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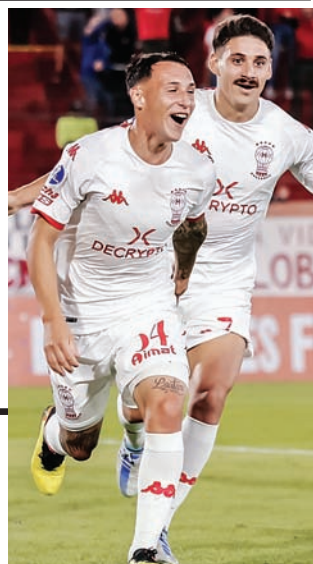
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KEEP ALL PREPAREDNESS FOR COVID-19 MANAGEMENT, CENTRE TO STATES

ALARMING BELL!

Alarmed by the resurgence of Covid-19, Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday chaired a meeting of health ministers of all states and Union Territories and advised them to keep all preparedness for Covid management. Continuing the rising trend, Covid cases crossed 6k-mark this morning, the Union Health Ministry data showed. India has been witnessing a steady increase in Covid cases with average daily cases rising to 4,188 in the week ending April 7 from 571 in the week ending March 17; and weekly positivity rate up to 3.02 per cent in the week ending April 7.

“The Centre and states need to continue working in collaborative spirit as was done during the previous surges for Covid-19 prevention and management.”
Union Health Minister



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya urged the State Health Ministers to conduct mock drills of all hospital infrastructure on April 10 and 11, and review the health preparedness with district administrations and health officials on April 8 and 9. Minister Mandaviya also urged the states to identify emerging hotspots by monitoring trends of ILI/SARI cases and sending sufficient samples for testing of Covid-19 and Influenza; and ramping up whole genome sequencing of positive samples. It was observed that 23 states/UTs had average tests per million below the national average. Mandaviya said that irrespective of the new variants, the five-fold strategy of "Test-Track-Treat-Vaccinate & Adherence to Covid Appropriate Behaviour" continues to remain the tested strategy. This would facilitate undertaking of appropriate public health measures, he said. The states/UTs were also requested to expeditiously increase the rate of testing from the current rate of 100 tests per million, as on the week ending April 7. They were further advised to increase the share of RT-PCR in tests.

Seven states reporting high number of Covid cases

New Delhi: A review meeting chaired by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya noted on Friday that seven states are reporting high number of Covid cases in India with rising test positivity rate, which include Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Haryana.

At the meeting with the health ministers of different states and Union Territories, Mandaviya stressed on the importance of enhancing public awareness campaigns regarding adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour.

The state health ministers were advised to personally monitor and review the preparedness of all logistics and infrastructure, including availability of sufficient designated hospital beds, besides ensuring that there is adequate stock of essential medicines. The states were also asked to regularly update their Covid data on the designated Portal.

The meeting also discussed the global Covid situation, along with the domestic scenario.

The states/UTs were reminded of the joint advisory issued by the Union Health Ministry and ICMR on March 25, which called for a reinvigorated public health response to contain the surge of seasonal influenza and Covid cases through early detection, isolation, testing and timely management of suspected and confirmed cases to detect and contain outbreaks of new SARS-CoV-2 variants.

Omicron more deadly than seasonal influenza, reveals research

New Delhi: Adults hospitalised with the Omicron variant have a higher death rate than those hospitalised with seasonal influenza, even though Omicron is considered less virulent with lower case fatality rates than the Delta and Alpha strains, new research has revealed.

The study by Dr Alaa Atamna and colleagues from the Rabin Medical Center at Belinison Hospital in Israel found that adults (18 years or older) hospitalised with influenza were 55 per cent less likely to die within 30 days than those hospitalised with Omicron during the 2021-2022 influenza season.

Influenza and Covid-19 are both respiratory diseases with similar modes of transmission. To find out more, researchers compared the clinical outcomes of patients hospitalised with Covid-19 (Omicron variant) and those hospitalised with influenza at a large academic hospital in Israel.

Overall, 63 patients died within 30 days -- 19 admitted with influenza and 44 hospitalised with Omicron.

Patients with Omicron tended to have higher overall comorbidity scores, needed more assistance performing activities of daily living (washing and dressing), and were more likely to have high blood pressure and diabetes, whereas asthma was more common in those hospitalised with influenza. Respiratory complications and need for oxygen support and mechanical ventilation were also more common in Omicron cases than in seasonal influenza.

The double whammy of overlapping influenza and Covid-19 epidemics will increase the complexity of disease and the burden on health systems, said the study to be presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) in Copenhagen this month.

Telangana BJP chief released from jail, hits out at KCR

Hyderabad | Agencies

Telangana BJP president and Karimnagar MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who was arrested two days ago in 10th class exam paper leak case, was released from jail on Friday.

After coming out of Karimnagar district jail, he lashed out at KCR government and dared it to order a probe by a sitting judge into the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) exam paper leak and the allegations against him. Sanjay alleged that the allegations made against him in 10th class Hindi paper leak were aimed at diverting public attention from the TSPSC paper leak issue.

The BJP MP said that no matter how many "conspiracies" KCR government hatches to divert attention from the TSPSC paper leak issue, he would not spare it.

Sanjay was granted bail by a court in Hanamkonda on Thursday night, following a marathon hearing on his bail plea. After completing the bail formalities, authorities released him from jail on Friday morning amid tight security in Karimnagar. Police imposed prohibitory orders under section 144 of



Criminal Procedure Code in the town and ordered closure of shops till 6 p.m. "Since we were demanding resignation of Chief Minister KCR's son and minister KTR in the TSPSC paper leak case, a false case was booked against me to divert the attention," he said.

Sanjay alleged that police behaved in a bad manner with him, ignoring the fact that he is a Member of Parliament. He remarked that some police officers were working to serve the interests of the ruling party.

The BJP leader denied any links with the man who shared the question paper with him. He asked police to clarify how mobile phone was allowed in the exam

centre and how a photo of the question paper was taken. Sanjay criticised Warangal Police Commissioner Ranganath and said the official did not know the difference between leakage and copying.

The Karimnagar MP was arrested amid high-drama from his in-laws' house in Karimnagar on Tuesday night. This triggered protests by the BJP, which termed the arrest illegal.

Warangal police have named Sanjay as the main accused in the leakage of Hindi question paper of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exam from an exam centre at Kamalapur in Warangal district on Tuesday.

'Govt websites made accessible for differently-abled persons'



Team Absolute | New Delhi

As many as 95 central government ministries' websites have been made accessible to differently-abled persons. Apart from this, 676 websites of various

states have also been made accessible for them, according to sources aware of developments.

An integrated browser-based tool with text-to-speech and text-to-Braille System that provides a verbal description of all events of a web page, including links, buttons, check box, text etc, which are keyboard-event-driven, and provides 'keyboard only' accessibility using a minimal set of keys, has been developed for making websites accessible for differently-abled persons.

Ministry for electronics and IT has initiated a project named "Content Management Framework" for making Central government websites accessible for differently-abled persons. Under it, a fund of Rs 16 crore has been released, sources said.

Clues from girlfriend help Rajasthan cops track down paper leak mastermind in Odisha

Team Absolute | Jaipur

Rajasthan Police team tracked down and arrested teacher recruitment examination paper leak's alleged mastermind Sher Singh Meena - absconding for months now - from Odisha's Kalahandi where he was hiding in the guise of a labourer working at a construction site, officials said on Friday. Initially, the police team was confused as Meena was found shoddily dressed and was sporting a long beard as he worked at the under-construction building of a government school, but identified and arrested him on Thursday. Anil Meena alias Sher Singh Meena, a resident of Dola's Bas in Jaipur's Chaumun, was working as Vice Principal in a government school in a



village in Sirohi district, when he allegedly leaked the senior teacher recruitment exam paper, selling it to Bhopendra Saran for Rs 1 crore.

Saran and Suresh Dhaka sold the paper to other candidates for Rs 8-10 lakh. When the state police's SOG

caught Saran from Bengaluru, Meena apprehended that he would be next on the police list and went absconding. The SOG and Udaipur police were continuously searching for him.

However, they received clues about Meena's whereabouts from his girlfriend as he was in constant touch with her.

Udaipur police had arrested Meena's girlfriend Anita Meena from Jaipur on April 2, and it was from her the information that Meena was hiding in Odisha was obtained.

Officials said that Meena changed 7 cities to evade arrest. After fleeing his village after he came to know of Saran's arrest, he came to Jaipur and from there, went to Delhi and finally to Odisha through Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

MP CM-Ex CM's war of words turns ugly

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh's two top leaders - Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and state Congress chief Kamal Nath, who have been engaged in a "question war" for over past two months, on Friday saw their verbal spat turn ugly as both used derogatory words for each other.

It all began as Chouhan, at a press meet on Friday, accused the latter of "inciting communal violence" the state, which he termed an "island of peace" and be it Ram Navami or Hanuman Jayanti, it was cel-

ebrated not only peacefully but also with harmony in the entire state.

"But, the Congress and its top leadership want to create communal violence in Madhya Pradesh. Everyone has seen the video of 2018 when he (Kamal Nath) was found 'instigating' a group of Muslim voters. Will people be instigated for votes, on the basis of religions and caste? In a recent incident on Wednesday, he again said that riots are breaking out in the country and in the state," he said, referring to Kamal Nath's statement at a Roza Iftar party.

"Kamal Nath ki voton ki bhukh itni badh gayi hai ki

wo pagal ho gaye hain (Kamal Nath has become so hungry for votes that he has become mentally unbalanced)," Chouhan said, sparking off a political controversy and protests by Congress workers in Bhopal.

Hitting back, Kamal Nath said that a few days back, the CM said that he would end him (the Congress leader) and "now he is calling me 'pagal' (insane)". "The MP CM has forgotten all respect and humanity and 'sadak chhap bhasha bol raha hai' (speaking the vulgar language of the street)."

"The whole world is watching how the Chief

Minister of Madhya Pradesh is behaving. All civilised behaviour, dignity within him have ended. He is speaking the language of street gang goons.

"I don't care about my humiliation. I have been serving the people of Madhya Pradesh for the last 44 years and will continue to do so till my last breath. But, I am sad that a person with such frustrated thoughts is sitting on the chair of the Chief Minister of a great state like Madhya Pradesh. Such a person being the Chief Minister is an insult to the 8 crore people of the state," Kamal Nath, a former Chief Minister, said.

PREGNANT WOMEN SUFFER UNEASINESS DUE TO WRONG DIAGNOSIS IN BIHAR

Patna: Around a dozen pregnant women suffered uneasiness on Friday after doctors and nurses reportedly diagnosed them wrongly in Bihar's Jahanabad district.

The medics allegedly gave wrong injections to the pregnant women in the gynecology ward of the Sadar hospital, due to which they felt uneasy.

When the relatives of the patients learnt about the incident, they created a ruckus inside the hospital. The situation turned so bad that the doctors and nurses had to jump out of the windows to escape the agitators' wrath.

Hospital superintendent D.D. Chaudhary had to rush to the gynecology ward and calm down the agitating relatives.

"We have initiated an inquiry into the matter. The concerned medical officers and staff will be penalised if proven guilty of providing wrong treatment. The situation is under control now, and the patients are recovering," Chaudhary said.

HAL HANDS OVER 100TH SU-30 MKI ROH AIRCRAFT TO IAF

Nashik/Bengaluru | Agencies

Union Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane on Friday inaugurated the third LCA production line and also handed over the 100th Sukhoi-30 MKI ROH aircraft to Air Vice Marshal Sarin at HAL's Nashik Division. The Signal Out Certificate (SOC) of the 100th ROH aircraft was handed over by Saket Chaturvedi, CEO (MiG Complex), HAL, to Air Vice Marshal Sarin in the presence of HAL CMD C.B.

Ananthkrishnan and other senior officials. HAL has already set up two LCA manufacturing facilities in Bengaluru.



HAL's Nashik Division set up the Su-30 MKI Repair and Overhaul (ROH) facility in 2014 to meet the operational requirements of the IAF. Having gained experience from manufacturing MiG-series and Su30-MKI aircraft and subsequent overhaul of MiG-series aircraft, HAL successfully mastered the technology with valuable support from the IAF, regulatory bodies and private industries.

Several HAL sister divisions are involved in the ROH activities. The company plans to reduce the dependency on OEM by indigenising majority of components required for ROH within the next 3-5 years.

TRINAMOOL LEADER SHOT DEAD IN BROAD DAYLIGHT IN BENGAL

Kolkata: In a shocking incident at Hanskhali in West Bengal's Nadia district, a local Trinamool Congress leader was shot dead in broad daylight by miscreants on Friday morning. The deceased has been identified as Amod Ali Biswas, who was an area vice-president of Trinamool at Hanskhali. According to eyewitnesses, Biswas came to the market on Friday morning and ordered a cup of tea at a tea-stall, something he did regularly. Suddenly, a group of around eight bike-borne miscreants arrived at the spot and started firing indiscriminately at Biswas from a close range. All the miscreants had their faces covered. A profusely bleeding Biswas died on the spot, while the assailants fled from there. The body has been sent for post-mortem with a large contingent of police patrolling the area, which has been gripped by tension. Biswas' family members claimed that there had been attacks on him earlier as well. "His rivals in the locality had attacked him with crude bombs thrice in the past. However, he had managed to escape on all three occasions, something which he could not do on Friday," said Biswas' wife.



RASHTRIYA SEWA SANGAM OF RSB COMMENCES IN JAIPUR, FOSTERING HOPES FOR MAJOR SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

Lalit Sharma

The three-day mega conclave Rashtriya Sewa Sangam hosted by the Rashtriya Sewa Bharati for the third time in the country and for the first time in Rajasthan, commenced in Jaipur on 7 April 2023, amidst a massive presence of 2700 social reformers from across the country. The volunteers making the even a grand initiative to foster social transformation represented organizations like Kalyan Ashram, VHP, Bharat Vikas Parishad, Saksham, etc. The key objective of the convention is to embrace the ideological pursuit of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to encourage unity and bring in a positive change in every section of the society.



lessly for the upliftment of the weaker sections. Compassion has been the most important sect that one should practice in Hindu religion. Every human being should inculcate compassion and mercy among themselves. We as whole make this society, thus it is very important that we must work together to make our motherland a better place to live.

"There has been several unprivileged tribal sections who were deprived of the basic right to practice their culture during

the colonial era; but it's a matter to regret that even after independence they failed to get any recognition in our society due to lack of government documents, by the grace of god the Sangh came to know about these sections and since then we have been working hard to establish a cultural right and rehabilitate them," Dr Bhagwat further noted.

Chairman, Piramal Group, Mumbai Shri Ajay Piramal Ji lauded the efforts of the Rashtriya Sewa Sangh for working tirelessly for the upliftment of the lesser fortunate and under privileged section of the society. "We must learn the attitude of service from Lord Hanuman, who precisely is the best servant for humanity and mankind. The RSB along with the Sangh family has worked very hard during the COVID-19 pandemic. The mechanism in providing the ventilators, plasma and other useful materials were very efficient. The RSS has always provided the first line of service in every crisis moment in the country, whether it was Indo-china war any natural calamity," he mentioned.

The national level Sewa Sangam is organized every five years by Rashtriya Sewa Bharati. The first Sewa Sangam was organized in the year 2010 in Bangalore and was a grand success with the attendance of 980 delegates. In the year 2015, the second Sewa Sangam was organized in New Delhi with the motto Samras Bharat, Samarth Bharat. As many as 3500 delegates participated in it and now the third Mahasangam is being held in Jaipur on 7, 8 and 9 April.

Basant Jindal associated with Sewa Sangam said that Rashtriya Sewa Bharati has provided employment to more than 25 thousand people last year. Along with this, the organization is continuously working in areas like efficiency, health, skill development and women empowerment. Rashtriya Sewa Bharati is an organization that encourages and supports voluntary organizations serving the deprived, needy, neglected and suffering brothers and sisters.

'Parivar welcomes you Modi Ji' hoardings come up in Hyderabad

Hyderabad | Agencies

Head of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival in Hyderabad, hoardings have come up in the city taking a dig at BJP over dynasty politics and corruption. "Parivar welcomes you Modi Ji," reads a huge hoarding put up by the ruling BRS on Friday.



The hoarding has pictures of dozens of BJP leaders whose parents or children are into politics. These include Union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Piyush Goyal, Dharmendra Pradhan, Kiren Rijiju and Jyotiraditya Scindia.

Another hoarding mocks the Prime Minister over corruption. "BJP achievements welcome to Modi Ji," reads the hoarding with a map of India, highlighting corruption scandals involving BJP leaders in various states. Since Modi often targets Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao over family rule and corruption, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) this time launched a counter attack ahead of his visit.

The Prime Minister is

arriving in Hyderabad on Saturday to launch various infrastructure projects. He is also scheduled to address a public meeting.

He will inaugurate or lay the foundation stone for projects worth over Rs 11,300 crore. Modi will visit Secunderabad Railway Station to flag off Secunderabad-Tirupati Vande Bharat Express.

He will lay the foundation stone for new blocks at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bibinagar and also launch various railway and highway projects.

The city had also witnessed poster wars during Modi's earlier visit to the city.

The BRS had mocked him over fuel price hike, demonetisation and failure to fulfill the commitments made to Telangana.

SIT to probe illegal lease of minority religious property in J&K

Jammu | Agencies

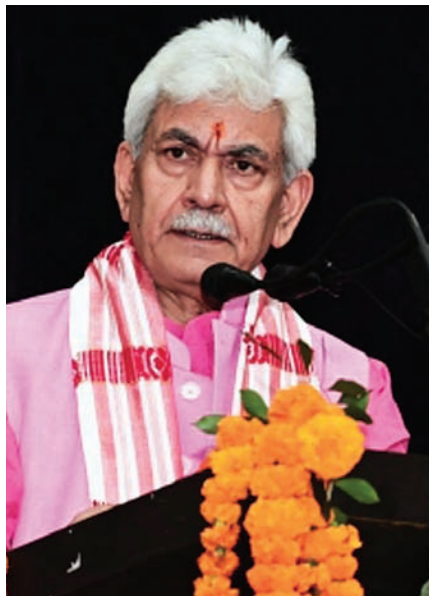
The J&K government has ordered a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the illegal lease of temple properties in Kashmir.

Officials said that a letter addressed to all the 10 deputy commissioners in the Valley has directed them to probe the illegal lease of temple properties and the nexus involved therein.

"The deputy commissioners will furnish an updated inventory of such properties within one week.

"The inventory should include updated details of religious minority properties, including temples, Gurudwaras and others," officials said.

The officials added that the directions received from the Lt. Governor's secretariat in this regard have been communicated to all the deputy commissioners by the divisional commissioner (Kashmir).



Calcutta HC denies permission to terminate minor girl's 28-week pregnancy

Kolkata | Agencies

The Calcutta High Court has denied permission to terminate the 28-week pregnancy of a 12-year-old minor girl who conceived after being raped.

The mother of the rape victim made an appeal at the Calcutta High Court seeking permission to terminate her daughter's 28-week pregnancy.

The judgement on the matter, announced on Wednesday, was made available on Friday.

The termination of pregnancy, which is more than 24 weeks, can be done only after getting permission from any court.

However, the report of the medical board argued against the termination, claiming it might prove fatal



for the minor victim.

Justice Aniruddha Roy of the Calcutta High Court accepted the argument of the medical board and denied permission for the termination of pregnancy. The medical board constituted for the matter submitted its report to the court on April 5.

The medical board had submitted that rather than termination, giving birth to the child would be safer for the victim. Justice Roy also observed that the prime consideration for the court is the safety aspect of the minor girl. He also observed that it is the responsibility of the state to protect the dignity of the minor mother and her child in such cases. "The state cannot deny its responsibilities on this count," Justice Roy observed.

DCW's surprise inspection leads to seizure of 50 lt acid from public toilet in Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a surprise inspection conducted by the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) led by its chief Swati Maliwal, officials have seized around 50 litres of acid from a public toilet located opposite the G.B. Pant Hospital in central Delhi.

The operation was carried out on Thursday and the officials confirmed the seizure of the acid on Friday.

Maliwal has now asked the concerned officials from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to appear before the commission on April 11 with a detailed report on the matter.

"I was shocked to discover huge quantities of acid kept in the open at a public toilet in Delhi. It could have



been used by people for criminal activities. The fact that acid is being

used in public toilets for cleaning purposes on a large scale is unacceptable and shameful," said Maliwal.

"Strict action should be taken against the authorities for encouraging the use of acid for cleaning in toilets. Also, there should be no fee for using public toilets. All the toilets should be functional at all times, and if any toilet is non-functional, strict action should be taken against the official(s) responsible for it," she added.

During the inspection on Thursday, the commission had noticed that Rs 10 was being charged from the users each time they used the toilet.

"The commission was also informed that the toilet closes down at 10 p.m., rendering women and girls vulnerable to open defecation," said a DCW official.

K'taka HC rejects plea seeking Indian citizenship for two minors born to Pakistani father

Bengaluru | Agencies

Two minors born to a Pakistani father and Indian mother living in Bengaluru are facing a legal challenge after a Karnataka High Court bench headed by Justice M. Nagaprassanna rejected a plea seeking Indian citizenship for the two children.

The law of attaining 21 years of age to denounce the citizenship of Pakistan has become a roadblock for attaining Indian citizenship for the two minors, who are presently living with their separated mother in Bengaluru. The court ruling came on Wednesday.

In 2002, Ameena Rahil

from Bengaluru had married Pakistani national Assad Mallik in Dubai, where they had settled down. However, in 2014, the couple got divorced in a court in Dubai, which gave the custody of the two children to Ameena.

In 2021, Ameena decided to return to her mother's place in Bengaluru along her two kids aged 17 and 14. Though Ameena is an Indian national, her kids are Pakistani nationals as their father hails from that country.

Ameena had contacted the Indian Embassy in Dubai after she faced legal hurdles to bring her children to India. On a humanitarian ground, the Indian Embassy had

given temporary passports to the children after submitting their earlier passports to the Pakistan Embassy.

Now the children have to obtain Indian passport and citizenship, as the duration of the temporary passport has lapsed.

Ameena and her family had made submissions to the Union Home Ministry seeking extension of the temporary passport. But now with the high court rejecting their plea, Ameena and her children are worried over the consequences.

Family sources said they are hoping to get an extension of the temporary duration from the Home Ministry.

ED trace Rs 12 crore of proceeds in Bengal municipalities recruitment scam from Ayan Sil

Kolkata | Agencies

The Enforcement Directorate has procured crucial clues about collection of Rs 12 crore in the alleged scam for recruitment of staff in different municipalities in West Bengal by private real estate promoter Ayan Sil, who is already in custody for his alleged involvement in the multi-crore teachers' recruitment scam, officials said.

During the recent raid and search operations at Sil's residence the ED sleuths got hold of the documents relating to his involvement in the municipalities recruitment scam.

Sources said that during the course of that raid and search operations, the central agency sleuths recovered a hard disc from his residence. After decoding the contents in the hard disc, the sleuths have got a clear picture of the proceeds collected by Sil in municipalities recruitment and the amount as calculated by them is to the tune of around Rs 12 crore.

ED sources said that while this is the collection amount only from the municipalities recruitment irregularities, the central agency sleuths are yet to reach at the final calculation of proceeds collected by the arrested real estate promoter from the scam relating to recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff in state-run schools.

As per initial estimates done by ED the col-



lection made by Sil from the two scams combined will be nothing less than around Rs 100 crore. Sources said that the hard disc not only has mention about the total proceeds collected in case of the municipalities recruitment irregularities, but also names of the candidates from whom money was collected and the amount collected from each on this count.

The ED has already decided to file a separate case in the scam of recruitment irregularities in the municipalities. The ED counsel has already claimed at a special court of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) such irregularities had been evident in several municipalities in the state and in that process around 5,000 people in workers' and clerks' grades were recruited against payments of crore of rupees.

CHINESE LOAN FRAUD CALL CENTRE BUSTED IN DELHI, 18 HELD

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi police has arrested 18 persons including seven women and busted a Chinese loan fraud call centre operating under the guise of prominent finance companies in the national Capital, an official said on Friday.

According to police, a complaint on MHA Cyber Crime Reporting Portal was received in Cyber North police station in which the complainant, a resident of Manju Ka Tila, alleged that on February 25, a call was received on the complainant's mobile from a woman who threatened him saying, your daughter has taken a loan of Rs 3,500 which you should deposit through the link, otherwise your daughter's nude photo will be made viral. "After that someone edited his daughter's photo with an obscene photo and sent it to the complainant's WhatsApp number," said Sagar Singh Kalsi, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (North).

In that picture, indecent words like "XXXXX, one night only 3000" were used, along with the phone numbers of the complainant and his daughter.

During the investigation, the technical analysis of call detail records



and money trail was carried out and surveillance of suspect mobile numbers which zeroed on the location of alleged calling number Sangam Vihar, Delhi.

"A raid was conducted in Sangam Vihar area and one Renu was apprehended, who revealed that she is working at a call centre, which is situated at East Kailash. The details provided by the woman matched with the day time location of the suspect

number," said the official.

Further raid was conducted in East Kailash, where a proper call centre was found running with around 50 people working and on questioning with the staff, it was found that half of the employees were working for prominent finance companies and under their cover, the other employees were working on Chinese Loan Fraud Apps.

"Total 17 people who were found

working on the App have been apprehended. The team leader Amit, a resident of Sarita Vihar, was arrested and is presently on police remand. However, the main accused namely Mohsin and his accomplices are still absconding and raids are being conducted to nab them," said the official.

The official said that Amit and Khan were earlier working in call centres for EMI loan reminders of Bajaj and IDFC but due to less income, they opted for call centres of fake Chinese loan recovery apps.

"Amit was deployed as a leader over the call centre employees and Mohsin Khan and his friend Firdaus used to provide the login ID and password for these fake Chinese apps. The call centre employees used to make calls through VOIP Sim Box Gateway devices installed by Mohsin, who used to change it frequently to dodge police action," said the official.

"Payments were made by the complainants at the link provided in the Chinese apps and Mohsin used to get his share from his seniors. Many desktops, laptops and mobile phones have been recovered from the alleged call centre, data from which has been extracted for technical analysis," said the official.



MP IS AMRIT KUMBH, BUT CONGRESS HAS BECOME VISHKUMBH: CM CHOUHAN

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday took a dig at the Congress party and said that they did not want the state to remain an island of peace. CM Chouhan wrote on his Twitter handle, "Madhya Pradesh is 'Amrit Kumbh', but Congress has become 'Vishkumbh' (pot of poison)." Talking to the reporters after planting a sapling at smart city park in the state capital, CM Chouhan said, "Madhya Pradesh is an island of peace. The people of Madhya Pradesh live with love, affection and harmony. Be it Ram Navami or Hanuman Jayanti, it was celebrated not only peacefully but also with harmony in the entire state. But the Congress does not like this." "Congress wants that Madhya Pradesh should not



remain the peace island, there should be riots in the state. I am surprised that the veteran Congress leader, former Chief Minister Kamal Nath, when he was not the Chief Minister before the 2018 elections, even then he was saying loudly that why 90% votes were not cast at the polling booths of Muslims. Get the votes casted otherwise there would be loss," Chouhan said.

Everyone has seen the video of that time that he (Nath) works considering vote banks only. Will people be instigated for votes, on the basis of religions and castes? In a recent incident on Wednesday (April 5), Nath is again saying while attending a Roza Iftar party, that riots are breaking out in the country and in the state, Chouhan said.

He further asked, "Where are the riots breaking out in Madhya Pradesh? Where is the unrest in the state? But you (Nath) have become so mad in the hunger of votes that you want to throw Madhya Pradesh into the abyss of unrest and disharmony? Do you wish that riots would break out?" Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Nath used to get happy seeing the dead bodies, he was happy to see the bodies. This levellessness of politics will not do any good to Madhya Pradesh, the CM said.

"We saw that our Muslim brothers showered flowers on Ram Navami and Hanuman Jayanti at many places. You (Congress) did not like this harmony, but whatever you do; we will not allow Madhya Pradesh to be engulfed in riots. Peace and tranquility will prevail here," Chouhan said.

OLD WELLS AND STEPWELLS WILL BE RENOVATED AND USED AS WATER SOURCES: CM CHOUHAN

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that old wells and stepwells will be renovated and used as water sources while making all security arrangements. After the heart-wrenching incident that took place in Indore recently, instructions were given to identify wells and stepwells in the state and take all possible measures to make them safe. The work of identifying them is going on.

Wells and stepwells will be useful for the society by making them safe and renovating them for the purpose of using them as water sources instead of filling them.

The temple will be established again in Indore with accord and harmony, so that the devotees can offer prayers again. Chief Minister Chouhan was discussing with media representatives after planting saplings in Shyamla Hills Garden.

Mob Attacks Madhya Pradesh Police Station, Frees Dacoit from Lock-Up; 4 Cops Injured



Team Absolute | Burhanpur

A mob of more than 60 people launched an attack on a police station in Madhya Pradesh's Burhanpur district on Friday and freed three accused persons, including a dacoit, lodged in the lock-up, an official said. The incident took place around 3 am, when the mob entered Neapanagar police station, attacked and injured on-duty policemen and damaged several police vehicles, the official said.

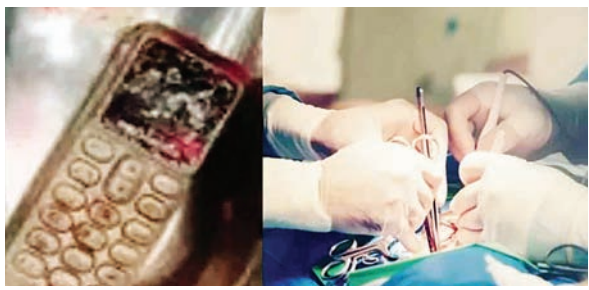
Four policemen were injured in the incident and are undergoing treatment at a private hospital, he said. The mob freed dacoit Hema Meghwal, who was carrying a reward of Rs 32,000, and their two other associates lodged in the lock-up. Meghwal was arrested a few days ago, Burhanpur SP, Rahul Kumar Lodha said. On being alerted about

the attack, senior officials including Collector Bhavya Mittal and the superintendent of police reached the spot. At the time of the incident, four policemen were on duty, while the attackers were more than 60, Lodha said. The police were using CCTV footage to identify the attackers, he said. Apart from Meghwal, the mob also freed Magan Patel and another youth from the lock-up, the official added.

Girl Swallows Mobile Phone, Doctors Take It Out After Hour Long Surgery

Team Absolute | Gwalior

A 15-year-old girl allegedly swallowed a mobile after which the doctors at a Gwalior district performed an operation and successfully took out the phone from her stomach. The girl, a resident of Amayan locality in Bhind district, got angry over something and swallowed her keypad mobile phone. Following which, the family members took the girl to Bhind district hospital but seeing the seriousness of the matter, the doctors referred her to Gwalior. Superintendent of Jaya Arogya Hospital, Dr R K S Dhakad said, "There was a case of a girl swallowing a mobile phone in Bhind district. It was good that the doctors of Bhind immediately referred her to Gwalior. Here, doctors performed an operation and took out the



mobile. After the operation of around an hour, the doctors took out the mobile from the girl's stomach. It was the first such operation in the hospital. Superintendent of Jaya Arogya Hospital, Dr R K S Dhakad said, "There was a case of a girl swallowing a mobile phone in Bhind district. It was good that the doctors of Bhind immediately referred her to Gwalior. Here, doctors performed an operation and took out the

mobile phone from her stomach. The girl is completely safe and sound." "I can say that it is an achievement for the hospital that by taking immediate action, we saved the girl. I congratulate those doctors. It is also an achievement for those doctors who referred the patient to Gwalior on time and we took action with the same promptness," he said. The girl is around 15 years old and she is completely healthy, Dhakad added.

DAY TIME NAPPING IS BENEFICIAL FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN ELDERLY: RESEARCH IN AIIMS BHOPAL

Bhopal: During the Covid pandemic, elderly people became victims of depression, anxiety and stress. During these difficult times, they needed more attention and support for their mental health. The results of a comprehensive research conducted during this time in AIIMS Bhopal show that sleeping or taking a short nap during the day also benefits our mental health and keeps us away from anxiety, stress, depression etc. A total of 690 participants had participated in it. Of the 705 participants, 7.25% had mild to moderate depression, while 0.58% had severe or very severe depression. Mild to moderate anxiety was found in 9.56%, while 2.46% had severe or very severe anxiety. 4.78% were mildly or moderately stressed, while 0.42% were found to be severely or extremely anxious. It was observed in the research that women were found to be more stressed than men. A strong association was also observed between alcohol addiction and depressive symptoms. This research has been published in the official journal of Mymen Singh Medical College, Bangladesh. The research study was conducted by Dr. Varun Malhotra, Dr. Danish Javed, Dr. Rajay Bharshankar, Dr. Vijender Singh, Dr. Namita Gautam, Dr. Shweta Mishra, Dr. Anuradha Kushwaha, Dr. Drikpal Singh, Dr. Gyanendra and Dr. Arunima from AIIMS Bhopal.

CM hints 'Mandir wahi banega' after locals protest demolition of Beleshwar Temple

Team Absolute | Indore

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan seems to have given in to locals' demand of "Mandir wahi banega" after Indore district administration filled in the Beleshwar temple stepwell where 36 people died. Notably, after the tragic temple accident, the district administration demolished the Beleshwar temple that was built on a stepwell and had filled the stepwell with mud to avoid any such incidents. This sparked anger among some locals and a Sangharsh Samiti was formed. The committee members gathered at the collectorate to protest the demolition and raised slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram'.



On the other hand, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan seemed convinced to rebuild the temple. In a video shared by BJP state spokesperson Narendra Saluja, Chouhan said, "After the Indore temple tragedy, the stepwell was filled

but that temple was very old. People were offering prayers there for years. I deem it fit to rebuild a temple there keeping in mind all the safety arrangements and maintaining harmony." Sangharsh' committee formed After the demolition of the Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple, the residents there formed a 'sangharsh' committee on Thursday and demanded the

reconstruction of the temple. Markets in Rajwada and other areas were also kept closed in protest against the demolition of the temple and in support of the 'sangharsh' committee. Chouhan also said that he agrees with BJP National General Secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya's suggestion that wells and stepwells should be used as water sources. They should be protected and used.

30-day summer sports training camp will start in the state from May 1

Camp will be held at TT Nagar Stadium from April 15 to June 15

Team Absolute | Bhopal

This year also summer sports training camps will be organized in the state. There will be 30-day summer training camps from May 1 to June 15 at all district and block levels. At least 2 sports training camps will be organized at development block headquarters, 4 sports at small district headquarters, 8 sports at major district headquarters and 15 sports at divisional headquarters. The examinations of the school children are over. The new session has also started. Soon the holidays will start again. Parents want to utilize their children's time in extracurricular activities. There is nothing better than utilizing the summer vacations in sports. Sports and Youth Welfare Department is giving sports opportunities to the children. Training camps will also be organized for women in self-defense related sports in each district. For this, a coordination meeting will be held at the district headquarters regarding the outline,



duration, date, time, place and availability of trainers, etc. of the summer sports training camp. Detailed discussions will be held.

The summer training camp will start from April 15 at TT Nagar Stadium in Bhopal. In this training camp, which will run till June 15, training of about 21 different sports disciplines will be done under the supervision of high class coaches. Forms have started being received at the stadium for training in this camp. Youth from the age of 6 years to 22 years can take admission in this summer camp. The entry fee has been fixed at Rs 400 for players in the age group of 6 to 18 years and Rs 500 per month for players in the age group of 18 to 22 years. More than 3 thousand children are expected to participate in the summer sports training camp to be held in two sessions.

Basketball, Karate, Football, Boxing, Kabaddi, Gymnastics, Taekwondo, Yoga, Table-Tennis, Badminton, Tennis, Malkhamb, Volley ball, Beach Volley ball, Aerobic, Facing, Billiards and Snooker in training camp at TT Nagar Stadium from 15th April to 15th June. Judo, athletics, skating, kid fitness games will be included.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan plants saplings



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Peepal, Guava, Gulmohar and Jamun in the garden located

at Shyamla Hills. Along with CM Chouhan, Kshatriya Khatri Samaj Vice President Rampal Verma of Ichhawar district Sehore, former corporator from Kolar region of Bhopal Mamta Pawar and

boy Nikhil Saini and girl child Tanvi Chheera planted saplings on their birthday. Their family members and acquaintances also participated in the plantation.

16 INJURED IN ROAD ACCIDENT, THREE OTHERS SEVERELY INJURED IN BARWANI

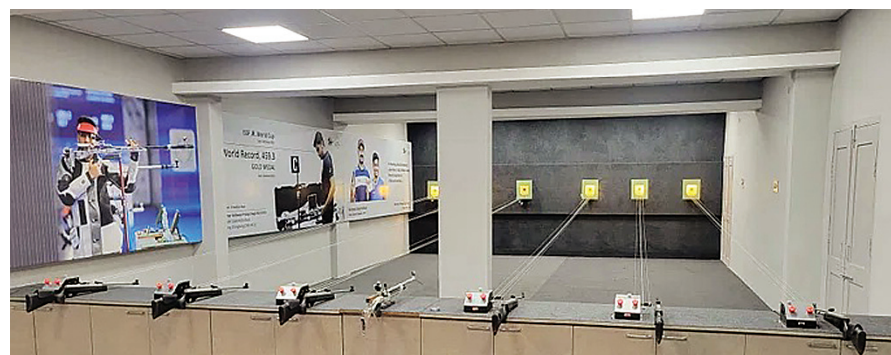


Barwani: As many as 16 people were injured due to a collision between a mini truck-loading vehicle on the Khetia-Sendha state highway on Friday. Three people suffered life-threatening injuries. As per reports, the accident occurred when a loading vehicle in which 16 people were travelling, collided with a mini truck ie eicher truck on the state highway on Friday. On being informed, locals rushed to help and shifted injured persons to a community health centre in Pansemal. BMO Dr Arvind Kirade, Dr Bamanka and other doctors, and health workers provided first-aid treatment and referred 12 people to the district hospital for further treatment. Three persons have received severe injuries. All 16 people were identified as labourers. Out of them, 11 hailed from Lalvaniya village, one person from Gorikheda, another one from Virpur (Maharashtra).

Man gives Rs 10 lakh 'supari' to kill his wife, held along with two aides

Team Absolute | Indore

A man, his two aides were arrested for allegedly hiring shooters to kill his wife in Indore on Friday. As per report, Indore businessman Vinod had allegedly hired the shooters for Rs 10 lakh to kill his astrologer wife, Sapna, who was not compromising on a previous case of a murderous attack against her. According to Additional DCP, Sapna (40) resident of Kunjwan colony, had a love marriage with Vinod Sahu resident of Bhavani Nagar, 10 years ago in Mumbai. However, disputes arose between the couple, and cases were registered against each other in the past. Recently, Vinod filed a case in Dhamnod on May, accusing Sapna of a murderous



attack last year. Vinod had demanded Rs 70 lakh from Sapna for the settlement, but she denied. Unable to reach a settlement, Vinod allegedly conspired to have Sapna killed. He contacted Balram, a resident of Bhaunrasla, and gave him for Rs 10 lakh. Balram then hired shooter Chetan

from Shipra, paying him one lakh rupees as earnest money. Balram used the money to buy a pistol and came to Indore to carry out the murder. However, the Crime Branch apprehended all three accused when they were on their way to court. Both the couple had filed multiple cases against each

other over the years. whereas Vinod was living with his first wife, Shalini, after leaving Sapna. Sapna identifies herself as an astrologer and Vinod runs an electric showroom in Bhavani Nagar. There is also a dispute over plots and money between them, said Additional DCP Guruprasad Parashar. The

Ace shooter Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar opens academy in Khargone



Team Absolute | Bhopal

The state's ace shooter and Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar has set up a rifle and pistol shooting academy in Khargone along with his brother, the 2012 Asian Championships gold medalist Navdeep Singh Rathore. The academy has been set up in association with a private school. The academy will open in last week of April. In all, 10 shooters will be selected for the new academy through a talent hunt who will get 100% scholarships till state-level tournaments. The acad-

emy has been named as Aishwary Shooting Academy where the shooters will get training in rifle and pistol shooting. Youth Olympian Rathore said, "Whenever Aishwary won any medal and brought it home, it was really hard for us to make people understand about the game and the value of the medal that he had won. We both got a lot from this sport, and we want to give something back to society, so we decided to open the academy." He added, "We will open academies in other districts as well to bring out talents.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Global trade growth to slow to 1.7% in 2023

Global trade growth in 2023 will slow to 1.7 per cent, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) said in its annual trade statistics and outlook report. The volume of world merchandise trade has been weighed down by the effects of the war in Ukraine, high inflation, tighter monetary policy and financial market uncertainty, the report said on Wednesday. However, the forecast for trade growth in 2023 is up from the previous estimate of 1 per cent from last October. China's adjustment of its Covid-19 measures is a "key factor" in this increase, the report added. The reopening of China is expected to boost international trade, the report said. Dragged down by a sharp slump in the fourth quarter, world trade volume grew by 2.7 per cent, "a smaller-than-expected increase". According to WTO economists, the global GDP at market exchange rates will grow by 2.4 per cent in 2023. Meanwhile, projections for trade and GDP growth in 2023 are below the averages for the past 12 years, of 2.6 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively, Xinhua news agency reported. Interest rate hikes in advanced economies have also revealed weaknesses in banking systems that could lead to wider financial instability if left unchecked, he added. According to the report, global trade growth should rebound to 3.2 per cent in 2024, as global GDP growth picks up to 2.6 per cent. The estimate is more uncertain than usual due to the presence of substantial downside risks, including geopolitical tensions, food supply shocks, and the possibility of unforeseen fallout from monetary tightening, the report added.

20 SHGS COME TOGETHER TO MAKE THIS MGNREGA PARK A PROFITABLE ENTERPRISE

Sanavver Shafi

From a distance, it appears like any other gaushala (cow shelter) in rural Madhya Pradesh. Once you enter the MGNREGA & Livelihood Park, you would see groups of women involved in pasturing, community plantation and managing community poshan vatika (nutrition garden) and fish ponds, among other activities.

The park has been running for the last two years on 28 acres of land that was once an encroached property. Now, it serves as a source of livelihood for 284 women of Bhaukhedi village, about 16 km from Sehore district headquarters.

This year during the Holi festival alone, they managed to make Rs 40,000 by selling 2,200 cow dung cakes and 3,600 gaukashta (cow dung wood).

Women take collective decisions on what to produce and sell. The endeavour has not only made them more confident, but also financially self-sufficient. However, not everyone was ready to join hands at first.

How it began

"It was very difficult to bring together the women of 20 self-help groups (SHGs) to work here... In the beginning, we were only running the gaushala... the women did not want to work in a cowshed; they did not want to clean cow dung. Somehow, we managed to persuade them. But then their husbands would create trouble by not allowing them to work," said Manisha Malviya, the president of Jai Gurudev SHG located in the park.

The Kanhaiya Gaushala came into being under the Project Gaushala of the Madhya Pradesh government. "We were searching for land for building the gaushala, but could not find a suitable plot in Bhaukhedi gram panchayat. Around the same time, we received information about the encroachment of 28 acres of land belonging



to the revenue department. We evicted the encroachers and finalised it for the gaushala. Eight of the 28 acres of land was allotted for gaushala-charagah (cowshed and pasture)," Sehore district Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Harsh Singh told 101Reporters.

The SHG women were selected to manage the site, which did not sit well with the leaders and other male members of the village who objected to the women's participation in the project. Singh, along with Livelihood Mission District Project Manager Dinesh Barfa and Nodal Officer Dharmendra Upadhyay, went door-to-door to counsel the women and their families, after which they joined the effort.

"Once the gaushala started functioning properly, we decided to allot the rest of the land to the Livelihood Mission. That was when we ran into trouble due to lack of funds. Ultimately, we got the required funds from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)," Singh said.

Out of the one crore rupees made available to them under MGNREGA, Rs 3.94 lakh was sanctioned for community plantation, Rs 4.73 lakh was given for pond development, Rs 14.34 lakh for community nutrition garden, and Rs 12.29 lakh for fish farming. Apart from this, a medicinal plant garden under Devaranya scheme, a com-

munity sanitation complex, goat sheds, nursery sheds, toilets and boundary walls were also created, enabling employment generation in the village during the construction phase.

Barfa told 101Reporters that they wanted to develop separate units of sustainable livelihood on 20 acres of land to help build the community. "We discussed it with the women and sent a proposal to the administration."

Jai Gurudev SHG secretary Rekha Verma recalled how people made fun of her when she started working at the park. "They said I cleaned up cow dung throughout the day. Nevertheless, all that hard work has paid off. Now, many women earn a good income for their families. This has changed people's perspectives also. They look at us with respect... I was here from the beginning. Sometimes we made a profit, other times not. By saving whatever money I got, I bought a Honda Activa. I am also sending my two children to a good school."

Finding market linkages

Manisha Malviya still remembers the initial trepidation of the workers when Jai Gurudev SHG was making no profit. "The women would get nervous because they were spending the entire day here,

but not making any money... They were planting saplings, cleaning cow dung, and sowing and watering crops. We were neither facing a loss nor making a profit."

Verma said there were only five cows in the gaushala in the beginning. Now, their numbers stand at 119 including four milch cows.

To earn a living, women started making pots, lamps and other decorative items from cow dung. When the products were ready, they started looking for a market. During Deepavali season, they sold lamps and incense sticks to earn about Rs 1 lakh.

"But after Deepavali, we were back to how it was earlier... We then decided to approach the local market and start selling incense sticks and cow dung cakes at prices lower than the market rates. We approached local dhabas (roadside food stalls) near the gaushala and slowly built a market base. Our strategy of selling at lower-than-market prices worked because the vendors now approach us directly," she said. This also works better for them as they are able to do away with transportation costs while selling in bulk. They sell the cakes for Rs 4 and Rs 8 and the sticks for Rs 5 and Rs 10, moving over 500 of each variety every day; and they received an order for 5,000 cakes from a company in Harda.

To move things forward, the women of 20 SHGs decided to club their groups together and form a village organisation, for which five members, including the president and secretary, were elected from among themselves. Manisha serves as its president at present.

"We started strategising. Different groups were given different responsibilities. We kept a record of different activities separately to know where we were making mistakes and how to fix them," Bhaukhedi village organisation secretary Madina Khan told

101Reporters.

Explaining the thought behind the idea, Khan said, "We started assigning one activity to a particular group following the success of our fish farm. When Vinayak SHG was given the responsibility of fish farming, they took loans from all the groups. Altogether it cost Rs 4.18 lakh for fish seed (which constitutes the largest expenditure), to set up the fishing equipment, procure medicines, feed, traps and other necessary items."

"After six months, we produced 7,000 kg of fish and sold it for Rs 90-110 per kg in the markets of Bhopal. We made a profit of Rs 3 lakh," she said, adding that they learnt things worked better when one group managed one activity from top to bottom.

Proper division of responsibilities also made record-keeping easier and encouraged innovations. Lalita and Avanta Malviya of Rakhi and Radha SHGs, respectively, told 101Reporters that they had planted 120 paper lemon plants along the edge of the park. In three years, 120 plants produced 50 kg of fruit per plant, which they sold in Bhopal. Similarly, they had also planted 400 Thai pink guava saplings, which earned them increasing profits over the last three years.

"When we were getting ready to sell the first crop of lemon and guava, we did not have much knowledge of the market and price ranges. We got help from a local ASHA didi's husband, who sells fruits in the market. Once we got acquainted with the market's functioning, we sold the second crop by contacting the traders of Bhopal and also in Bittan market," they said.

(Sanavver Shafi is a Madhya Pradesh-based journalist and a member of 101Reporters, a pan-India network of grassroots reporters.)

international

ISRAEL STRIKES GAZA, LEBANON IN RESPONSE TO MAJOR ROCKET ATTACK

Jerusalem | Agencies

In response to a major rocket attack, Israel on Friday launched airstrikes in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon amid escalating tensions in the region. In a statement, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said that it "struck targets including terrorist infrastructures belonging to Hamas in southern Lebanon".

"The IDF will not allow the Hamas terrorist organisation to operate from within Lebanon and hold the state of Lebanon responsible for every directed fire emanating from its territory," the statement said. This comes in retaliation after 34 rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israel late Thursday night, said the IDF. It said that 25 rockets were intercepted by the IDF Aerial Defense Array, while five landed in Israeli territory and four additional launches were under review. Meanwhile in the Gaza Strip,



Israeli warplanes stepped up airstrikes with around 20 missiles hitting four new sites in 10 minutes, the BBC reported. Meanwhile, Hamas, the militant organisation which controls the besieged Palestinian enclave, said that it was not aware of who launched the

rockets into Israel from Lebanon. The attack was the biggest single barrage from Israel's northern neighbour in 17 years.

Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, who was in Lebanon when the rockets were launched, said Palestinians would not

"sit with their arms crossed" in the face of Israeli aggression. Tensions remain high after Israeli police raided the Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem on consecutive nights earlier this week. The violence first broke out on Tuesday night during a sensitive holiday time when tens of thousands of Muslim worshippers observe the holy month of Ramzan through prayers at the hilltop compound. Below the compound, scores of Jewish pilgrims commemorate the Passover holiday with prayers at the Western Wall. The Al-Aqsa Mosque is the third holiest site for Muslims and the most sacred place for Jews.

In the past, the shrine has often seen clashes between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli security forces, triggering wider unrest. In May 2021, an Israeli raid here contributed to an 11-day full-scale conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Islamist militant group which governs the Gaza Strip.

Pakistan facing real danger of defaulting on its debt: Analysis

New York | Agencies

There is a real danger that Pakistan could default on its debt, which could lead to intensifying political turmoil amid already surging terrorism, says an analysis by the US Institute of Peace (USIP) said.

There is a real danger that nuclear-armed Pakistan with a population of nearly 230 million people may be unable to meet its external debt obligations -- which will trigger a sovereign default, it said.

If Pakistan ultimately defaults, there will be a cascade of disruptive effects.

Crucially, Pakistan's imports could be disrupted, which could lead to a shortage of some essential goods and commodities. In Sri Lanka, the disruption of oil imports stoked public discontent, protests and a change in government. Pakistan, which is already seeing intense political conflict between Sharif's government and opposition leader Khan, may also see the economic crisis creating more political turmoil, the analysis said.

And given Pakistan's demographic profile and surging terrorism threats, the resulting crisis could go in unexpected directions.

To avert this scenario, Pakistan needs IMF's continued support as well as help from

Chinese and Middle Eastern partners. Pakistani leadership has been asking the US to intercede with the IMF, but that effort hasn't borne fruit in the way they hoped for.

Pakistani leadership is also making frantic efforts for bailouts from foreign partners, but it is unclear if they will make the difficult reform choices necessary to win the trust of the IMF, the analysis said.

Pakistan's stability increasingly depends on the outcome of an ever-worsening economic crisis. Amid skyrocketing inflation, political conflict between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government and former Prime Minister Imran Khan, and surging terrorism, the country is facing the risk of a default due to its massive external debt obligations, the USIP analysis said.

This burden has been exacerbated by the derailment of the \$6.5 billion International Monetary Fund (IMF) program Pakistan entered in 2019, as the international lender is unsatisfied with Pakistan's commitment to reform and ability to arrange for funds to meet external financing requirements.

Troublingly, Pakistan's official foreign exchange reserves are hovering around \$4 billion, which is insufficient to finance even a one-month of the country's import bill.

DHAKA WHOLESALE MARKET FIRE COMPLETELY DOUSED AFTER 75 HRS

Dhaka: A massive blaze that erupted earlier this week at the Bangabazar wholesale market Dhaka, the biggest such shopping complex in Bangladesh, was completely doused on Friday after a period of 75 hours, fire officials said. More than 700 firefighters of 48 units of the Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) worked at the site and brought the blaze under control at about 9.30 a.m.

The fire erupted early Tuesday morning at the Adarsha Market in the complex, gutting some 7,000 shops.

Businessmen have repeatedly blamed vandalism as the cause of the massive fire.

The reason for this is the construction of multi-storied buildings of the City Corporation and the allotment of space for two organisations. Fire broke out twice in the complex previously in 2015 and 2019.

Myanmar to restore murals at pagodas of world heritage site

Yangon | Agencies

Myanmar will restore mural paintings at the pagodas in the ancient city of Bagan in Mandalay region, a Unesco world heritage site, according to the Department of Archaeology and National Museums on Friday.

"We were restoring all the mural paintings in Bagan. By restoring like this, people of the next generation will be able to view the fine arts of the ancient period and take pride in Myanmar's cultural heritage," U Ar Kar Kyaw, director from the department, told Xinhua news agency.

The century-old murals can be seen at pagodas, temples and palaces of ancient kings in the ancient city of Bagan, he said.



"To maintain and restore the murals, we also have to take technical assistance from experts of other countries," he said, adding that the countries giving technical assistance for restoring the cultural heritage in Bagan included India, China, Italy and South Korea. The department maintains and restores the cultural heritage at pagodas in Bagan including mural paintings, he added.

US blames hasty troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan on Trump

Washington | Agencies

The US administration has blamed the hasty withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan in the wake of the 2021 Taliban takeover on former President Donald Trump, saying that President Joe Biden was "severely constrained" by his predecessor's decisions, including the 2020 Doha Agreement to end the war.

This was revealed in a new report which was put together by the White House National Security Council with input from Biden and made available to the public on Thursday.

It says that when Biden took office in January 2021, he "believed the right thing for the country was to end the longest war in American history and bring American troops home". But "Biden's choices for how



to execute a withdrawal from Afghanistan were severely constrained by conditions created by his predecessor", the report said. "When Trump took office in 2017, there were more than 10,000 troops in Afghanistan. Eighteen months later, after introducing more than 3,000 additional troops just to maintain the stalemate, he ordered

direct talks with the Taliban without consulting with our allies and partners or allowing the Afghan government at the negotiating table. "In September 2019, Trump emboldened the Taliban by publicly considering inviting them to Camp David on the anniversary of 9/11. In February 2020, the US and the Taliban reached

a deal, known as the Doha Agreement, under which Washington agreed to withdraw all forces from Afghanistan by May 2021. "In return, the Taliban agreed to participate in a peace process and refrain from attacking US troops and threatening Afghanistan's major cities, but only as long as the US remained committed to withdraw by the agreement's deadline," it added. The report goes on to say that as part of the agreement, the former President had also pressured the Afghan government to release 5,000 Taliban fighters from prison, "without securing the release of the only American hostage known to be held by the Taliban". Over his last 11 months in office, Trump ordered a series of drawdowns of American troops and by June 2020, he reduced personnel in Afghanistan to 8,600.



MAHA CM SHINDE TO PRAY AT AYODHYA TEMPLE ON SUNDAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde will travel to Ayodhya for a darshan of the Lord Ram Temple there, and then likely to have a dinner meeting with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday, an official said here on Friday.

This will be a second visit by a Maharashtra Chief Minister to the upcoming Ram Temple - in March 2020, then Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had prayed there.

Shinde will depart from Mumbai on Saturday evening for Lucknow, accompanied by party ministers, MLAs, MPs and other leaders of the Shiv Sena, following an invite extended recently by the Mahant of Ayodhya.

More than 3,000 Shiv Sena activists from Shinde's home district and other parts have already left for Ayodhya to join him there, said the party's Spokesperson Krishna Hegde.

After an overnight halt in the Uttar



Pradesh capital, the Chief Minister will fly by helicopter from Lucknow to Ayodhya where he will participate in the Maha Aarti at the Lord Ram Temple and then visit the temple construction site.

Hegde said thereafter, Shinde will go to the Laxman Killa and seek the blessings of saints and mahants there followed by an aarti at the River Sharayu.

Shinde will then drive down to Lucknow for a possible dinner rendezvous with the Chief Minister

Adityanath scheduled at the latter's residence around 9 p.m. on Sunday.

Upon completing his final engagement, the Maharashtra delegation is expected to depart for Mumbai around midnight.

Shinde's trip to Ayodhya comes a week after the Maharashtra government sent the first consignment of prized teak-wood from Chandrapur district for the Lord Ram Temple's main doors, windows, the entrance to the sanctum sanctorum and wooden construction requirements.

Earlier, then Maharashtra minister Aditya Thackeray and other senior leaders had gone to Ayodhya and prayed at the Lord Ram Temple in June 2022, barely a fortnight before the MVA government was toppled by a Shinde-led rebellion.

However, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena President Raj Thackeray - the estranged cousin of Uddhav - was barred from going to Ayodhya in early June 2022 in view of threats by the Uttar Pradesh BJP MP Brijbhushan Sharan Singh, though the MNS-BJP are now cosy up in this state.

After 17 days' battle, Maha Judge Ambatkar succumbs to accident injuries

Team Absolute | Kolhapur

Additional District and Sessions Judge of Maharashtra's Ichalkaranji, R. N. Ambatkar, who was knocked down by a speeding motorcycle during an evening walk, succumbed to his grievous trauma injuries after a 17-day long battle for life, officials said here on Friday.

According to police, it was late in the evening of March 21, when Judge Ambatkar had gone for his routine post-meal walk near his residence at Yadravphata near Ichalkaranji.

Just then, a speeding motorcycle rammed into Judge Ambatkar from behind, knocking him down with full force on the road and he suffered serious head injuries. The speeding motorcyclist, identified as Anil R. Jadhav, 44, was rushing home from Ichalkaranji to Jambhli when the accident took place, and he was also badly injured and admitted to another hospital for several days till he was discharged last week.

Judge Ambatkar was rushed to a nearby clinic and then to Kolhapur's City Hospital where he underwent trauma surgeries and other treatment, and continued to fight for life till he breathed his last on Friday - a day after his 55th birthday (on April 6), plunging



the town into grief.

Hailing from Manchar, Pune, Judge Ambatkar, who was posted to the Ichalkaranji Court in June 2022, is survived by his aged parents, wife, and two daughters.

The Shahapur police station in the town had arrested Jadhav under Indian Penal Code sections and slapped charges of rash driving and other sec-

tions of the Motor Vehicles Act after his discharge from hospital, though no foul play is suspected.

He was granted a day's police custody and then ordered to be released on bail on medical grounds, but now, after the demise of Judge Ambatkar, the police will decide on enhancing the charges against Jadhav and further probe is underway.

Priyanka Chopra seeks blessings at Siddhivinayak temple with daughter

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who is busy with the promotions of her upcoming global spy series 'Citadel', visited Siddhivinayak temple in Mumbai with her daughter Malti Marie Jonas.

The actress took to her Instagram to share pictures from their visit. In the pictures, the actress is seen carrying her daughter in her arms. The little one looks on intently as her mommy does pooja. The actress wrote in the caption: "MM's first trip to India had to be completed with Shree Siddhivinayak's blessings (sic)."

Bollywood actress and IPL cricket team owner, Preity Zinta reacted to her post by writing: "Awww Jai Ganapati



Bappa". 'Bheed' actress Dia Mirza also took to the comments section and reacted with red heart emojis.

After sharing the pictures from the temple visit, Priyanka also shared an unseen picture from the promotions of 'Citadel' and revealed that her Mumbai

trip has come to an end. She wrote: "Mumbai done right! See you."

On the work front, Priyanka Chopra will be seen essaying the role of an elite spy in the global series 'Citadel' which also stars 'GoT' star Richard Madden in the lead.

CONGRESS SUSPENDS MAHA EX-MLA ASHISH DESHMUKH FOR ANTI-PARTY COMMENTS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Congress Maharashtra unit on Friday suspended former MLA Ashish Deshmukh for several anti-party comments and statements, officials said here on Friday.

The MPCC Disciplinary Action Committee met here on Wednesday and took serious note of Deshmukh's recent utterances and "unsubstantiated allegations" against top party leaders like state President Nana Patole and senior national leader Rahul Gandhi.

Among these were his call to Gandhi "to apologise to the OBC community" and that Patole was getting one crore rupees from the current Chief Minister.

"Being a member of the Congress Party, you know the agenda of the current Bharatiya Janata Party government is to tarnish the image of the Opposition by invoking false cases against them. We have noticed that you've been constantly criticising the Congress leadership publicly," said the show-cause notice signed by the MPCC-DAC Chairman Prithviraj Chavan, a former CM.

The show-cause notice sought Deshmukh's



reply within three on why he should not be expelled from the party membership forthwith.

The Congress warned that if he failed to reply, it would be treated as an admission of the charges and the party would decide in the matter without further reference to him.

In the notice, Chavan has also advised Deshmukh to refrain from making any public statements till the matter is disposed off.

NCW EX-CHAIRPERSON DR POORNIMA ADVANI SUCCUMBS TO CANCER

Mumbai: Noted lawyer Dr Poonima Advani, who was former Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW), passed away in a private hospital after a two-year long battle with cancer, an aide said here on Friday.

She was 63 and breathed her last on April 1 at the Breach Candy Hospital. She is survived by medico husband Dr Shailesh Hathi and their teenage daughter Poornima. An academic, legal eagle, author and administrator, Dr Advani served as the 31-year-old NCW's 4th Chairperson (2002-2005), and was credited with several landmark achievements during her tenure.

She headed a legal firm, 'The Law Point' founded by her besides lecturing at the University of Mumbai, University of Queensland, London School of Economics and other institutions. In 1997, the Mumbai-based Dr Advani authored a book 'Indian Judiciary: A Tribute' and was conferred the Acharya Tulsi Kartitva Puraskar (2003).



After NGT ruling, BMC bulldozes illegal film studios in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A day after the National Green Tribunal (West)'s verdict, the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation started demolishing around half-dozen illegal film shooting studios that had come up at Malad's picturesque coastal Madh, Erangal, Marve and Batti, here on Friday.

The action came after Bharatiya Janata Party's former MP Kirit Somaiya had exposed the issue in September 2022, alleging that illegal constructions worth Rs 1,000 crore had come up in the areas blatantly violating all norms.

"The NGT passed an order yesterday (April 6) that these studios are unauthorised, and they have misused permissions and built permanent structures instead of temporary studios for six months," Somaiya told media persons at the demolition site.



Launching a strong attack on the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), Somaiya alleged that this is the demolition of "Thackerays' unlawful monuments of corruption" and pointed accusing fingers at Shiv Sena (UBT) former Minister Aditya

Thackeray and Congress ex-minister Aslam Sheikh, who is the local MLA, for giving the permissions.

Following Somaiya's complaint, the BMC Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal had ordered a probe into the issue and the inquiry

report was submitted in February 2023.

The findings reportedly concluded that there were no illegalities, but only procedural shortcomings by half-a-dozen civic officials from various concerned departments in the BMC P-North Ward.

In 2021-2022, the BMC had received over four dozen complaints from locals alleging that several unsanctioned film shooting studios had mushroomed in areas that fell under the Coastal Regulatory Zone and No Development Zone, while Somaiya had also pinpointed some 20 such studios.

Ahead of the razing, a beaming Somaiya and his supporters reached the area this morning, carrying a symbolic hammer and axe, 'surveyed' the site with some purported civic officials, made 'thumbsup' signs and oversaw the bulldozing of the standing studios to rubble.

After getting a gun, Salman Khan zips around in a bullet-proof imported SUV



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Under threats from various quarters, Bollywood mega-star Salman Khan has acquired a swank white bullet proof SUV in which he zips around, barely months after getting a gun licence for self-defence, sources close to the actor said.

Already accorded a Y-Plus Security cover, Khan is not taking chances and has imported a yet-to-be-launched Nissan Patrol SUV for his travail-free travels in and around Mumbai.

This would be an upgrade on his erstwhile modified Toyota Land Cruiser with armour and bulletproof glass, but is considered a

lower level of protection.

The developments follow the series of threats in the past few months from the mafia don Lawrence Bishnoi's gang, to him and his aged father and renowned Bollywood writer Salim Khan. Bishnoi had even proclaimed in an interview that his life goal was to "kill Salman Khan", even as the security cover for the actor and his celeb family was stepped up a few weeks ago. Khan has scheduled his next big release, 'Kissi Ka Bhai, Kissi Ki Jaan', later this month coinciding with the Ramzan-end festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. Later he has Diwali lineup of 'Tiger 3' and then 'Tiger Vs. Pathaan' in which he will work with Shah Rukh Khan.

Probe team confirms IIT-Bombay student wrote suicide note found in room



enth floor of a hostel building located on the campus on February 12 this year, a day after his semester exams ended.

On March 3, the SIT stumbled upon a "suicide note" in his hostel room in which the student had accused one student of harassing and threatening him. According to the police, "The handwriting expert said in his report that the suicide note recovered by the police is written by Darshan Solanki. The expert sent the report to the police on Thursday night."

In the suicide case, police have so far recorded the statements of 35 people.

A senior official said that the student whose name was written in the suicide note told the police in his statement that Solanki was very scared after the fight with him, although he had apologized to Solanki several times. Though he is not telling the exact reason why he apologized.

On March 29, the father of Solanki wrote to Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CM-Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Mumbai Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar alleging that his family is facing harassment from the police for registering an FIR into the death of his son.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the suicide of an 18-year-old IIT-Bombay student, has received a report from a handwriting expert which said the purported suicide note found in the student's hostel room was written by him.

Darshan Solanki allegedly committed suicide at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay in Mumbai by jumping off the sev-

GreenLine deploys its LNG-powered trucks at UltraTech Cement's Pune Bulk Terminal

Team Absolute | New Delhi/Pune

GreenLine (Green Planet Logistics Pvt Ltd.), India's first and only LNG-fueled heavy trucking logistics company, has announced the deployment of its LNG-powered trucks at UltraTech Cement's Bulk Terminal located in Pune, Maharashtra.

UltraTech is making strides in its commitment to sustainability and decarbonisation of its operations with this second deployment of GreenLine's LNG-powered fleet of trucks, after the first deployment at its Awarup Cement Works near Nagpur.

The use of LNG trucks is a significant step towards



achieving the company's sustainability targets. This development underscores UltraTech's commitment to scaling up its LNG fleet at its plants across the country in the coming months.

The trucks were flagged off by Tanmay Pradhan, AVP Logistics, UltraTech Cement, Nisha Jain, Plant Head, UltraTech Pune Bulk

Terminal, along with Anand Mimani, CEO, GreenLine, and other key officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Tanmay Pradhan said, "At UltraTech, we are dedicated to creating a sustainable future, and we are fully committed to collaborating with our partners and stakeholders to achieve our goal of a cleaner environment. Our

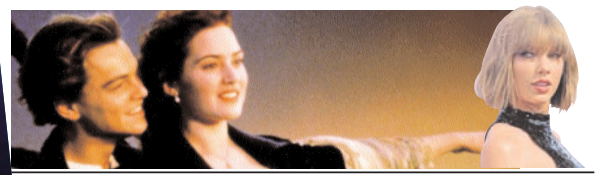
association with GreenLine is a step forward in our ongoing efforts to decrease emissions, enhance energy efficiency, and promote sustainability."

GreenLine's LNG-powered trucks reduce CO2 emissions by ~28 per cent, translating to emission reduction of ~24 tonne CO2 per truck per annum, compared to conventional diesel trucks. In addition, these LNG trucks significantly reduce other dangerous emissions - SOx emissions by up to 100 per cent, NOx emissions by up to 59 per cent and particulate matter by up to 91 per cent.

Commenting on the occasion, Anand Mimani said, "We are proud to again be the chosen green mobility partner for UltraTech Cement in

their endeavor to reduce carbon emissions from their heavy trucking. Reducing toxic, polluting emissions from road logistics is crucial for businesses, and GreenLine is actively supporting corporations in this endeavor through our fleet of LNG-powered heavy-duty trucks."

GreenLine is on a green mobility mission and is paving the way for widespread adoption of LNG fuelled long haul trucks by showcasing its immense advantages for corporates. GreenLine has collaborated with multiple organisations to create India's first and only integrated green logistics ecosystem to make LNG trucking a reality in India.



'BIG ONE LAST NIGHT'

Maya Jama shares scruffy hangover selfie - with remnants of make-up still on her face - after partying up a storm in China

Los Angeles | Agencies

Maya Jama looked rather sorry for herself on Friday when she shared a glum hangover picture on Instagram. The Love Island presenter, 28, is currently spending some time in China, after the hit ITV show came to an end last month. She told her 2.7million social media fans that she partied too hard on Thursday evening with pals and was still sporting remnants of her make-up from the night before, reports dailymail.co.uk. In the selfie, the beauty showcased her natural beauty and left her long dark tresses loose in a messy style. She penned: 'Big one last night'. It comes after Maya broken her silence to share a flawless Instagram clip, after Leonardo DiCaprio denied claims that they were dating. Maya flaunted her natural beauty in the video, while a remix of T9ine & Lil Durk's song Mind of a Real played in the background. It comes just hours after the Hollywood actor, 48, hit back at claims that he has been seeing the presenter after they were introduced by mutual friends. He denied the new string of rumours after a source told the Sun that Leo - who was most recently linked to Gigi Hadid - and Maya 'are in regular contact and have been on a string of dates'. The insider claimed: 'They have both recently come out of long-term relationships so neither of them are rushing into anything - they are having fun and seeing how it goes.' The duo reportedly spent time in New York last month, where they were both for work. They were also pictured leaving the Le Piaf club in Paris last month with friends.



Michelle Yeoh to be honoured with Women in Motion award at Cannes

Los Angeles | Agencies

On the heels of her Oscar victory with 'Everything Everywhere All At Once', Michelle Yeoh will be celebrated by Kering at this year's Cannes Film Festival. The actress will receive the 2023 Women In Motion Award, reports Variety. The ceremony will be held in Cannes during the glamorous Women In Motion dinner which is dedicated to honouring women in cinema. Yeoh was chosen as this year's honoree by Francois-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of Kering, and Iris Knobloch, the new president of the Cannes Film Festival, as well Thierry Fremaux, Cannes Festival's director. As per Variety, the dinner is part of the pioneering Women in Motion programme, launched in 2015 during the Festival to highlight the creativity and contribution made by women in the world of culture and the arts. Yeoh, who was born in Malaysia, has become a revered actor and producer known for portraying complex and fearless women on screen. She has also helped to challenge gender and age-related stereotypes in the film industry. She just won an Academy Award for her multifaceted performance in 'Everything Everywhere All at Once', becoming the first Asian actor to win an Oscar in this category. She also scooped a Golden Globe and a SAG award. In her acceptance speech, which proved to be a highlight of the Oscar ceremony, Yeoh touched on issues such as diversity, racism and ageism, as she said: "I believe that times are changing. There is much more inclusivity. There is more diversity. Look at me. I've been in this business for 40 years and I finally get to be number one on the call sheet."

JEREMY RENNER YELLED 'NOT TODAY, MOTHER *****' BEFORE COMING UNDER SNOW PLOUGH

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Jeremy Renner has detailed exactly how his January 1 accident occurred, revealing that he was run over by his 14,330-pound Sno-Cat after attempting to jump back in the vehicle to save his nephew. Renner said that he and his 27-year-old nephew, Alex, were attempting to tow a Ford Raptor out of the snow with his snow plough, reports Variety. Jeremy told ABC News' Diane Sawyer, that as Alex undid the chain connecting the two vehicles after successfully getting it out of the snow, Renner's plough began to slide on the ice. Worried for his nephew's safety, Renner stuck one foot out of the plough to look back at Alex, neglecting to set the parking brake. That's when he lost his footing and fell out of the vehicle's cab. He said, quoted by Variety: "I just happened to be the dummy standing on the dang track a little bit, seeing if my nephew was there. You shouldn't be outside the vehicle when you're operating it, you know what I mean? It's like driving a car with one foot out of the car," Renner said. "But it is what it was. And it's my mistake, and I paid for it." Afraid that the vehicle would roll back and "sandwich" Alex with the truck, Renner attempted to jump back into the Sno-Cat to disengage it - at which point he was run over. "That's when I screamed, by the way, when I went under the thing," Renner said. "'Not today, mother*****!' is what I screamed. Sorry for the language."



Los Angeles | Agencies

The custody battle between 'Ted Lasso' star Jason Sudeikis and his - and Harry Styles' ex, actress and director Olivia Wilde has turned nasty. Olivia has filed court papers containing what a source close to actor Jason claims are "unfair and unfounded" accusations, reports Mirror.co.uk. In her legal statement filed last month in California, she said that he had behaved with "egregious, unnecessary, and aggressive conduct" and paid no child support, claiming she has footed "100 per cent of the costs of the children's care" while they are with her. She confirmed the pair split "certain expenses for the children, such as their school tuition." As per Mirror.co.uk, Olivia, 39, also requested he pay her 400,000 Pounds legal bills, because "he is wealthier than I am and has far greater income." But a source close to Jason, 47, told Mirror.co.uk: "Olivia and Jason shared costs equally and fairly throughout their relationship, including everything related to the children. Jason took it upon himself to initiate the proceedings in the first place to ensure that the kids would be properly cared for by both parents based on the court deciding what is fair financially going forward." Olivia's court papers, obtained by 'The Blast', also confirm that she has 8 million in assets, and makes 32,000 Pounds per month, but her monthly outgoings total 85,000 Pounds. The parents Otis and Daisy, split after a seven-year engagement in November 2020, shortly before she started dating Harry, star of her film 'Don't Worry Darling'.



OLIVIA WILDE WANTS EX JASON SUDEIKIS TO PAY CHILDCARE COSTS, LEGAL BILL

Diddy pays Sting \$5,000 per day for sampling latter's song



Los Angeles | Agencies

American rapper Diddy said that he is paying Sting \$5,000 per day for sampling the Police frontman's 1983 blockbuster hit 'Every Breath You Take' on his own 1997 song 'I'll Be Missing You'. Diddy tweeted in response to a resurfaced video clip from a 2018 interview Sting did with the Breakfast Club, reports Variety. As noted by the Shade Room, the clips shows interviewer

Charlamagne Tha God asking Sting to confirm whether Diddy pays him \$2,000 daily for sampling the song on 'I'll Be Missing You'. Sting said yes, "for the rest of his life," to laughter, and then confirmed that Diddy asked for permission to sample the hit after his own song was released. He noted that there are no hard feelings and that the two are "are very good friends now," adding: "It was a beautiful version of that song." As per Variety, presumably a

large percentage of that daily \$5k is going to Universal Music Publishing, which last year acquired the song along with most or all of Sting's song catalogue in a deal reported to be worth around \$350 million. However, while terms of the deal were not disclosed, it seems likely that Sting kept at least some of the songs and the catalogue's substantial publishing and/or songwriter shares.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Kylie Jenner



IPL 2023

K.L. RAHUL, KRUNAL PANDYA LEAD LUCKNOW TO FIVE-WICKET VICTORY OVER HYDERABAD



Lucknow | Agencies

Skipper K.L. Rahul and left-arm spin all-rounder Krunal Pandya shared a 55-run partnership off 38 balls for the third wicket to lead Lucknow Super Giants to a comfortable five-wicket victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium on Friday.

After Krunal started with a three-fer in a disciplined Lucknow bowling performance to keep Hyderabad to a modest 121/8 on a sluggish black soil pitch, he joined forces with Rahul to complete an easy chase with four overs to spare. Chasing 122, Lucknow cruised to 35/0 in four overs. While Rahul was solid in his drives and flicks to pick three fours, Kyle Mayers had some luck as bails didn't fall off after being beaten by Fazalhaq Farooqui, apart from picking two boundaries.

Farooqui had success in the fifth over as Mayers pulled straight to deep square leg. Bhuvneshwar Kumar was hit for a huge six by Deepak Hooda down the ground in the last over of Power-play. After four dot balls, Bhuvneshwar had Hooda's wicket by taking a low one-handed catch to his left for completing a caught-and-bowled dismissal.

Post Power-play which had just two overs of spin, Rahul punched Adil Rashid through deep cover, followed by Krunal driving Aiden Markram sweetly through extra cover. Krunal used his feet well in launching Rashid over long-on for six, before driving and pulling off T. Natarajan and Umran Malik for boundaries. After slicing Umran over mid-off for four on the first ball of the 13th over, Krunal fell on the very next ball in an attempt to cut and gave an outside edge to keeper Anmolpreet Singh. Marcus Stoinis hit boundaries

off fast bowlers through fine leg and down the ground to bring Lucknow closer to victory. But Rahul fell in the 15th over, trapped lbw while going for a reverse sweep on a leg-break off Rashid. On the very next ball, Rashid trapped Romario Shepherd lbw with a googly. Nicholas Pooran swept Rashid for four, before finishing off the innings with a six launched over square leg off Natarajan.

Brief scores

Sunrisers Hyderabad 121/8 in 20 overs (Rahul Tripathi 34, Anmolpreet Singh 31; Krunal Pandya 3-18, Amit Mishra 2-23) lost to Lucknow Super Giants 127/5 in 16 overs (K.L. Rahul 35, Krunal Pandya 34; Adil Rashid 2-23, Fazalhaq Farooqui 1-13) by five wickets

Aizawl FC overcome TRAU FC to make Super Cup Group Stage

Manjeri | Agencies

The battle of the North East between Aizawl FC and TRAU FC for a spot in the Group Stages of the Super Cup turned out to be an interesting encounter, with the former having the last laugh at the Payyanad Stadium, here.

It was more of a seesaw fight, but a goal in the 64th minute by Belarusian striker Ivan Veras made all the difference leaving Aizawl FC the 1-0 winners.

Aizawl FC, the People's Club, appeared to be the better of the two teams in the early stages, making several inroads into the rival area. They had more than one attempt on target in the first half, but somehow couldn't find the back of the net. While they were definitely unlucky on a few occasions, their strikers, too, didn't do their team any favours by failing to take advantage of some of the opportunities that came their way.

On the other hand, TRAU FC too made a couple of breakthroughs, but couldn't capitalise on either. Aizawl's early chance came in the 12th minute when Nigerian defender Emmanuel Oluغبena's shot went off-target from inside the box. After finishing 0-0 in the first 45 minutes, the two sides made strategic changes to come back strong in the second session. Once they returned to the pitch, both teams altered their tactics with quick substitutions.

In the 64th minute, Chhantea Sailo found space on the right flank and delivered a measured cross inside the box. His shot was saved by the opposition keeper Lunkhominlenmang Jedidi, but Ivan Veras was quick to react on the rebound and found the back of the net to give his side a lead that turned out to be the decisive goal in the end.



Having fallen behind, TRAU FC were expected to hit back with all their might, but, strangely enough, they continued to struggle for the most part of the second half, failing to break down Aizawl's resolute defence. Aizawl FC should definitely be happy with the victory - it not only

took them to the Group Stages of the Super Cup, but also gave them their first win over TRAU this season. In the 1-League, the first clash between the two teams ended in a 1-1 draw, while TRAU were clear 3-1 winners when they hosted the match.

CHURCHILL BROTHERS PUMP SIX PAST REAL KASHMIR

Manjeri: The remaining last spot in the Group Stages of the Super Cup was snatched away in style by Goa giants Churchill Brothers when they earned a resounding 6-0 victory over Real Kashmir at the Payyanad Stadium, here.

Liberian striker Ansumana Kromah was the star performer with four goals against his name.

While the ardent fans of the two teams would remember them engaging in highly spirited rivalry in the 1-League only a few months ago, Thursday's knock-out encounter was a complete contradiction, with Churchill Brothers enjoying total control over the proceedings.



Olympic champion Holub-Kowalik suspends sprinter career

Warsaw | Agencies

Two-time Olympic medalist, Polish sprinter Malgorzata Holub-Kowalik announced that she is pregnant and will suspend her career.

She also revealed that she does not know whether she will return to the track, reports Xinhua.

The 30-year-old earned two medals for Poland during the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, as she stood on the highest podium in the women's 4x400m relay and secured a bronze in a mixed relay.

"I'm really happy. I'm preparing for the most important moment in my life. I was dreaming about being a mother. I always repeated that family is the top value for me. I know my body very well so I thought that something was going to happen. I went to the doctor, who confirmed that I'm preg-



nant. That's why I have to suspend my career," she explained in an interview with Polish media.

"I will try to get back into the sport. I don't know if I'll succeed, but I promise I'll try. If not, then my world won't collapse," the athlete added.

DELHI CAPITALS OPEN THEIR FIRST CRICKET ACADEMY IN THE NORTHEAST

Guwahati | Agencies

Delhi Capitals, the JSW-GMR co-owned Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise, have opened their first DC Cricket Academy in the Northeast.

The academy has been started in collaboration with ICON Sports Academy, which began in January 2023. The official announcement about the new DC Cricket Academy was made during a press conference in Guwahati on Friday.

The announcement was made in the presence of Sourav Ganguly, Director of Cricket, Delhi Capitals; Ricky Ponting, Head Coach; Pravin Amre, Assistant Coach; Shane Watson, Assistant Coach and Jagrit Anand, Head of DC Cricket



Academies along with Debashish Bora, Secretary, ICON Group of Institutes; Rajinder Singh, Joint Secretary, Assam Cricket Association; Rajdeep Ojha, Vice President, Assam Cricket Association; Naba Bhattarjee,

President, Meghalaya Cricket Association and Syed Zuffri Zakaria, Head Coach, DC ICON Academies.

The DC ICON Sports Academy is the first cricket facility in Guwahati, which has an indoor training area, the

Delhi Capitals informed in a release on Friday.

The academy also provides accommodation facilities and multiple turfs for several budding cricketers to hone their skills. The youngsters in the northeastern region have a great opportunity to grow as cricketers with the support of highly-qualified BCCI Level 2 coaches and world-class training facilities. Speaking about the association with ICON Sports Academy, Sourav Ganguly, Director of Cricket, said, "The Delhi Capitals Cricket Academy in Guwahati will give many young boys and girls an opportunity to train in good gear and pitches. I am certain that we will see cricketers from the northeastern region play for India with the support of the Delhi Capitals."

Thiem enters maiden QF of season in Estoril

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Dominic Thiem produced his best performance of the season at the Millennium Estoril Open where he cruised past Ben Shelton 6-2, 6-2 to reach his first quarter-final of the year.

The Austrian earned a confidence-boosting victory against countryman Sebastian Ofner in the first round and backed that up with a dominant display against Shelton. He crushed the ball off both wings to overpower the American, earning consecutive tour-level wins for the first time since he advanced to the semi-finals in Antwerp in October, reports ATP.

The former World No. 3 will aim to continue his run when he takes on fourth seed Roberto Bautista Agut or Quentin Halys in the last eight. Thiem



is up eight spots to No. 103 in the ATP Live Rankings and will crack the Top 100 again if he reaches the semi-finals

in Estoril. Thiem holds a 3-8 record for the year after Thursday's win, which he will hope is the catalyst for

improved results. The Austrian, who reached the Roland Garros final in 2018 and 2019, has historically excelled on clay. He has won 10 of his 17 tour-level crowns on the surface.

Shelton this week was making his tour-level debut on clay. The 20-year-old, currently No. 39 in the Pepperstone ATP Live Rankings, has enjoyed a standout start to the season, highlighted by his run to the quarter-finals at the Australian Open.

Later on Thursday, Spain's Bernabe Zapata Miralles earned a comeback victory against second seed Hubert Hurkacz, 6-7(7), 6-4, 6-2. By beating the World No. 12, Zapata Miralles scored his biggest career win by measure of the Pepperstone ATP Rankings and picked up his second Top 20 victory after beating Taylor Fritz last year at Roland Garros.

Sao Paulo, Huracan make winning starts in Copa Sudamericana

Buenos Aires | Agencies

Forward Erison scored two second-half goals as Brazil's Sao Paulo eased to a 2-0 away victory over Argentine side Tigre in their opening Copa Sudamericana group match.

The Botafogo loanee struck in the 57th and 74th minutes as Sao Paulo began their campaign in perfect fashion at Estadio Jose Dellagiovanna on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, reports Xinhua. Meanwhile, Argentina's Huracan cruised to a 4-1 home win over Paraguay's Guarani. Santiago Hezze, Lucas Castro, Santiago Gaston and Juan Fernando Garro were all on target for the hosts while Federico Santander netted for the visitors. In Paraguayan capital Asuncion, Brazil's Bragantino struck three second-half goals as they came from behind to rout Tacuary 4-1. Juninho Capixaba, Alerrandro, Talisson de



Almeida and Gustavo scored for the visitors after Edson Carius gave the hosts an early lead. Elsewhere, Botafogo drew 2-2 at Magallanes and Deportes Tolima prevailed 2-0 at Puerto Cabellos.

SKY CAN WIN YOU A WORLD CUP: RICKY PONTING

New Delhi: Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting feels India should back Suryakumar Yadav ahead of the ODI World Cup to be held at home in October-November, saying the right-handed batter is a kind of a player who can win the side a major event like the World Cup.

In India's last ODI assignment in March before IPL 2023 began, Suryakumar was dismissed for a hat-trick of golden ducks as Australia won the three-game series 2-1. He has scored 172 ODI runs at an average of just 12.28 since his last ODI half-century in February 2022. "Everyone in their career goes through something like that. I mean, I'm not sure I have seen it before where someone's got three first-ball ducks in a row in an entire series. But look, we've all been there. You have your ups and downs as international players." Ponting believes that Suryakumar could be best utilised at the number five spot for India in ODIs. "I think he was only batting at five, wasn't he? I don't think they want him much lower than that, especially when they've got Hardik (Pandya), (Ravindra) Jadeja and Axar (Patel), they've got plenty of batting. I'm a big believer in giving your best batter as much time as you can in all formats of the game. Because if you keep them down the order, quite often you don't get to use your best players and that's the last thing you want. So I think the No.5 slot's perfect for him and he's just got to grow into that role there."

Sharp drop in TV viewership for IPL 2023 opener; digital viewership on rise; report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The season opener of IPL 2023 between Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings recorded the second-lowest number in terms of TV viewership in the past six seasons even though digital viewership registered record-breaking opening day numbers, said a report.

According to information received here, Star Sports, the official broadcaster of the tournament, recorded a TVR of 7.29 for the opening fixture, a sharp drop from the 2021 edition (8.25) and 2020 (10.36).

The engagement numbers for the 1st game came in at a lowly 33 per cent, the second lowest in the past six seasons and the BARC numbers were also reflective of this drop with



the curtain raiser recorded at 22 per cent as opposed to previous year's 23.1 per cent.

IPL 2023's official digital streaming partner, Jio Cinema, surpassed Disney+ Hotstar's digital viewership numbers from last year by the very first week of the tournament, said a statement. "JioCinema's TATA IPL debut proved to be hugely successful marked by record-breaking opening day numbers. The total match views on Day 1 on JioCinema touched 50 crores," a statement read.

"Over 2.5 crore downloads of JioCinema were accounted for, making it a record for the most installed app in a single day. Additionally, over 6 crore unique viewers tuned in for the GT vs CSK match, which achieved a peak concurrency of over 1.6 crore on the platform."



'GOLMAAL' TO 'CHAMELI': KAREENA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A RISK-TAKER

Team Absolute | Mumbai



Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor Khan, who recently kickstarted the shoot of her upcoming film 'The Crew', has shared that she likes to keep a healthy mix of mainstream and off-beat films in her filmography and that her titular role in 'Chameli' is a testament to that.

'Chameli', which was released almost 2 decades ago, was directed by Sudhir Mishra, and saw Kareena playing the role of a sex worker - a brave choice for an actor in that era. The film received many accolades for its storytelling and Kareena's performance and proved to be a milestone in her career. Talking about making brave choices, Kareena said: "I have always been a risk-taker and it's because of my passion for acting. That's the reason behind me doing a 'Golmaal' and an off-beat film like 'Omkara', 'Yuva' or 'Chameli'."

Kareena, whose streaming chat show 'What Women Want' on Mirchi Plus has been receiving a lot of audience appreciation, comes from the first film dynasty of India - the Kapoor clan but, being a star was never on her mind, she said. Instead, for her, it has always been about honing her craft as an artist. She further mentioned: "It was never on my mind to become a star. I come from a certain background so back then, I thought that being an exceptional actor, it may happen or it might not happen but to try and give my 100 per cent to the part that I essay is not just my duty but also the responsibility that comes with the privilege."



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TAAPSEE FLAUNTS HER WASHBOARD ABS, LEAVES THE INTERNET AMAZED

Actress Taapsee Pannu, who

was last seen in the streaming movie 'Blur', recently sent the Internet into frenzy with her super fit avatar. The actress took to her Instagram to drop two photos of herself in which she is seen flaunting her six-pack abs. Needless to say, fans were impressed.

She shared two photos of herself wearing a black gym wear as she posed with her gym trainer, Sujeet Kargutkar. In the first picture, the actress can be seen flexing her core muscles but her caption has another story to tell - that of temptation and craving. Taapsee captioned the post, "Months of grilling and hard work only so I could have the biscuits and he could have his cup of tea. @sujeetkargutkar you finally have the picture and I'm off to have my chole bhature and croissants."

Her friends from the film fraternity flooded the comments section with praises. From Huma Qureshi to Pratik Gandhi and Shreya Dhanwanthary - friends from the fraternity heaped praises on her dedication.

Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress has Rajkumar Hirani's 'Dunki' with Shah Rukh Khan which will hit the big screen in December 2023. She also has 'Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba' in the pipeline.

PLAYING THE ROLE OF COP WAS NEW TO ME: MRUNAL THAKUR



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TV and film actress Mrunal Thakur shared how it was a challenge for her to essay the role of a police officer on screen in Vardhan Ketkar's film 'Gumraah', which also stars Aditya Roy Kapur.

'Gumraah' starts with a murder and the entire story revolves around finding the truth and the real culprit in the case. Mrunal is seen playing the role of investigating officer, Shivani Mathur, who is on the mission to solve the murder mystery. It is a remake of the 2019 Tamil film 'Thadam'.

Talking about the challenges of playing a cop on 'The Kapil Sharma Show', she said: "It was a great experience essaying the role of a cop for the first time. The moment when you wear that uniform, you feel the responsibility and the power that comes with it. Earlier, I have played the roles of a daughter, love interest or a wife but this is something very new to me."

Mrunal started her career with TV and during her college days got the lead role in 'Mujhse Kuchh Kehti...Yeh Khamoshiyaan'. Later, she signed the most popular show 'Kumkum Bhagya' and also appeared as a contestant on 'Box Cricket League 1' and 'Nach Baliye 7'. She was also seen in a titular role in the international film 'Love Sonia'.

In 2022, she became part of 'Jersey' opposite Shahid Kapoor and made her Telugu film debut opposite Dulquer Salmaan in Hanu Raghavapudi's 'Sita Ramam'. She further shared her shooting experience in 'Gumraah' and how it was to work with Ronit Roy. "I really enjoyed the filming process with Ronnie and Ronit Sir. It was an adventure altogether. There were times when Vardhan (director) would come up to me saying that the scene was very cute but it has to be the opposite. I had to prepare my own mindset to not behave like a cute girl and portray a strong and serious personality for the scenes," added Mrunal.

I married my best friend,' Sonali Bendre about her husband Goldie Behl

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Bollywood actress Sonali Bendre, who will be seen among the panel of judges with Terence Lewis and Geeta Kapur on the show, 'India's Best Dancer 3', spoke about her chemistry with her husband Goldie Behl and said they are like best friends. Sonali met filmmaker Goldie Behl, son of director Ramesh Behl on the sets of her film 'Naaraaz' and they both got married on November 12, 2002.

Sonali shares a very friendly bond with Goldie and she said that marrying him for her is like tying the knot with her best friend.

During the show, amidst all the dance acts, two contestants from Delhi, Norbu and Sushmita Tamang, impressed the judges with their dance moves and also with their cute chemistry.

Norbu shared that he met his best friend Sushmita in Mumbai at a dance battle and their bond grew as they started practising dance together. Norbu also appreciated Sushmita by mentioning things he likes about her. Listening to them, Geeta asked Sonali if her best friend appreciated her like this and she replied: "I think Goldie should shower me with more praises, it's been so long since he has done it. Years back, even we were just like Norbu and Sushmita; and this is exactly what used to happen where I was also like Sushmita and I would say he is my best friend and we would stay as best friends."

GUMRAAH : EVEN TWO ADITYA ROY KAPOORS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO MAKE THIS THRILLER THRILL YOU!



FILM REVIEW

SHACHI CHATURVEDI

Cast: Aditya Roy Kapur, Mrunal Thakur and Ronit Roy

Director: Vardhan Ketkar

Runtime: 147 min

Ratings: 2/5

Synopsis : When cops discover that the top suspect has a lookalike, the murder investigation of a young man takes an unexpected turn.

Review : The film begins with a murder, and it is evident from the first scene that Aditya's character is the murderer. The police are about to lock him up when a man enters the lockup, and he is Aditya's humshakal. With identical faces and no particular evidence, how the police will determine which of the two is the murderer is for you to see. A film that begins on a thrilling note takes



a step back in time to explain the story of these two people, making it sluggish and languid. To be more specific, the entire case on which the film is based is shown for a few minutes, and the rest is merely backstory.

Aditya Roy Kapur, who plays two characters in the film, gives a good performance.

Although a poorly written plot makes his efforts futile, he should be commended for being able to differentiate between his two characters.

Speaking of Mrunal Thakur, who portrays a cop and comes across as a misfit Throughout the film, you expect Mrunal to

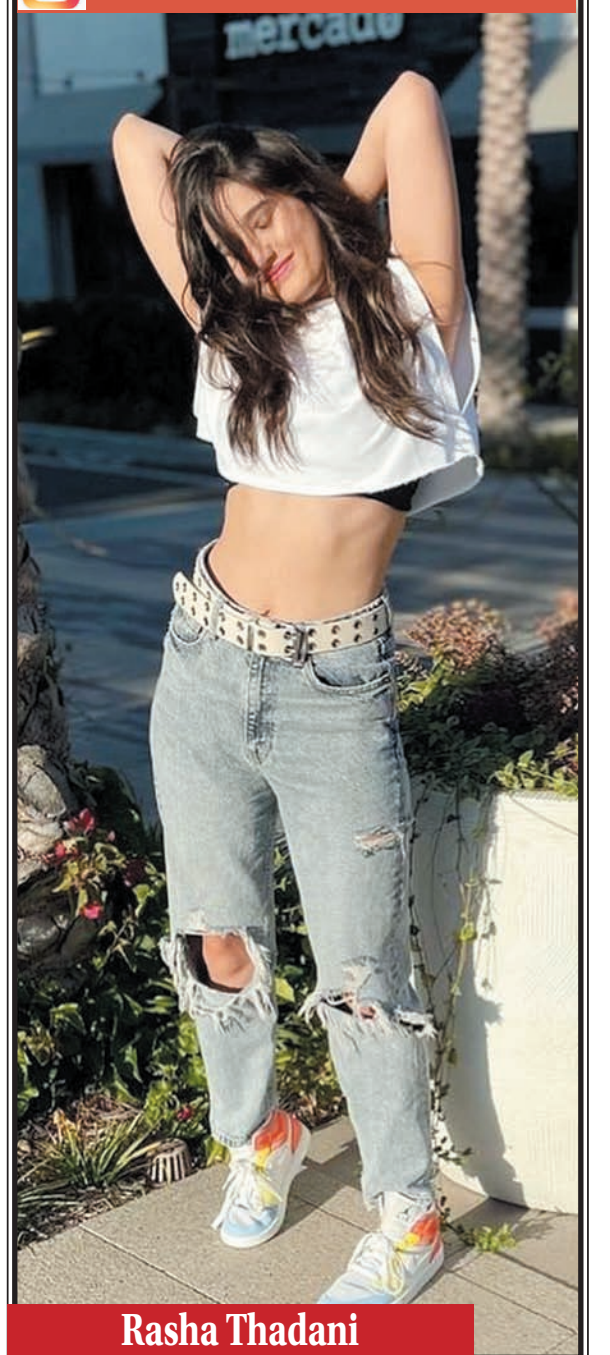
do something or woo you with her charisma, but all you get is disappointment. I wish she had put in more effort instead of just keeping a poker face.

Ronit Roy is a man of great potential, and seeing him underutilized requires a significant failure on the part of the scriptwriters. He has always been a brilliant man, but his outstanding acting isn't enough to make this film enjoyable.

Based on a true story, the idea of the film is praiseworthy, but with an interesting idea and the fact that it is true, the team should have done a better job. The script editing part is where the effort is needed. The story needs to be shorter, and the case requires more focus. Regarding the camera moments and placement, it is fine to build the required tension. Whereas talking about the background music and song, they are not that great to be added to the playlist but kind of enjoyable.

Conclusion : A great idea that could be better executed. It is nothing that one will miss by not watching. If, after reading the review, the topic still excites you, wait for the film to stream online and save money.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Rasha Thadani