

absolute india

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LATHMAR HOLI



Women of Barsana beating men of Nandgaon with sticks during Lathmar Holi celebration in Barsana town near mathura on Tuesday

India's fiscal deficit rises to Rs 11.91 lakh crore

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The fiscal deficit for the first 10 months of the current fiscal rose to Rs 11.91 lakh crore, which was 67.8 per cent of the whole year target for 2022-23, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts on Tuesday.

The fiscal deficit for the corresponding period of last year was 58.9 per cent of the previous fiscal's target. The government had made an upward revision in the fiscal deficit target for 2022-23 in the Union Budget to Rs 17.55 lakh crore from Rs 16.61 lakh crore.

The total revenue receipts for April-January period of 2022-23 were Rs 19.76 lakh crore, which is 81.3 per cent of the revised 2022-23



budget estimate of Rs 24.32 lakh crore. During the corresponding period of last year, the total receipts were 88.5 per cent of the budget estimate.

The net tax revenue, for the 10-month period ending January 2023, was Rs 16.89 lakh crore, which is 80.9 per cent of the entire fiscal's target. During the year-ago period, the net tax revenue collected was 87.7 per cent of the annual target.

The total expenditure in 2022-23 till January was Rs 31.67 lakh crore, which is 75.7 per cent of the 2022-23 target.

The government raised Rs 31,123 crore through disinvestment between April and January of 2022-23, which is 62 per cent of the current fiscal's revised target of Rs 50,000 crore.

Centre's market borrowings in the April-January period rose to Rs 10.05 lakh crore, which is 84 per cent of the current fiscal's target.

'Not me, but you are target', Sisodia writes in resignation letter to Kejriwal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After arrested Delhi ministers - Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain - resigned from the cabinet on Tuesday, the resignation letter of the former revealed that he told Arvind Kejriwal that it is the Chief Minister who is BJP's real target, and not him. Kejriwal has accepted their resignations.

"Me and my god know that all these allegations levelled against me are fake and nothing more than a conspiracy hatched by cowards who are afraid of Arvind Kejriwal's politics of truth. I am not their target, but you (Kejriwal) are," said Sisodia in his resignation letter to Kejriwal. He added, "This is because today, not just the person of Delhi, but the whole country sees you (Kejriwal) as a leader who has a vision for India which can bring change in the lives of the people. Today, Arvind Kejriwal has become a symbol of hope in the eyes of crores of people across the country that are facing problems like economic crisis, poverty, unemployment, inflation and corruption. People know that unlike other leaders, Kejriwal does what he says."

Sisodia also said that many FIRs have been registered against him and many more will follow.

Talking about his association with Kejriwal, Sisodia said, "They tried hard to force me to leave you. They even threatened me and lured me. When I did not bow down before them, they have arrested me and put me in jail. I am not even afraid of their jails. I am not the first person in the world to go to jail while fight-



'GO TO HC': SC DECLINES SISODIA'S PLEA AGAINST ARREST IN LIQUOR POLICY CASE

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to entertain a plea by arrested Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia challenging his arrest by the CBI in an alleged case of corruption in now-withdrawn Delhi liquor policy. A bench of Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and comprising Justice P.S. Narasimha told senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, representing Sisodia, that his client has alternative remedies available before the Delhi High Court and stressed that he must move either the trial court or the high court for the relief he is seeking from the apex court. The bench also pointed out that this is a case involving the Prevention of Corruption Act and it would not interfere directly, adding that an efficacious alternate remedy is available. "It will set a very wrong precedent... Just because an incident occurs in Delhi, we can't entertain it here directly," said the bench.

ing on the path of truth." The resignation letter also recounted Sisodia's tenure as the Education Minister. "I have worked honestly in various departments of the Delhi government. The prayers of lakhs of children studying in government schools of Delhi are with me. The love of their parents is with me. And the biggest thing is that I have the blessings of thousands of teachers

who brought about a revolution in the field of education in Delhi," he said. Sisodia claimed that all the allegations levelled against him will be proven false and the truth will come out with time.

"But now that they have crossed all limits and put me in jail by hatching a conspiracy under false and baseless allegations, I wish that I should no longer hold the post of a

CBI FINDING IT HARD TO GET INFORMATION OUT OF SISODIA

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is finding it hard to get information out of the Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Manish Sisodia, in connection with the 2021-22 Delhi excise policy case.

A source in the CBI said that on Tuesday, the agency sleuths asked Sisodia about the deleted files and documents which they have now retrieved from his computer.

"Dinesh Arora and some IAS officers will be confronted with Sisodia. They had recorded their statement against Sisodia," the source said.

The source also claimed that Sisodia has failed to legitimately explain the incriminating evidences which surfaced against him during the investigation.

Sisodia is currently under CBI custody till March 4 following his arrest by the probe agency on Sunday.

Twitter account of Trinamool Congress hacked; logo & picture changed

Kolkata | Agencies

The official Twitter account of the Trinamool Congress has been hacked, with the picture and logo of the handle changed.

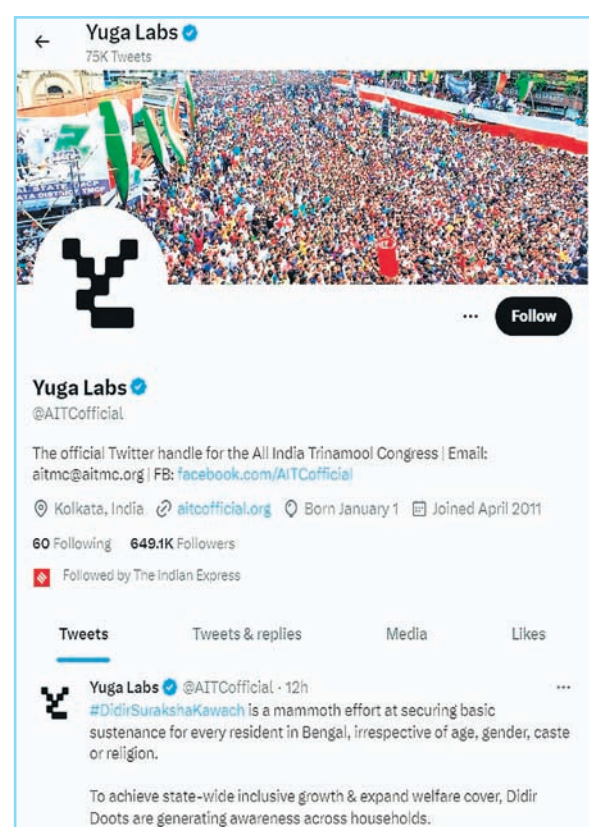
The party's national spokesman and Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien has confirmed the development and claimed that communications are being made with the Twitter authorities to bring the handle back to its original format.

In the hacked handle the name has been changed to "Yuga Labs" and the original party logo has been replaced by a symbolic picture combining the letters "Y" and "L".

The "blue tick", however, is still there. Party sources said that the matter came to the notice of the leaders early Tuesday morning and they doubt that the hacking incident took place on late Monday night.

The Twitter authorities have contacted and they have assured us of giving back the party's official Twitter handle the original looks at the earliest," a party leader said.

However, despite being hacked no derogatory comment slamming the party has been posted through



this Twitter handle.

The last tweet posted by the handle at 9.01 p.m. on Monday night, read:

"#DidirSurkshaKawach is a mammoth effort at securing basic sustenance for every resident in Bengal, irrespective of age, gender, caste or religion. To achieve state-wide inclusive growth & expand welfare cover, Didir Doots are generating awareness across households."

expand welfare cover, Didir Doots are generating awareness across households."

Party sources said that besides informing the Twitter authorities about the development, the leadership might also file an official complaint with the cyber crime division of the Kolkata Police.

SOLDIER, TERRORIST KILLED IN PULWAMA ENCOUNTER

Srinagar: A soldier and a terrorist were killed in an encounter in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Tuesday, officials said. Police said that the body of the terrorist is yet to be retrieved and the encounter in the Padgampura area is currently underway. The encounter erupted after a joint team of police and security forces received a tip-off about the presence of terrorists in the area. After the security forces cordoned off the area, the terrorists started firing drawing retaliation.

'WATERMELON AND FOOTBALL' SIZED TUMOURS REMOVED FROM MAN'S ABDOMEN

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A 51-year-old man with two tumours in the abdomen equal to the size of a large watermelon and a football has been successfully operated upon, doctors here said on Tuesday.

The bilateral adrenal tumours are "the world's largest adrenal tumours removed so far", doctors at Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, said in a statement. The tumours measuring 20 x 20 cm (right side) and 12 x 10 cm (left side) in size and weighing 4.5 kg and 1 kg each were located deep in the upper part of the abdomen at the top of the kidney where adrenal is situated. Adrenal glands normally measure about 2 cm in an adult.

The tumours were so huge that they made the patient's abdomens protrude outwards and had displaced internal organs around them. The patient, Divash Chandra

Tivari, a resident of Bihar was admitted to the hospital with complaints of loss of appetite, constipation for 2 to 2.5 months and abdominal distention.

The doctors removed the tumours in a complex surgery that lasted six hours.

"The surgery was very challenging because the tumours occupied the entire space in the patient's abdomen and had displaced organs such as kidneys, liver, spleen, pancreas and intestines and there was hardly any space to manoeuvre. There was a risk of damaging vital organs during the surgery," Dr Anant Kumar, Professor and Head, Department of Urology & Renal Transplant and Robotics at Max said in a statement.

"We performed bilateral adrenalectomy and removed the tumours safely," he added. The patient was discharged after five days post-operation and is now doing well, the doctor said.

2010 JNANESWARI EXPRESS DERAILMENT

CALCUTTA HC GRANTS BAIL TO 11 ACCUSED MAOISTS

Kolkata | Agencies

The Calcutta High Court, on Tuesday granted bail to 11 Maoists accused in the 2010 Jnaneswari Express accident, in which as many as 148 persons were killed and 180 were injured.

The 11 accused were granted bail after spending almost over a decade since their arrests while the investigation of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the matter is yet to be concluded.

A division bench of Justice Debangshu Basak and Justice Md. Shabbir Rashidi, while granting the bail of the 11 accused Maoists, questioned whether the investigation agency is not aware of the fundamental rights of the accused.

According to the bench, it is a matter of shame the legal formalities and even the process of inte-



grating the witnesses is yet to be completed even after 13 years since the incident took place. "Do not forget that even the

accused persons have fundamental rights. They cannot be locked behind the bars for years without trial. All of them have spent over

10 years behind the bars with the trial process being yet to be completed," Justice Basak observed.

The 11 accused who were granted bail on Tuesday were Khagen Mahato, Bholanath Mahato, Jaladhar Mahato, Ram Mudi, Manik Mahato, Amiy Mahato, Jaideb Mahato, Mohonto Mahato, Lakshmikanto Roy, Sunil Mahato, and Manoj Mahato.

The Jnaneswari Express derailed in 2010 near Jhargram in West Midnapore district of West Bengal, following which 148 persons were killed and 180 were injured.

Investigation revealed that the train got derailed because some miscreants removed the fish-plates. The incident took place when the Maoists were continuously observing strike in the area. The CBI had taken over the investigation in the matter.



SC JUNKS PLEAS BY NOIDA/GREATER NOIDA BUILDERS FOR RESTORING 8% INTEREST RATE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a major setback to builders in Noida and Greater Noida, the Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed the intervention applications (IAs) against its November 7 order, where the court had recalled its 2020 order, capping the interest rate at 8 per cent for delay in payment of land cost by builders to the authorities.

A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M. Trivedi said: "The IAs were filed by various group of companies, including Ace Group of Companies, but they are not in any manner concerned with the plight of home buyers of Amrapali Group of Companies, of which judicial cognisance was taken by this court and merely filing of IAs by other group of companies who are stranger to the cognisance taken by this court in reference to Amrapali Group of Companies, do not deserve any indulgence at least in the instant proceedings." It noted that Ace Group of Companies approached it by filing IA on its own behalf and not being authorised by the builders who have entered into their respective lease



deeds with the Noida/Greater Noida authorities, neither the applicant (Ace Group of Companies) was holding power of attorney on behalf of others nor authorised by other developers/project proponents working with Noida/Greater Noida authorities, or that it was in a representative capacity. The Supreme Court on November 7, 2022, had recalled its 2020 order, capping the

interest rate at 8 per cent, for delay in payment of land cost by builders to the Noida and Greater Noida authorities.

Senior advocate Ravindra Kumar, representing Noida and Greater Noida authorities, contended that there was no material available on record, even placed by Ace Group of Companies, and other builders, to claim parity with the Amrapali Group.

Kumar submitted that so far as the Prateek Group of Companies is concerned, the statement which has come on record and noticed by this court in its order, dated November 7, 2022, is indeed alarming in that all its projects were completed much before the cognisance was taken by this court and it was unable to pay the demand as raised by the Noida/Greater Noida authorities in terms of the conditions of the lease deed executed with open eyes between the parties. "It also moved an IA before this court which was not even remotely concerned with the cause of which judicial notice was taken by this court with an object to secure interests of the homebuyers of Amrapali Group of Companies," he said. Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi represented CREDAI & NAREDCO and senior advocate Ranjit Kumar represented the builders.

The top court judgement came on batch of IAs filed by various promoters/ developers/builders working in Noida/Greater Noida for recalling of the order dated November 7, 2022, pursuant to which the interim orders passed by the apex court dated June

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Central Railway's Solapur Division has achieved 100 per cent electrification of its 976 kms rail lines, an official said here on Tuesday.

With this, the Solapur Division will save 3,116 kilolitres of diesel worth Rs 35.50 crore annually, entailing carbon footprint reduction of 8,268 tons on the Kurduwadi-Latur section.

The first section electrified here was the 73-km long Manmad-Puntamba-Sainagar Shirdi in August 2014, and the last non-electrified section was the 52-km long Ausa Road-Latur Road section that was also electrified last week.

The Central Railway said that Indian Railways is working on a mission mode to become the largest Green Railway network in the world and rushing to become a 'net zero carbon emitter' before 2030. Accordingly, the pace of railway electrification, which



is eco-friendly and reduces pollution, has increased nine times since 2014.

The Indian Railways has planned electrification of the broad gauge routes to eliminate diesel traction that would lead to significant reduction in its carbon footprint environmental pollution.

Besides being eco-friendly, electrification comes with several advantages like reduced dependence on imported diesel and savings in foreign exchange, lower operating costs, haulage of heavier freight trains and longer passenger trains with high haulage capacity of electric locomotives, etc.

GMDA cuts 3 water connections over non-payment of Rs 2.9 cr

Gurugram | Agencies

Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) on Tuesday disconnected three water connections due to non-payment of Rs 2.9 crore.

These include Vipul World Society - Sector 48, Mayfield Garden - Sector 51, and BPTP Countrywide Promoters Pvt Ltd in Sector 102, Gurugram

"The above 3 licence holders have for a long period not cleared the water supply charges of GMDA for the bulk water supply provided to them by the Authority. Reminder notices have been issued thrice to the concerned builders but no action has been taken from their end." The Development Authority has now disconnected their water supply connections which will be resumed on the clearance of



the dues. All the beneficiaries of water supply are requested to timely clear the water supply charges of the Authority to avoid any such disconnection of water supply to their colonies," said Abhinav Verma, Executive Engineer, GMDA.

Currently, GMDA has outstanding payments amounting to Rs 2.88 crore due from 40 licence holders in the city. Vipul World has a pending amount of Rs 72 lakh while

the dues of BPTP Countrywide amount to Rs 1 crore. Other colonisers with such high-value pending dues will soon be issued similar notices for clearance of water supply bills of GMDA.

At present, GMDA is supplying approximately 545-570 MLD of potable water to the city to meet the demands of the residents and further projects are being taken up to augment the water supply in the city shortly.

MBBS STUDENT JUMPS TO DEATH FROM 7-STORY BUILDING

Bidar (Karnataka): A 22-year-old MBBS student committed suicide by jumping off a seven-storey building in Bidar district of Karnataka on Tuesday. The deceased has been identified as Srirama Kadagi.

According to police, Srirama was a final-year medicine student at the Bidar Institute of Medical Sciences (BRIMS). He was residing at the BRIMS hostel and committed suicide in the morning. Police explain that Srirama hailed from Chitraguppa taluk of Bidar district. He was dejected and under depression after the death of his father. Srirama was the topper in the college. More details of the case are yet to emerge. New Town police are recording the statements of his hostel mates, friends and teachers. The investigation is on.

Two die in blast at firecracker manufacturing unit in Odisha

Bhubaneswar | Agencies

At least two persons were killed and two others were critically injured in an explosion at a firecracker manufacturing unit in a village in Odisha's Jagatsinghpur district on Tuesday.

According to police, the mishap took place at Inchapur village under the jurisdiction of Balikuda police station in the district around 1.15 p.m. The explosion took place after a fire erupted at the unit where firecrackers were being made. The blast not only destroyed the firecracker unit completely, but the resultant fire also gutted a house and huge quantities of paddy stored nearby.

After getting information, fire service personnel reached the spot and doused the fire. Local police also reached the spot and initiated an investigation.

The deceased are identified as Dillu Mohanty and Bulu Das of local vil-



lages. Both died on the spot, the police said.

Two others, Susant Prusty and Dinabandhu Das, who sustained critical burns, were immediately rushed to the district headquarters hospital at Jagatsinghpur.

Later, Dinabandhu was shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack while Prusty is now under treatment in a private hospital in Bhubaneswar. The health condition of both injured persons is stated to be critical, sources said.

Men in 'luxury car' caught stealing flowerpots put out for G20, FIR lodged

Gurugram | Agencies

A video went viral on Tuesday in which two men allegedly stole flowerpots set up for the G20 meeting near Shankar Chowk on Delhi-Jaipur Expressway in Gurugram.

The Gurugram Police are now registering an FIR related to the matter.

"We have received a complaint from Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) following which we are filing an FIR in the matter. The car bearing number 'HR20AV0006' was registered in Hissar and the owner is a lady identified as Beena. We will soon send her a letter to join the inves-



tigation," Umesh Kumar, station house officer of DLF Phase-3 police station told IANS.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson of the GMDA said they will deploy security guards and alerted the police so that such incidents could be

avoided in the future.

The incident forced the district administration to act against the involved persons.

In the viral video which surfaced on Twitter, the two men can be seen standing alongside their KIA car, which has a VIP number

plate, in Gurugram's Shankar Chowk, picking flowerpots one after the other and storing them in the trunk.

The video had received over 5 lakh views and over 3600 'likes' on Twitter.

DC Gurugram responded to the viral post on Twitter and asked the city police to look into the matter.

According to the District administration, representatives from 39 nations are to attend the G-20 event where they will discuss the anti-corruption initiatives implemented in their nations, the degree to which they were successful in reducing corruption, and what else needs to be done.

PM MODI'S BROTHER HOSPITALISED IN CHENNAI

Chennai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's younger brother Prahlad Modi has been admitted at a private hospital in Chennai due to a kidney ailment, sources said.

Without providing further details, the sources at the hospital in Ayanambakkam said that his condition is stable.

Prahlad Modi, who is also the Vice President of All India Fair Price Shop Dealers Federation, is on a spiritual tour with his family and had visited the Madurai Meenakshi temple, Rameswaram temple and Kanniyakumari Devi temple.

CBI raids pvt firm; recovers cash worth Rs 21L, gold watches

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday conducted search operations in Delhi and recovered cash worth Rs 21,50,000, gold watches, eight gold coins, 14 demand drafts of Rs 6.83 crore, and other documents and digital evidences in an ongoing investigation in connection with a bank loan fraud case, officials said.

A senior CBI official said that a case was registered on a complaint from Punjab and Sindh Bank against a private firm which deals into four wheelers, its proprietor Taran Kapoor and his wife Pawan Kapoor (Guarantor) and others.

The official added that Sterling Motors obtained a cash credit limit of Rs 18 crore and bank guarantee (financial) of Rs 22 crore during 2009 to 2017 from the bank against primary security of new vehicles, spare parts and accessories. The central probe agency said that Sterling Motors then allegedly diverted the funds to other bank accounts and related



parties and thereby misappropriated the money." The loan account was irregular and bank declared it as an NPA on March 31, 2018, with an outstanding amount of Rs 35.99 crore," said the official. The official added that raids were conducted in Delhi at the premises belonging to the accused.

Youth held for raping and killing two-year-old girl in Surat



Surat | Agencies

The body of a two-year-old girl, who went missing on Monday evening, was recovered late at night from a remote location in Surat.

The police have arrested a youth for raping and killing the toddler.

According to the officers of Sachin police station on Navsari Road in Surat, a couple from Kapletha village, which is within the jurisdic-

tion of the police station, reported that their two-year-old daughter went missing on Monday evening.

During searches later that night, the police discovered her body from the bushes in a remote area. The body has been sent for post-mortem, police sources said.

While probing the matter, the police found that the infant was last seen with a person named Ismail Yusuf, who lives in the same area as the complainant.

Lawrence Bishnoi-Kala Jathedi gang sharpshooter nabbed in Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

A 29-year-old sharpshooter of Lawrence Bishnoi-Kala Jathedi gang, facing cases of murder, robbery, extortion and under the Arms Act, was arrested in Delhi, a Delhi Police official said on Tuesday.

The accused, identified as Sudhir Maan, a resident of Najafgarh area, had recently threatened a businessman of a real estate firm in Mohan Garden in Uttam Nagar area at gunpoint.

Police have also recovered a sophisticated pistol of .32 bore and four bullets from the possession of Maan.

According to police, on February 23, information was received that a shooter of Lawrence Bishnoi-Kala Jathedi gang, namely Maan, is involved in extortion activities for his gang in Delhi and other states.

"The inputs further stated that Maan would go to Uttam Nagar to threaten another businessman for extortion. A trap was laid on main Najafgarh-Dhansa Road, Mitraon, Delhi and Maan was nabbed after a scuffle," Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Cell, Rajiv Ranjan Singh



said.

On interrogation, Maan revealed that on the direction of jailed gangster Sandeep Jhanjhar alias Kala Jathedi in March 2022, shooters of their gang had fired at the owner of a real estate firm in Mohan Garden for extortion of Rs one crore.

"The businessman had received bullet injuries in both legs. In spite of the severe threat, the businessman did not succumb to their extortion. Within a short span, all five shooters, one informer, a weapon supplier and five conspirators were arrested

by the Special Cell from Sri Ganganagar and Hanumangarh districts of Rajasthan, Neemuch (Madhya Pradesh), Delhi, and Haryana," said the DCP.

In Jan 2021, jailed gangster Sachin Bhanja had introduced Maan to another gangster Ankit Lagarpuria in Gurugram to threaten businessmen of Delhi-NCR for extortion.

"At that time Ankit Lagarpuria was desperately wanted in many cases but residing secretly in a PG in Sector 22 Gurugram along with another wanted desperate criminal namely Virender. Lagarpuria further introduced him to gangsters Virender Pratap alias Kala Rana and Sandeep Jhanjhar alias Kala Jathedi over VoIP call," said the DCP.

"In the year 2021, they planned to fire upon a businessman of a supermarket in Jharoda Kalan, Najafgarh. The planning to fire upon this businessman was orchestrated through his VoIP communication with the then most wanted gangsters Kala Rana and Kala Jathedi. This communication was further extended through the most wanted Satinderjeet Singh alias Goldy Bar of their gang to ensure safety of their shooters," said the DCP.

PUNJAB VILLAGE TO GET NATIONAL AWARD FOR SANITATION WORK

Chandigarh:

Peroshah village in Punjab's Gurdaspur district will be honoured with the national award -- Swachh Sujal Shakti Samman 2023 -- by the President of India and the Union Minister for Jal Shakti on March 4.

The award will be given to village sarpanch Harjinder Kaur for providing excellent sanitation facilities. In the context of International Women's Day (March 8), this award will be given to those women who have done good work in the water supply and sanitation sectors.

State Water Supply and Sanitation Minister Bram Shanker Jimpa said that with the support of the state government, the village has got recognition at the national level by properly managing waste water and solid and liquid waste. Peroshah village falls in the Sri Hargobindpur block near Batala, where dirty water is being purified by the villagers using the Thapar technology following which the water is being used for irrigation. Also, compost is being prepared from the waste in the village itself. Harjinder Kaur has expressed happiness over the village being named for the award. She said that other villages should also come forward to establish such projects with the help of the government.





MADHYA PRADESH RECEIVES MSEFC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the state is constantly making achievements. It provides a feeling of pride and joy. After getting the top position in Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, now the state has made another achievement. The MSME Department of Madhya Pradesh has been awarded the MSEFC Excellence Award-2022 by the Central Government for resolving delayed payments of MSMEs. This award has been given to the Micro and Small Enterprises Facilitation Council for strong recovery procedure and quick disposal of cases. Madhya Pradesh has received this award for getting delayed payment of more than Rs. 30 crore to MSME units. Chief Minister Chouhan said this to the media representa-



tives after planting saplings in the garden located at Shyamla Hills.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that 73-year-old Shri Asudo Lachhwani, who retired from BHEL, is doing a commendable job of providing assistance and guidance to needy children and youth to complete their education and career building. The lifestyle of Lachhwani, a resident of Sant Hirdaram Nagar of Bhopal, is full of simplicity. He has given guidance to many youths for career building. Under his guidance, many doctors, engi-

neers, chartered accountants and company secretaries are serving in prestigious organisations today. Lachhwani has also done the work of collecting tuition fees and educational materials for the education of needy children for the last 40 years. Due to this noble work done by him, 15 youths have become CA, CS, doctors and engineers in 7 years. He is also currently providing financial assistance to 65 children. Chief Minister Chouhan said that Forest Range Officer Sita Jamma posted in Samanpur buffer zone of Kanha National Park has opened a free library for the youths of the tribal village. Books are being made available to the youths for the preparation of competitive exams from the library which began three months back. This library is not being operated in rooms with all facilities but in forest nakas and unused rooms.

TERROR SUSPECT SARFARAZ MEMON DETAINED IN INDORE

Bhopal: Terror suspect Sarfaraz Memon, who has alleged links with the now-banned Popular Front of India (PFI), has been detained in Indore.

On Monday, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) had issued an alert about Memon's whereabouts, after which Indore police was alerted.

Based on NIA inputs, Memon was detained on Monday, Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Nartoram Mishra said on Tuesday. "Those involved in suspicious activities will not be spared," Mishra added.

Memon, who knows many languages, hails from Chandan Nagar in Indore and was residing near a mosque in the Khajrana area. He also opened a medical store in the area. Police sources said that Memon has allegedly undertaken training in handling arms and ammunition in Pakistan, China and some other countries.

High Court grants bail to Raja Pateria in case for alleged 'filthy' remarks against PM Modi

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday granted bail to Congress leader and former State Minister Raja Pateria, who had been arrested for making controversial remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Justice Sanjay Dwivedi ordered the release of Pateria on his furnishing a personal bond of Rs1 lakh with one solvent surety of the like amount.

Pateria was arrested in December for allegedly making a speech during a Congress meeting using "filthy and intimidating language" against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

His first bail plea was rejected by the High Court on January 10, with the Court noting that his release on bail may give a wrong message to society.

At the time, the Court had also observed that public leaders are not expected to use foul language disparaging the image of leaders in high places like the President or the Prime Minister. However, the Court had added that Pateria was at liberty to resuscitate the prayer of bail by filing a



fresh application after thirty days. Accordingly, Pateria moved a fresh plea for bail, which has now been allowed by the High Court.

During the hearing, counsel for Pateria informed the Court that the chargesheet was already filed and that his bail application should be considered since he had been in jail since December last year.

On the other hand, the State opposed the application by contending that the earlier bail application of

the applicant was rejected on merits. Therefore, a second bail application, without any change in circumstance, cannot be considered, the State argued. The Court, however, proceeded to grant bail in view of the earlier liberty granted to Pateria to revive the application after thirty days. It clarified that it was not commenting on the merits of the case against Pateria while granting bail. Senior Advocate Shashank Shekhar and Advocate Samresh Katara appeared for Pateria.

MPS ECONOMY BOOSTED CONTINUOUSLY: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that Madhya Pradesh is performing well in financial discipline, holistic development and tax collection. The financial management of the state is outstanding. Per capita income has increased. Chief Minister Chouhan was discussing with the representatives of the TV channels on the Economic Survey 2022-23 of Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that there is progress in every field in Madhya Pradesh from economic and financial point of view. Revenue collection and capital expenditure has also increased. Industrial growth rate of the state has also increased. According to advance estimates, the economic growth rate of the state is 16.43 percent in the year 2022-23. Earlier this growth rate was 18.02 percent in 2021-22 despite the circumstances of Covid.

Significant increase in per capita income Chief Minister Chouhan said that in the year 2022-23, a fact came forth that the per capita income in Madhya Pradesh is Rs one lakh 40 thou-



sand 583. In the year 2011-12, the per capita income in the state had increased to Rs.38 thousand 497. Prior to this, in the year 2001-02, the per capita income in Madhya Pradesh was only Rs 11 thousand 718. Talking about debt and GSDP ratio, the performance of Madhya Pradesh is great in this area as well. The latest Economic Survey states that the debt to GSDP ratio which was 39.5 percent in the year 2005 decreased to 22.6 percent in the year 2020-21. The capital expenditure of the state has increased from Rs 37 thousand 89 to Rs 45 thousand 685 crore. This increase is 23.18 percent and

is the highest capital expenditure in the history of the state. Efforts were made to increase the state's revenue even under the circumstances of Covid, with the vision of building an Atma-nirbhar Madhya Pradesh. It has grown at a Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.94 percent per annum in the last three years. In the field of fiscal consolidation, the work of increasing revenue constantly has been done in Madhya Pradesh. The work of expansion of priority sector lending has also been done.

Increase in agriculture growth rate and facilities for farmers

Credit to farmers has increased by 13.41 percent and to MSME sector by 30.22 percent. In the year 2001-02, the agriculture growth rate was only three percent, which has now increased to 19 percent. The state has also achieved the success of wheat production of 352.7 lakh tonnes in the advance estimate of 2022-23 as compared to 174.8 lakh tonnes in the year 2013-14 and 46 percent participation of Madhya Pradesh in wheat exports. Paddy production has increased from 53.2 lakh to 131.8 lakh tonnes.

Overage army aspirant dies by suicide after failing to qualify for Agniveer recruitment

Team Absolute | Shivpuri

A 22-year-old Army aspirant allegedly committed suicide in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district on Tuesday after failing to qualify for the Agniveer selection process as he was overage, police said.

Kedar Pal left home in the early hours of the day to go for a run, but was later found dead, around 200 metres from his house in the town, an official said. "We found Pal's body and recovered a suicide note, in which he mentioned that he was unable to join the Army as he was not qualified to apply for Agniveer recruitment," said



Kripal Singh, the in-charge of the 'Physical' police station. According to Pal's friends, he had aspired to join the Army and exercised a lot to keep fit.

After the Agniveer scheme was introduced, the age criterion for joining the Army was fixed at 17 to 21 years, while earlier it was up to 23 years, they said. "No recruitment

drive was conducted for two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic and by then, many aspirants like Pal became overage. He was born on June 30, 2002, while the age criterion for selection was for candidates born between October 1, 2002, and April 1, 2004," said Sonu Gurjar, a friend of the victim.

CM Chouhan pays tribute to Dr. Rajendra Prasad on his death anniversary



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid tribute to the first President of India and great freedom fighter Dr. Rajendra Prasad on his death anniversary. CM Chouhan garlanded his portrait in the auditorium located at the residence office and paid floral tributes.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad was one of the prominent leaders of the Indian independence movement. He also contributed significantly in the making of the Indian Constitution. Often he is

mentioned respectfully with the address of 'Rajendra Babu'. Dr Rajendra Prasad was born on 3 December 1884 in Jiradei village of the then Saran district (now Siwan) of Bihar. He obtained a doctorate degree in law. He became the first President of the country on 26 January 1950. He again became the President in the year 1957 and remained in this highest position till the year 1962. After this, he lived in Patna Bihar Vidyapeeth and spent his life doing public service. He passed away on 28 February 1963 in Patna.

New Education Policy to help youths, says Mohan Yadav

Team Absolute | Narmadapuram:

MP Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav has said the new education policy will help the youth of the country to build their career. The youth, in turn, will build the nation, he said at a workshop at Narmada Degree College. The day-long workshop was held on the National Education Policy 2020 and the state's youth policy.

Yadav released a book, "Nayee Siksha, Nayee Udan," containing various aspects of the New Education Policy (NEP), and launched an e-education portal comprising more than 1,600 contents of 40 subjects. The minister then released booklets on Hindi literature.

He honoured many students of the college with certificates and shields for excelling in sports, NSS and in various other fields. The students will be able to shape their career from their child-



hood on the grounds of the NEP, Yadav said. He said seminars on the NEP were being held in different parts of the state to tell the students about its importance in their life. Such seminars will be held in districts and all degree colleges, and that the history of those who laid down their lives for the country's freedom will be taught, Yadav said. The minister also spoke about the letters written by Bhagat Singh to his mother and about the war between Rani Durgawati and Akbar. Sitasaran Sharma and Vijaypal Singh, legislators from Narmadapuram and Sohagpur, respectively, were present at the function. Chairperson of Nagar

Palika Neetu Mahendra Yadav, collector Neeraj Kumar Singh, the staff and the students from various degree colleges were also present at the function.

Higher Education Minister Mohan Yadav held one-to-one interaction with the students and replied to their questions. A student Harsh Yadav wanted to know how the New Education Policy would be helpful to strengthen education in villages.

The minister said age would not be an impediment to anyone's education and the students can complete their education through Bhoj Open University, Indira Gandhi Open University and other institutions.

COUPLE GETS LIFE IN JAIL FOR KILLING DAUGHTER BORN WITHOUT EAR

Indore: A couple was on Monday sentenced to life imprisonment by a court in Indore in Madhya Pradesh for killing their three-month-old daughter, who was born without an ear, and disposing of her body in a garbage dump.

Pappu Rawal and his wife Sangeeta Rawal were convicted under section 302 of the Indian Penal Code for killing their child with a kitchen plier, a prosecution official said.

The child's body was found wrapped in cloth in a garbage heap in Khajrana area here on March 16, 2016. The child, who was the second daughter of the couple, did not have an ear, due to which they disowned her and killed her, the official said. However, DNA tests established them as the biological parents and a probe found them guilty. Assistant District Public Prosecution Officer Avisarika Jain convinced the court about the couple's guilt through circumstantial and scientific evidence, the official said.

Form IV

(Rule 8, The registration of Newspaper (Central) rules, 1956)

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7	Name and address of individual/s who own the Newspaper	: Yogendra Chaturvedi, 161-162, Flamingo, Aakriti Eco City, Bawadia Kala, Bhopal (MP)

I, Yogendra Chaturvedi hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-
Yogendra Chaturvedi
Signature of Printer & Publisher
Date: 01.03.2023

30,000 ONLINE CHILD ABUSERS IDENTIFIED IN MP WITH HELP FROM US AGENCY DATA

Bhopal: A US-based agency has identified over 30,000 people in Madhya Pradesh over the alleged circulation of suspected child sexual abuse material (CSAM), including pornography, online enticement and contact offences. 4,000-plus 'actionable' cases identified MP Police intends for a major crackdown and has identified 4,000-plus 'actionable' cases from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) CyberTipline data acquired from central intelligence, TOI reported quoting sources in the home department.

It has been further revealed that over 26,000 cases are under scrutiny and potential arrest lists are being sent to 10 districts from the state cyber cell headquarters.

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DEMAND NOTICE
(under Rule 3 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)
SUBSTITUTED SERVICE OF NOTICE U/s 13 (2) OF SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the borrowers as mentioned below that since they have defaulted in repayment of the Credit facility availed by them from Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited (ABHFL), their loan accounts have been classified as **Non-Performing Assets** in the books of the Company as per RBI guidelines thereto. Thereafter, ABHFL has issued demand notices under section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act) on the last known addresses of the said borrowers thereby calling upon and demanding from them to repay the entire outstanding amount together with further interest at the contractual rate on the aforesaid amount and incidental expenses, cost, charges etc. as stated in the said demand notices. However, the demand notice is also being served by way of publication, as per Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (SARFAESI Rules).

Sl. No.	Name and Address Borrower/ Co-Borrower and Guarantor / Co-Guarantor & Loan A/C No.	NPA Date	Date of Demand Notice	Amount due as per Demand Notice / as on Date
1	1. MANOJ DUBEY, plot no. 367 (south part), kalyan sampat vihar, village nanod, indore, madhya pradesh-453112. 2. KIRAN BAI Plot No. 367 (South Part), Kalyan Sampat Vihar, Village Nanod, Indore, Madhya Pradesh-453112. 3. MANOJ DUBEY D-8, Gurukripa Colony, 80 Feet Road, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452005. 4. KIRAN BAI D-8, Gurukripa Colony, 80 Feet Road, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452005. 5. MANOJ DUBEY C/O RAMASHRAY ENTERPRISES, 8-D, Gurukripa Colony, 80 Feet Road, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452001. Loan Account No. LNINDOHL-10290074287 & LNINDOHL-10290074288	08.02.2023	22.02.2023	Rs. 19,57,934.00/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Four Only) by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 17.02.2023
2	1. SANJAY SAWANT, Plot No. 36, Village Balyakheda By Pass Road, Tehsil, Sanjivani, Tehsil & Dist. Indore, Madhya Pradesh 453771. 2. CHHAYA Plot No. 36, Village Balyakheda By Pass Road, Tehsil, Sanjivani, Tehsil & Dist. Indore, Madhya Pradesh 453771. 3. SANJAY SAWANT 228, Aranya Nagar Sct. 7B Sita Sector 3, Indore, Madhya Pradesh 452010. 4. CHHAYA 206, S-E-SI 03 Scheme No. 78, Aranya Nagar, Indore, Madhya Pradesh 452010. 5. SANJAY SAWANT 206, S-E-SI 03 Scheme No. 78, Aranya Nagar, Indore, Madhya Pradesh 452010. 6. CHHAYA C/O SHRI SAWARIYA TAILORS 206, Sector-E, Slice-3, Scheme No. 78, Indore, Madhya Pradesh 452010. 7. SANJAY SAWANT C/O Free Press (Compac Printers Pvt Ltd) Free Press House, 3/54 Press Complex, Agra-Mumbai Road, Indore, M.P. 452008. Loan Account No. LNINDOHL-03210087771 & LNINDOHL-03210087770	08.02.2023	21.02.2023	Rs. 11,80,467.28/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Eighty Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Seven and Twenty Eight Paise Only) by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 17.02.2023

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY/PROPERTIES MORTGAGED: All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 367 Paiki South Part, Situated At Kalyan Sampat Vihar, Gram: Nanod, Tehsil & District: Indore (M.P.), Total Area 550 Sq. Ft., And Bounded As: North: Remaining Part Of This Plot South: Plot No. 366 East: Road West: Colony Boundary Wall.

DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY/PROPERTIES MORTGAGED: All That Piece And Parcel Of Residential Plot No 36, In The Project Named As 'Sanjivani', Admeasuring 1407 Sq. Ft., I.E., 13.07 Sq. Mtr., Situated At Village Balyakheda, Bypass Road, Tehsil & Dist. Indore., Madhya Pradesh-453771, And Bounded As: North: Road South: Plot No. 35 East: Road West: Plot No. 25.

We hereby call upon the borrower stated herein to pay us within 60 days from the date of this notice, the outstanding amount (s) together with further interest thereon plus cost, charges, expenses, etc. thereto failing which we shall be at liberty to enforce the security interest including but not limited to taking possession of and selling the secured asset entirely at your risk as to the cost and consequences.

Please note that as per section 13(1) of the SARFAESI Act, all of you are prohibited from transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise, the aforesaid secured assets without prior written consent of the Company. Any contravention of the said section by you shall invoke the penal provisions as laid down under section 29 of the SARFAESI Act and / or any other legal provision in this regard.

Please note that as per sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, if the dues of ABHFL together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by ABHFL are tendered to ABHFL at any time before the date fixed for sale or transfer, the secured asset shall not be sold or transferred by ABHFL, and no further step shall be taken by ABHFL or transfer or sale of that secured asset.

Date: 01.03.2023
Place: INDORE

Sd/-
Authorised Officer
(Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited)



EDITOR'S SPECS

For clean Yamuna

The vanishing ghats of the Yamuna were cleaned and the river bed was made litter-free by scores of volunteers of the Nirankari Mission in Agra. The dry and polluted river, without any fresh water, continues to remain a major threat to the Mughal monuments along its banks. River activists said the state and the successive Union governments showed no sense of urgency to desilt and dredge the river to revive it and support its aquatic life. The volunteers, men, women, and children armed with gloves, spades, baskets and tractor trolleys, spent several hours picking up the garbage, mostly used polythene, plastic waste, and leather cuttings. Several tonnes of litter were cleared and transported to the municipal dump yards, the organisers said. The action started early at the Etmaddaula viewpoint park, Balkeshwar Ghat, Hathi Ghat, Poiya Ghat and Kailash under the supervision of the Mission's zonal chief Kanta Mahendru. "Our hearts should be clean and also our surroundings, the rivers, the wells, and ponds," she said. Over the years, Yamuna has been reduced to a vast 'sewage canal' as all the freshwater is consumed by Haryana and Delhi. Agra's drinking water problem has been largely solved by the 130 km long pipeline from Bulandshahar district, which brings 150 cusecs of Ganga water. Ten cusecs of water go to Mathura while Agra gets 140 cusecs. But the Yamuna is crucial to Agra, not only as it's the city's lifeline, but also to sustain monuments like Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Etmaddaula, Ram Bagh, etc. "A dry and polluted river raises the air pollution levels in the city as dry dust from the river bed hits the monuments," said members of the River Connect Campaign.

PLAYING GOOD COP, BAD COP!

Vinod Mirani

Writer, lyricist, poet and film encyclopedia in his own right Javed Akhtar is in the news again. He is being hailed as a hero for taking a stand on the kind of things Pakistan does against India. He raised a number of issues, from the accused in the Mumbai terror attacks going scot free in Pakistan to Indians playing perfect hosts to Pakistani talent, such as Mehdi Hassan, although Pakistan never showed the courtesy to invite even the legendary Lata Mangeshkar!

Javed Akhtar has been hailed for his stand because he did it in Pakistan and in front of a Pakistani audience. Of course, the audience present appreciated what he had to say with applause.

Javed Akhtar was in Pakistan to attend a literary event, but he did not shy away from telling his audience why the Indians were angry. He raised the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks which he, being from Mumbai, had seen very closely. He stated that he was well aware that the terrorists were not from Norway or Egypt, but from Pakistan and the masterminds of the attack were still roaming free in Pakistan!

Javed Akhtar showed the mirror to the Pakistanis on their own soil. And Shabana Azmi is acting in a British film, 'What Has Love Got To Do', which is directed by Shekhar Kapur and written by Jemima Goldsmith (Imran Khan's ex-wife). The film also stars a couple of Pakistani actors.

Talking to the Pakistani media house, 'Dawn', Shabana Azmi said Pakistan and India could make really good films together. Why? Just because you are taking to the Pakistani media?

Azmi claims that Pakistan has a lot of talent or something to that effect. Does India lack in talent? Our filmmakers are victims of the star system, but if one were to watch television and OTT programmes, one

will see how the country is oozing with talent!

From the business angle, why would India want to make films in collaboration with Pakistan, a country that bans Indian films on a whim as is the status now? Their cinemas, which thrived on Hindi cinema, are starving for audiences, but they will still ban Hindi films.

Where is the talent if the Pakistani industry has to fall back on a crude 1979 remake, 'Maula Jatt', to find its big hit in a long time?

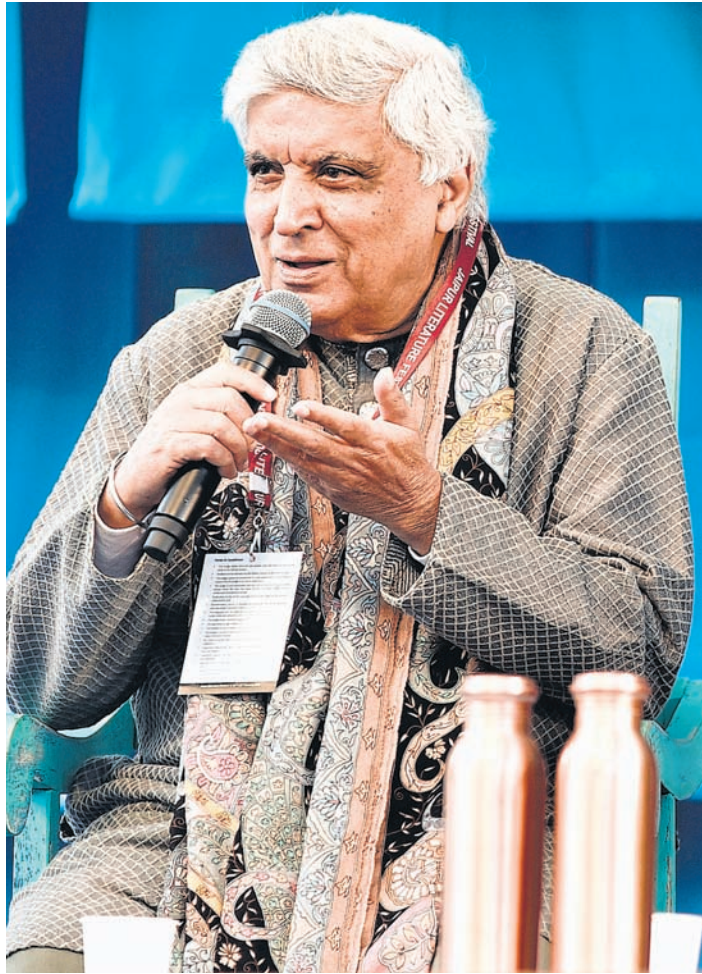
The problem with Pakistanis is that they don't respect hospitality. As Javed Akhtar said, they never reciprocated by calling the Indian legend to Pakistan. Those who make money here badmouth India on their return to Pakistan and talk to the local media.

The cricketer, Shahid Afridi, is one of them. Rameez Raza, another former cricketer they love, only talks negatively about India. Also heard, a so-called actress, Meera, who spent her evenings allegedly soliciting clients at a Juhu hotel in Mumbai, now has made abusing India her full-time hobby. Then there was Veena Malik; they are all the same. Who doesn't know what the ghazal singer Ghulam Ali said about Indian women while on a flight to a co-passenger not knowing he was an Indian government official.

The Hindi film industry gave work to a lot many Pakistani actors, but they all talked against India, instead of remaining neutral. Is India producing about 2,000 films a year without having its homegrown talent that we need ingrate Pakistani talent?

Yes, Ms Azmi was talking to a Pakistani channel and had to say nice things. Thankfully, Javed Akhtar balanced it with his views on Pakistan. There was a phrase much in use: Good cop; bad cop!

This joint venture with Pakistan can only spell disaster. This topic has been talked about often over the years. But there is nothing for India in this idea. I was invited by



India's biggest media group to discuss this topic of India-Pakistan joint ventures.

A Pakistani lady producer was to express her views against mine. She was given the first option to choose for or against (you know Aman Ki Asha entailed being nice to enemies!). She suggested it would be a great idea to make a co-production. I opined that we in India had no real reason to do that. If at all, may be, the Punjabi producers can follow up on the proposal, for there is a huge Punjabi-speaking population on the other side of the border. That could have added to the business of Punjabi films, instead of

them watching these films for free.

How Many Phalke Awards Do We Have?

The media, especially TV news channels, even those claiming top slots, went ga-ga over the Phalke International Awards during the week.

Which Phalke Awards are these? And, how many Phalke awards do we have? There is one, the original, that the Government of India bestows on an individual for his/her contribution to films.

There is one Dadasaheb Phalke Academy, which is a registered body. Rest, there are half-a-dozen others who exploit the Phalke name; and, this one claims to be International!!

What was international about these awards? How many Hollywood or other foreign films did they choose?

Why do film people get swayed by such fly-by-night award givers and why do media houses never verify their credentials? Because the media loves everything served on a platter. Especially if it is about films! The media seems to believe in the adage: "Why bother to confirm it, just publish it till someone denies it!"

The Phalke award in question lists some known names as jury members and these persons are never aware of their names being used, let alone getting to see the films they are supposed to be giving awards to.

It happened with one reputed editor of a trade journal a few years back. All that happened was they called him to say they had put his name as one of the jury members! This only happened when he learnt about it from his own sources.

These film folk love any kind of endorsement and an award is one such. There were times when various journalists associations, film fan clubs, and so on, bartered away awards to stars for a personal appearance or for an advertisement in the souvenir to be published on the occasion.

One vernacular journalist even went from office to office giving away an award. His award was a decently framed Sai Baba idol; no film personality had the courage to refuse a Sai Baba idol!

There was only one Dadasaheb Phalke, but there are so many exploiting his name for personal gains!

international

US LAWMAKER WARNS INDIA AGAINST CHINESE-TAINTED RUSSIAN WEAPONS

Yashwant Raj | Washington

A top US lawmaker has cautioned India against "compromised" Chinese elements in technology it may have imported from Russia in view of growing ties between Moscow and Beijing.

"We don't want to be in a situation where for some reason, the Russians somehow have given technology that's compromised by the CCP to India or others that could be taken advantage of by the CCP," said Raja Krishnamoorthi, the top Democrat and the ranking member of the newly established House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the US and the Communist Party of China (CCP), in an interview.

"I think there's just a very detailed conversation that's probably happening and should happen between our governments with regard to a whole range of technology now that we believe that it's critical to our collective security," he added.

The compromised parts could give the Chinese a window into the Indian defence systems, and/or into American hardware being used by



Indians. As India and the US have deepened and broadened defence cooperation, with Indian purchases of American military hardware at an all-time high, Washington DC has had concerns that its sensitive-technology military hardware sold to India can be accessed by Russia through their equipment that flood Indian armories. This has been cited as a chief concern by Americans as they press India, without success, to

cancel its order of the Russian S-400 air missile defence system. They also say that the presence of Russian equipment impeded interoperability between the militaries of India and the US.

Asked about India's ties with Russia, the lawmaker, who was born in New Delhi and came to the US when he was three, said, "I understand the historical ties between the Indians and the Russians. And I also

understand the practical nature of the relationship. I hope that over time, the US can prove to be a reliable source of security equipment. But also, we can deepen our ties so that the Indians aren't as dependent on the Russians for certain critical items."

India has indeed been diversifying military purchases in recent years and it has substantially cut dependence on Russia and the US has been among the countries that are rushing in to fill that space, along with others, by, among other things, upgrading India's access to sensitive technology at par with close allies.

Americans have publicly urged India to review ties with Russia in view of this growing proximity. "I do think that the CCP and the Russians have entered into a rather unholy relationship right now with regard to Ukraine with regard to other matters that I don't think are in the best long term interests of the world," said Krishnamoorthi, who had earlier served on the House Permanent Select Committee that oversees the work of America's 17 intelligence agencies.

Hong Kong drops mask mandate after 959 days

Hong Kong | Agencies

After it was first imposed on July 15, 2020, in the wake of the raging Covid-19 pandemic, Hong Kong has finally dropped its mask mandate after 959 days, the city's government announced on Tuesday.

The mandate, enforced through fines that could reach more than \$1,000, had required facial coverings in all public spaces, reports CNN.

The rule came into effect for public transport and was expanded two weeks later to include indoor and outdoor areas -- though the vast majority of people in the city had begun wearing masks months earlier as reports of coronavirus infections spread, leading to panic buying and shortages as early as January that year.

The mandate will be fully lifted on Wednesday, Hong Kong's Chief Executive John Lee said while addressing a



press briefing. "We are now returning to normalcy," CNN quoted Lee as saying.

In recent months, Hong Kong has rolled back several other major Covid restrictions, most notably mandatory quarantine for all international arrivals in an effort to boost tourism.

Also addressing the same news briefing, Health Secretary Lo Mau-chung said that with the lifting of the mask mandate, "we have

now removed all epidemic restrictions". "I'm looking forward to seeing a smile on everyone's face now," he said.

He however, added that the government still advises the wearing of masks in "high risk" settings such as elderly care homes and hospitals.

Most other places in Asia have either fully or partially eased their mask mandates in recent months, including South Korea, Japan and Taiwan.

5.6-MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE IN TURKEY KILLS 1, INJURES 69

Ankara: One person was killed, while 69 others were injured after a 5.6 magnitude earthquake hit eastern Turkey, three weeks after the massive quakes that claimed more than 44,000 lives, the country's disaster agency said. The epicenter of the earthquake on Monday was located at the Yesilyurt district of Malatya province, which had already been struck by the powerful tremors on February 6, Xinhua news agency reported. A total of 25 buildings that had previously been damaged by the tremors earlier this month collapsed on Monday, the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) said. On February 6, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck Turkey's southern province of Kahramanmaraş at 4:17 a.m. local time (0117 GMT), followed by a magnitude 6.4 quake a few minutes later in the country's southern province of Gaziantep and a magnitude 7.6 earthquake at 1:24 p.m. local time (1024 GMT) in the Kahramanmaraş Province. Another two earthquakes jolted Hatay province in southern Turkey on February 20, killing six people.

UK, EU reach new post-Brexit deal for N. Ireland

London | Agencies

The UK and the European Union (EU) have concluded a new post-Brexit trade arrangement for Northern Ireland.

The agreement - dubbed the 'Windsor Framework' - was struck over the Northern Ireland Protocol, aiming to ease the trading issues created by the Protocol.

After months of negotiations, the deal was announced by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen after their meeting in Windsor near London on Monday, Xinhua news agency reported.

"I'm pleased to report that we have now made a decisive breakthrough," Sunak said at a joint press conference with von der Leyen. "Together, we have changed the original Protocol and are today announcing the new Windsor Framework."

He said the agreement delivers the



smooth flow of trade within the UK, as goods destined for Northern Ireland will travel through a new Green Lane, with a separate Red Lane for goods at risk of moving on into the EU.

In the Green Lane, burdensome customs bureaucracy will be scrapped, meaning food retailers such as supermarkets and restaurants as well as whole-

salers will no longer need hundreds of certificates for every lorry, Sunak told reporters.

"This means we have removed any sense of a border in the Irish Sea," he said.

The two sides have also amended the legal text of the Protocol to ensure the country can make critical value-added tax and excise changes for the whole of the UK, "for example on alcohol duty, meaning our reforms to cut the cost of a pint in the pub will now apply in Northern Ireland." With a settlement on medicines, moreover, drugs approved for use by the UK's medicine regulator will be automatically available in every pharmacy and hospital in Northern Ireland.

A new so-called "Stormont Brake" was also introduced. It will allow the elected Northern Ireland Assembly to stop EU goods laws that would have "significant and lasting effects on everyday lives." When pulled, "the UK government will have a veto," the Prime Minister said.

Russia-Ukraine war drives refugees into Lithuania

Vilnius | Agencies

Three quarters of foreigners that settled in Lithuania in 2022 were refugees fleeing Ukraine as a result of the ongoing war, official figures revealed.

According to Statistics Lithuania, traditionally, most Lithuanians repatriate from the UK, Norway and Germany, reports Xinhua news agency.

Last year, the corresponding figures were 5,684, 1,546, and 1,369, respectively. It also saw 14,352 Lithuanians repatriating to, and 12,697 leaving the country, according to government statistics. In 2022, 95,400 people immigrated to Lithuania, and 23,000 people left the country.

Among all immigrated people, there are 81,000 foreigners



and three quarters of them are refugees from Ukraine.

The country registered 62,000 refugees fleeing Ukraine in 2022, Statistics Lithuania said. The last "migration negative" year was 2019, with 24,510 arrivals and 20,412 departures.

Last year, the total number of permanent residents in Lithuania increased by 54,000 to 2,860,000, mainly due to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, Statistics Lithuania reported in January.



BHIDEWADA, WHERE INDIA'S FIRST GIRLS SCHOOL CAME UP IN 1848, TO BE NATIONAL MEMORIAL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Asserting that it is committed to making Pune's Bhidewada - where the legendary Savitribai Phule founded India's first girls school 175 years ago - into a national memorial, the Maharashtra government told the legislature on Tuesday that all steps will be taken to resolve the pending legal issues and tenants' dues.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said that the government is prepared to spend any amount for acquiring this historic location - where girls' education was kickstarted in a small way on January 1, 1848 by Savitribai Phule.

Replying to a question by Nationalist Congress Party MLAs Chhagan Bhujbal and Chetan V. Tupe, asking the government to clear the position on Bhidewada and the tenants, he said that he has issued the instructions to the Urban Development Department to immediately settle the dues of the tenants, which are around Rs 10 crore.

"Since the matter is pending in court, after the dues are cleared, at the next hearing on March 10, the case



can be settled and the possession can come to the state government," Shinde said.

To Tupe's concern on the issue of heritage status for the Bhidewada building which is over 150 years old, Industry Minister Uday Samant replied that it cannot be included in the heritage list, so the government would pay up the tenants, take possession and carry out all other works related to the national memorial on it later. The demand to make Bhidewada

a national monument has been raised for several decades by various politicians, parties and even social organisations, but the matter was stuck in a legal tangle between the tenants and the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC).

The iconic Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and his wife Savitribai, launched India's first girls' school in 1848 at Bhidewada, Pune, creating history.

While Savitribai became the country's first woman teacher at that

school, the success of that modest but epochal initiative enabled two more girls schools coming up in Pune, with the help of her friend, Fatima Begum Sheikh, a literate woman who also taught there to become India's first woman Muslim teacher in 1849.

Since the past few years, there have been demands from various quarters to confer the Bharat Ratna on the Phule couple, and the state government had sent a proposal to the Centre on this in 2018.

Onion, cotton, soybean farmers in doldrums, MVA protests outside Assembly

The onion growers have demanded an immediate grant of Rs 1,500 per quintal of onions and that the government buy their produce at Rs 15-20 per kg. Else, they would not let the auction resume at the mandi, said a representative.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance of Congress-Nationalist Congress Party-Shiv Sena (UBT) protested outside the Assembly here on Tuesday on the plight of the farmers demanding a fair price for the farm produce, especially onion, cotton and soybean cultivators.

Many of the opposition leaders and MLAs came sporting garlands of 'onion' mock 'selling' basket-loads of the vegetable to draw the state government's attention to their situation in view of the sudden drop in procurement prices. Inside the Assembly, NCP's Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar raised the issue and said the farmer is in dire straits and the house must drop everything else to discuss their woes.

"We have already informed the government how a cheque of Rs 2 was given to an onion producer in Barshi (Solapur) for his stock, which is a mockery. The government should immediately intervene and direct organisations like the NAFED to purchase the agro-produce plus coordinate with the Centre to resolve the issue," Pawar urged.



He emphasised that the farmers must be given the right prices for their produce since Maharashtra is India's largest onion growing state with 33 per cent share, and the state leads in exports owing to the good quality of the vegetable produced here.

"However, presently, the price is barely Rs 500-600/quintal that has disappointed the farmers and led to widespread protests like roadblocks, dharnas, marches, etc. Besides, even those cultivating cotton, soybeans, gram, grapes are also suffering huge financial losses as they are unable to recover even the production costs," said Pawar. They pointed out how a farmers leader Ravikant Tupkar has threatened to self-immolate himself if the demands of the agriculturists are not met, while Pawar moved an adjournment motion inside

the House demanding a probe against the caning incident.

“ The government is taking all measures to provide relief to the onion farmers by buying their produce. ”

Dy CM Devendra Fadnis

“ BJP MLA Ram Kadam alleged that the protesting farmers were actually Congress and NCP workers. ”

Probe MVA's liquor policy, demands BJP Mumbai chief

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai BJP President Ashish Shelar on Tuesday demanded a probe into the excise and liquor policy of the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, alleging it was riddled with corruption.

The plea came after the arrest of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in an alleged liquor scam case by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on February 26.

Speaking to the media, Shelar said that the manner in which Sisodiya is charged with extortion in Delhi in the liquor scam, the same was perpetrated during that period by the then (MVA) government in Maharashtra.



Justifying, he reeled out the excise incentives given by the MVA regime headed by then Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to the liquor manufacturers, tax exemptions to foreign liquors, licence fees concessions to bars-pubs and permitting the sale of wine through shops and supermarkets. "Are the threads of the CBI Delhi probe extend-

ing till Maharashtra? In Maharashtra, will the file of the concessions bounty granted be opened? Is that why (Delhi Chief Minister) Arvind Kejriwal came for a visit? The then Thackeray government of alcoholics under suspicion," Shelar said in a tweet.

Two days after Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann called on Thackeray on February 24 -- ostensibly to forge a united platform against the BJP -- Sisodia was nabbed by the CBI, sparking a furore. In January 2022, the then MVA government had come out with a new liquor policy, which among other things, permitted the sale of wines through neighbourhood shops and supermarkets, which kicked up a huge political row.

NAGPUR POLICE RECEIVED CALL CLAIMING BOMBS PLANTED AT AMBANI, BACHCHAN & DHARMENDRA RESIDENCES

Nagpur: An unidentified person on Tuesday called Nagpur police control room claiming that bombs have been planted near business tycoon Mukesh Ambani's residence Antilia, Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan's bungalow and veteran actor Dharmendra's residence. The Nagpur police alerted the Mumbai Police about the anonymous call following which bomb squad teams are carrying out searches at all the places.

The caller also claimed that 25 people have reached Dadar in Mumbai equipped with weapons to carry out terror attacks.

SIX BOOKED FOR DOWRY HARASSMENT AFTER WOMAN'S DEATH

Thane: A 28-year-old man and five of his family members have been booked for allegedly harassing his wife and driving her to commit suicide in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Tuesday. The case against the six, under the Indian Penal Code and Dowry Prohibition Act, came on a complaint by the woman's father, said the official. The couple got married in November 2021. The woman's father said he gave cash and jewellery worth nearly Rs 33 lakh to her in-laws at the time, but they wanted more dowry, including a flat, said the official.

The husband even forced the woman to undergo an abortion to put more pressure on her, said the official citing the complaint. The woman hanged herself on February 24 following which her father approached the police on Monday, he said.



Madrasa teacher booked for beating 14-year-old student

Team Absolute | Bhiwandi

Police have registered a case against a teacher from a madrasa in Maharashtra's Thane district for allegedly beating a 14-year-old student, an official said on Tuesday. According to the first information report (FIR), the Islamic school is "attached to Darul Ulum Hasnain Kariman" in Bhiwandi area. The case against the teacher, booked under the Indian Penal Code and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, came on a complaint by the trustee of a dargah.

As per the complaint, the 32-year-old teacher beat the student with a stick for not memorising his lessons in November 2022, said the official from the Nizampura police station.

Though the dargah trustee



approached the police only on Monday, no reason was immediately given for the delay in

reporting the alleged assault, he said, adding that no arrest has been made yet.

Buffalo milk prices rising in Mumbai from March 1, will have cascading effect

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The buffalo milk wholesale prices in Mumbai will shoot up by Rs 5/litre from midnight on Tuesday and could trigger a significant cascading effect on the entire food industry that depends on it as its raw material, milk industry players say.

Portending a hard hit, the Mumbai Milk Producers Association (MMPA) last Friday announced the steep hike in wholesale price of buffalo milk.

The bulk milk prices will go up from Rs 80/litre to Rs 85/litre and will remain in force till August 31, MMPA Executive Committee Member C.K. Singh said. This will be followed by a similar increase in the retail market by the 3,000-plus retailers in Mumbai for the creamy fresh buffalo milk, which would now sell at around Rs 90 per litre - up from the current Rs 85 per litre - from March 1.

These sharp hikes shall be borne by the ordinary consumers not only in the form of dearer plain milk, but also other milk products that are consumed by households daily.

"This would impact, albeit marginally, the rates of a cup of tea-coffee-



ukala-milkshakes, etc, served by restaurants, at the ordinary pavement vendors, or in small eateries," said MMPA Treasurer Abdul Jabbar Chhavananiwala. The duo said that there are many other milk products like khoya, paneer, sweetmeats like pedha, barfi, certain north Indian or Bengali sweet varieties which are milk-based which could witness a price hike now.

Prominent milkman in north Mumbai, Mahesh Tiwari ruled that the price hike has come on the eve of certain festivals and also the big fat weddings season, which would be hit by the whole-sale milk price hike from

Wednesday. "The demand for milk and milk products goes up at least 30-35 per cent during festivals and even higher for weddings, marriages and other social events, and the new rates would be applicable," he said.

There's a string of festivals like Holi, Gudi Padva, Ram Navami, Mahavir Jayanti, Easter after Good Friday, Ramzan Eid, and others in the next couple of months where the celebration budgets would have to be expanded, says Singh. "Inflation has become unbearable, many of the items that make buffalo feed are almost wasted, but we have to buy them at higher rates from the market. So the milk price hike was inevitable, though done reluctantly," rued MMPA General Secretary Kasim Kashmiri. Singh avers that normally, any fluctuation in milk prices in Mumbai is usually followed by an increase in milk rates in the rest of the country, too. On an average, Mumbai consumes over 50 lakh litres of buffalo milk daily, of which more than seven lakh is supplied by the MMPA through its chain of dairies and neighbourhood retailers, through their farms spread in and around the country's commercial capital.

COURT SENTENCES TWO CHAIN SNATCHERS TO 10-YEAR RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT

Thane: A court in Thane district has sentenced two chain snatchers of the Irani gang to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment after pronouncing them guilty under provisions of the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). In the order passed on Monday, special MCOCA court judge A M Shete also imposed a fine of Rs 5 lakh each on the accused - Aziz Abbas, Jaffar Sayyed Jaffri, and Jaffar Ajam Sayyed (35).

Special Public Prosecutor Sanjay More told the court that the two accused were caught by an auto-rickshaw driver and other people on July 2, 2016, when they tried to snatch the gold chain of a woman in Kalyan town and were running away. They were charged under Indian Penal Code Sections 392 (robbery), 394 (voluntarily causing hurt in committing or attempting to commit robbery) and 34 (common intention) as well as provisions of the MCOCA.

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ADELE ENGAGED TO BOYFRIEND RICH PAUL

Kosovo | Agencies

Singer Adele is engaged to boyfriend Rich Paul. The 'Hello' hit-maker and her sports agent beau are said to be planning a summer wedding this year after Rich popped the question. Their engagement comes two years after the pair first went public with their relationship, reports Mirror.co.uk. Adele was seen wearing a huge diamond ring on her wedding finger at her latest Las Vegas show over the weekend, which has further spurred speculation. Adele has been wearing the dazzling diamond since for over a year now, after she debuted the ring at the BRIT Awards in 2022, but with fresh claims that the singer is planning a wedding this summer, it looks as though Adele could be walking down the aisle soon. As per Mirror.co.uk, her engagement was revealed by online gossip site Deux Moi, who said that the claims had come from a 'very reliable source' close to Adele. Adele and her beau Rich were last seen at the Superbowl earlier this month. Last May, Adele confirmed that she and Rich have moved in together.



Priyanka plays an elite spy with no past memory in 'Citadel'

Los Angeles | Agencies

The first-look images of the upcoming action-spy thriller series 'Citadel' were unveiled recently and they show Priyanka Chopra Jonas in a deadly gun-toting avatar which she balances by setting the mercury on fire with her look. Her character is revealed to be an elite spy, Nadia Sinh in the show directed by Anthony Russo and Joseph Russo.

'Citadel' tells the story of the eponymous independent global spy agency which gets destroyed by operatives of Manticore as the former was tasked to uphold the safety and security of all people. Manticore is a powerful syndicate manipulating the world from the shadows.

With Citadel's fall, elite agents Mason Kane (Richard Madden) and Nadia Sinh had their memories wiped as they narrowly escaped with their lives. They continue to be hidden from the world, building new lives under new identities, unaware of their pasts. Until one night, when Mason is tracked down by his former Citadel colleague, Bernard Orlick (Stanley Tucci), who desperately needs his help to prevent Manticore from establishing a new world order.

Mason seeks out his former partner, Nadia, and the two spies embark on a mission that takes them around the world in an effort to stop Manticore, all while contending with a relationship built on secrets, lies, and a dangerous-yet-undying love.

The series also stars Lesley Manville as Dahlia Archer, Osy Ikhile as Carter Spence, Ashleigh Cummings as Abby Conroy, Roland Moller as Anders Silje and Davik Silje and Caoilinn Springall as Hendrix Conroy.



Jennifer Coolidge had near-death experience in her garden

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jennifer Coolidge, who has been sweeping awards this season for her work in "The White Lotus", feels "lucky to be alive" after being impaled on a garden stake. The actress has revealed that she once suffered a near-death experience in her own garden, reports 'Female First UK'. Jennifer told US Weekly: "I was once locked out of the house and I jumped the fence but didn't know the gardener had put a new stake in the yard. I got impaled. It was a bloody mess. I'm lucky to be alive." As per 'Female First UK', Jennifer has won various accolades during her career, including a Golden Globe Award, a Primetime Emmy Award and two Screen Actors Guild Awards, but she actually dreamed of becoming a successful musician during her younger years. She shared: "I went to an orchestra camp for three summers. I played the clarinet. I thought I might do it for a living." Meanwhile, Josh Duhamel recently confessed to being a "huge fan" of Jennifer. The 50-year-old actor starred alongside the award-winning actress in "Shotgun Wedding", and Josh revealed that he relished the experience of working with Jennifer. He said: "I'm a huge fan. She is a wonderful person to have around the set. She's very chill."



COURTENEY COX REUNITES WITH 'FRIENDS' CO-STARS JENNIFER & LISA KUDROW

Los Angeles | Agencies

There was a special 'Friends' reunion recently as Courteney Cox was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which was unveiled by her co-stars. Jennifer Aniston and Lisa Kudrow were among the speakers at the ceremony as they came together to pay tribute to Courteney, reports Mirror.co.uk. The actress was hailed as a "really good human and an extraordinary friend" and credited with creating "one of the closest, most loving and supportive casts in the history of television" during her time on 'Friends'. Speaking at the ceremony, Jennifer said, quoted by Mirror.co.uk: "We're very honoured to be here today to speak on your behalf as your co-workers, your friends, your family, your sisters." She added: "To be friends with Courteney is to be family with Courteney and she is responsible for all of that." "(Courteney) instilled into all of us, into our DNA, to support each other and to love one another, and that actors need to support and love one another, not compete with one another. Those wise, wise words have stayed with me - I learned them as a young 20-something-year-old actor and that really set me on my path as a young woman and being able to create relationships that I cherish to this very day," Jennifer added. Lisa then said: "I really believe that it was that, and Courteney doing that, that really set us up to become one of the closest, most loving and supportive casts in, I'll say it, the history of television."

Michael B. Jordan said "sorry" to mom after starring in an underwear ad

Los Angeles | Agencies

Michael B. Jordan, who is awaiting the release of his film 'Creed 3', said "sorry" to his mom after starring in an underwear advertisement. The actor starred in Calvin Klein's Spring/Summer 2023 campaign - but has confessed to being slightly embarrassed by the eye-catching photos of him in his underwear, reports Female First UK. Michael told Entertainment Tonight: "I was like, my mama gon' have to see this. Let me call her and be like, 'I'm sorry. It's out here.' My business is all out in the streets, literally." As per Female First UK, Michael is currently promoting 'Creed 3', which he stars in and has directed, and the actor feels he's reached a landmark moment in his career. He explained: "This was like, a moment, you know? Just to have everything come together at one time, it feels great. And to be able to share that moment with my other actors, who are having a moment of their own as well, it just feels special. It feels like everything is happening at the right time." Meanwhile, Michael recently revealed that he plans to be "responsible" with his next romance. The actor split from Lori Harvey in June, and explained that his next relationship will happen "when it's supposed to happen." He said: "Of course I think about it, but I definitely want to try to be responsible with that, knowing how I wanted to be as present as possible. It's gonna happen when it's supposed to happen." Michael also claimed that he learned a lot through his split from Lori. He explained: "I'm a firm believer in what's for you is what's for you, and coming out of that situation - not to give it, you know, any energy and kind of move from that - is you know, it was an experience for me to grow and learn."



Kathryn Newton





IND vs AUS

ROHIT MAINTAINS SUSPENSE OVER RAHUL-GILL CONUNDRUM BEFORE START OF INDORE TEST

Indore | Agencies

On the eve of the third Test of the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India here, India skipper Rohit Sharma maintained the suspense over KL Rahul-Shubman Gill conundrum, saying that the former's recent removal as vice-captain doesn't indicate anything.

Rahul's performance in the last 10 Tests has been very underwhelming and despite the backing from head coach Rahul Dravid and captain Rohit Sharma, it is evident that his spot in the playing XI for third Test is doubtful after he was removed as vice-captain recently.

However, the Indian skipper said that the recent development doesn't actually tell anything. So, it will be interesting to see whether Gill, who has been waiting patiently for his opportunity, gets a chance on Wednesday or not.

"I said it after the last game as well that players who are going through a tough time, anyone with potential, will be given enough time



to prove themselves.

And being vice-captain or not being vice-captain doesn't actually tell you anything. At that point in time when he was the vice-captain, he was probably the senior-most (in the leadership group). His removal from vice-captaincy doesn't indicate anything," Rohit said in the pre-match press conference.

Asked if Gill, who was seen practicing quite a bit in the build-up to the Test, was in the reckoning over Rahul, Rohit said it was normal to train and practice before any game.

"As far as Gill and KL Rahul are concerned, that is how they train and practice before any game. Today was an optional training session for the entire group. Whoever wanted to

come they came. Other guys like Surya, Ishan are also there.

All 17-18 are in reckoning. It's not about Gill or someone else," he said.

"As far as the playing 11 is concerned, we've not yet finalized on it yet. I would like to do it at the toss, considering last-minute injuries can happen," he added.

Messi wins 2022 Best FIFA Men's Player Award

Paris | Agencies

Lionel Messi of Argentina won the Best FIFA Men's Player Award 2022 and Argentina was the biggest winner of the Best FIFA Football Awards 2022.

This is the second time Messi won the award after he first won it in 2019 and Argentina, champion of the 2022 Qatar World Cup, pocketed away with four trophies at the ceremony, reports Xinhua news agency.

Argentina's head coach Lionel Scaloni won the Best Men's Coach Award, Emiliano Martinez won the Best Men's Goalkeeper Award and the Argentine Fans won the Best Fan Award for the first time.

Alexia Putellas of Spain won the Best FIFA Women's Player Award 2022 for the second time in a row.

After the opening speech of FIFA President Gianni Infantino, the ceremony started with a video tribute to Brazilian legend Pele, who passed away at age of 82 on December 29, 2022.

Pele's wife Marcia Aoki received a special recognition award from Brazilian legend Ronaldo and President Infantino.

The Best Women's Goalkeeper was Mary Earps of England and the Best Women's Coach went to Sarina Wiegman of England's women's national team.

Marcin Oleksy, Poland's amputee footballer won the Puskas Award (Best Goal)



with his one-foot volley scored in a match between his team Warta Poznan and Stal Rzeszow on November 6, 2022.

India wins Women's Snooker World Cup after beating England

Bangkok | Agencies

Team India A defeated England A 4-3 (26-56, 27-67(51), 61-41, 52-27, 11-68(34), 64-55, 39-78) to win the 2023 Women's Snooker World Cup here at the Hi-End Snooker Club.

Represented by Ameet Kamani and Anupama Ramachandran, both unranked on the tour, India A exhibited skill and determination as they overcame established players on the World Women's Snooker Tour -- 12-time world champion Reanne Evans and current world number four Rebecca Kenna to lift the title. "It feels like magic and all the hard work that I have done has paid off and this is just the start. I just want to keep winning every world title, that is what I look up to, but for now I am super happy and proud because I have made my nation India proud," Kamani told World Women Snooker.

Kamani also revealed that the feat was to be even more remarkable as the pair only decided to enter the team event shortly before the



entry deadline, looking to gain valuable match practice ahead of the start of the upcoming World Championship at the same venue. Teammate Ramachandran added: "I am really happy because this has been my first tournament with World Women's Snooker and the first couple of days I was finding it really hard to adjust to the tables, it was like a completely new environment for me but I just wanted to enjoy what I was doing on the table and not thinking too much about whether I win or lose. I was going shot by shot and that really helped. I have no words!"

ANUPAMA, MITHUN WIN WOMEN'S AND MEN'S SINGLES TITLES

Pune | Agencies

Former world junior No. 1 Anupama Upadhyaya and Mithun Manjunath registered contrasting victories to clinch the women's and men's singles titles at the 84th Senior National Badminton Championship in the Balewadi stadium.

Eighteen-year-old Anupama got the better of Aakarshi Kashyap 20-22, 21-17, 24-22 in an hour and 18 minutes in the women's singles final before Mithun dominated the men's singles smash against Priyanshu Rajawat for a 21-16, 21-11 victory in just 38 minutes.

Top seed Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly were crowned the new women's doubles champions while T Hemanagendra Babu and Kanika Kanwal clinched the mixed doubles crown.

Men's doubles combination of S



Kushal Raj and S Prakash Raj wrapped up the proceedings to clinch

the men's doubles title. The women's singles final was a

topsy-turvy affair with both players fighting for every point.

The experienced Aakarshi fought back from 11-15 in the opening game by winning seven of the next eight points and pocketed the game on second game point.

But the reversal only made Anupama more determined to go on the offensive as she began with a 3-0 lead in the second, extended it to 9-1 and then maintained the advantage to force the decider.

The 18-year-old from Haryana looked like running away with the title and prize purse of Rs 3.25 lakh when she opened up a 17-10 lead in the decider. But Aakarshi wasn't willing to give up. The world No. 42 engaged her opponent in long rallies and drew level at 17-17 to set up an exciting finish and even earned a match point that Anupama saved with the shuttle tumbling over after hitting the net chord.

ENG vs NZ Test Series

NEW ZEALAND BEAT ENGLAND BY JUST ONE RUN

Wellington | Agencies

New Zealand became just the fourth team ever to win a Test match after being forced to follow on when they pulled off a thrilling one-run victory over England in a classic final-day contest.

Pacer Neil Wagner (4/62) was the hero for the Kiwis as he had James Anderson caught behind down the leg side to clinch a famous victory for New Zealand in the second Test at Basin Reserve.

The hosts' hopes had looked forlorn when they were asked to follow on after being dismissed for just 209 in their first innings in reply to England's 435/8 declared, but Kane Williamson's 26th



Test century on the penultimate day of a topsy-turvy contest gave New Zealand some hope, reports ICC.

England had to chase down 258 for victory in the fourth innings and they looked to be in control when Joe Root (95) and Ben Stokes (33) were at the crease and less than 60 runs were required. But Wagner and Tim Southee

(3/45) dug deep during a tense finale to ensure New Zealand picked up a thrilling triumph to level the two-match series at one-game apiece.

The match was not part of the current World Test Championship period, with both New Zealand and England already out of contention of reaching June's final.

THAT GAME IS WHAT TEST CRICKET IS ABOUT: STOKES

Wellington | England skipper Ben Stokes said "that game is what Test cricket is about" and it was incredible to be involved in such a thrilling contest. "That game is what Test cricket is about, it was just incredible. The emotions we were going through and obviously the Kiwi boys out there as well. Was incredible to be involved in such a Test match. Everyone's got their money's worth," Stokes said after the match.

"It was a case of assessing the situations, we always knew that at some point in that partnership (between himself and Root), Tim was gonna have to roll the dice with something. Wags (Wagner) came on and blew the game open for them. For me and Joe there, that was our opportunity to pounce. Sometimes things don't happen the way you want them to," he said. Speaking about attacking the bouncers from the Kiwi bowlers, Stokes said: "Sometimes things don't happen the way you want them to. With those bouncer plans, we had to make a decision and obviously, it didn't come off for us. It was an opportunity for us to score runs there. As soon as Waggie came on to do those bouncers, I saw it as an opportunity to maybe take 20 runs off the over and then bring the game even more in our favour."



Premier League Arsenal can move five clear, while Liverpool have to beat Wolves for European hopes

London | Agencies

Arsenal have the chance to open a five-point lead at the top of the Premier League when they entertain struggling Everton, while Liverpool need to recapture some form against Wolverhampton.

Arsenal go into the match with Gabriel Jesus their only absentee as he continues his recovery from a knee injury. The 'Gunners' will hope for a better result than in their first meeting with Everton ended in a 1-0 defeat at Goodison Park less than a month ago.

Everton have struggled to score goals, with just 17 in 24 league games, and their cause is not helped by the continued absence of Dominic Calvert-Lewin.

Meanwhile, Dyche is expecting a totally different game in the Emirates Stadium than the meeting earlier this month.

Liverpool's main issues have been in midfield and defense this season, with players such as Trent Alexander-Arnold looking tired,



although Klopp said after the weekend draw with Crystal Palace that the full-back has not been able to rest. Despite their poor season, a win would lift Liverpool above Fulham into sixth place and with a game in hand. Klopp will hope to have Darwin Nunez available after the striker suffered a shoulder injury, but Thiago Alcantara, Luis Diaz, Joe Gomez and Ibrahima Konate are all likely to miss out.

VIRAT DOESN'T GIVE REST TO FAST BOWLERS: SIRAJ

New Delhi |

Fast bowler Mohammad Siraj revealed his struggle to bowl talismanic batter Virat Kohli in the nets and said the former Indian skipper doesn't give rest to seamers to settle after delivering a bowl.

"Puji Bhai (Cheteshwar Pujara), he plays with a deep focus in Test cricket... Virat bhai does not give rest to the fast bowler. He gets ready immediately after hitting the shot, I don't even get time to settle," Siraj said on SG Cricket YouTube channel when asked which batsman he enjoys bowling in the nets.

"After hitting the shot, the batsman looks here and there, but Virat Bhai... he gets ready immediately. He has this passion... his aggression, which is amazing about a superstar like him," he added.

Siraj has been impressive for India in ODIs and also made it into the Indian Test XI on most occasions. The paceman is currently a part of the ongoing Border Gavaskar Trophy squad.



8 teams confirmed as automatic qualifiers for 2024 ICC Women's T20 WC

Dubai | Agencies

The International Cricket Council on Tuesday confirmed eight teams have been identified as automatic qualifiers for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024, to be held in Bangladesh, after the end of the eighth edition of the tournament that saw Australia win their sixth title.

As per the qualification process, the top three teams from each group earn direct qualification along with the hosts and the highest-ranked team outside of the six direct qualifiers from the 10-team tournament.

Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are the teams to earn direct qualification as the top three teams of Group 1 in the league stage while England,



two places to 16th), Bangladesh captain Nigar Sultana (up two places to 21st) and India all-rounder Deepti Sharma (up one place to 28th). Australia power-hitter Tahlia McGrath hangs onto the top spot ahead of teammate Beth Mooney despite the opener putting together a hard-fought 74 not out to be Player of the Final on top of a fifty in the semi-final against India.

Meanwhile, England spinner Sophie Ecclestone's three for 22 in her four overs in the semi-final was enough to make her just the second bowler in history to go past 800 rating points in the Women's T20I bowlers' rankings. Australia fast bowler Megan Schutt peaked at 805 in 2019 and is the only other woman to reach that barrier. Ecclestone is currently on 801 rating points.



India and the West Indies similarly make it from Group 2. Bangladesh qualified as hosts of the ninth edition of the tournament while Pakistan made it by virtue of being the next highest-ranked team in the ICC Women's T20I Team Rankings as of February 27, 2023.

The remaining two spots will be identified through a Global Qualifier to be held early next year. From the teams who played in this year's tournament, Sri Lanka and Ireland are the teams failing to get direct qualification. Sri Lanka is currently ranked eighth in the rankings while Ireland is 10th.



Rani Mukerji

compares her upcoming movie's trailer with 'Black'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Rani Mukerji, who is receiving a lot of appreciation for the trailer of her upcoming film 'Mrs. Chatterjee VS Norway' is chuffed with the response and has compared it to the appreciation that she received 18 years ago for her film 'Black'.

Overwhelmed by the reactions, Rani said: "The reactions to the trailer have been too special and overwhelming, to say the least... I'm very humbled seeing the love pouring in from the world over, from my fans, people who have

watched the trailer on social media, my own industry colleagues, friends, and family."

She further said: "In my entire career, this is probably the first time I am witnessing so much love and emotion of this kind for my work!! The last I remember this had happened was during Black! Very rarely do we get to see such unanimous reactions for a trailer. To see people get teary-eyed and cry after seeing the trailer of a film is again never heard of before."

She continued: "Somewhere they are connecting to the helplessness of a mother and are getting angered by the injustice. I am witnessing these kinds of reactions for the very first time. It baffles them that it's a true story." "I am really happy and hopeful that if the trailer can move them to this degree, they will definitely be moved to see Debika's cathartic journey in the film. So keeping my fingers crossed for the 17th of March as the film hits the theatre. It needs all the love from everyone everywhere, so hoping and praying it finds its audience in large numbers," she added.

The film opened my eyes in a way I never thought could happen: Saiyami

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Saiyami Kher will be seen playing the role of a para-athlete, a cricket prodigy in R.Balki's 'Ghoomer' which is a sports drama. The actress said that it is not at all an easy role for her as although she grew up playing cricket, in this film, she has to portray a character with a disability. Saiyami said: "I play the role of a left-handed bowler in 'Ghoomer' and, for me, in real life, I am a right-handed player. I could never actually step into the shoes of a real-life para-athlete, but even the small hurdles I had to overcome being an athlete myself, reminded me of things we take for granted."

The actress shared further how she prepared herself for playing this character on-screen physically and mentally. She said that essaying this role challenged her not only physically but also mentally. The plot of this film is inspired by the story of Karoly Takacs, the late Hungarian right-hand shooter who won two Olympic gold medals with his left hand after his other hand was seriously injured.

She added: "Preparing and filming for 'Ghoomer' opened my eyes in a way that I never thought would happen. It was a physically and emotionally challenging time, but my struggles were minuscule when compared to those heroes who make our country proud by participating in so many sports as para-athletes".

'Ghoomer' stars Abhishek Bachchan, Angad Bedi, and Shabana Azmi in pivotal roles. Abhishek plays Saiyami's coach and Angad Bedi plays her love interest in the movie.

There's a wide audience for short films: Rasika Dugal

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Rasika Dugal is known for her performance in a number of TV shows, web series, and films. Now she is seen starring in a short film 'The Broken Table' also featuring Naseeruddin Shah, who is playing Giri, a person suffering from Alzheimer's disease, to whom Rasika plays a caregiver and a budding psychologist. The 'Mirzapur' actor said: "I am delighted that this simple yet unusual story about love and acceptance is resonating with people. I am always intrigued by the precision required for storytelling in the short film format. And I am happy that there is a wide audience for short films who are noticing and appreciating the nuances of this kind of storytelling." About her experience working with Naseeruddin Shah, she said: "Collaborating with Naseer Sahab again was a wonderful experience; every moment with him on set is a masterclass. His commitment to the work never ceases to amaze me and brings out the best in me as an actor."

Khushi Dubey learnt many stunts, kicks, punches for the show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Khushi Dubey, who plays Chikki in the third season of the web series 'Aashiqana', learnt stunts, kicks and punches for the show as the new season focuses more on action. Elaborating on the same, the actress shared, "The audience is in for a surprise as Chikki will be seen performing stunts and action like never before in this season. There is thrice the action and drama and I am super excited. I have learnt many stunts, kicks, punches and various other moves. While it was challenging, I thoroughly enjoyed this experience. 'Aashiqana 3' is heavy on action and we are ready to bring a whole new series of twists and turns with us." Zayn, who plays Yash in the show, said: "Season 1 and 2 have set a benchmark for action sequences but Season 3 will be even better. Khushi and I are performing many action sequences together this time. There are jump scares and hectic stunts that the audience will surely enjoy. In fact, Season 3 will have gripping power-packed stunts and more. I am excited for audience reactions and hope they enjoy this side of ACP Yash."

I WAS BULLIED BY SUSHANT SINGH ON SET: ABHISHEK BANERJEE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-casting director Abhishek Banerjee, who plays the character of Jaffa in the upcoming streaming series 'Rana Naidu', has said in jest that he was bullied by his co-actor Sushant Singh during the shoot of the series. Sushant and Abhishek play the siblings of the titular character in the series.

Talking about the vulnerability of his character, Abhishek Banerjee said, "The vulnerability of Jaffa made him susceptible to the beguilement of his own father and would have put him in unimaginable danger, had he not got the protection of his brothers."

He also candidly opened up about how this was not the case as soon as the cameras turned away, "I was bullied by Sushant on set, just like an elder brother bullies his younger sibling. I have grown up being the only child to my parents so exchanging this banter with him actually made me feel more like a part of a family that I was also portraying on-screen".

Sushant Singh shared, "There is something so beautiful about the bond that brother's share that cannot be described in a few words. Rana, Tej and Jaffa have a kind of a tizzy relationship. They bond over their shared trauma and prove to be each other's pillars facing the storm that is their dynamic relationship with their father Naga".

He further mentioned, "This was not bound only to the characters we played but also when we were off-screen. We helped each other through character developments and took much more interest in making this series the finest we could. We also had a lot of fun just working together on set - the three of us have very different personalities, but when we came together it was always a riot".

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Asha Negi