curran was Player of the Tournament at the T20 World Cup in Australia.

Centre approves Bharat Biotech's intranasal Covid vaccine for booster

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Friday approved Bharat Biotech's needle-free intranasal Covid vaccine for booster dose, said an official source. The nasal vaccine has been approved for those aged above 18 years. The vaccine will be available in the private hospitals for booster dose in the initial phase. The source said that the nasal vaccine will be used as a heterologous booster among the eligible population. Meanwhile, the intranasal Covid vaccine is also expected to be introduced in the Covid-19 vaccination program from Friday, said the source. The nasal vaccine is likely to be added to the CoWIN App from this day only. Meanwhile, India on Friday reported 163 fresh Covid-19 cases along with nine deaths have also been reported in the country. The number of active coronavirus cases declined to 3,380.



INDIA REPORTS 163 FRESH COVID CASES, 9 DEATHS



New Delhi: India reported 163 fresh Covid cases in the last 24 hours, said the Union Health Ministry on Friday. In the same period, the country recorded nine Covid-related deaths, taking the national toll to 5,30,690 as per the report. Meanwhile, the active caseload has declined to 3,380 cases, accounting for 0.01 per cent of the country's total positive cases. The recovery of 176 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,41,42,608. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.80 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 1,25,361 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 90.96 crore. With 87,723 vaccines administered in the last 24 hours, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage exceeded 220.02 crore as of Friday morning.

Corbevax booster gives maximum protection: study

HYDERABAD | Agencies

Amidst concerns of a new Covid wave in India following massive surge in China and other countries, research at AIG Hospitals here has revealed that Corbevax booster in individuals vaccinated with Covishield gives maximum protection against Omicron variants. The scientific study has proved the immunity benefits of indigenous heterologous vaccine booster, Corbevax in combating Omicron variants.



Announcing the findings of the study, AIG Hospitals Chairman Dr D Nageshwar Reddy told media persons that the study was done on 250 healthcare workers who had received 2 doses of Covishield as the primary vaccine regimen not more than 6 months ago. None of the participants had any adverse events following the administration of Corbevax booster dose. Corbevax is an indigenously developed peptide-based

vaccine which is different from the viral vector (Covishield) or the inactivated vaccine (Covaxin). The key difference is that Corbevax uses only a protein subunit of the virus replicated inside a yeast cell while the others are whole virus vaccines. The advantage of peptide-based vaccine is that it considerably reduces the risks of allergic and autoimmune responses making them safe for widespread usage.

LOK SABHA ADJOURNED SINE DIE, 6 DAYS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die on Friday, six days ahead of schedule. Before adjourning the House, Speaker Om Birla informed the members that 97 per cent of work productivity was clocked during the winter session. During the session which got underway on December 7, a total of 13 meetings were held which lasted for 68 hours and 42 minutes, taking the productivity to 97 per cent. Birla apprised that nine Government Bills were introduced of which seven were passed. The members, he said, raised 374 matters of urgent public concerns and 298 matters under Rule 377. A total of 43 statements were made by the ministers and 1,811 papers laid on the Table. He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Parliamentary Affairs Minister and leaders of all parties for their cooperation in the House proceedings.

Sixteen Army jawans killed as vehicle falls into gorge in North Sikkim

Gangtok | Agencies

Sixteen Army jawans were killed and four others injured when their vehicle skidded off the road and fell into a gorge at a remote location in North Sikkim near the India-China border on Friday. According to a senior police officer, the injured have been airlifted to an Army hospital in North Bengal. The mishap took place at around 8 a.m. at Zema 3, about 15 kms away from Lachen, located at a distance of around 130 km away from State capital Gangtok. Chungthang Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Arun Thatal informed that the Army vehicle was heading towards the border posts with 20 occupants. The vehicle seemed to have veered off the road while negotiating a curve in the Zema 3 area and crashed hundreds



of feet down. All the 16 bodies have been recovered from the crash site. The condition of the four critically injured Army personnel remains unknown, said Thatal, who was at the spot with a police team from Lachen. The bodies are being taken to State-run STNM Hospital in Gangtok for post-mortem and later will be handed over to the Army. The regiment of the victims is yet to be ascertained, he added. As per police, the Army vehicle had been picking up the Army personnel on the way as it was heading towards its destination.

Cabinet approves free ration distribution till December 2023

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a major decision, the Union Cabinet on Friday decided to distribute free ration under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) for a period of one year till December 2023. The move will entail a burden of Rs 2 lakh crore which would be completely borne by the government, Commerce and Food Minister Piyush Goyal told media persons. More than 81.35 crore NFSA beneficiaries will benefit from the move. Earlier, rice and wheat were provided at subsidised rates to the beneficiaries under NFSA. Foodgrains, which were being provided under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) since April 2020, will also be subsumed under NFSA quota, Goyal informed. Thus PMGKAY won't be extended beyond December 2022. Prior to Friday's decision, under NFSA, 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month at Rs 2-3 per kg were being provided. Families covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) get 35 kg of food grains per month. Rice is given to the poor under NFSA at Rs 3 per kg and wheat at Rs 2 per kg under NFSA. Now all this would be given free of cost to the beneficiaries.

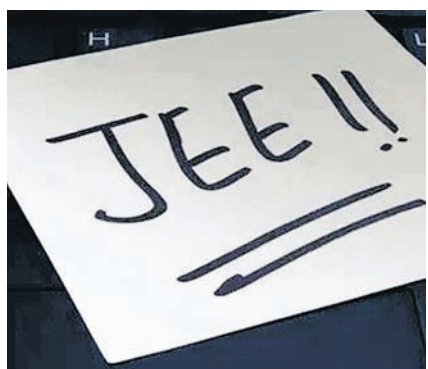
DEFENCE PERSONNEL'S PENSION REVISED

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Friday announced revision of pension for defence personnel under the provisions of "One Rank One Pension". The decision will entail an annual burden of Rs 8,450 crore on the government and will benefit 25,13,002 defence pensioners. An amount of Rs 23,638 crore would be paid as arrears from July 2019 to June 2022. Pension of the past pensioners would be re-fixed on the basis of average of minimum and maximum pension of defence forces retirees of calendar year 2018 in the same rank with the same length of service. Armed forces personnel who retired up to June 30, 2019 (excluding pre-mature retirees with effect from July 1, 2014) will be covered under this revision. Pension for those drawing above the average shall be protected. The benefit would also be extended to family pensioners, including war widows and disabled pensioners, an official statement said. Arrears will be paid in four half-yearly instalments.

No 10th marks to show, JEE aspirants from TN in a spot

Team Absolute | Chennai

With no marks to show in their 10th-class examination, several students from Tamil Nadu are facing a tough situation while applying for Joint Entrance Examination (JEE). The students don't have 10th marks to produce as they were all passed by the Tamil Nadu Board due to Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-21. Sujith Somanathan, a 12th standard student from a government school of Madurai, while speaking to IANS said, "I am worried as I don't have any 10th marks to show which is mandatory for applying in JEE. The state government officials have told us that the matter has been taken up with the National Testing Agency (NTA) and that it would be resolved soon. I am really worried." He further said, "After entering the personal details, the marks of Class 10 are mandatory and we are not able to further proceed in the application and hence we are really worried." It is to be noted that around 40,000 students appear for JEE from Tamil Nadu and the students who have taken the Tamil Nadu state board exams for the 10th standard don't have any marks for the tenth exam which is a mandatory criterion for applying in JEE. The registration for JEE commenced on December 12 and would continue till January 12. Ramkumar. T, a Physics teacher in a Government higher secondary school at



Vadapalani, Chennai while speaking to IANS said, "We had then requested the government to award marks to students based on their performance in 9th standard but they did not award any marks. This is creating a problem now for the students applying for JEE." Tamil Nadu School Education Minister, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi told IANS that Tamil Nadu Government has already taken up the matter with the Union government and the issue would be sorted out. School Education Commissioner of Tamil Nadu, K. Nanthakumar while speaking to media persons, said that the state government has already approached the Union Government and the National Testing Agency (NTA) - which conducts the test paper, and added that the issue would be sorted out soon.

Cold wave grips North India; dense fog engulfs several areas

MP TO FACE SEVERE COLD IN NEW YEAR

The celebration of Christmas in Madhya Pradesh will be celebrated in the bitter cold. As per meteorologists, the day and night temperature will remain high for two to three days. After that there will be a decline, that means there will be severe cold on New Year. Meteorologist Abhijit Chakravati told that there will be an increase in the night temperature for 3 days. After this the temperature will start rolling.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Cold wave continued to grip northern parts of the country and dense fog engulfed the Indo-Gangetic plains, including Delhi, for the fifth consecutive day on Friday. According to officials, in Delhi a minimum temperature of 7.9 degrees Celsius was recorded at Palam; Lodhi Road had 7.3, Aya Nagar - 5.6; Ridge (Civil lines) - 5.3, Najafgarh - 9.1 while Pitampura, Akshardham's Sports Complex, Mayur Vihar

recorded a minimum temperature of 10, 10, and 8.7 degrees Celsius. "Dense to Very Dense Fog conditions are likely to continue over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours and decrease in intensity & spread thereafter," tweeted the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Around 20 trains were delayed due to the fog and low visibility. According to an IMD official, due to moisture and light winds at lower tropo-

THE EFFECT OF COLD WILL INCREASE FROM DECEMBER 25
Meteorologist Ashfaq Hussain told that light clouds may appear once again in a day or two. This can increase the night temperature. Mild fluctuations in temperature will continue till December 25.

WHY COLD IS INEFFECTIVE IN MP?
According to meteorologist Ajay Kumar Shukla, when the wind hits the snow-capped mountains, the mercury also reaches the unit's digit. It has been four days since the Western Disturbance ended. The cold shines as soon as the sky is clear, but this time it is not happening. The reason behind this is that the mountains themselves are dry.

spheric levels over Indo-Gangetic plains, very dense fog in many/pockets is very likely over Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in night/morning hours during the next 48 hours. "Dense fog in isolated pockets is also very likely over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, north Rajasthan, Bihar, Sub Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim and Tirpura for the next 2-3 days," said the offi-

cial. A drop in temperature has been also recorded in states of North India, including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Bihar. Intense cold wave swept Ladakh and Kashmir as the 40-day long period of harsh winter cold known as 'Chhillai Kalan' entered its third day.



BJP MLAs to file complaint against Jitu Patwari for presenting wrong facts: Narottam Mishra

Team Absolute | Bhopal

MLAs of Bhartiya Janta Party filed complaint against the Congress MLA Jitu Patwari for presenting wrong facts in state assembly...



"You are misleading the House. I can say with full responsibility that not a single paisa of the government was spent on serving food to BJP workers. CM Chouhan

Patwari had deliberately misled the Assembly by showing just part of a document and hiding the fact that the ruling party had paid these bills. VD Sharma (MP BJP chief)

those events held at the Chief Minister's residence. The home minister said, "It was the Congress government when the question was raised, the leaders put pressure on the officials and prepared a report to taint the BJP government and also the Party".

the party, the government paid the amount on the programs which the government had organised and the party had also paid the money of their program".

KK Mishra (State Congress media department chairman) said, "Patwari is a serious politician and has levelled charges against the government by waving documents. He is fully aware of the consequences of showing false papers. BJP should answer the charges instead of making a hue and cry."

All arrangements of GIS-23 should be according international standards: Minister Dattigaon

Team Absolute | Bhopal

All arrangements of GIS-2023 should be of international standards. All the arrangements should be completed within the time limit. This instruction was given by Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Minister Rajvrudhan Singh Dattigaon in the review meeting of the preparation of GIS-2023 AT the Mantralaya.



Minister Dattigaon said that all the heads of states and heads of industrial organisations should be welcomed appropriately according to Indian culture. There should be proper arrangements from receiving everyone at the airport to taking them to the place of stay and venue.

arrangement for appropriate branding and providing information about ODOP (one district-one product). Principal Secretary Manish Singh said that in GIS-2023, more than 4 thousand people including heads of states, ambassadors and their delegations and representatives of industrial organisations will participate.

Manish Singh informed that discussions have been held with all the visitors. Along with this, invitations are also being sent to everyone. He said that according to the intention and instructions of the Chief Minister, all the works would be completed within the time limit.

JCB DEPLOYED FOR ILLEGAL SAND MINING SEIZED IN KHARGONE

Khargone: Officials have confiscated a JCB deployed for illegally sand mining from Sahastra Dhara area of Maheshwar. Mining officer Sawan Chauhan said they had received information about illegal mining of sand at banks of the Narmada River in Jalkoti of Sahastra Dhara around 10 am on Friday. Acting on the tip off, a team immediately rushed to Maheshwar.

Two employees were sent on motorcycles to the site, however, by the time they reached, the people had fled from the site and only a JCB was parked there. The team confiscated the JCB, which was used for illegal sand mining, and brought it to Maheshwar police station. A case has been registered under MP Minerals (Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage) Rules, 2022.

CM Chouhan expresses grief over martyrdom of soldiers in accident in Sikkim



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has expressed grief over the untimely death of army personnel in an accident in Sikkim. Chief Minister Chouhan has said in a tweet that- My mind is extremely distressed by the news of the martyrdom of the brave soldiers of the army in a road accident in Sikkim. Chief Minister Chouhan has prayed to

God for the well being of the jawans injured in the accident and for the peace of the souls of the deceased jawans.

The Chief Minister said that in such a painful moment, everyone is involved in the grief of the Indian Army and the bereaved family members. An army truck fell into a gorge in Sikkim this afternoon, resulting in an untimely death of the jawans.

Be Fully prepared for prevention of Corona: CM Chouhan

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that there is nothing to worry like the spread of Corona like before, but all arrangements must be ready in the hospitals. Those who have not got their booster dose should get it administered.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that people should be careful from Corona. Adequate arrangement of necessary medicines should be kept ready in the hospitals for the treatment of Corona. Mock drill of oxygen plant should be done in medical colleges and hospitals. It should be ensured that the plant remains in running condition. The persons, who have not got the third dose (booster) of the vaccine, should get the dose.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that there is nothing to worry like the spread of Corona like before, but all arrangements must be ready in the hospitals. Those who have not got their booster dose should get it administered.

Health Mohammad Suleman and senior officers were present.

3 of 'Band Baaja Baarat' gang held for stealing from wedding venues

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Two men have been arrested while a juvenile has been apprehended by Delhi Police's Crime Branch from a Madhya Pradesh-based 'Band Baaja Baarat' gang for allegedly stealing bags containing jewellery and cash from wedding venues, said an official on Friday.



The accused have been identified as Sonu and Kishan, residents of Rajgarh district in MP.

the wedding venues and three suspects, including one juvenile, were identified," said Yadav.

"The video footages showed that the accused before committing the crime used to spend considerable time at the venues, making themselves comfortable and familiar with the guests. They have their dinner in the party and patiently waited for the time to strike," said the official. A tip-off was received by police

and a raid was conducted. Trio, including the juvenile, were apprehended when they were leaving Delhi and moving for their village in Madhya Pradesh," said the official.

On interrogation, the accused told police that they hailed from Rajgarh district of MP and used to visit Delhi-NCR and other metro cities in north India during the wedding seasons to commit thefts.

PDS rice worth Rs 55K seized in Chanchoda, 1 arrested

Team Absolute | Guna

Case of black marketing of grains to be distributed under public distribution system's (PDS) in Chanchoda has come to fore. Chanchoda police have arrested a man with 37 quintal rice worth Rs 55, 500 which was meant to be distributed under PDS. Hidden in a truck, the stolen rice was sent to neighbouring Rajasthan. As per reports, the truck transporting PDS rice to Rajasthan for selling in open market. Acting on a tip off, a



police team intercepted a truck at Bageshwar Tiraha. Police detained truck driver Ghanshyam Singh Balmiki, 40, a resident of Chanchoda village. Police seized 37 quintals of PDS rice, packed in 74 plastic bags from the truck. On being questioned, Balmiki, failed to produce the documents pertaining to sale and transportation of rice.

G-20 delegation visit Tourism MP, collector review preparations at Mandu

Team Absolute | Dhar

Tourism corporation's managing director S Viswanathan and Dhar district collector Priyank Mishra on Friday reviewed the preparations and arrangements at historic town Mandu ahead of the visit of delegations during the G20 Summit. During the visit to tourist sites, the officials directed to ensure that all amenities were in place.



While visiting Jahaz Mahal, the authorities directed the local officials to look into road repair, renovation of street lights, cleaning of the pond, installation of focus lights on Khorasani tamarind trees around the monuments.

Mahal complex (Nagar Palika Naka to Jahaz Mahal) and cleaning of Munj Talab near Jahaz Mahal, when the water in the talab is less, lighting arrangements around the talab and, outside were given by the senior officials. Instructions were also given to make a vertical garden on the vacant space. Senior officials said that signboards

should be put up warning against littering in the pond and mentioning about the time for the same

A bamboo wall in front of the houses near the pond would be installed. The employees have been told to keep the parking lot clean.

The collector instructed that arrangements should be made for guides for the guests. Group-wise guides should be arranged for a bigger tourist group. A route chart would also be prepared so that the guests do not face any inconvenience in reaching Mandu.

The collector inspected the rest house of the Public Works Department (PWD). The rest house is to be renamed Khorasani Villa and the name plate is to be put up on the building.

CM CHOUHAN PLANTS SAPLINGS WITH 86 YEAR OLD NIRANJAN PAL



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Kadamba, Blue Gulmohar and Jungle Jalebi in the Smart City Garden. Former Mayor of Bhopal Alok Sharma was with him. Niranjan Pal, 86, who came on a wheelchair, planted saplings on his birthday. Chief Minister Chouhan greeted Niranjan Pal on his birthday and wished him a healthy and long life.

"MY NUMBER REMAINS SAME," SAYS SONU SOOD, HELPING PEOPLE IN CRISES DURING COVID-19

Team Absolute | Indore

Where the nation is scared of increasing cases of covid-19, actor Sonu Sood claims to help all those in need while saying, "My number remains the same." Sonu Sood visited Indore on Friday morning on his way to visit the Mahakal Lok in Ujjain. Sonu said, "Indore is my home, I have been visiting the city every year since childhood. And I am amazed to see how beautifully the city developed." As similar to his contact number, his memory of Indore remains constant as well. "I am well aware of all the popular places of the city, namely Chappan, Sarafa, Rajwada, Palasia, and even the Janjeerwala square," said, Sood. Fascinated about the developments made within the city, he said that undoubtedly, the city has received the award for cleanest city in the nation as 'you all' (the residents) have kept it the way it is. In afternoon, Sonu Sood traveled to Ujjain to visit the Mahakal Lok. Discussing about his after plan he said, "I will visit the Mahakal Lok and later meet children there, as I had planned previously."

WOMAN JUMPS OUT OF RUNNING TRAIN ON PLATFORM, INJURED

Mandsaur/Indore:

A 65-year-old woman was injured after she jumped out of a running express train that she had boarded by mistake at Ratlam railway station in Madhya Pradesh, a Western Railway official said on Friday. The incident was captured on a CCTV camera.



The woman, Sagar Bai, was supposed to board a train for Nagda station on Thursday afternoon but she boarded the Emakulam-Hazrat Nizamuddin superfast train by mistake, the official said. When passengers informed her, she panicked and jumped out on the platform of Ratlam railway station when the train was gaining speed.

According to officials, the woman fell unconscious after falling on the platform. A Railway Protection Force (RPF) jawan and a few passengers rushed her to the medical-aid room at the station where she was given preliminary treatment. The official informed the woman suffered a minor injury on her leg.

Owner of cat attacks neighbour's family with axe, 3 injured

Team Absolute | Bhind

The actions of a cat led to an argument between two parties in Machhand area of Ambedkar colony in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind. The owner of the cat attacked the family which opposed to it drinking milk kept outside their house. Three members of the family were injured in the clash and admitted to Bhind district hospital for treatment today.

According to reports, Shamin's cat often used to drink milk in houses of people living in the neighborhood. The entire neighborhood claimed they were troubled by the cat.

When the cat was trying

to drink milk from Ramnaresh's house, he threw a stick at her and chased the cat away.

As Shamin received the information regarding this, he, along with Arif, Javed, Mubarak and his six to seven friends, went to Ramnaresh's house and started attacking his family with sticks and axes. Ramnaresh, his wife, and daughter suffered serious injuries in the attack. After giving first aid at Machhand hospital, all were sent to district hospital. Ramnaresh informed the police that terror of Shamin's cat was there for many days.

Whenever someone tries to stop the cat, Shamin bullied that person, he said.

ADITYA BIRLA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED. Registered Office- Indian Rayon Compound, Veraval, Gujarat - 362266. Branch Office- G Corporation Tech Park, Kasarvadavali, Ghodbunder Road, Thane -400067 (MH). DEMAND NOTICE (under Rule 3 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002) SUBSTITUTED SERVICE OF NOTICE U/s 13 (1) of SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Political fireworks likely in Kerala

Given the ongoing tussle between Governor Arif Mohamad Khan and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Kerala is likely to ring in the New Year with a plenty of political fireworks with many crucial decisions, including the Bill removing the former as Chancellor. Interestingly, the decisions have to be taken at a time when the relations between the two leaders have hit the rock bottom. Khan, who is travelling, is expected to be back in the New Year and the first file that he will be looking into is the Bill that has been passed by the Kerala Assembly removing him as the chancellor of 14 universities in the state. The Bill became a necessity for the Vijayan government after Khan started throwing spanners in the functioning of the government, which was running the higher education system in the state as a department of the CPI-M, as per Khan. Vice-Chancellors, teaching and administrative jobs was being given to the party cadres, in violation of all norms. With the Bill now before Khan, he may look into it but not sit in judgement as it is an issue concerning him. The Governor has been reiterating that he will stay away from judging matters if he is the subject. Hence in all likelihood, if the Governor does not sign the Bill, he will lay it before the President. Many are seeing it as a climb down as the Congress-led Opposition in Kerala has always been wary of the standoff between the two as they see it as nothing but a "match fixing". Hence all eyes are fixed now on how Khan deals with the Bill as he has to make the first move. If he reads out the customary Governor's address, then the Congress's assumption that the entire standoff being "stage-managed" will turn out to be true.

HISTORIC UN BIODIVERSITY PACT TEXT WITH 2030 VISION RELEASED

Vishal Gulati

After two days of agreeing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by 196 parties at the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, which contains a mission to halt and reverse nature loss, the final text of the historic framework has been released. The framework, released on Thursday in this second-most populous city in Canada, includes four goals and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030. Responding to final Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, WWF International Director General Marco Lambertini, told IANS: "Agreeing a shared global goal that will guide collective and immediate action to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 is an exceptional feat for those that have been negotiating the Global Biodiversity Framework, and a win for people and planet." "It sends a clear signal and must be the launchpad for action from governments, business and society to transition towards a nature-positive world, in support of climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals." Saying it was taken time to get here but governments have signed a once-in-a-decade agreement to halt the destruction of earth's ecosystems and to protect people and species, Jennifer Morris, The Nature Conservancy, CEO, said, "We were looking for a global agreement that would transform our relationship with nature." "Agreeing to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 puts the issue squarely on the table with a clear deadline for all of society. If implementation moves at pace, and funding flows where its needed then we can look back on this snowy historic day in Montreal and say yes, I

remember the moment when humanity decided to put nature first." The framework has four long-term goals for 2050 related to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. **Goal A** The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050; Human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced ten-fold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels; The genetic diversity within population of wild and domesticated species is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential. **Goal B** Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contribution to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050. **Goal C** The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources, and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protect-



ed, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments. **Goal D** Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework are secured and equitably accessible to all parties, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing states, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year, and aligning financial flows with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. The framework has 23 action-oriented global targets for urgent action over the decade to 2030. The actions set out in each target need to be initiated immediately and completed by 2030. Together, the results will enable

achievement towards the outcome-oriented goals for 2050. Actions to reach these targets should be implemented consistently and in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its protocols and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national circumstances, priorities and socio-economic conditions. Responding to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, campaign group Avaaz said a new chapter has begun. "The result of COP15 opens a new chapter of hope in the fight to keep our world a liveable place for all, Avaaz Acting CEO, Bert Wander, told correspondent. "Implementing this deal will require increased and sustained mobilisation. We won't have much time to breathe: the work has to start right away. These outcomes open a new chapter where there will be much to do on implementation, and to further strengthen the implementation mechanisms at the Convention on Biological Diversity." Avaaz sees the global biodiversity framework as a blueprint to

guide collective effort, but also vigilance, to stop biodiversity loss. Countries will now have to update their national biodiversity strategies and action plans to reflect the global biodiversity framework and how they will contribute to achieving it. This must happen as soon as possible and before COP16 (Antalya in Turkey in 2024), when a first assessment of the level of global ambition will take place. The development and implementation of these plans opens up formidable opportunities for people to mobilise in all countries. There is a funding need of nearly \$1 trillion a year to implement the global biodiversity framework. As per Avaaz, the final text used a smaller number, but still estimated the funding gap to fill at \$700 billion per year. With 196 nations, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity has near universal participation among countries. The convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

international

MULTIPLE FACTORS CAUSE RISE OF SEVERE COVID CASES IN BEIJING: HEALTH EXPERTS

Beijing Agencies Health experts noted that multiple reasons have led to a rise of severe Covid cases in Beijing, as north China generally sees a greater occurrence of respiratory infectious diseases in winter times. Some senior patients developed severe conditions after contracting the Omicron variant, but will recover from the infection after treatment, said Li Yanming, head of the department of respiratory and critical care medicine at the Beijing Hospital, whose patients admitted are mostly seniors, Xinhua News Agency reported. Tong Zhaohui, vice president of Beijing Chao-Yang Hospital, said the hospital has been receiving an average of 350 to 400 fever patients and around 500 patients with emergencies daily in recent days. China has prepared medical facilities for treating severe cases as the country is witnessing a rise in the



number of these patients. Third-grade hospitals should take in Covid patients with severe conditions as well as those with multiple critical underlying conditions, said Jiao Yahui, an official with the National Health Commission. Senior patients with underlying conditions and children should be directly transferred to third-grade hospitals as soon as their conditions change, Jiao added.

S.KOREA LOGS 68,168 NEW COVID CASES
Seoul: South Korea reported fresh 68,168 Covid infections on Friday, including 95 from overseas, bringing the total caseload to 28,534,558. Friday's count is up by about 1,200 from a week ago. The daily infection numbers have been on a steady rebound for the past several weeks amid a winter wave, Yonhap News Agency reported quoting the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA). Despite the virus spread, the government announced plans to scrap the indoor mask mandate in phases and a set of criteria that need to be met to implement the mask-free policy. Third-grade hospitals rank at the top of China's three-tier hospital grading system. They have the most hospital beds and provide comprehensive medical services.

Severe winter weather sweeps across US, disrupts holiday travels

Washington Agencies Severe winter weather is sweeping across the US and has disrupted holiday travels ahead of Christmas. The National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center tweeted on Thursday that "a strong cold front continues to rapidly move through the middle of the country this morning with remarkable temperature drops, strong winds creating dangerous wind chills, and bursts of snow." The winter storm, likely to intensify into a bomb cyclone, is expected to create record-low temperatures for Christmas weekend in many parts of the US, Xinhua News Agency reported. US President Joe Biden told reporters Thursday that the White House has "tried to contact 26 governors so far in



affected regions." "Please take this storm extremely seriously," Biden said. "This is not like a snow day, you know, when you were a kid. This is serious stuff." Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear is urging people to stay off the roads as the state is bracing for the severe cold weather. "We are urging Kentuckians to stay off the roads starting Thursday afternoon," Beshear tweeted. "If you are an essential worker and must travel, please follow these safety tips and have a vehicle kit in your car." Airlines have cancelled more than 2,000 flights within, into, or out of the US as of early Thursday afternoon, according to the flight-tracking site FlightAware.

TTP claims Islamabad suicide blast that leaves policeman dead
Islamabad: A policeman was killed and at least six people - including four police officers and two civilians - were injured in a suicide blast in Islamabad on Friday, media reports said citing police officials. Television footage showed the fiery wreckage of a vehicle with a large number of police personnel combing the scene. Shortly afterwards, the Islamabad Police declared a "red alert" in the city, Dawn reported. According to Deputy Inspector General of Police Sohail Zafar Chattha, the police spotted a "suspicious vehicle" with a man and a woman aboard at 10.15 a.m. in the area. "When the police stopped the vehicle, the couple came out of the car. The long-haired man, while being checked by the officers, went inside the vehicle on some pretext and then detonated himself," he said in a media briefing, Dawn reported. Separately, in an interview with Geo News, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah confirmed that "two terrorists" were killed in the blast.

GENEVA TO HAVE 24-HR DRIVERLESS BUS SERVICE FROM 2025: REPORT

Geneva Agencies (Germany) and Oslo (Norway). A total of 45 vehicles will be deployed, with 15 in Geneva, Xinhua news agency reported. "ULTIMO will focus on issues such as how to ensure the safety of passengers and react, for example, in the event of accidents or incivilities in the driverless, unmanned shuttles. It will also look at pricing questions, minimum and maximum distances for the bus destinations and the legal framework," the Swissinfo.com report said. "By offering door-to-door, on-demand, 24-hour transport, the service would be of higher quality. It would also avoid empty trips during off-peak hours and thus reduce some costs. Finally, by responding to demand in real time, queuing and congestion around stations could be avoided," it added.

N.Korea denounces US-led UNSC discussions against its missile launches

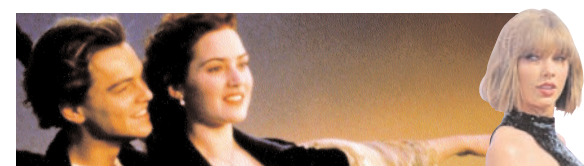
Seoul Agencies North Korea's foreign ministry on Friday slammed the US push for a presidential statement of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) condemning the regime's recent missile provocations. The US has reportedly produced a draft of the document and circulated it among the other members of the UNSC. It features a strong condemnation of North Korea for its saber-rattling, including the launch last month of a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile, Yonhap News Agency reported quoting Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). An unnamed spokesperson for the ministry said the US is now trying to "cook up" a UNSC presidential statement condemning its "exercise of the



right to self-defence," according to the KCNA. "The DPRK has already and clearly warned that such foolish attempt of the US may entail a very undesirable consequence," the spokesperson said. DPRK is the acronym for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The spokesperson added Pyongyang is closely watching what it described as "reckless moves of the US".

BIKINI KILLER CHARLES SOBHRAJ FREED FROM NEPAL PRISON

Kathmandu: Charles Sobhraj, 77, who is popularly known as "serpent killer" and "bikini killer" was freed from the jail on Friday afternoon as per the order from the Supreme Court of Nepal. On Wednesday, Nepal's Supreme Court had ordered the release of Sobhraj for different reasons. He should have been released much ago but due to political maneuvering, it got delayed, Nihita Biswas, who is known as his fiancée, told reporters in Kathmandu ahead of his release from the central jail. He should have been released some five years ago but it could not happen, said Biswas, adding that political party only released their people from the jail, and did not give preferences to his early release. He has spent 19 years and two months in central jail in Kathmandu.



Megan Fox, Michele Morrone set to star in 'sci-fi thriller movie'



Los Angeles | Agencies

The 'Transformers' star Megan Fox and Michele Morrone of '365 Days' fame have been set to star in sci-fi thriller 'Subservience'. The project will be bankrolled by 'Angel Has Fallen' and 'The Hitman's Bodyguard' producer Millennium Media, reports.

On the project, Fox will rejoin with her 'Till Death' director S.K. Dale, with a screenplay written by Will Honley and April Maguire. Production is due to start filming at the Bulgarian Nu Boyana Studio on January 7, 2023.

According to the reports, the film is about a struggling father (Morrone) who purchases a domestic SIM (Fox) to help care for his house and family until she gains awareness and turns deadly.

'Transformers' and 'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' actress Fox recently starred in 'Big Gold Brick' with Andy Garcia, Lucy Hale, and Oscar Isaac, and 'Good Mourning' starring Colson Baker and Dove Cameron.

Her upcoming projects include 'Naya Legend of the Golden Dolphin' with Kate Winslet, Elliot Page and Gerard Butler, and Millennium Media's 'The Expendables 4' with Jason Statham and Sylvester Stallone.

Morrone is known for his starring role in Netflix's franchise hit '365 Days' in which he starred opposite Anna-Maria Sieklucka, MGM's 'Duetto', and Netflix's 'The Trial'.

I think 'The best fashion is confidence': Shania Twain

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Shania Twain, who stripped off on the cover of her latest single 'Waking Up Dreaming' back in September, talked about how she's "comfortable in her own skin" and found the whole experience "really liberating."

"This is me expressing my truth. I'm comfortable in my own skin, and this is the way I am sharing that confidence. I think the best fashion is confidence, and whatever you wear - if you're wearing it with that, it's fashionable," she said.

"I am a woman in my late 50s, and I don't need to hide behind the clothes. I can't even tell you how good it felt to do nude shooting. I was just so unashamed of my new body, you know, as a woman that is well into my menopause. I'm not even emotional about it; I just feel okay about it. It's really liberating."

The 'Man! I Feel Like a Woman' hitmaker also broke down boundaries with her debut music video 'What Made You Say That' in 1993, in which she appeared braless with her midriff on show, but she started to get more self-conscious as she "grew older."

She added, "From the very beginning - the very first video - I was ditching the bra. But, I was a lot firmer then, so as I grew older, I started feeling a different pressure of, 'Well, your breasts are not as plump as they used to be. Your skin is not as tight as it used to be. Maybe you should start covering it up a little bit more.'"

However, the moment she felt her confidence "regressing," she decided "frig that" and wanted to embrace her figure. She explained, "I am embracing my body as it changes, as I should have from my childhood to my teens, as I should be from my taut, 20s and 30-year-old self, to my menopausal body."

"I'm not going to be shy about it. I want to be courageous about it, and I want to share that courage in the artwork that I am directing."



"Idris Elba to return as Luther"

Los Angeles | Agencies

British actor Idris Elba's character of John Luther from the thriller series 'Luther' has been away for quite some time. In the 2019 finale of 'Luther', the dark series about the complicated detective, he is arrested and cuffed by Schenk (played by Dermot Crowley) and sent to prison.

Now he's returning for a movie continuation of his story, reuniting with director Jamie

Payne and series creator-writer Neil Cross.

"He's done so much to bend the law in order to catch the bad guys that he's ended up in jail," Elba said. "So that's where we start the story. He's contemplating what he's going to do with his life." According to the reports, though Elba said the show's ardent fans had a lot to do with getting the movie version going ("They really wanted it. And I wanted it"), viewers needn't watch all five seasons of the thriller series in order to get up to speed.

"Luther is just so haunted -- that's his whole thing," Elba said.

"Even when he's a free man, he can't help but chase it, chase the ghosts that get into his head. And I think that's what drives him in this film."

"He's just very haunted by things he's done, things he could have done, people that have died."

"Still, prison has changed him, and we, as viewers, have changed since Luther's last out-

ing too," Payne said.

"The film really digs into, again, our primal fears," says the director.

"We've all gone for a period of time where we were literally locked in our house."

He added, "And in a very contemporary society, we're all so visible now. It's almost like I can look through the vast walls of our hearts into each other's life in a way that we've never looked before. And I think that makes us all very vulnerable."



Los Angeles | Agencies

Aubrey Plaza has a strange wish. She wishes Drew Barrymore was her mom. While joining Barrymore on her podcast 'Drew's News' to talk about 'The White Lotus', Plaza praised Barrymore's parenting skills. She said: "You're a dream mom. I wish you were my mom," before then adopting a baby voice and declaring, "Be my mommy." Barrymore ran with the request, replying: "I'll say the same thing I say to my girls. Get back in my belly." Barrymore has two daughters, Olive and Frankie. According to the reports, things got weirder from there. "Feed me, put me to bed," requested Plaza. Barrymore responded: "I'm good at it too. I put them in the nook of my arm and I hold them and I pet them." And she added: "Oh God, what I wouldn't do to put you to bed." When Barrymore tried to steer the conversation back on track, noting that her dreams were coming true by being with Plaza in the moment, Plaza replied: "Mine too, Mommy." "Get in my belly!" Barrymore responded, with Plaza creepily saying: "Oh God, it's so warm." Barrymore then described her womb as not too hot, not too cold and with food available 24/7.

Aubrey Plaza wishes Drew Barrymore was her mom

Zoe & Sam spoke about the pressure & risk they faced for the movie

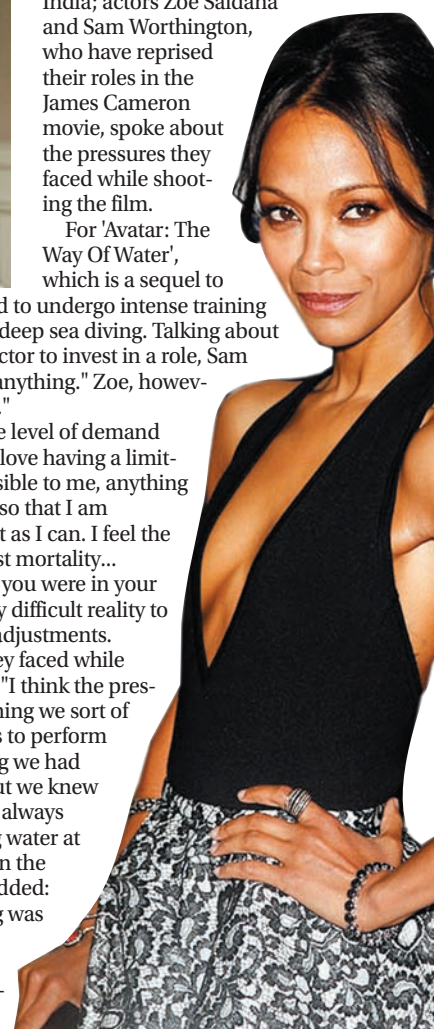
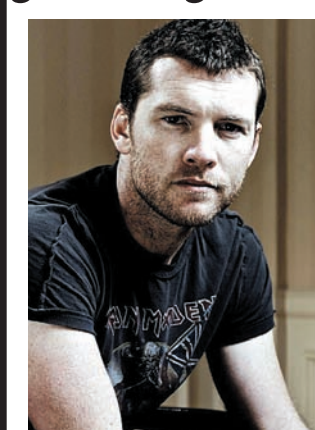
New Delhi | Agencies

Their latest release 'Avatar: The Way of Water' has made a whopping Rs 235 crore in its one week of release in India; actors Zoe Saldana and Sam Worthington, who have reprised their roles in the James Cameron movie, spoke about the pressures they faced while shooting the film.

For 'Avatar: The Way of Water', which is a sequel to 2002 film 'Avatar', the actors had to undergo intense training for swimming underwater and deep sea diving. Talking about how much is too much for an actor to invest in a role, Sam said with a laugh: "I am up for anything." Zoe, however, feels it "depends on an actor."

"I think it depends on just the level of demand that a role or project requires. I love having a limitless amount of resources accessible to me, anything I may need to just help me just so that I am immersed and character as best as I can. I feel the only challenge I am facing is just mortality... You're not as fast in your 40s as you were in your late 20s. So, that becomes a very difficult reality to face and then you make those adjustments."

What about the pressures they faced while shooting for the film? Zoe said: "I think the pressure that I felt was the new training we sort of required for the sequel which is to perform under water that was something we had never done in the first movie but we knew that James Cameron was always going to meddle with capturing water at some point and incorporating in the whole journey of Avatar." She added: "So, training for that, free diving was definitely nerve-wracking but once we went through the process it became a really exhilarating journey."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

Kelly Gale



IULIA VANTUR DREW INSPIRATION FROM URMILA FOR HER LATEST TRACK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer and actress Iulia Vantur revealed how she was inspired by Bollywood actress Urmila Matondkar for her latest song 'Yai Re'. She has collaborated with Honey Singh for the track which was originally sung by Asha Bhosle for the movie 'Rangeela' starring Urmila.

She spoke about how she drew inspiration from Urmila's dance steps for the music video of this track.

The singer said: "The thought of matching the steps and vibes from the original song picturised on Urmila Ji made me slightly nervous at first. But as I watched the original song I was able to draw inspiration from her and create a new vibe for the song in my own style." She is known for her songs such as 'Mai Chala', 'Designer Lehenga', and 'Tera Tha Tera Hoon', among others. Now, she has all the hopes from her latest track and she talked about getting support from the team to bring perfection in the picturisation of the song.

"With the constant support and guidance of the team, we achieved what we were aiming for. And by the audience's reaction, we can tell that we are on the right track," she added.

'Yai Re' is sung by Yo Yo Honey Singh and Iulia Vantur.



Shrenu Parikh to play titular role in the new show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Shrenu Parikh, who is known for her roles in 'Iss Pyaar Ko Kya Naam Doon?' and 'Ishqbaaz', is all set to play the titular role in the new show 'Maitree'.

Shrenu said: "I am really happy to be a part of a show like Maitree as it not only offers viewers high-octane drama, but I feel that my character is also unique and exciting. Maitree is a simple and sensible girl who likes to celebrate every small moment of her life. An ambitious girl by nature, Maitree and I are very similar, and her journey is sure to keep everyone on the edge of their seats."

The show is a reflection of true friendship and childhood bonds between two friends living in the city of Prayagraj. Their mothers feel that their friendship will continue after marriage but the two are sure to be best friends even if they settle down. However, there is a twist in the story.

She said: "The show revolves around two best friends and their volatile journey in life, which has brought them to a point they never imagined in their wildest dreams. With several intriguing plot twists in store for the audience, I hope they shower us with their love and support."



Bhumi takes a break from her erratic shoot schedule

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Taking a break from her erratic shoot schedule, actress Bhumi Pednekar will be seen ringing in the New Year in style in Mexico with her friends. Bhumi will be taking a break after shooting almost seven films this year. Having had to work non-stop since the pandemic related lockdowns lifted Bhumi will travel to Mexico with her friends.

The actress' slate of seven films, including 'Govinda Naam Mera', released earlier this month. Her upcoming line-up includes Anubhav Sinha's 'Bheed', Ajay Bahl's 'The Ladykiller', Sudhir Mishra's 'Afwaa', Gauri Khan-produced 'Bhakshak', Mudassar Aziz's 'Mere Husband Ki Biwi' and a couple of more unannounced projects.

Bhumi's latest release 'Govinda Naam Mera' is a comedy thriller written and directed by Shashank Khaitan and produced by Karan Johar.

The film also stars Vicky Kaushal, and Kiara Advani. It was premiered on 16 December 2022 on Disney+ Hotstar.



I'M SOMEBODY WHO IS BUILT TO CONQUER: YASH

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Pan-India star Yash has had a great 2022 as his film 'KGF: Chapter 2' broke records at the box-office.

The actor says he is built to conquer much more and adds that it's okay if he dies fighting but he is somebody who will be fighting for something that excites him. Yash revealed, "Lot of people ask me, what do you do now, what can you do (post KGF success). I said what do you think, this is the ultimate (the success of KGF and box office numbers) may be it is for you or someone else." "I'm not somebody who is going to say that I must just encash this success, establish myself and just relax now. I'm not somebody who is built for administration, I'm somebody who is built to conquer much more."

The actor added: "I'll do something which gives me excitement. It's okay if I die fighting but I am somebody who will be fighting for something that excites me." Yash has given the biggest blockbuster of the year with 'KGF: Chapter 2' grossing over Rs 1,250 crore worldwide.

CIRKUS : SANJAY MISHRA SHINES WHILE RANVEER COMES OUT AS A CLOWN

FILM REVIEW

BY SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Director: Rohit Shetty
Cast: Ranveer Singh, Pooja Hegde, Jacqueline Fernandez, Johnny Lever, Sanjay Mishra, Varun Sharma, among others
Runtime: 2hr 18 mins
Ratings: 2/5

SYNOPSIS

Dr Roy Jamnadas rearranges and places two sets of identical twins up for adoption with two separate families in two different cities. Years later, when one pair of twins chooses to travel to the city where the other set of twins runs a circus, a comedy of errors unfolds.

REVIEW

Jamana das Orphanage is an Ashram that is maintained by two brothers, Joy and Roy. One of the brothers holds the opinion that a child's future is determined by upbringing more than just their blood relationship. He splits apart two sets of identical twins in order to prove this hypothesis, which sparks confusion.

Surprisingly, the new parents of the rearranged pair of infants choose to name their children Roy and Joy. Roy One is the Electric Man. Roy Two always gets shocked when Roy One touches the wire.

Talking about the movie, with the Golmaal series, Rohit Shetty has repeatedly shown that he is a master of creating good comedy. This time he highly disappoints his audience. In the attempt to create a chaotic comedy, the filmmaker ends up making a mess. The movie's dialogues fall flat and one cannot even force a laugh on them. Only a few instances make you



laugh out loud; otherwise, the whole movie is like a bland meal; which just looks fancy but tastes nothing.

Regarding the star performances, this multi-star movie boasts a fantastic star cast that includes talented performers like Johnny Lever, Siddhartha Jadhav, and Sanjay Mishra, among others. However, it appears that Rohit Shetty has forgotten to put the skill to use.

When it comes to the main lead of the film, Ranveer Singh is an unmitigated letdown. When utilized properly, Ranveer is a talented actor who has enormous potential, but it seems like he is a big misfit for a Rohit Shetty comedy.

Varun Sharma doesn't try anything new, which is often preferable than overacting or doing too much. He is a good talent but his dialogues are so lame that even a kid sitting next to me in the theatre, doesn't laugh. Although Pooja Hegde has a small role, she is bearable. I still don't get why Jacqueline is in the movie, she doesn't do anything that advances the story or the humour. Her presence in the film is quite avoidable. To be honest, the supporting cast of the film is the only thing that has a chance of keeping everyone

interested till the very end. This movie's true star is Sanjay Mishra. He displays his true talent in the movie by playing Jacqueline's father. Despite lousy writing, he succeeds in making the audience laugh with his facial expressions and dialogue delivery. Even Siddhartha Jadhav, Vrajesh Hirjee, and Johnny Lever are deserving of praise. Coming on to the film's music and background score. Rohit Shetty's film has a very particular background score, which he uses in his comedy films. This time as well the technical team has used the exact same soundtrack which is okay. The songs of the movie are totally forgettable except Deepika's Current Laga song. It is a nice track which makes you want to groove. Looking at the Technical aspects of the film, the CGI and VFX are poorly done. The script of the film needs major editing and some good jokes to make the movie palatable.

CONCLUSION

There is nothing outstanding about the film, which disappoints audiences. Instead of cribbing in the theatre, I would much rather rest and relax at home.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Aisha Sharma