

absolute india

VOL. 10, ISSUE 70, MUMBAI | SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHOPAL AND NEW DELHI

NATION > 02
Charge sheet can't be equated with an FIR for free public ...



HOLLYWOOD > 06
'I like being alone too much' ...



SPORTS > 07
India Open 2023: Vitidsarn upsets Loh Kean Yew to reach ...



GOOGLE'S PARENT COMPANY ALPHABET TO LAY OFF 12K EMPLOYEES

DEEPLY SORRY: PICHAI

▶ **THE ROLES THE COMPANY IS ELIMINATING CUT ACROSS ALPHABET, PRODUCT AREAS, FUNCTIONS, LEVELS, AND REGIONS.**

▶ **MORE THAN 1,600 TECH EMPLOYEES ARE BEING LAID OFF PER DAY ON AN AVERAGE IN 2023 GLOBALLY, INCLUDING IN INDIA, AND THE SACKING EPISODES HAVE GAINED SPEED AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC MELTDOWN AND RECESSION FEARS.**

▶ **AMAZON ANNOUNCED TO LAY OFF 18,000 EMPLOYEES GLOBALLY, INCLUDING NEARLY 1,000 IN INDIA.**

▶ **GOOGLE WILL PAY 2022 BONUSES AND REMAINING VACATION TIME TO THOSE IMPACTED.**



In an email to employees, Pichai said the company has already sent a separate email to employees in the US who are affected by the layoffs. "In other countries, this process will take longer due to local laws and practices," he added.

In the US, Google will pay employees during the full notification period (minimum 60 days) and also offer a severance package starting at 16 weeks salary, plus two weeks for every additional year at Google, and accelerate at least 16 weeks of GSU (Google stock) vesting.

"We'll be offering 6 months of healthcare, job placement services, and immigration support for those affected. Outside the US, we'll sup-

port employees in line with local practices," said Pichai.

The Google CEO said that these are important moments to "sharpen our focus, reengineer our cost base, and direct our talent and capital to our highest priorities".

The layoffs at Google's parent company were expected amid the deepening funding winter that has hit companies of all sizes in the global slowdown and recession fears.

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella said earlier this week that the company will be "making changes that will result in the reduction of our overall workforce by 10,000 jobs through the end of FY23 Q3 (third quarter)".

SWIGGY LAYS OFF 380 EMPLOYEES



New Delhi: Online food delivery platform Swiggy on Friday confirmed that the company is laying off 380 employees as food delivery growth slows.

The impacted employees will receive a minimum assured payout of 3 months, which will include variable pay/incentives at 100 per cent.

The joining bonus and retention bonus paid out will be waived off.

Moreover, the affected employees will get medical insurance coverage for themselves and nominated family members till 31st May, 2023, the company mentioned.

The company also said that it will be shutting down its meat marketplace very soon as the company was not able to achieve product-market fit despite their iterations.

If needed we will take legal action against WFI: Bajrang Punia

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Friday formed a seven-member committee to probe the allegations of sexual harassment against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. The Members of the committee are Mary Kom, Dola Banerjee, Alaknanda Ashok, Yogeshwar Dutt, Sahdev Yadav and two advocates.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Bajrang Punia on Friday addressed the media in a press conference held by protesting wrestlers here at Jantar Mantar and said that if needed, they "will take the legal route" to get their demands fulfilled.

Punia said, they "have only one demand which is to dissolve the federation" adding that the protesting wrestlers will go back to their homes if their demands are fulfilled by the government.

"Still, many players are scared that there are many tournaments ahead, and what will happen to them. So, we have cancelled them. Hopefully, this information will reach to the young athletes through media," Punia added.

He further said, like the WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan said that he will hang himself if the allegations against him are to be proven then "we hope that day will come soon." Star wrestler Vinesh Phogat alleged that the WFI President has been sexually harassing female wrestlers.



Wrestlers write to IOA chief PT Usha

New Delhi: Olympian wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik, Ravi Dahiya, and Deepak Punia on Friday wrote to PT Usha, president of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) regarding the "sexual harassment" complaints against Wrestling Federation India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. In a letter to the IOA president, the top Indian grapplers accused Brij Bhushan of sexual exploitation and financial irregularities.

WFI CHIEF REFUSED TO QUIT

"If I make a statement, there will be a tsunami. I am not here on anyone's charity. I am an elected representative. There is no question of resigning. I have not spoken with the Prime Minister's Office and Home Minister."

GOVT ISSUES GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS; FINE UP TO RS 50L, 6-YR BAN ON REPEAT OFFENCE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Social media influencers and celebrities will face a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh, which can go up to Rs 50 lakh on repeat offence and even lead to a ban of up to six years, on violation of guidelines for them, which were released by the consumer affairs ministry on Friday.

Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh told mediapersons, while releasing the guidelines, that the whole issue is centred around consumers' right.

"It is the responsibility of the endorser, celebrities and influencers or other advertisers to truthfully disclose whatever information the consumer must know before making any decision for purchase," the guidelines said.

Singh further said social media influencers should disclose the nature of their endorsements.

Influencers are defined as creators who advertise products with a strong influence on the decisions or opinions of their audience. Virtual influencers, which are defined as fictional computer-generated people with realistic features of humans, are also required to disclose their endorsements, the guidelines said further.



The department noted that, "When there is a material connection between an advertiser and celebrity/influencer that may affect the weight or credibility of the representation made by the celebrity/influencer."

These material connections include monetary or other forms of compensation, free products, contests and sweepstakes entries, trips or hotel stays, media barter, coverage and awards, or any personal, family or employment relationship,

the rules note.

The influencers should be able to substantiate the claims made by them. The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides the framework for the protection of consumers against unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements.

The product and service must have been actually used or experienced by the endorser, the ministry said, adding that consumers can seek legal actions against those defaulting.

Joshimath crisis: Demolition work halted due to heavy snowfall

Joshimath | Agencies

The demolition of the structures declared unsafe after being affected by land subsidence in Joshimath has come to a halt due to heavy snowfall, which has added to the woes of the residents. Their belongings, lying outside Hotel Mount View and Malari Inn, are covered in snow as they could not be shifted due to the adverse weather.



The national highway near the hotels has been opened after the demolition drive was halted.

More than a dozen villages in Chamoli district are covered with snow. The weather in the city is freezing due to rain and snowfall in the area, since Thursday evening.

Chamoli DM Himanshu Khurana said that the labourers are unable to work, which is why the demolition work has been stopped. It will be resumed when the weather improves.

The Mandal-Chopta highway and the Ghat-Ramani motorway have been closed due to snowfall. According to information received from the District Disaster Control Room on Friday, several areas including Badrinath Dham, Hemkund Sahib, Auli, Gorson Bugyal, Lal Mati and villages like Sutol, Kanol, Dumak, Kalgoth are experiencing snowfall.

About two feet of fresh snow has accumulat-

ed in Badrinath Dham and up to three feet in Hemkund Sahib. The Joshimath and Ghingharan region experienced the year's first snowfall. The district administration has made arrangements for bonfires at various places in the city in view of the harsh weather.

The administration has permitted the people of Jaypee colony to demolish the 15 houses declared unsafe in the colony themselves.

The Shri Badri-Kedar Temple Committee has banned Yagya, rituals and other events without permission in Narsingh Temple premises. According to Secretary, Disaster Management, Ranjit Sinha, the water leakage near Jaypee colony has increased from 100 LPM to 150 LPM. Sinha said that as per the reports of the crackometer installed in the affected buildings, the cracks have not increased in the last three days.

1.8 KG 'URANIUM' SEIZED IN PATNA, 9 ARRESTED

Patna: Nine persons, including two Nepalese nationals, were arrested in Patna on Friday for smuggling highly radioactive "uranium metal", police said.

A team of Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) learnt about a uranium consignment that reached the city's Patrakar Nagar police station area, a team was set up, and carried out a raid, seizing the metal and arresting nine.

Apart from two Nepalese nationals, the 7 others belong to Patna and Purnea districts.

According to an ATS Patna official, who requested anonymity, the 1.8 kg of highly radioactive metal was in two black bags with each having 900 gram weight. The manufacturing and expiry dates of June 3, 2017 and October 28, 2024, respectively mentioned on each of the bags, which also had "metal from the US" written on them.

The officials have sent the seized items to a forensic lab to ascertain the actual nature of the substance.

DGCA imposes Rs 30 L fine on Air India, suspends Pilot-In-Command for 3 months

New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA has imposed a fine of Rs 30 lakh on Air India and suspended the License of pilot-in-command for three months in connection with the Air India urination case.



Moreover, the regulator has also imposed a penalty of Rs 3 lakh on Director-in-flight services of Air India for failing to discharge her duties on November 26, 2022.

The development in the case came a day after the airline banned the alleged accused Shankar Mishra for four months on the basis of a report by the internal committee.

The DGCA issued show-cause notices to Accountable Manager of Air India, Director in-flight Services of Air India, all the pilots and cabin crew members of that flight as to why enforcement action should not be taken against them for dereliction of their regulatory obligations. The written reply of Air India and the personnel involved were examined, added the official.

Earlier, On Thursday, the independent three-member Internal Committee under the Chairmanship of the former District Judge concluded that Shankar Mishra is covered under the definition of "unruly passenger" and is banned from flying for a period of four months as per the relevant provisions of the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR)."

Siachen Hero Captain Bana Singh joins Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu

Jammu (Kathua) | Agencies

Param Vir Chakra awardee Captain Bana Singh (retired) joined the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' of Rahul Gandhi in Kathua district on Friday.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi could be seen holding Captain Bana Singh's hand as the 'Yatra' resumed its Jammu and Kashmir leg on Friday.

Rahul Gandhi appreciated Captain Bana Singh's presence in the yatra through a tweet.

"Whenever we speak of protecting India and its ideals, the names of brave sons of the country like Bana Singh are taken," he wrote.

"Captain Bana Singh, a Param Vir Chakra winner who hoisted the tricolour on the icy heights of Siachen, is



an inspiration to me and every patriot," Rahul Gandhi added in his tweet.

Captain Bana Singh (Retired) was awarded the Param Vir Chakra, the high-

est gallantry award for his contribution to 'Operation Rajiv'. He is known to have captured Pakistan's Qaid Post in Siachen Glacier and hoisted the national flag.

The post was renamed 'Bana Post' after that.

Shiv Sen leader Sanjay Raut also joined the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Kathua on Friday.

JD-U leader warns of 'turning cities into Karbala'

Ranchi: Janata Dal United leader and former MP Ghulam Rasool in a provocative speech made in Hazaribagh, warned that he would turn the cities into Karbala, if anyone points fingers at Prophet Mohammad, in an apparent reference to former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma.



A convention on social reform was conducted by an organisation called Idara-e-Shariah at Karbala Maidan on Thursday, where Rasool spoke to the crowd of thousands, who raised slogans upon hearing him.

He termed it surprising that none of the leaders of parties who claimed to be "secular" had condemned Sharma's statement.

Rasool said that "we would not tolerate anything which raised questions on the community's Messenger (Prophet Mohammad)". Gulam Rasool Balyawi stood firm on his controversial 'Karbala' remarks that he had made in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh district on Thursday. "I am firm on my statement and need not to take it back," Balyawi said.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Faction war in TN Congress

Ahead of the by-elections to the East Erode Assembly seat on February 27, a faction war has broken out in Congress over the seat. While the seat fell vacant following the sudden demise of the sitting legislator of the Congress party, E. Thirumahan Everaa, there is stiff opposition to the candidature of the family members of the deceased MLA. The father of the late legislator, E.V.K.S. Elangovan was a former Union Minister and a former state president of the Tamil Nadu Congress. The family is keen that either Elangovan himself or the brother of the deceased legislator, Sanjay Sampath contest the seat which has been a family bastion. It is to be noted that Elangovan is closely related to the late Dravidian ideologue, EV Ramasamy Periyar or Thanthai Periyar. A section of the state Congress leaders, including the party state president, K.S. Alagiri is, however, favouring the candidature of a local leader from Erode. This section argues that while the untimely death of Thirumahan Evera was tragic and sad, the party must consider the candidature of local party leaders who have been the grassroots strength of the Congress. Makkal Rajan is a grassroots leader and has always been at the forefront of all the struggles that Congress had undertaken in the constituency. While Elangovan is a heavy-weight leader of the Congress party, the opposite faction is pointing out his loss in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections to O.P. Raveendranath, son of O. Panneerselvam at Theni Lok Sabha seat. Another factor that is working against Elangovan is the fact that the TNCC president, K.S. Alagiri is totally opposed to him. Alagiri believes that Elangovan and his supporters were behind the recent attack on Congress state headquarters, Satyamoorthi Bhavan following a dispute over party postings in Thoothukudi district block committees.

WOMEN'S CRICKET - A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET

Yajurvindra Singh

The famous line by Juliet: "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet", from the play Romeo and Juliet written by William Shakespeare, seems quite appropriate for cricket in India.

The recent success, as regards the selling of the Rights of Women's IPL cricket tournament, truly reflects the progress that has been made by both the BCCI and cricket as a sport, in India. The game of cricket is the true benefactor, as it smells as sweet when played by either men or women.

The reason why India's marketing gurus find the property enticing is that Indian Women's cricketers bring in a feel of amateurism in the way that they play the game. They instil a breath of fresh air, a different look to the sport. It enables one watching it to enjoy cricket at a pace that is easier to follow.

Men's cricket, on the other hand, has become a contest, wherein, it has become professional with a serious outlook. The game of cricket and cricketers are thoroughly scrutinized. Whereas, in women's cricket one accepts errors and blunders and enjoys the naivety that it brings about. There is joy in watching women play the game in the way one enjoyed men playing it many years ago.

Love for cricket was the only factor that kept men's cricketers engrossed in the sport in the past. Although the reason to play is no different now, the game has taken a turn into becoming a serious one to pursue. The fun element and laughter that once prevailed in playing the game of cricket by boys and men at all levels of the sport, seems to have lost its charm. Cricket now seems to be a business in which winning has become the most important factor.

Women's cricket, on the other hand, has still the aura of being in the embryo stage. Although it has



gone through many years of difficulty and hardships in the past, the IPL in April this year should catapult it into a huge leap for the better in the future.

I can still recall my conversation a decade ago, when I met the present Indian captain, Harmanpreet Kaur, at the MCA indoor nets. She was a girl from Haryana who had left the comfort of her home. She was nestled into accommodation in Mumbai, struggling to make two ends meet. She desired to continue playing cricket for India and to bring laurels to the country. The lack of facilities is what brought her to Mumbai, the Mecca of Indian cricket, along with several others from around the country.

Harmanpreet along with the likes of Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami and Smriti Mandhana are household names now. Their success should catapult women's cricket in India to another level.

The platform is set for women's

cricket to flourish; however, the challenge would be for the BCCI to structure facilities for them to excel. Girls aspiring to play the sport should be taken care of in every manner possible by providing them with the security and needs that are necessary in all respects.

At the other end of the spectrum is India's domestic cricket. With the season in full flow, one is astounded by the runs scored by batters in the Ranji Trophy tournament. There have been one triple and 18 scores of double centuries, over 40 scores of 150 plus runs and close to a century of centuries. These are phenomenal numbers and truly reflect the focus, fitness and mindset of the new breed of Indian batters.

One name that shines out like the North star, having had 3 years full of buckets of runs, is Sarfaraz Khan from Mumbai. He unfortunately has had, as one lightly conjectures, a piece of bad luck. This has been the case for many consistent perform-

ers playing in the domestic circuit. Jaydev Unadkat, the fiery left-arm fast bowler from Saurashtra, was another case in time. Fortunately, after 10 years of being in oblivion, he managed to get selected and has performed well enough to retain his place in the immediate future.

The irony of the domestic Indian cricket circuit is that established and BCCI-contracted players rarely play in any of the tournaments. The annual Indian International cricket calendar makes it difficult for them to do so. This makes the contracted players exclusive and comfortably secured. The problem that surfaces is that the domestic performers do not get a window in which to stake their claim for an India cap.

Furthermore, without the top 35 Indian cricketers in the fray, there always is an element of doubt about the quality of domestic performances. The

Indian A team tour was a good initiative as an incentive for an aspiring player. However, most other countries do not have the quality or quantity of players in their fold. In India in the earlier times, the Duleep and Irani Trophy matches were the selection trials for an Indian side playing in India or touring abroad. Both these tournaments have lost their lustre and therefore the domestic performers are now hoping to get recognized via the IPL route.

Indian cricket needs to find a solution or else the likes of Sarfaraz Khan and many more will remain in the wilderness waiting for the elite lot to get injured or come in as replacements when they are on a rest and recreation break. They end up with a short stint as drink boys for their efforts.

international

RUSSIA RAMPS UP MOSCOW'S AIR DEFENCES WITH MISSILE LAUNCHERS PLACED ON ROOFS

London | Agencies

Russia is urgently ramping up its air defences in Moscow amid evident fears of a full-scale attack on the capital city from Ukraine, with an anti-air system also being installed near President Vladimir Putin's official residence outside the capital, local media reported. A Pantsir-S1 defence system has appeared on the roof of the Russian defence ministry's National Defence Management Centre (NTsUO) on Frunzenskaya Embankment, the command centre of Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Daily Mail reported.

A video showed the same powerful system being lifted onto a rooftop in Teterinsky Lane, Taganka district, one-and-a-half miles from the Kremlin. And in another clip, the installation of another Pantsir-S1 complex emerged close to the Russian president's country retreat in



Novo-Ogarevo, evidently to protect him from Ukrainian drones or missiles, Daily Mail reported.

Pro-Russian Telegram channel Military Informant acknowledged this was an admission that Moscow, with

a 12 million population, is now vulnerable, with the deployment underscoring that the "the military are afraid of a possible strike".

On Wednesday, photographs appeared of the modern S-400 missile

defence system in two locations, one in fields belonging to the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy in the north-west of the city, another Losiny island in a national park to the northeast where trees were felled for the installation.

There are reports of such deployments at half a dozen sites in Moscow, as Putin daily increases his defences in the capital city, Daily Mail reported. One deployment is said to be at Zarechye village, close to his country retreat Novo-Ogarevo, said Sirena Telegram channel.

A video purportedly showed the deployment.

There are rumours that Putin and his young family with former Olympic gymnast Alina Kabaeva are now usually based in one of several secret bunker complexes, Daily Mail reported. The children have not been introduced to the Russian people, and secretive Putin has never confirmed his relationship with Kabaeva.

INDIA'S G20 PRESIDENCY COMES AT CRUCIAL TIME, MODI'S LEADERSHIP CRITICAL: WEF'S KLAUS SCHWAB

Davos | Agencies

Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, said that India's G20 Presidency has come at a crucial time and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "leadership is critical in this fractured world".

"I had the pleasure of meeting the Indian ministerial delegation and many of its top business leaders," Schwab was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the WEF amid the ongoing Davos Forum.

"I commend the country's decisive action on the climate case for renewables, its contribution to the global healthcare ecosystem, the focus on an economic model for women-led development, and its leadership on digital public infrastructure.

"India remains a bright spot amid global geoeconomics and geopolitical crises," he added. This year's Forum, which is bringing together leaders from all over the globe, is convening under the theme, 'Cooperation in a Fragmented World'.

"The WEF shares a 38-year history with India and looks forward to continued partnership with the country during its G20 presiden-



cy under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," says the statement.

Schwab further says that "India is promoting a just and equitable growth for all in the world during its G20 presidency".

"India's G20 presidency comes at a crucial time, Prime Minister Modi's leadership is critical in this fractured world," he added.

OLD CHURCH IN CANADA TRANSFORMED INTO SIKH TEMPLE

Toronto: An old church has been transformed into a Sikh place of worship -- the first in Canada's Red Deer city after requests from the local Sikh community since 2005.

The Cornerstone Gospel Chapel at 5911 63rd Street is now Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara, and will open seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

It will serve around 150 families, 250 international students and temporary foreign workers from India, CBC News reported.

"The community is growing every day. So many people are moving here from B.C., Calgary and Ontario," Nishan Singh Sandhu, the gurdwara's president, told CBC News.

"It's very important, otherwise we don't have a place to get together. We struggled for the last 20 years to build a gurdwara," said Sandhu.

The community received donations from neighbouring Sikh communities in Calgary, Edmonton and Surrey, British Columbia, along with private donations to the tune of \$450,000, which allowed them to buy the building with no mortgage.

The gurdwara, which opened last month, includes a main floor with a large basement area and kitchen.

The centre's kitchen provides free vegetarian meals ('langar') to visitors and anyone who needs it.



Sweden to send Archer artillery system to Ukraine

Stockholm | Agencies

Sweden will provide Ukraine with the Archer artillery system, its tenth and the largest military aid package so far, Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said.

The package is worth around 4.3 billion Swedish kronor (\$415 million) and also includes around 50 CV-90 armoured vehicles with ammunition, NLAW anti-tank missiles, disposable anti-tank weapons, and mine clearing equipment, the government said at a press conference here on Thursday.

Ukraine has repeatedly requested that Sweden provides them with Archer, a vehicle-mounted howitzer with a range of up to 50 km, Xinhua news agency reported.

The Swedish government



has tasked the Swedish Armed Forces with preparing for deliveries of the system, including ammunition.

Sweden will also assist Ukraine with their own arms procurement through cooperation and co-purchases with the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV), the government said, adding that it would speed up arms deliveries to Ukraine.

Before Thursday's announcement, Sweden had already pledged to provide Ukraine with military equipment worth nearly five billion kronor in total, Swedish Television (SVT) reported.

Russia has said that the supply of Western weapons to Ukraine does not help resolve the conflict but prolongs the suffering of the Ukrainian people, and that Western arms convoys to Ukraine would be considered "legitimate targets" for the Russian armed forces. (1 Swedish krona = 0.097 US dollar)

Burglars break into Texas Hindu temple, steal donation box: Report

New York | Agencies

The Indian community was left in a state of shock after burglars broke into a Hindu temple in the US state of Texas and stole its donation box, the media reported.

The Brazos County Sheriff's Office said they are investigating the burglary at Shri Omkarnath Temple located in Brazos Valley, Texas, which took place on January 11.

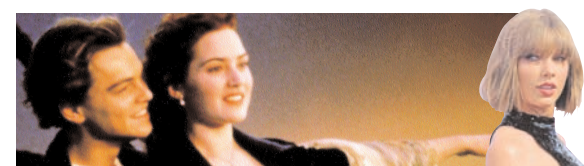
"There was a break-in. They (burglars) broke in through the side window and what was immediately...missing was our donation box and a safe in which we kept our valuables," Srinivasa Sunkari, a board member of the Shri Omkarnath Temple, told KBTX news channel.

According to the report, a video captured by security cameras inside the temple showed a person walking straight to the donation box. He then used the temple's cart to wheel the box out the door.



"There was a sense of invasion, that sense of loss of privacy when something like this happened to us," Sunkari, told the news channel.

He said the priest and his family, who live in an apartment right behind the temple, are safe, adding that the community members were notified about the incident at a gathering. "We will rebound, we will take extra precautions to make sure our priest is safe and this family is safe and our place of worship is safe. And we hope that something like this doesn't happen to anybody in the future," a shocked Sunkari said. Condemning the incident, the HinduPact, an advocacy collective in the US, has asked the FBI for a thorough probe into the incident.



'I LIKE BEING ALONE TOO MUCH'



Selena Gomez says 'I am single' after being spotted with Andrew Taggart

Los Angeles | Agencies

The 'Only Murders in the Building' star Selena Gomez and 'The Chainsmokers' star Andrew Taggart may be hanging out together, but it seems that Gomez isn't actually looking for anything serious at the moment.

In photos obtained by the New York Post's Page Six, the 'Same Old Love' singer and 'The Chainsmokers' member were spotted bowling together at New York City's 'The Gutter', reports 'People' magazine.

A source revealed that Gomez and Taggart -- who were dressed in casual attire -- were amongst 'a group.' The 'Only Murders in the Building' star was seen holding an orange bowling ball with Taggart nearby.

However, Gomez appeared to respond to the rumours that the two are linked by posting a black-and-white image on Thursday (Pacific Standard Time) in a since-deleted Instagram Story (captured by Pop Base) with the caption, "I like being alone too much." She also added the hashtag "iamsingle" at the bottom.

Taggart was previously linked to Steve Jobs' daughter, Eve, according to US Weekly.

As per 'People', before that, Taggart was in a year-long relationship with the model and DJ Chantel Jeffries. His representatives confirmed the breakup to 'People' in April 2021, explaining that the pair "broke up a month ago amicably and remain friends."

Dakota Johnson leaves audience gasping with her joke

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Fifty Shades' star Dakota Johnson started off the 2023 Sundance Film Festival with a laugh in her role as a presenter at the inaugural 'A Taste of Sundance' dinner.

The actress joked that she was offered the role of the peach in Luca Guadagnino's Oscar-winning indie 'Call Me by Your Name', but she had to turn it down due to scheduling conflicts, reports 'Variety'.

"Thank god, though," she said. "I would have been another woman that Armie Hammer would have tried to eat."

Johnson praised Guadagnino as a lover of cinema (and Prada) as she presented him with the international icon award. She starred in his remake of 'Suspiria', but her joke about Hammer made the room gasp and giggle.

As per 'Variety',

Hammer, who starred alongside Timothee Chalamet in 'Call Me by Your Name', has been accused of having cannibalistic fetishes, sexual assault and abusive behaviour by extramarital partners. Hammer has denied the claims.

In the film, Hammer plays the love interest of Chalamet, whose character Elio performs a sexual act on a piece of fruit, which Hammer eventually discovers. "It's been five years since that film premiered here, and Luca hasn't

stopped taking us to exciting places," Johnson said, quoted by 'Variety' referring to Guadagnino's 2022 film 'Bones and All', a cannibalism romance drama also starring Chalamet. "Who knew cannibalism was so popular?" she joked.



Britney Spears clears air on new tattoo rumoured to be on ex Justin Timberlake

Los Angeles | Agencies

Pop singer Britney Spears took to Instagram to shut down claims that her new ink was for former flame Justin Timberlake.

The pop sensation revealed she'd had a new tattoo at a



similar time to she posted about the former N*Sync man - an upload she has since deleted, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'. But now, she's confirmed it was purely a coincidence and the two snaps were in no way linked. Sharing a short message on her Instagram Stories, the hit maker wrote: "Just to clarify... my tattoo had nothing to do with an ex in the past!!! She further wrote, quoted by 'Mirror.co.uk', "I simply did it because I wanted to!!! The pic with my ex is a time where there was less confusion on what it meant to be together ... it is what it is".

The singer uploaded a number of throwback snaps of her and Justin, who she dated between 1999 and 2002, playing basketball. The pair was seen in matching jerseys from a charity game in 2001. She began her now-deleted caption: "When we used to shoot hoops TOGETHER - that's when miracles happened." And she went on to add a cryptic message about being "cast out," saying: "I came out of my mom's stomach just like we all did!!! Psss a why always cast me out??? I'm equal as all!!!"

Shortly after, she shared a clip of her getting a tattoo while on holiday in Hawaii - something she now regrets. The 'Baby One More Time' singer was seen in her hotel room and she was joined by a tattoo artist. In the clip, she danced around her room before the artist started tattooing her arm.

'You come home to heaven'

A\$AP ROCKY SHARES THE JOYS OF FATHERHOOD

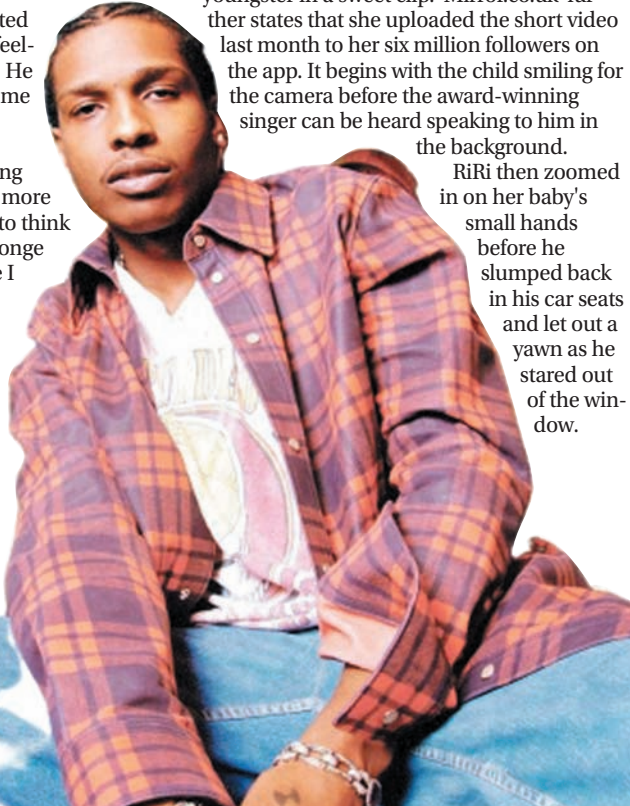
Los Angeles | Agencies

A\$AP Rocky is clearly loving life in the "dad club" as he opened up about his pride of fathering Rihanna's child. The rapper and 'Umbrella' songstress welcomed their first child in May last year and he gushed how fatherhood has given him a "whole new perspective" on his life and career, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.

In an interview, he admitted he "can't even explain" the feelings he has towards his son. He told the host: "You come home to heaven every day. I'm so thankful. God is good, man."

"Being outside and working and being creative, it drives more energy for you to obviously to think and soak things up like a sponge now that I'm a dad, because I have a whole another perspective. But it honestly helps you get home to your family and get home to your baby."

His words follow sources saying Rihanna is "obsessed" with her baby. An insider told 'People' magazine, "Rihanna loves being a mom. She is obsessed with her baby boy".



They added that her partner ASAP Rocky is "very involved as well and (is) a great dad."

As per 'Mirror.co.uk', the couples are understood to have been dating since 2020. They have been keen to keep their tot out of the limelight for the majority of the time and are yet to publicly reveal his name.

However, Rihanna did take to TikTok recently to share an adorable first look at the youngster in a sweet clip. 'Mirror.co.uk' further states that she uploaded the short video last month to her six million followers on the app. It begins with the child smiling for the camera before the award-winning singer can be heard speaking to him in the background.

RiRi then zoomed in on her baby's small hands before he slumped back in his car seats and let out a yawn as he stared out of the window.



VERONICA FUSARO'S DEBUT ALBUM IS ALL ABOUT INFORMATION OVERLOAD

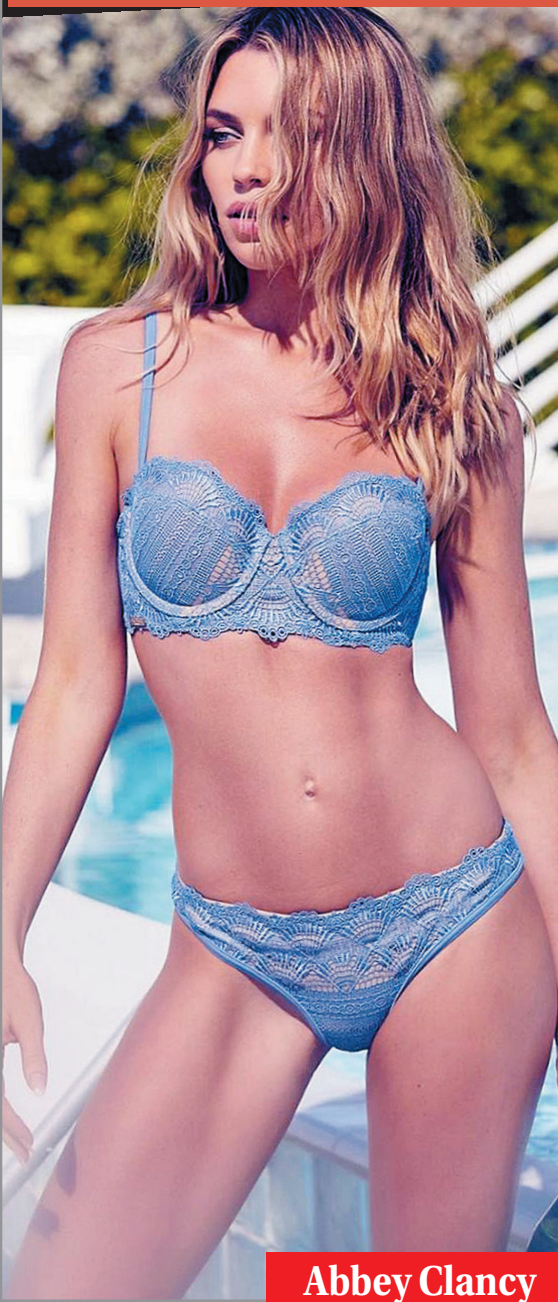
Mumbai | Agencies

Swiss Singer-Songwriter Veronica Fusaro, who is known for her Extended Plays 'Lost In Thought', 'Ice Cold' and 'Sunkissed', has released her debut album 'All the Colors of the Sky'. In the album, she combines different influences, rhythms and harmonies. Talking about the album, Veronica said, "This record is about life in this modern world of ours, about streaming tears, flaming anger and apathy in the middle of a storm - but also about the bluest of skies that follow the turmoil, the relief of acceptance, healing and falling in love". Veronica wrote most of

her first album in her basement studio. The lyrics talk about the challenges in the modern world such as information overload, pressure to succeed and ideals.

"The title of this album is inspired by the sunset at my grandma's place in Italy. I was so amazed at what spectrum of colours our eyes are able to perceive, and how beautiful and bittersweet this moment was between the fading of the day and the falling of the night. Ever since then the title stuck with me, and while I was putting together all the songs for the album, 'All the Colors of the Sky' just felt right as the title, as I'm singing about a whole spectrum of emotions," she added.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Abbey Clancy

WOMEN'S T20 TRI-SERIES All-round Deepti, debutant Amanjot help India beat South Africa by 27 runs

East London | Agencies

A superb all-round performance from the experienced Deepti Sharma (33 runs & 3/30) and an unbeaten 30-ball 41 on debut by Amanjot Kaur helped India beat South Africa by 27 runs and make a winning start in the opening match of the South Africa Women's T20I Tri-Series.

India were in deep trouble at 69/5 in the 12th over when Deepti Sharma and Amanjot came together for a quick-fire partnership of 76 runs for the sixth wicket that helped India post a competitive total of 147/6 in their 20 overs after South Africa Women won the toss and elected to field first. Skipper Deepti blazed to 33 off 23 balls, hitting one four and one six while Amanjot hammered seven fours in her 41 not out after opener Yastika Bhatia scored 35 off 34 deliveries to help India Women after South Africa bowlers Nonkululeko Mlaba (2-15, Marizanne Kapp (1-30) and Ayabonga Khaka caused early trouble.

Deepti came to the fore once again during South Africa's reply as she claimed three wickets for 30 runs as South Africa were soon reduced to 64/5 in the 12th over.



They recovered a bit but could manage only 120/9 in 20 overs as they lost the tri-series opener by 27 runs.

The day belonged to Deepti and Amanjot as they came together to rescue India. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur was unwell and forced to sit out of the match and Smriti Mandhana, leading the side in her absence, fell cheaply for seven runs.

Though Yastika help one end going with watchful innings, Harleen Deol (8), Jemimah Rodrigues (0) and Devika Vaidya (9) were soon back in the pavilion as India slipped to 69/5.

Deepti and Amanjot provided the innings with the impetus that it needed badly as they raised 76 runs for the sixth wicket and set India on course for a defendable total. The spinners then got into the act and propelled India Women to victory.

Brief scores - India Women 147/6 in 20 overs (Yastika Bhatia 35, Deepti Sharma 33, Amanjot Kaur 41 not out; Nonkululeko Mlaba 2-15) beat South Africa Women 120/9 in 20 overs (Sune Luus 29; Deepti Sharma 3-30, Devika Vaidya 2-19) by 27 runs.

IND vs NZ 2nd ODI INDIA AIM TO WIN CONSECUTIVE 50-OVER MATCH SERIES AT HOME

Raipur | Agencies

After surviving a mighty scare from all-rounder Michael Bracewell in a successful defence of 349 in the first match, India will be aiming to overcome New Zealand challenge in the second ODI and clinch back to back 50-over match series at home here, which will be Raipur's debut as an international cricket venue.

First is, allowing the opposition to claw back in the match with the bat. In their last six ODIs, India have allowed batters like Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Dasun Shanaka and more recently, Bracewell to hit centuries.

Also, after reducing the opposition to tatters, they haven't been able to close out matches with the bowlers looking flat, clueless and under immense pressure. India will be hoping that this chink in their armour gets a solution in Raipur.

With the bat, Shubman Gill was excellent in his maiden ODI double century at Hyderabad. Apart from other batters, who have shown to be in form, eyes will be on whether Rohit Sharma can convert a good start into a big total.

Rohit has looked good every time in ODIs this year, before squandering the good start. Once known for his big-daddy centuries in the format, a three-figure mark has continued to elude Rohit since slamming 119 against Australia at Bengaluru in January 2020.

On the other hand, New Zealand would want for their inexperienced bowling attack to come good in the absence of Tim Southee and Trent Boult. Henry Shipley, Blair Tuckner and Lockie Ferguson were expensive in Hyderabad.



FC Barcelona, Real Madrid form part of tough draw for Copa del Rey

Madrid (Spain): FC Barcelona and Real Madrid completed the draw for the quarterfinals of the Copa del Rey with wins away to Ceuta and Villarreal. Barca had a comfortable evening away to third-tier Ceuta on Thursday, while Real Madrid had to dig deep in Villarreal, coming back from 2-0 down before winning 3-2.

Villarreal dominated the first half, with Etienne Capoue putting them ahead in the fourth minute after an assist from Gerard Moreno. Samuel Chukwueze doubled Villarreal's lead three minutes from time as Villarreal caught Madrid on the break and Moreno gave another assist.

The game changed after the break and Madrid were level with goals in the 57th minute from Vinicius Jr, who produced a composed finish under pressure from the defense. Eder Militao levelled in the 69th minute, following up to sweep home the rebound after his initial header had been saved, reports Xinhua.

Dani Ceballos won the game for Madrid with a smart finish after good work from Marco Asensio, who pulled the ball back for him to score from the edge of the area.

Barcelona never looked to be in danger of suffering an upset in Ceuta as the newly crowned Spanish Supercup champions controlled the ball, but it wasn't until the 40th minute that Raphinha put them ahead.

The two teams join Athletic Bilbao, Sevilla, Atletico Madrid, Real Sociedad, Valencia and Osasuna in a strong draw for the quarterfinals.

BUNDESLIGA: BAYERN SIGN GOAL KEEPER YANN SOMMER FROM BORUSSIA MONCHENGLADBACH

Berlin (Germany) | Agencies

Yann Sommer will fill the gap of injured goalie Manuel Neuer after putting pen to paper on a deal with the Bavarians until June 2025, the German giants confirmed in an official statement.

After a long back and forth, Bayern Munich eventually signed Monchengladbach's custodian Sommer, who replaces Neuer with immediate effect for the time being. Neuer suffered a leg fracture during a skiing trip back in December and will be ruled out for the remainder of the season.

"I'm really looking forward to my new role at FC Bayern. It's a big club with power; we've often played against each other. I know about the enormous quality and appeal of this club. I'm proud to be part of FC Bayern now. We have big tasks ahead of us," Sommer told the club's official homepage.

The goalkeeper is part of Switzerland's national team, the "Nati", and showed his skills several times at the 2022 World Cup. Sommer joined Monchengladbach from FC Basel in 2014 and made overall 272 Bundesliga appearances, reports Xinhua.

Bayern's new arrival received jersey No. 27 and will encounter Leipzig at the curtain raiser of Bundesliga's second half of the season.



HOCKEY WORLD CUP Australia clinch quarters berth with 9-2 win over South Africa, France hold Argentina 5-5

Rourkela | Agencies

Rio Olympic gold medalist Argentina came back from a goal deficit thrice to hold lower-rated France to a 5-5 in a highly-entertaining clash even as Australia thrashed South Africa 9-2 to finish on top in Pool A and clinched a direct berth into the quarterfinals at the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023.

Australia, who started the proceedings at the Birsas Munda Hockey Stadium here on Friday as the World No. 1, rode on four goals, including a hat-trick, by seasoned Blake Govers to finish their league proceedings unbeaten with two wins and a draw.

With Australia enjoying a huge goal-difference advantage, Argentina needed to beat France by at least a 15-goal margin to overtake the Kookaburras, finish on top of the table and bag the quarter-final berth.

Govers completed his hat-trick in the 19th minute when he scored a field goal to make it 5-1 for the Kookaburras. Jake Harvie and Daniel Beale scored in the 21st and 27th minute respectively as Australia surged to 7-1 at half-time.

France held the upper hand in the fourth quarter as they earned three penalty corners but could score only one consolation goal in the 5th minute when Tevin Kok scored a fine field goal as the match ended 9-2 in favour of the World No.1 team.

Meanwhile, the Argentineans, who needed a big win, started the match with an early goal when Nicolas Keenan scored a field goal in the 2nd minute. But France levelled the scores within five minutes when Etienne Tyneves responded with a field goal of his own.

France are ranked 11th while Argentina are seventh. Charlet was at it once again when he converted a penalty stroke in the 59th minute and just when it looked like they had sealed a famous victory but Argentina launched a wave of attacks to force three successive penalty corners and off the third, Della-Torre scored to salvage a point for Argentina.



India Open 2023: Vitidsarn upsets Loh Kean Yew to reach semis; Yamaguchi, An Se-Young also advance

New Delhi | Agencies

Former world junior champion Kunlavat Vitidsarn upset third seed and last edition's finalist Loh Kean Yew of Singapore to reach the semi-final while sixth seed Indonesian Anthony Ginting was forced to dig deep by Li Shi Feng of China in the men's singles quarter-finals of the India Open 2023 at the Indra Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

Vitidsarn adopted a slow and steady game plan to defeat Loh 21-12, 21-17 while Ginting fought back from a 6-10 deficit in the decider to beat Li 21-11, 17-21, 21-18. Top seed Viktor Axelsen of Denmark also advanced to the semi-finals after his opponent Rasmus Gemke had to be taken off the court on a wheelchair following a fall.

Semi-finals of the prestigious BWF World Tour Super 750 event, which is organised by the Badminton Association of India, will be played on Saturday while finals take place on Sunday.

In women's singles, top seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan got the better of Spaniard Carolina Marin 21-17, 14-21, 21-9 and will now face Thailand's Supanida Katethong, who got a walkover from third seed Chen Yu Fei citing illness. The other women's singles semi-final will see second seed An Se Young of South Korea face China's He Bingjiao.

The women's singles quarter-final between Yamaguchi and Marin looked like it was heading to a humdinger with both players locked at 5-5 in the decider. But the Japanese then simply raised the bar and raced to victory in an hour and four minutes.



La Liga: Memphis trains with Atletico Madrid ahead of confirmation of Barca move

Madrid (Spain) | Agencies

Dutch international striker Memphis Depay on Thursday trained with Atletico Madrid ahead of the confirmation of his signing from FC Barcelona.

Depay will help cover for Joao Felix, who left to join Chelsea on loan a week ago.

The Dutch striker leaves Barcelona after scoring 14 goals in 42 appearances since joining on a free transfer from Olympique Lyon in the summer of 2021 at the petition of former coach Ronald Koeman.

The signing of Robert Lewandowski has seen Memphis drop down the pecking order at Camp Nou and that, along with an injury earlier in the season, means he has started just two league matches this campaign, reports news agency Xinhua.

Atletico are thought to have paid Barca around three million euros to buy Depay, which represents a decent return for Barca, given that they signed him for nothing. The striker's departure will also lower Barca's hefty wage bill, making it easier to meet financial fair play requirements in the future.

Memphis will be available to make his debut when Atletico entertain Valladolid this weekend.



SA20 Sunrisers Eastern Cape beat Paarl Royals, soar into second place

Paarl (South Africa) | Agencies

The Sunrisers Eastern Cape banked on their spin bowlers to become the first team in the SA20 to achieve a hat-trick of wins when they overcame the Paarl Royals by five wickets at Boland Park.

After a slow start to the competition, the Eastern Cape side has gathered momentum to move into second position on the table. The Royals may pride themselves on their spin bowling prowess, but it was the visitors that out-spun the home side. Captain Aiden Markram (2-21), Roelof van der Merwe (2-21) and Brydon Carse (2-29) combined to claim 6-71 in their cumulative 12 overs to restrict the Royals to 127/7. The Royals were in trouble from the outset after Sisanda Magala, who was recently called up to the Proteas ODI squad for the upcoming series against England, had dangleman Jos Buttler brilliantly caught by a diving Carse at mid-on. From there on the Sunrisers spinners dominated proceedings with only Wihan Lubbe (28) and Corbin Bosch (20) managing to make an impact on the scoreboard.

The Sunrisers' reply started on a positive note thanks to Adam Rossington and Jordan Hermann. The latter was making his SA20 debut and made an impact with 43 off 39 balls, while Rossington compiled a rapid 20 off just 12 balls.

Fortuin was excellent again on the night on his home ground to finish with 3-20, but he could not prevent Tristan Stubbs (18 not out) and Marco Jansen (21 not out) from taking the Sunrisers home.

Brief scores: Paarl Royals 127/7 in 20 overs (Wihan Lubbe 28; Aiden Markram 2-21; Roelof van der Merwe 2-21) lost to Sunrisers Eastern Cape 131/5 in 18.2 overs (Jordan Hermann 43; Bjorn Fortuin 3-20, Lungi Ngidi 2-31) by 5 wickets.



Australian Open Tsitsipas sets fourth round clash with Jannik Sinner

Melbourne | Agencies

Greek player Stefanos Tsitsipas and Italy's Jannik Sinner will cross swords in the fourth round of the Australian Open, in what will be a rematch of last year's quarterfinal, after registering contrasting victories in their third-round matches.

The third seed Tsitsipas extended his perfect set record at the 2023 Australian Open to 9-0, beating Tallon Griekspoor 6-2, 7-6(5), 6-3. The Greek saved a set point late in the second set before powering through the finish at the Rod Laver Arena.

Already up one place to No. 3 in the ATP Live Rankings this week, Tsitsipas will leave Melbourne as World No. 1 if he wins his first Grand Slam title.

Tsitsipas will take a 4-1 ATP head-to-head advantage against Sinner into their fourth-round meeting, including a streak of nine consecutive sets won. Their most recent meeting came last year in Rome, after the Greek's 6-3, 6-4, and 6-2 wins in Melbourne.

MURRAY STAGES STUNNING COMEBACK TO BEAT KOKKINAKIS IN A FIVE-SET THRILLER

Melbourne: The former World No. 1 Andy Murray rallied past home favourite Thanasi Kokkinakis 4-6, 6-7(4), 7-6(5), 6-3, 7-5 in a highly-anticipated second-round match at the Australian Open, advancing after five hours and 45 minutes in the longest match of his career.

It is the first time Murray has reached the third round at the first major of the season since 2017. He will next play Roberto Bautista Agut, the Spaniard who also rallied from two sets down to defeat American wild card Brandon Holt 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

The three-time Grand Slam champion Murray demonstrated his mental and physical strength for the second time this week, having edged Matteo Berrettini in a four-hour and 52-minute five-set thriller in the first round.

The world No. 66 has produced some of his best tennis at the hard-court major, reaching the final five times. Scot, who now holds a 51-14 record in Melbourne, has not advanced to the fourth round at a major since 2017 when he reached the quarterfinals at Wimbledon.





The entire world wants to see SRK on screen: John Abraham

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor John Abraham, who will be soon seen as an antagonist in the upcoming spy-thriller film 'Pathaan', has shared that the whole world is waiting for Shah Rukh Khan's return to the silver screen. The film is SRK's first in four years with his last release being the ambitious Aanand L. Rai directorial, 'Zero'.

In a video released by the makers of

'Pathaan', John said, "I don't think just the entire nation, I think the entire world wants to see Shah Rukh Khan on screen, including myself, and I think he more than delivered the goods because he's fantastic in this film."

John plays the arch-enemy of SRK in the movie and he is relishing that this film is bringing back the old John Abraham from 'Dhoom', a film that made him achieve cult status among audiences with his bad boy on bike image.

Talking about his character in the film, John shared, "Jim is cool. Jim is dangerous and Jim brings back the old John Abraham from Dhoom! I totally love the action sequences of 'Pathaan' because most of them are mobile."

He added, "One sequence was of course on motorcycles in the snow, one was on a truck so again we were moving, the third is in the air which is wow, fantastic. So, each one was in movement and they were fantastic."



ADAA KHAN SHARES HOW SHESHA GETS A DIFFERENT LOOK IN EACH SEASON OF SHOW

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Adaa Khan, who has been playing the role of Shesha in 'Naagin' series and reprised her role in the 6th season, also, said that every year, her look as Shesha changes and she loves being part of the show. She shared: "Every season, they (the makers) change the look. It's not the same. It's always a different outfit, different makeup, different hair, everything is different and all the fans wait that if Shesha comes, what will be her look this time? And they observe everything, from the jewellery to the clothes, to Makeup and everything else. So everyone is really happy that this time Shesha has come back as positive. People are very happy to see our chemistry and are also comparing it with Mouni Roy".

She added further: "I am always happy when they call me for any season. It feels like you are back home because this is your own baby, at the end of the day. I was part of season one and it started with me. So, when I come in another season, I enjoy it. I enjoy playing Shesha and I am sure the audience will also love watching Shesha."

Her look is something that she is always very excited about, says Adaa, adding: "Before I could enter, we just chose an outfit and spoke about how it would be different. What will the jewellery be like? So of course, there are inputs. The creative, the stylists, we all discuss and that's how the look comes together."



Aditi talked about the trauma her on-screen character is going through

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Katha Ankahee' actress Aditi Dev Sharma talked about the trauma and shock her on-screen character Katha is going through in the show. She further added how Katha is trying to come out of the shock and pain she underwent in the past but again she has to face a similar situation in her life.

Talking about the shock Katha's character is going through in the current track, actor Aditi shared: "Kathaa is already trying to come out of the trauma of the darkest night of her life where she had to let go of her self-respect in order to arrange money for her son. She is trying hard to forget whatever happened and focus on her job and Aarav but Viaan needs to understand her and know that his intention is not helping out at all and deepening the wound even more."

"While Katha thinks that Viaan took advantage of her vulnerability, Viaan on the other hand thinks that Katha is a gold digger, but Katha's behaviour and few incidents in the day to day life start changing Viaan's perception. This will lead to Viaan trying to buy her time with 2 crore rupees which will be mistaken by Katha as a token of money to again sleep with him which will leave her furiously angry," she added. Adding further, Aditi said:

"Each day when I play Kathaa, I feel like I am unraveling a new layer of the character. The emotional turmoil that she is going through is very challenging to portray. On one hand, she is somewhere happy that she could save her child but on the other hand, the dark night still haunts her." "Forgiveness is not even on her mind when Viaan worsens the situation by putting forward another indecent proposal. The viewers will go on an emotional roller coaster ride with Katha from here onwards, I can guarantee that," she concluded.



'I NEVER WANTED TO GET MARRIED'

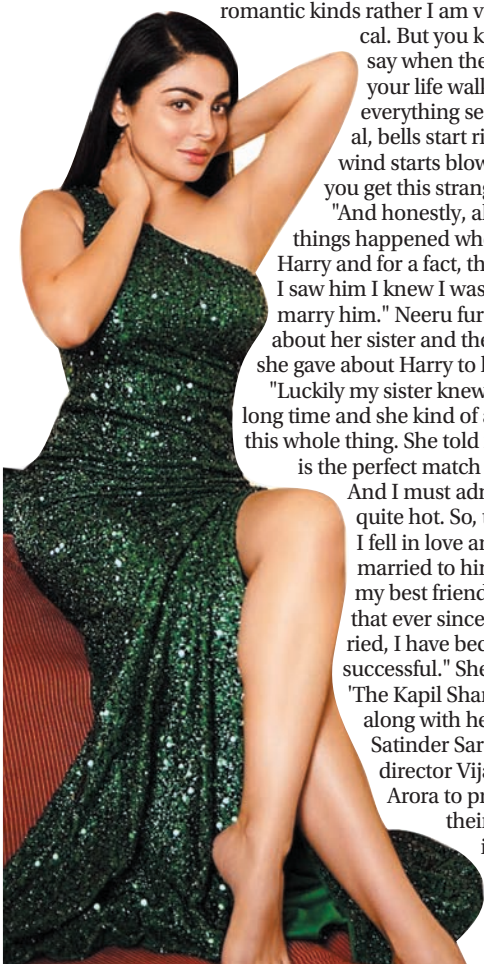
Neeru Bajwa never wanted to get married, thought she would stay single forever

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Neeru Bajwa recently spilled the beans on her decision to never get married and how later she fell in love with Harry Jawandha and got married to him. She shared: "I never wanted to get married, and I always thought that I would be single forever because I am not those romantic kinds rather I am very practical. But you know they say when the love of your life walks in everything seems surreal, bells start ringing, the wind starts blowing and you get this strange feeling."

"And honestly, all these things happened when I saw Harry and for a fact, the first time I saw him I knew I was going to marry him." Neeru further talked about her sister and the advice she gave about Harry to her.

"Luckily my sister knew him for a long time and she kind of arranged this whole thing. She told me that he is the perfect match for me. And I must admit he is quite hot. So, that's how I fell in love and got married to him. He is my best friend and I feel that ever since I got married, I have become more successful." She graced 'The Kapil Sharma Show' along with her co-star Satinder Sartaaaj and director Vijay Kumar Arora to promote their upcoming film 'Kali Jotta'.



Mission Majnu - A patriotic goosebumps, but in parts



FILM REVIEW

AAKRUTI BAGLA

Directed by: Shantanu Bagchi
Cast: Sidharth Malhotra, Rashmika Mandanna, Kumud Mishra, Sharib Hashmi, Parmeet Sethi

Duration: - 129 minutes
Ratings: 3/5

Story: Directed by Shantanu Bagchi, Mission Majnu is based on true events from the 1970s examining one of India's most noteworthy historical missions. It revolves around an undercover Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) agent Amandeep Singh who enters Pakistan to snoop confidential information about the neighbouring country's nuclear capability and whether they are planning a bomb with India as its target. In pursuit of this mission, he falls head over heels in love with a blind girl Nasreen. Well, does Amandeep Singh succeeds in his mission and is able to stop the destruction while saving his own life? The answer lies in the film.

Review: Mission Majnu marks the Bollywood directorial debut of Shantanu Bagchi and it's quite evident that he tries to bring to the table a story who probably are oblivious of. There is no denying in the fact that a patriotic film with a tint of romance has always carried a certain success ratio. The same formula is used by director Shantanu Bagchi for Mission Majnu. It is because the issue with the film is that it is walking a tightrope between being a romantic film and a patriotic representation of an unsung war hero.

It begins with giving his a gist about World War 1 and 2. It proceeds with introducing us to Sidharth Malhotra's character Amandeep Singh who is in Pakistan when he falls in love with a



blind girl Nasreen and is on the cusp of embracing fatherhood while also carrying out the mission despite being billed as the son of a traitor.

Director Santanu invests prominent time in establishing their love story which takes a major part of the film. Few scenes are extremely predictable and at times sitting through them does become a task.

As mentioned above, the direction of the film is formulaic but there are some gripping moments that do get us at the edge of the seats with a few surprising elements and well executed action sequences. Barring climax, even the emotional moments in the film falls short of striking the right chord.

The dialogues are conversational but at the same time also have the required punch and drama.

Talking of other technical aspects, the cinematography is fine whereas the editing could have been a bit taut.

The BGM and songs with moving lyrics add gravitas to the plot.

When it comes to performances, after Shershaah the expectations are certainly high with Sidharth Malhotra and he even puts forward his best foot.

Rashmika Mandanna's accent appears and disappears as per convenience, just like her role in the film. The actress barely gets a chance to shine in her limited screen space.

The rest of cast including Kumud Mishra, Sharib Hashmi, Parmeet Sethi deliver from what's offered to them.

Conclusion: Overall, the story line of Mission Majnu is gripping and riveting, but only in fragments, making for a passable experience.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Elnaaz Norouzi