

absolute india

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3RD DAY OF AERO INDIA



IAF Sarang helicopter aerobatics team performs during the 3rd day of Aero India 2023 at Yelahanka Air Base in Bengaluru on Wednesday, February 15.

'QUALITY OF WITNESS, NOT QUANTITY MATTERS': SC UPHOLDS CONVICTION IN MURDER CASE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it is not the quantity but the quality of witnesses which matters, as it upheld the conviction and life term handed down to three for murdering four members of a family in Uttar Pradesh in 2007.

A bench of Justices B.R. Gawai and Vikram Nath said: "It is the discretion of the prosecution to lead as much evidence as is necessary for proving the charge. It is not the quantity of the witnesses but the quality of witnesses which matters."

The bench noted that one of the daughters of deceased Vijay Pal Singh had seen the assailants murdering her family members and also causing injury to one of them and wisely did not speak out anything in their presence and



allowed them to remain in the dark that she had actually seen them committing the crime.

It further added that the daughter of one of the deceased, who was examined as a prosecution witness in the case, was injured during the incident, was a "fully reliable witness and has stated the things in natural course".

The top court judgment came on a clutch of appeals, including those filed

by the convicts, challenging the February 2012 Allahabad High Court judgment, which affirmed their conviction in the case. The court noted that one of the convicts, Ajai, has since died. The trial court had awarded the death sentence to the accused but the high court, while affirming their conviction, commuted it to life term.

SC AGREES TO EXAMINE PLEA ON 'MENSTRUAL PAIN LEAVE' NEXT WEEK

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to examine a PIL seeking direction to state governments to frame rules for menstrual pain leaves for female students and working women.

Advocate Vishal Tiwari mentioned the plea for urgent hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and it agreed to consider the plea on February 24.

The plea, filed by advocate Shaileendra Mani Tripathi, said: "Few states provided menstrual pain leaves and ancillary benefits, women in their counterpart states are still bereft of any such benefits. It is accordingly a violation of Article 14 of the Constitution in as much as the Maternity Benefit Act differentiates women in the name of federalism and state policies." The plea contended that Bihar introduced menstrual leave for women employees in 1992, however menstrual periods have been largely disregarded by society, government, and other stakeholders, but some organisations and states have taken notice of it.

WILL CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF REHABILITATION, SAYS SC ON NIGHT SHELTER DEMOLITION

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will now have to examine the rehabilitation issue, after it was informed about the demolition carried out by authorities of a night shelter located at Delhi's Sarai Kale Khan earlier in the day. Advocate Prashant Bhushan mentioned the matter before a bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Dipankar Datta, saying that the night shelter, being availed of by over 50 people, has been demolished and that authorities carried out the demolition at 10 a.m.

The bench said if the night shelter has been demolished, then it would have to examine the question of rehabilitation. Bhushan had mentioned the matter while the bench was in the middle of hearing a case. After the hearing of the case was over, Bhushan said that authorities have come there with bulldozers and the homeless matter is pending before this court, and this issue is about a night shelter for homeless people. He contended that without providing alternative accommodation, a night shelter is being demolished by the authorities. The bench told Bhushan it could hear the matter on February 22, and asked him to incorporate the subsequent developments in the matter.

Petroleum products can be brought under GST if consensus reached: Sitharaman

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said that if states arrive at a consensus, then petroleum products can be brought under the GST regime. Addressing a post-budget interactive session organised by industry body



PHDCCI, she said that if the states

agree, then petroleum products can be brought under the GST ambit. The GST Council is scheduled to meet on February 18. Meanwhile, the Finance Minister, during the interactive session with industry captains, said that the government, over the years, has striven to increase public expenditure, which she said would fuel growth.

SWAMI PRASAD MAURYA, MAHANT RAJU DAS COME TO BLOWS AT TV CONCLAVE

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party leader Swami Prasad Maurya and Mahant Raju Das of Hanuman Garhi in Ayodhya came to blows in the lobby of a five-star hotel here on Wednesday. The two were there to attend a news conclave organised by a TV channel during which they got into a heated argument which turned physical. The security personnel rushed in to separate the two. Das had recently announced a reward of Maurya's head after the latter made some objectionable remarks on Ramcharitmanas. The Mahant later claimed that he was attacked by the SP leader's supporters and said that he would lodge a complaint against Maurya. Maurya was not available for comment.



India delivers relief material to quake-hit Syria

Damascus | Agencies

An Indian Army team deployed in United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on Wednesday delivered relief material to quake-rattled Aleppo in Syria.

The material included rations & medicines from Government of India as well as contributions from the international community. "#IndianArmy team deployed in @UNDOF delivers relief material to Aleppo, #Syria. This included rations & medicines from Government of #India as well as contributions from the international community." Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADG PI) posted on Twitter.

On Tuesday, Union Health Ministry said that it provided life-saving humanitarian medical assistance to quake-hit Turkey and Syria.



Under operation Dost, emergency relief material comprising life-saving medicines, protective items and critical care equipment valued at over Rs 7 crore were arranged and promptly dispatched to Turkey and Syria, the Ministry tweeted.

Union Health Minister on Tuesday post on Twitter: India provided life-saving emergency medicines, protective items, medical equipment, critical care drugs, etc as part of the country's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to Turkey and Syria.

Apple Watch Crash Detection alerts rescuers of severe car crash in Germany

London | Agencies

The Crash Detection feature of the Apple Watch Series 8 has helped rescue the lives of three people in a serious car crash which fell down a 20-meter-deep embankment in Germany.

According to the initial investigations, the car was driving on the Bundesautobahn 20 (a road in Germany) when it "left the lane to the right, drove through a green strip, and was catapulted over the crash barrier, reports 9to5 Mac."

The three passengers were "partially trapped in the vehicle wreckage in the accident", and there were no witnesses to the accident, nor could it be seen from the highway above, according to the report.



The Apple Watch Series 8 automatically shared the exact location of the accident with first responders, allowing police and fire rescue workers, as well as a full rescue service, to arrive at the scene.

Moreover, the report stated that the driver suffered minor injuries while the two passengers "suffered serious injuries."

All three were taken to nearby hospitals. Meanwhile, Apple has released a new iPhone update -- iOS 16.3.1, including "optimisations" for the iPhone 14 and 14 Pro's Crash Detection feature, which has been criticised by some search and rescue personnel for causing false alarms during winter sports activities.

Another Hindu temple defaced in Canada; India seeks action



Toronto | Agencies

Strongly condemning the defacing of a Hindu temple in Canada, India on Wednesday asked authorities in the country to investigate the incident and take swift action against the perpetrators.

The Ram Mandir in Mississauga city was vandalised with anti-India slogans, sending shockwaves across the Indian community.

"We strongly condemn the defacing of Ram Mandir in Mississauga with anti-India graffiti. We have requested Canadian authorities to investigate the incident and take prompt action on perpetrators," the Consulate General in India in Toronto tweeted early on Wednesday.

The incident also evoked sharp reactions from Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown, who said that hate has no place in Canada, and police are investigating it. "I am saddened to hear of the hate motivated vandalism at the Ram Mandir Temple in Mississauga. Unknown suspects spray painted the walls on the back of the temple. This type of hate has no place in Peel Region," Mayor Brown tweeted on Wednesday.

"The Peel Police & Chief Nish (Chief of Peel Regional Police Nishan Duraipappah) are taking this potential hate crime very seriously. 12 Division has carried out the investigation & they will find those responsible. Religious freedom is a Charter right in Canada & we will do everything we can to make

sure everyone is safe in their place of worship," Brown added.

Starting 2023, a string of attacks has been unleashed upon Hindu temples across Canada with close to half-a-dozen incidents of vandalism, spiteful graffiti, break-ins and burglaries.

Last week, an unsuccessful burglary attempt also took place at the same temple, according to media reports. The thieves reportedly fled after a security alarm went off. A day after, the Bharat Mata Mandir in Brampton was burgled with the thieves escaping with the donation box collections, according to media reports.

Last month, the Gauri Shankar Mandir was vandalised with "anti-India" graffiti in Brampton, with leaders in Canada and India asking the Ottawa government to take the matter 'seriously'. "I call on govt at levels in Canada to start taking this seriously," Indo-Canadian MP Chandra Arya had tweeted.

"The attack on Gauri Shankar Mandir in Brampton is the latest in attacks on Hindu temples in Canada by anti-Hindu and anti-India groups. From hatred on social media, now physical attacks on Hindu temples, what next?" Arya, MP from the ruling Liberal Party, had asked.

Musk says he may step down as Twitter CEO by 2023 end

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Elon Musk has said that he might step down as Twitter CEO by the end of this year, after stabilising the company and making it more financially viable.

After conducting a poll on stepping down as Twitter CEO in December last year, Musk has not offered any indication as to when he is going to appoint a new CEO to run the daily affairs at the micro-blogging platform.

"I need to stabilise the organisation and just make sure it's in a financially healthy place in that the product roadmap is clearly laid out," Musk said via video link at the World Government Summit in Dubai. "I'm guessing probably towards the end of the year would be good timing to find someone else to run the company," he was quoted as saying in reports.

"I think it should be in a stable position around the



end of this year," Musk added.

Musk has said that he does not want to be the CEO of any company, be it Tesla or Twitter. "I frankly don't want to be the CEO of any company. At SpaceX, it's really that I'm responsible for the engineering of the rockets and Tesla for the technology in the car that

makes it successful," he said. "So, CEO is often viewed as somewhat of a business-focused role, but in reality, my role is much more that of an engineer developing technology and making sure that we develop breakthrough technologies and that we have a team of incredible engineers who can achieve those goals,"

Musk elaborated. He said he does not wish to remain CEO of Twitter forever.

"I expect to reduce my time at Twitter and find somebody else to run Twitter over time," he added.

Earlier on Wednesday, Musk had said that he has hired a dog to replace him as the Twitter CEO.



CONGRESS ESTABLISHED ONLY 74 AIRPORTS IN 70 YEARS, MODI GOVT DID IT IN 9: SCINDIA

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia along with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday laid the foundation stone of an airport in Rewa district. This will be the sixth in the state after Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Khajuraho. The project, which is in its initial stage with land acquisition underway, will be established on 300 acres of land in the Chorahta area of Rewa city. It is estimated to be completed by 2025.

While addressing the gathering on this occasion, Scindia said that until a few years back, people were demanding railway connectivity in their cities, but things have changed now, and people are demanding airports. Scindia, who switched to the BJP in early 2020 and became Civil Aviation Minister in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet, said till 2016 India had around 74 airports, and the BJP government has established the same number of airports in just nine years. "Today is a historic



day for Rewa and the Vindhya region when we are laying the foundation stone for this airport, and it happened only because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. You can see that 74 airports were established during the 70 years of Congress rule, while the same number of airports

has been established within just nine years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership," Scindia added.

Scindia also attacked Madhya Pradesh Congress president and his ex-cabinet colleague Kamal Nath saying the latter was lamenting the shortage of money during his 15-

month government. "Jansevak ki kursi rone ke liye nahi hoti, janta ki seva karne ke liye hoti hai. (Jansevak's post is not for lamenting but to serve the people). Had the same excuse been given by Shivraj Singh Chouhan, this project would not have been possible today. This is the difference between the BJP and the Congress," Scindia said.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan asserted that the people of Rewa deserve this gift (airport) because they had given all eight assembly seats to the BJP in 2018. Chouhan also announced to develop a Vindhya Expressway which will connect the region directly from the state capital Bhopal.

Chouhan also attacked the Congress saying that despite a strong presence in the state cabinet, Vindhya region did not see any development till 2003. "You might remember what kind of roads there used to be during the Digvijaya Singh led Congress government, and now you can see the roads of Rewa and entire Madhya Pradesh," Chouhan added.

Digvijaya Singh will now focus on assembly polls, MP's politics expected to heat up

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Former Chief Minister and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh will now actively participate in public meetings of the Madhya Pradesh Congress in different constituencies. The veteran Congress leader, who has been out of the state for the last few months as he was one of the key members of the Rahul Gandhi led 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', will be focusing on the upcoming state assembly elections.

Singh, who has a strong dominance in the state's politics, will kick-off his first public meeting on February 17 in two assembly constituencies in Bhopal districts Bairasia and Govindpura, both won by the ruling BJP in 2018. A decision in this regard was taken on the direction of MP Congress chief Kamal Nath, a party spokesperson said on Wednesday.

Singh will be meeting the district and block committees of the state Congress to



make headlines with his controversial remarks, is expected to heat up Madhya Pradesh politics. The election for the 230 Assembly seats is due at the end of this year.

Despite a snub from Rahul Gandhi during his Bharat Jodo Yatra over his remarks raising questions regarding the surgical strikes and the Pulwama terror attack, Singh again kicked off a row on Tuesday, saying the CRPF soldiers lost their lives in the Pulwama incident in Kashmir four years ago due to a "blatant intelligence failure". "Today we pay homage to the 40 CRPF Martyrs who died because of the blatant intelligence failure in Pulwama. I hope all the Martyrs families have been suitably rehabilitated," Singh said on Tuesday.

He was attacked by the ruling BJP's central and state leaderships for his remarks. However, he remained firm and kept questioning PM Modi while talking to the press and using social media.

Unmarried rape survivor kills her newborn in MP's Jhabua

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Fearing social stigma, an unwed rape survivor killed her newborn in tribal dominated Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh, police said on Wednesday.

As per the police, the young woman who gave birth to a baby boy four days back, was assaulted sexually by an unidentified man last year.

On learning about her pregnancy, the police asked her family to inform them when the baby was born, but fearing social stigma, the family decided to kill it.

The matter came to light, when the police went to her house for collecting DNA samples for investigating the rape case. Upon reaching there, the police learnt that



the baby was killed and buried at a secluded place.

As per the police, first she deprived the baby of her milk and then killed him by crushing his neck under her foot. "Newborn's brutal killing was confirmed after the body was

exhumed from grave and subsequent autopsy revealed multiple fractures on top of cervical spine. All 3 accused, the woman and her uncle-aunt, were arrested and booked for murder," police said.



Artist Sarfaraz Haasan honored with the National Youth Award by the Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Government of India, J.Kishan Reddy at a prestigious function organized at Meghdoot Auditorium, Delhi.

G20: CULTURE WORKING GROUP TO MEET IN KHUJARAHO

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The first Culture Working Group meet, under India's G-20 Presidency, will be held in Madhya Pradesh's temple town Khajuraho from February 22.

Officials of the Ministry of Culture said that India's G20 Culture Track is predicated on the idea of 'Culture for LIFE' - an environmentally conscious lifestyle as a campaign for sustainable living.

The CWG will evolve through four meetings in four historic cities of India and steer the G20 discourse on four priority areas. India's CWG will reflect the emergence of culture as a prominent theme on the global stage, it will adopt culture to renew multilateral and multicultural cooperation at all levels, and will aim to forward this ideal and inform future global cultural policies and initiatives.

An ancient city, Khajuraho is known for its majestic temples and elaborate sculptures. A UNESCO



World Heritage Site, Khajuraho's monuments were constructed by the Chandela Dynasty between 950-1050 AD. The aesthetic of the Nagara-style architecture, ornamented with the intricate and detailed sculptures, acts like a window into the socio-cultural

practices of the time. According to historical records, there were 85 temples in the temple site in Khajuraho, covering 20 square km, in the 12th Century AD. However, today, only 25 of these temples - scattered throughout a 6 square km area - have sur-

vived. Officials said that as a part of the meeting, there will be an exhibition titled "Re(ad)ress : Return of Treasures" at the Maharaja Chhatrasal Convention Centre (MCCC), which will be inaugurated by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Culture and Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy.

The delegates from the G20 countries will get to experience cultural programmes including the Khajuraho Dance Festival. They will also get to visit the Western Group of Temples along with a tiger safari at the Panna Tiger Reserve.

India assumed the G20 presidency on 1 December 2022, articulating the theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - One Earth. One Family. One Future', which aims to foster, celebrate, and incorporate the diversity of cultural traditions amongst the member states while striving towards holistic living and creating a pro-people planet.

CM Chouhan plants Peepal, Saptaparni and Guggul saplings

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Saptaparni and Guggul in the garden located at Shyamla Hills. Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, President of District Panchayat Bhopal, Ramkunwar Naurang Singh Gurjar and Corporator Brijjula Sachan planted saplings on their birthday. Naurang Singh Gurjar, Mohan Singh Jat, Vinod Rajoria, Chandresh Suresh Rajput, Ashok Meena, Gajendra Solanki, Samandar Gurjar, Balram Gurjar, Jitendra Srivast, Gyan Singh Gurjar, Inder Singh Gurjar, Deepak Singh Gurjar, B.K. Shukla, Ajab



Singh Gaur, Vishraj Singh, Antar Singh, Harinarayan, Sachin and Govardhan participated in the plantation. Dev Hari Sachan, Abhishek

Sachan, Rampal Tiwari, Laxmi Narayan Gaur and Divya Sachan also planted saplings.

Local Congress Leader's Remains Found In Forest

Team Absolute | Mandla

More than three months after he went missing, the skeletal remains of a 65-year-old local Congress leader were found in the forest area of Niwas town in Mandla district of the state, a police official said on Wednesday.

The dead, Hari Lal Maravi, who had been missing since October last year, was not keeping well mentally for the past one year, he said.

The remains of Maravi were found in the bushes of Badhiya Tendu forest area by his family members, who identified him on the basis of his clothes and Congress party 'gamcha', Niwas police station in-charge Suresh Solanki said.

Prima facie, it appears that he died of starvation in the forest area and it is also possible that wild animals devoured his body parts, he said. "Maravi was not keeping well mentally for nearly a year. In the past also, he had gone away from home without informing anybody. This time, he went away in a similar manner and probably lost his way in the forest area," he said. "A forensic team will examine the



remains and post-mortem will be conducted to know the exact cause of the death," Solanki added. Only the skull and bones of legs were recovered from the spot, he said. Maravi had gone missing on October 28 last year. On November 1, his family members had filed a missing person's report with the police, he said. "The skeleton was found by Maravi's family members as they were looking for him in different areas on a daily basis ever since he went missing," the official said. Hirna Chapar village sarpanch Kanshi Ram said that Maravi was a member of the local janpad panchayat and also the block president of Kisan Congress.

Three, including two from UP, arrested for vandalising MP church

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Two days after a church was vandalised in Madhya Pradesh's Narmadapuram, police on Tuesday said that they had arrested three accused, including two from neighbouring Uttar Pradesh.

During the interrogation, the trio claimed they were "hurt" over the incident of burning of copies of Ramcharitmanas by activists of an OBC outfit in Lucknow last month, and committed the vandalism as "revenge", a police official said.

According to police, the accused were also planning something big, and they could have targeted some more religious places, but were arrested soon after the incident.

The arrested persons have been identified as Akash Tiwari, 24, of Jhansi and his close friend Avani Pandey, 28, a resident of Ayodhya, and the third as Shiva Rai, a resident of Narmadapuram.

"Trio have confessed that they were hurt with Lucknow's incident and they wanted to do something for their dharma. They were targeting to vandalise non-Hindu religious places. After torching a church and Christian prayer hall in Narmadapuram district, they had planned to com-



mit similar acts at churches and mazars in Narmadapuram town followed by similar incidents at churches, mazars and mosques in Bhopal," a senior police official said.

The police official further said that Tiwari masterminded the vandalism of the church hall by sharing actual locations of the targets and also funded the crime, while his friend Pandey, with whom he had studied together and did initial private sector jobs in Lucknow, was living in Itarsi town of Narmadapuram and working as sales executive at a car showroom in Bhopal, executed the plan. Pandey came to Narmadapuram (MP) in December 2021 for apprenticeship in Railways at

Itarsi - a major junction of the West Central Railway). He completed the apprenticeship in December 2022, after which he joined a car showroom in Bhopal as sales executive. Since Bhopal is just 90 odd km from Itarsi, he continued to stay in Itarsi only and daily shunted between Itarsi and Bhopal. During the investigation, police found that Pandey had thrown a bottle of liquor inside a church earlier in January but it wasn't reported. On January 9, he burnt the gate of a church and also a copy of the holy Bible in Itarsi's Kheda area, after which the police lodged a case, the official added. A month later, Pandey convinced Rai to burning furniture and writing 'Ram' on the wall inside a Christian prayer hall in Chauki Pura village under Kesla police station of the district. The incident came to light on Sunday, after the hall was opened for prayers.

"After lodging a case under Section 295 IPC, we formed three teams and following sustained investigation, our teams were able to track two of the accused, including prime accused Avani and his helper Shiva Rai on Monday late night. Their grilling led to the arrest of Jhansi-based mastermind Tiwari. All three are now in police custody," Narmadapuram SP, Dr Gurkaran Singh said.



CONGRESS UNIT HOLDS 'SILENT' PROTEST AGAINST I-T SURVEY AT BBC OFFICES

Team Absolute | Pune

The Congress's Pune city unit staged a 'silent' protest on Wednesday against the Income Tax department's survey operations at the BBC's offices in Delhi and Mumbai, and claimed media houses and journalists were under pressure since the Narendra Modi government came to power in 2014.

The action, which sparked a sharp political debate with the ruling BJP accusing the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) of "venomous reporting" and the opposition questioning the timing of the move, comes weeks after the broadcaster aired a two-part documentary "India: The Modi Question" on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the 2002 Gujarat riots. The Congress workers led by Pune unit president Arvind Shinde covered their mouths with black bands during the protest held outside the Patrakar Bhavan here in Maharashtra.



Shinde said the Congress condemns the I-T department's action and blamed the central government for it. "We feel that just two weeks back, the BBC had come out a documentary on Gujarat riots and it (I-T department action) is connected to that," he said. Shinde claimed that since the Modi government came to power in 2014, media houses and journalists have been under pressure

and they should day, show and preach whatever the central government wants.

Journalists or media houses that do not obey are targeted by the Centre through the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax department, he claimed.

The Income Tax department had launched the action on Tuesday at the BBC's Delhi and Mumbai offices along with at least

two linked premises as part of an investigation into alleged tax evasion against the British broadcaster in India.

The tax department's survey operation against the BBC India continued for the second day on Wednesday with the sleuths understood to be making copies of electronic and paper-based financial data of the organisation, officials said.

"Blatant lies": team Thackeray on Devendra Fadnavis's "arrest" claim

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Shiv Sena (UBT) on Wednesday took a dim view of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis' claim that the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had tried to put him in jail, and asked the BJP leader in which case was he "fearing" arrest. An editorial in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' claimed that IPS officers had threatened MVA legislators to support Fadnavis and spied on them by tapping their phones. Devendra Fadnavis should explain if such "illegal" phone tapping is a crime or not, it said.

Maharashtra's political culture has never seen instances of arrest of political opponents and harassment of their family members, the Marathi publication said. After the 2019 Assembly polls, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena snapped ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the issue of sharing the chief ministerial post.

Uddhav Thackeray later tied-



up with the Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress to form the MVA in the state.

Fadnavis recently said the previous MVA government had given a target to then Mumbai police commissioner Sanjay Pandey to put me in jail, but the police officer could not succeed as he had done nothing wrong.

Reacting to it, the Saamana editorial on Wednesday asked, "Why is Devendra Fadnavis scared that he may be arrested?" "In which case was he fearing arrest and what connection did he have with the case... Fadnavis should have clarified," it said. "In the last few days, Fadnavis has been speaking blatant lies," it

claimed, adding this is not the "sanskar" of the Sangh (RSS). The Marathi daily said the MVA government had filed cases against IPS officer Rashmi Shukla in Pune and Mumbai in connection with the alleged phone tapping.

The phones of MVA leaders were illegally tapped when Fadnavis was the chief minister, it said. The phone numbers of MVA leaders were out for tapping under different names said to be of drug peddlers and terrorists, it claimed. Fadnavis should also explain if such "illegal" tapping is a crime or not, the editorial said. The investigating officers in the case visited Fadnavis when he was the leader of opposition and took his statement respectfully. There was no need to make an issue out of it, the Marathi daily said. MVA leaders Anil Deshmukh, Nawab Malik, Sanjay Raut was arrested by central probe agencies unnecessarily. If the phone tapping case was not serious enough, why former Mumbai police Chief Sanjay Pandey was arrested in the same case, the editorial asked.

To keep track of dogs, Mumbai engineer develops tags with QR code

Team Absolute | Mumbai

An engineer and a dog lover from Mumbai claims to have developed tags with QR code technology to keep track of stray dogs. The man behind the idea, Akshay Ridlan aims to provide these tags to people at a nominal price so as to increase the reach of the technology.

"It will also help the government find dogs' locations and make strategies for their sterilization or vaccination. It can be done through the database. We want to offer this QR at a nominal price right now. People and organizations who feed or rescue animals can use this," Akshay said while talking to Reporter.



Akshay further highlighted the various features provided by the technology. He said, "I attach the QR code with the reflective collar and then scan the QR with the scanner on my phone. After scanning, I get all the details in the digital form of a particular dog. This creates a UID (Unique identification), gender, pet name, name of the caretaker, phone number of the caretaker, and medical/vaccination history of the dog."

Man gets 10 years in jail for attacking wife after she refuses to cook

Team Absolute | Thane

A court in Maharashtra's Thane district has sentenced a man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for seriously injuring his wife after she refused to cook food for him ten years ago.

In her order on Tuesday, Sessions Judge Dr Rachna R Tehra held the 39-year-old man guilty under Indian Penal Code section 307 (attempt to murder) and also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on him.

As per the prosecution, convict Vanya Jagan Korde and his wife Laxmibai frequently fought as he was jobless. On September 22, 2013, the couple got into a fight and the woman refused to



cook for him.

In a fit of rage, Korde picked up a log and attacked Laxmibai, leaving her grievously injured, the court was told. The court refused to accept Korde's request for relief under the Probation of Offenders Act, which provides for the release of offenders on probation or

after due admonition and for matters connected therewith, saying the statute was not applicable to cases under section 307 of the IPC.

During the trial, the court examined eight prosecution witnesses, including a doctor and the woman's brother, said Additional Public Prosecutor E D Dhamal.

for his claim," the court ruled.

Maharashtra Court Refuses To Stop "Pathaan" Teaser, "Besharam Rang" From Streaming

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A court in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra has rejected a petition seeking temporary injunction to restrain streaming of teasers of Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Pathaan' movie and its 'Besharam Rang' song on YouTube without showing U/A censor certificate.

P A Patel, Joint Civil Judge at Shirampur court in Ahmednagar, rejected the plea on February 8, stating that a plaintiff must produce something to show the foundation for his claim.

Suresh Patil, who claims to be a social worker, had moved the court ahead of the release of the movie, which hit the screens on January 25.

Perusal of the complaint and documents filed on record show that the plaintiff is claiming temporary injunction to restrain the defendants (Yash Raj Films) from showing the teaser and 'Besharam Rang' song of "Pathaan" movie without showing U/A certificate, the court said.

The court also said that from the contentions of the plaintiff, it appears that he has seen the song and teaser on YouTube and also noticed that U/A certificate is not shown before streaming of the content. "Therefore he got confused," it said. Patil himself stated that the meaning of U/A certificate (unrestricted public exhibition subject to parental



guidance for children below the age of twelve), the court noted.

Thus, no injury is caused to the plaintiff, it said. On perusal of record, it shows that the main relief claim by Patil in present suit is same as the temporary injunction sought by him.

"If the said relief is granted, it is as good as the final relief. Hence, relief cannot be granted," the court noted. "Moreover, from the contentions of the plaintiff, no prima facie case is made out. Plaintiff must come off with something to show foundation

for his claim," the court ruled. The court observed that no loss will be caused to the plaintiff if application is rejected and he is having another remedy.

Ahead of its release, "Pathaan" was mired in controversy due to its song 'Besharam Rang' as many, including politicians, criticised the song for "hurting religious sentiments" of Hindus. Several right wing organisations objected to the "saffron costumes" worn by actor Deepika Padukone in the song.

Assam govt ads claim 'ownership' of 6th Jyotirlinga; Maha Oppn fumes

Team Absolute | Mumbai

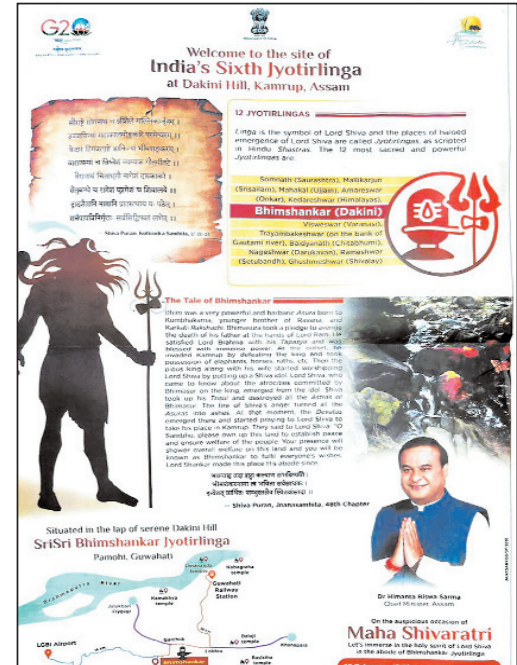
A row erupted in Maharashtra on Wednesday over an Assam government advertisement claiming that India's 6th Jyotirlinga is located at Kamrup in the Dakini hills in the northeastern state. The ad, released by the Assam government on Tuesday in various media, bears the photo of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma greeting and inviting people on the occasion of the upcoming Maha Shivratri (February 18) celebrations. "Welcome to the site of India's Sixth Jyotirlinga," says the huge media ads, which have given the names of all the 12 Jyotirlingas in the country, including now showing the 6th one as 'Bhimshankar (Dakini)', prominently in a red box, beside a Shivaling, a Trishul and Damru. As per Hindu texts, of the 12 such recognised Jyotirlingas all over India, one is in the Bhimashankar hill forests of Pune district in Maharashtra, where lakhs of devotees go for prayers every year. Taken aback by the 'preposterous' claims, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) immediately pounced on the Assam government and the ruling Balasahabnathi Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party regime in Maharashtra. Firing the first salvo, Congress'

General Secretary Sachin Sawant said: "Leave aside industries (in Maharashtra), the BJP wants to snatch away even Lord Shiva from Maharashtra. Now, the BJP Assam government claims that the 6th Jyotirlinga of Bhimashankar is situated in Assam and not in Maharashtra's Pune district. We strongly condemn this highly preposterous claim." Nationalist Congress Party MP Supriya Sule slammed Assam and demanded whether the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has now decided to give away the cultural and spiritual treasures of Maharashtra along with its industries and jobs. "What the Assam BJP government in Assam is doing is absolutely unacceptable and without any basis," she said, urging Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis to take immediate note of the developments.

Playing the Assam government, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s national spokesperson Kishore Tiwari said this is just the beginning and the BJP will now take away other important gods and deities of Maharashtra.

"Today, it's the Jyotirlinga which represents Lord Shiva. Tomorrow, they will even stake claim on his son, Lord Ganesha, who is the most revered in Maharashtra, where the annual Ganeshotsav festi-

val took birth 130 years ago," a fuming Tiwari said. Sule went on to quote Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya's Brihad Ratnakara Stotra that the Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga is the source of River Bhima in the forests of Dakini, hence the Bhimashankar in Pune is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga Temples, none other. "Who else needs to testify now? However, the BJP-ruled Assam has started promoting the Shivalinga at Parnohi near Guwahati as the 6th Jyotirlinga. This is very mischievous and false propaganda," Sule said. Hitting back at Savant for the criticism, BJP spokesperson Ram Kadam presented a press release of December 2021 of the Centre's Department of Tourism mentioning all the Jyotirlingas and also the Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga. Calling Sawant a 'misguided emperor' like the Congressmen, the BJP leader said that from the government, everything is clear. Sawant patiently requested Kadam to first "study the issue and then talk", pointing out that his concern pertained to the Assam government ad of February 14 which mentions that the 6th Jyotirlinga is not in Maharashtra but in Assam. "Even the name has been changed. Surprisingly, it didn't upset you. Maybe the topic is not understood as usual," said Sawant in a sarcastic swipe at Kadam.



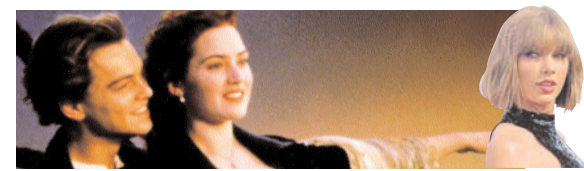
NIGERIAN MAN ARRESTED NEAR MUMBAI SCHOOL, DRUGS, INCLUDING COCAINE FOUND

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A 40-year-old Nigerian national has been arrested with cocaine and mephedrone worth nearly Rs 16 lakh at suburban Borivli, an official said on Wednesday.

The anti-narcotics cell (ANC) of Mumbai Crime Branch had received intelligence about a man carrying drugs at Borivli West, he said.

He was spotted near an international school on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and was taken into custody, said the official. The ANC recovered 55 grams of drug mephedrone and 12 grams of cocaine from him, he said, adding that a case has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.



Priyanka Chopra gives love a second chance in 'Love Again' trailer

Los Angeles | Agencies

The makers of 'Love Again' starring Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Sam Heughan dropped the trailer of the film on the occasion of Valentine's Day, and promised a complete love-filled ride.

It tells the tale of a grieving Priyanka who gives love another chance after a loss. Priyanka's American pop-star husband, singer-actor Nick Jonas has a cameo in the film as they share an awkward kiss.

The trailer starts with a glimpse of Priyanka as Mira who struggles to move on with her life after the death of her boyfriend. She keeps sending texts at the old number which is now being used by Sam, as his new work phone.

Rob, who is a journalist, gets fascinated by Mira's honest and heartbroken texts as she opens up about her old wounds. Rob and Mira cross paths at an opera night and hit it off but Rob is scared to open up about his feelings towards her. 'Love Again', directed by Jim Strouse, is slated to release in theatres May 12, 2023. Based on the 2016 German film SMS fur Dich by Karoline Herfurth, the film was previously titled 'Text for You'.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Emma Corrin, best known for portraying Princess Diana on Netflix's royal drama 'The Crown', is joining the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

The actor will star with Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman in the third installment of 'Deadpool'.

Corrin's exact role hasn't been announced, but they are expected to play the villain opposite Reynolds' snarky mercenary and Jackman's Wolverine. 'Deadpool 3' is scheduled to hit theatres on September 6, 2024.

Reynolds celebrated the casting on Twitter, writing: "New addition to the family! The Deadpool family, for clarity. Which is just like a real family except with less swearing. Welcome, Emma Corrin!"

Shawn Levy, who directed Reynolds in 'Free Guy' and 'The Adam Project', is taking over filmmaking duties for 'Deadpool 3' which is the first R-rated installment in Disney's MCU. Fox distributed the first two 'Deadpool' films prior to Disney's acquisition of 20th Century Fox in 2019.

Screenwriters Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick, who worked on 2016's 'Deadpool' and its 2018 sequel, are returning to pen the third entry.

Corrin, who is non-binary and uses they/them pronouns, scored an Emmy nomination for 'The Crown'.

You saved Hollywood's ass: Steven Spielberg tells Tom Cruise



Los Angeles | Agencies

Steven Spielberg and Hollywood star Tom Cruise reunited at this year's Oscar nominees luncheon, where the blockbuster filmmaker praised his 'Minority Report' and 'War of the Worlds' actor for saving the theatrical movie business with 'Top Gun: Maverick'.

Both Spielberg and Cruise are in the running for best picture this year thanks to 'The Fabelmans' and 'Top Gun: Maverick', respectively.

"You saved Hollywood's ass and you might have saved theatrical distribution," Spielberg said to Cruise in a video originally shared on Instagram by director Kartiki Gonsalves, whose film 'Who Can Say No to Baby Elephants!' is nominated for best documentary short film.

Spielberg added: "Seriously, 'Top Gun: Maverick' might have saved the entire theatrical industry."

'Top Gun: Maverick' was the second movie to gross over \$1 billion at the worldwide box office amid the pandemic, following 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'. With a \$1.48 billion gross, 'Maverick' ranks as the 11th highest-grossing movie in history worldwide. The film is the fifth-highest grosser at the domestic box office with \$718 million.

Although 'No Way Home' grossed more, that was a Marvel movie with three generations of Spider-Man actors in it.

Although 'Maverick' is a sequel, its success was hardly pre-ordained. Yet the follow-up to 1986's 'Top Gun' became a rare old-fashioned hit that legged out at the box office for months based on word of mouth.

EMMA CORRIN JOINS RYAN REYNOLDS IN 'DEADPOOL 3'



Kevin Feige confirms 'Spider-Man 4' movie is being written

Los Angeles | Agencies

Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige has confirmed in a new interview that Tom Holland's fourth 'Spider-Man' movie is being written. Marvel had one of its biggest hits ever with Holland's third-outing, 'Spider-Man: No Way Home', which became the first pandemic release to gross over \$1 billion worldwide.

"All I will say is that we have the story," Feige said about Holland's anticipated 'Spider-Man' return to Entertainment Weekly.

"We have big ideas for that, and our writers are just putting pen to paper now."

Whether Holland will once again team up with 'Spider-Man' actors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield remains to be seen. Both actors have expressed interest in returning for a new 'Spider-Man' movie.

Elsewhere in the EW interview, Feige confirmed that Marvel's Mahershala Ali-starring 'Blade' movie will be filmed this year. Production on 'Blade' hit a speed bump in 2022 when original director Bassam Tariq exited the project in September. Yann Demange stepped in to helm the vampire tentpole.

"It's going well," Feige said about 'Blade'. "Our director Yann (Demange) is down in Atlanta right now. Cameras roll in, like, the next 10 weeks or so." Feige also championed the upcoming Marvel debut of Harrison Ford, who is taking on the role of Thaddeus Ross in "Captain America: New World Order." Disney and Marvel have not yet announced a second season of 'Moon Knight' with Oscar Issac, but Feige said: "There's a future for that character as we move forward." He also compared the upcoming 'Captain Marvel' sequel, 'The Marvels' to the first 'Avengers' movie.



'I bought myself flowers'

REBEL WILSON PRETENDED SHE HAD A 'SECRET ADMIRER', SENT HERSELF FLOWERS ON V-DAY

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Rebel Wilson, who is in a relationship with Ramona Agruma, has opened up that she used to send herself gifts during her school years, admitting that it was always a "lonely day" for her. "I bought myself flowers and pretended it was from an anonymous admirer because a lot of the girls would get flowers on Valentine's Day. And I didn't have anyone to send, so I bought myself. I was like, 'Oh my God, I must have a secret admirer ... I'm so popular.'... But I think people were just looking at me like I was an idiot," Rebel shared.

"But then it would always be a bit of a sad, lonely day, I think. But especially in the last few years, I really worked on myself and have done a lot of healing and a lot of positive things. And then I was like, well, maybe it's not a coincidence that then I did find a really deep loving connection that's working really well." Rebel went public with her romance with Ramona in 2021. And the Hollywood star - who welcomed her first child, a daughter called Royce, via surrogate in November 2022 - has admitted to being "shocked" by their romantic connection. She told PEOPLE, "I always was a bit of a girls' girl and had deep friendships with women, but this was the first time that it was a romantic connection and I was just shocked. And then I was like, 'Oh, well, what if that was just part of my personality that I was repressing and wasn't exploring?' And maybe I should have ten years earlier. My journey is what it is, but it's just awesome now to be in a relationship."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Elkin Su



'TRULY A PROUD MOMENT'

Ali Fazal represents India at Oscar luncheon, clicks pics with Tom Cruise

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Ali Fazal, who is known for his works such as 'Death on the Nile' and 'Victoria & Abdul', is a member of the Academy in the US. The duty-bound actor recently attended the prestigious Oscar luncheon representing India.

India has three nominations in the Oscars race this year with Shaunak Sen's 'All That Breathes', 'RRR' being nominated for Best Original Song and Guneet Monga's 'The Elephant Whisperers' directed by Kartiki Gonsalves.



Talking about the same, Ali expressed, "It was great to be there alongside Shaunak and Guneet as a representative of Indian cinema. 'All That Breathes' is one of the most iconic films I have seen in the recent past and to be there to see the film and our cinema being celebrated was truly a proud moment".

The luncheon was attended by Hollywood big wigs including international superstar, Tom Cruise. Ali was elected as a member of the Academy in 2018, back then making him one of the youngest members from India. Ali who is in LA as part of his work commitments joined the talented bunch and extended his cheer for the Indian films representing the country.

It was tough to play 'Bihari' role for the first time: Poonam Rajput

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Begum Jaan' actress Poonam Rajput has been roped in for Anurag Kashyap's directorial short film 'Chaar Chappalein' also starring Manav Kaul, Randeep Jha, and Sanjay Gandhi. Poonam shared her experience working with the ace filmmaker and also revealed how challenging it was to play a Bihari character for the first time.

She said: "Chaar Chappalein" is an international short film set in Bihar. I portray a 21-year-old newly married woman and am playing the lead opposite Randeep Jha. The film was shot in Varanasi."

The 'Mirzapur 2' actress added that she never played a Bihari character before and language was a challenge for her.

"I had never played a Bihari character in my acting career, so I needed to learn the dialect and accent as I hail from Himachal Pradesh. The shoot started 2 days after I was selected to play the part, so I needed to quickly get into the skin of my character. I tried to keep it natural and real without losing the authenticity of her coming from a small town. Also, she is an introvert and simple girl which is the opposite of who I am in real life."

While talking about her experience working with the director, Poonam shared: "Anurag sir embraces the improvisation process, giving actors full creative control over their performances. He makes his actors feel very comfortable on set, and he wants them to look natural and realistic on screen. When I auditioned for this role, I was not confident that sir would actually cast me. I was unsure if I could perform well enough to get selected for the role, but thanks to his faith in my abilities and hard work, it all paid off in the end."

She recalled her first day on the sets and how she was nervous. "I was nervous to work with such an experienced director. At first, I felt quite intimidated by sir but my co-actor Randeep Jha and I gave the first shot in one take. It took off some pressure from me and I felt proud of myself. Also, the shooting schedule was preponed, we were not mentally prepared for that but still, we gave our best efforts and it came out well."



MY KIDS SEE ME ON SCREEN & SAY DAMN COOL BODY PAPA: SRK

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, who flaunted a perfect eight-pack abs in the song 'Jhoomo Jo Pathaan' in his latest release 'Pathaan', is happy that youngsters find his chiselled body "cool".

SRK, who is a father of three, said: "When they were doing Jhoomo Jo Pathaan song, I think a conspiracy was hatched to make me go shirtless. There was no way that I was sure about doing it (taking my shirt off) but then they made me do it!"

He added: "I think it was already planned that slowly, slowly, they will start opening my buttons. I have never done my signature steps with abs! So, ya, it took a lot of takes."

"I'm very happy now when youngsters, my kids see me on screen and say damn cool body papa! I feel very happy but it is really scary! I don't know if I will be able to do it again."

About what he loves about the chartbuster song Jhoomo Jo Pathaan, SRK said: "Jhoomo Jo Pathaan is a song that I feel makes you want to dance. Just wanted to do a step which everyone can do with ease. It comes when it's like all things are done well now and so let's celebrate, it's a party song in the film."



PERFORMING EVERY SCENE IS A PART OF MY JOB: RUCHI SINGH

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Ruchi Singh, who has been part of mythological dramas like 'Santoshi Maa Sunayin Vrat Kathayain 2' and 'Vignaharta Ganesh', said that she is now interested in grabbing different kinds of roles and is not hesitant to do a bold scene if the character demands.

Ruchi said: "I do feel that acting is a profession where you have to be ready to essay any kind of role, be it a negative one, positive one or a romantic one. Being in this profession, I can't create boundaries or inhibitions for myself because, nowadays, there are a lot of good projects which demand bold scenes. So, I don't believe in rejecting a

project only because it has a close-proximity scene."

She further added: "If I feel the scene justifies the screenplay and story and if it enhances the scene, I would love to perform it. For me, performing every scene is a part of my job, whether it's a drunken scene or bold scenes, and I don't find anything negative in this."

At last, she shares that she is open to taking up any role or scene if it is the demand of the script and "shot aesthetically".

"Nowadays, the choice of the viewers is also changing and everyone is open to the idea of adult scenes in any project. I am open to stretching the boundaries but the scene should be justified and shot aesthetically," she concluded.

'I think everything happens for a reason'

Anchal Sahu believes fame comes at a price and for her it was letting go of school life

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Anchal Sahu, who is currently seen essaying the role of Parineet Kakkur in the show 'Parineeti', recalled how tough it was to balance her studies and acting career, and how she also had to let go of her school life.

Anchal said: "I do believe that being an actor, managing everything is not an easy task because you tend to lose some or other things. Due to work commitments, I was also not able to attend my school on a regular basis; however, I tried my best to be present on important days."

"Initially, I used to struggle to find a balance between my work and studies, but gradually, I learned to balance everything. I carry books with me on the set and study whenever I find time between the shots."

"I think everything happens for a reason. To be honest, I don't regret anything in life, I do believe that fame comes at a price and for me, it was letting go of my school life," she concluded.



Nabha Natesh