



Maharashtra to celebrate Savarkar's birth anniversary as 'Swatantryaveer Gaurav Day'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday announced that the state will celebrate May 28 - the upcoming birth anniversary of the state's Hindutva icon Vinayak D. Savarkar - as the 'Swatantryaveer Gaurav Day', here.



his campaigns for social reforms and abolition of untouchability, all over the state. Proposing the 'Swatantryaveer Gaurav Day', state Minister Uday Samant said that Savarkar played a major role in Maharashtra politics and tributes would be paid to his patriotism, courage and progressive thinking for the younger generations.

Vinayak D. Savarkar, later revered as 'Swatantryaveer Savarkar' was born in Bhagur, Nashik, on May 28, 1883 and passed away on February 26, 1966 in Mumbai. Next month will mark his 140th birth anniversary.

Eknath Shinde Jabs Uddhav Thackeray over BJP Leader's Babri comment

Team Absolute | Ahmednagar

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday took a swipe at Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray over the remarks of state minister and BJP leader Chandrakant Patil who claimed that not a single Shiv Sena worker was present near the Babri masjid when it was brought down in 1992.



founder Bal Thackeray who had given a call of "Garv se kaho hum Hindu hain" (Say with pride that we are Hindus). "In the Babri case, Balasaheb had gone to the Lucknow court. At that time Lal Krishna Advani, Ashok Singhal, and Uma Bharti were also there. There was no party there (at the site in Ayodhya where the structure once stood), all were devotees of Lord Ram," Shinde added.

Shah to confer 'Maharashtra Bhushan' on Appasaheb Dharmadhikari

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will confer the 'Maharashtra Bhushan' Award on renowned social worker and reformer Dattatreya Narayan Dharmadhikari, alias Appasaheb Dharmadhikari on April 16, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has said. Shah will come down for a special function at the Corporate Park at Kharghar suburb of Navi Mumbai, in a grand function, said Shinde after a high-level preparation meeting held in Raigad on Monday night.



ensure full precautions for the mega-function. On February 8, (2023) Appasaheb Dharmadhikari -- honoured with the Padma Shri in 2017 - was named for the prestigious 2022 'Maharashtra Bhushan Award', comprising a medal, a citation

and Rs 25 lakh. Incidentally, his father and the renowned preacher-reformer, the late Dr. Narayan Vishnu Dharmadhikari, revered as Nanasahab Dharmadhikari was also conferred the 'Maharashtra Bhushan' 2008 award. Shinde described Appasaheb Dharmadhikari as instrumental in social and society building activities like afforestation, blood donation and medical camps, shunning dowry system, empowering women and tribals, organising training for children and adult literacy centres, holding job fairs, cleanliness, eradicating superstitions, conducting de-addiction, national integration and preaching to the masses on traditional and religious values.

COURT DENIES BAIL TO MOTORIST ACCUSED OF RUNNING OVER JOGGER AT WORLI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A sessions court here on Tuesday denied bail to the motorist who allegedly ran over and killed a 57-year-old jogger in Worli area of south Mumbai last month. Additional sessions judge M S Kulkarni rejected the bail plea of Sumer Merchant, who had claimed that he did not see the victim because of a blind spot. Rajalakshmi Ramakrishnan, a tech firm CEO, was hit by a speeding car during her morning walk on the Worli seaface promenade on March 19. While opposing the bail plea, the police claimed that Merchant was driving at a speed of 95 to 100 km per hour, and did so, despite knowing that the spot was accident prone. In a written response filed before the



court, the police further cited that according to the blood sample report, the alcohol level in the accused's blood was 137 mg in 100 ml, which is way above the permissible limit. A magistrate court had denied bail to the accused motorist, following which he approached the sessions court. The magistrate had held that though the accused blamed the sharp turn on the road for the accident, from the record and photographs filed on record, there appears no such blind spot.

AADITYA THACKERAY VISITS T-HUB, MEETS KTR

Hyderabad: Shiv Sena-UBT leader Aaditya Thackeray on Tuesday visited T-Hub in Hyderabad and met Telangana's Information Technology and Industry Minister K.T. Rama Rao. Accompanied by Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi, he went around the T-Hub premises in Hitec City and was impressed with the facility set up by the Telangana government as innovation hub and ecosystem enabler. The Shiv Sena leader later tweeted that it is always fantastic and encouraging to meet KTR and connect over "our common interests over sustainability, urbanism, technology and how it will help fuel India's growth". He wrote that he visited T-Hub and witnessed the amazing work that's happened there for start ups, innovators, and ideators. "Pleasure reconnecting with you Aaditya Ji after our meeting at Davos last year. Look forward to more conversations in future," tweeted KTR. The two leaders had met in May last year in Davos on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF). Thackeray was then Maharashtra's Tourism and Environment Minister.

Mumbai man, 69, throws acid on wife, 56, suspecting extramarital affair



Mumbai: A 69-year-old man allegedly threw acid on his wife suspecting her of having an extramarital affair in suburban Sion here, police said today. The 56-year-old victim sustained minor injuries in the attack that took place at her residence in Pratikshanagar in the early hours of Monday, an official said. The accused suspected his wife of having an affair and the couple got into a scuffle around 1.30 am, he said. In the fit of rage, the accused grabbed a bottle of acid and threw the liquid on his wife's face and injured her, the official said. Based on the victim's statement, the police were registering an FIR in this regard, he said, adding that the accused has been detained.

Arjun Kapoor to sponsor a promising girl cricketer's dream of playing for India

Mumbai | Agencies

Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor has turned into a real-life hero for an 11-year-old girl cricketer named Anisha Rout as he has come forward to sponsor her entire equipment cost till she turns 18. Anisha Rout travels 80 kms a day for eight hours of cricket training seven times a week, as she pursues her ambition to emulate her hero, Indian batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, and become a professional player. Anisha's father, Prabhat, who works as a supervisor is doing whatever it takes to give wind beneath her wings so that she can fulfill her dreams. However, he needs support to provide Anisha with all the best facilities and equipment so that she can give her best shot to play for India. Anisha's father Prabhat says, "As parents, we want the best for our child but training to become a world-class cricketer is expensive. Anisha wants to earn the India cap and bring glory to our country like Sachin Tendulkar.



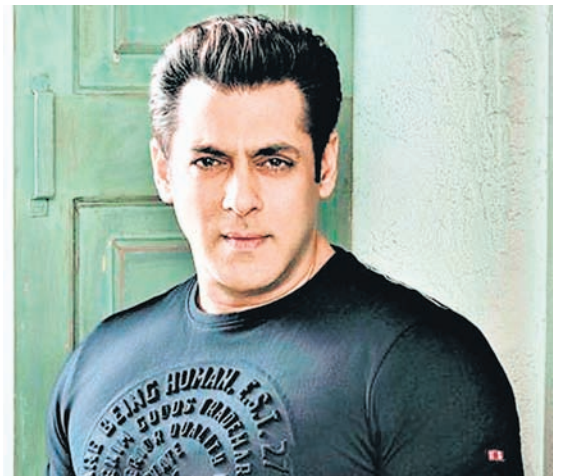
The father added: "As a father, I need to empower her so that she can try to do that and become an inspiration for others like her for generations to come. "This help from Arjun Kapoor is godsend." "It takes a lot of load off my shoulders and I can't thank him enough. It is important for Anisha to get the best equipment as a cricketer and now she will have everything till she turns 18!"

Residing in Panvel, Maharashtra, Anisha trains eight hours a day to chase her dream. She was inspired to play cricket after watching the film 'MS Dhoni: The Untold Story'. At the age of 10, she played Under-15 Women's Cricket for Raigad District, Maharashtra. She has scored three half-centuries in her previous matches. Anisha is currently playing for MIG Club under 15. She opens the batting for her team.

CALLER THREATENING TO KILL SALMAN KHAN ON APRIL 30 DETAINED

Mumbai | Agencies

The Mumbai police have tracked and detained a person who threatened "to kill Bollywood megastar Salman Khan on April 30", top officials said here on Tuesday. On Monday evening, the Mumbai police control room received a call from one unidentified person who conveyed a terse message: "On (April) 30, I shall kill Salman Khan. You can inform him," and disconnected. When the police control room staff called him back on the mobile number, he identified himself as 'Rocky bhai', a 'gaushala rakshak', speaking from Jodhpur in Rajasthan. Swinging into action, several police teams fanned out to track and identify the caller, who was traced to Dolkhamb village in Thane, nearly 50 km north of



Mumbai. A police team reached there and attempted to catch him, but with the help of his friends, he managed to escape on a motorcycle. After a chase of some distance, the police team managed to intercept him and subjected him to questioning. He admitted to having made the threat call to the actor, and thereafter, he was handed over to the Azad Maidan police station in Mumbai, which detained him and is investigating further. The caller is reportedly said to be a minor hailing from Rajasthan and his identity has not yet been revealed, and police suspect it may be a prank.

BNHS pats Rajasthan govt for Lesser Florican reserve in Ajmer

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) on Tuesday lauded the Rajasthan government for declaring a 931-hectare of lush grassland as a 'Lesser Florican Conservation Reserve', in Ajmer district yesterday. The smallest of the bustard family, the Lesser Florican is renowned for its spectacular leaping breeding display, but currently faces severe threats and stands on the verge of extinction. The Lesser Florican is found only in India and as per current estimates barely 700 mature birds are now left, and the BNHS is actively working for the conservation of these feathered creatures. "The Lesser Florican is the smallest bird of the bustard family which was formerly a common game bird of Indian grasslands. But now its global population is 250-300 males confined in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Rajasthan, with an IUCN status of CR



(Critically Endangered)," said Kishor Rithe, Hon. BNHS Secretary. The Ajmer landscape of Rajasthan is one of the last remaining breeding grounds where it is surviving in a human-dominated landscape, he added. The BNHS started working with the Rajasthan Forest Department on its conservation project in 2017, and their scientific teams collected data regarding its status, distribution, behavior, habitat, etc. in the desert state with the help of local communities. "We identified 26 sites (73 locations) spread across 50 villages in the Ajmer district and recorded many important observations on its strong site fidelity; its movements in the grasslands and croplands before settling down in its breeding site," said scientist Dr Sujit Narwade, BNHS Assistant Director, project head working in Rajasthan and other parts of India. The data and observations recorded by BNHS teams are now helping Rajasthan Forest Department to take policy decisions to save this species

from extinction. Among these are the changes from traditional crops like Jowar, Moong, and Urad growing up to a height of 50-100 cm to irrigated cash crops and the use of heavy machines and music systems on tractors that affect the birds in this landscape, said Narwade. An increase in free-ranging dogs, land use changes, chemical sprays, uncontrolled tourism, and unavailability of grasslands was recorded as threats to be addressed immediately, but after the Rajasthan Government's notification, the conservation efforts shall be expedited, said Rithe. Lesser Floricans mainly breed in the North-west part of India in monsoon and then fly to spend winters in the Deccan plateau, said the BNHS experts. Hence the participation of locals is essential for the survival of the species which requires mosaics of the grasslands and crop fields plus inter-state and inter-departmental coordination, to save the Lesser Floricans from being snuffed out forever.

28 lakh siphoned off from bank account of thane man who died in 2021

Thane: An

offence has been registered in Maharashtra's Thane city against unidentified persons who allegedly siphoned off more than Rs 28.3 lakh from the bank account of a man's bank who had died in 2021, police said on Tuesday. Based on a complaint, the police have registered a case under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology Act, an official said. The man had died in September 2021, and his father went to a private bank, where he had an account, to intimate them about the death in February 2022, he said. The bank statement of the man's account revealed that more than Rs 28.3 lakh had been siphoned off between September 2021 and April 2022 by way of transactions to unidentified persons, the official said, adding that a probe is underway.





EDITOR'S SPECS

Calculations that cost TMC its national party status

While the Trinamool Congress has hinted that it might take to the legal path against the decision of the Election Commission of India (ECI) to cancel its national party status, analysts doubt how far that step will be fruitful in the backdrop of some calculations based on which the party has received the setback. One important condition for retaining the national party status is that the political party concerned should have two per cent of the total Lok Sabha seats and that should be from three Indian states. In case of Trinamool Congress, although it has more than two per cent of the total Lok Sabha seats, they are all from the single state of West Bengal. Another condition is that the party should have the state-party status in at least four Indian states. Now to get the state-party status, the political party concerned should have at least two elected representatives in the state Assembly concerned and six per cent of the votes polled in the last elections in that state. In case of Trinamool Congress, besides West Bengal is only in Meghalaya where Trinamool has five elected legislators and secured 13.78 per cent of total votes polled in the last elections there. Despite Trinamool Congress contesting from Goa and Tripura, neither a single party candidate from any of these two states got elected nor it secured the required percentage of the votes polled. In the last Tripura Assembly polls, the vote percentage in favour of Trinamool Congress was 0.88 per cent which was even lesser than NOTA. In case of the 2022 Goa Assembly polls, the party vote share was 5.21 per cent of the total votes polled.

NATO's expansion

Asad Mirza

Finland formally became a member of NATO on April 4 during a scheduled summit, finalising the fastest accession process in the treaty's history. Last week, the blue-and-white flag of Finland was raised alongside those of its western partners outside NATO's headquarters in Brussels after the Nordic country formally became the 31st member of the transatlantic defensive alliance. Guests at the ceremony, including the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, and the Finnish President, Foreign and Defence Ministers applauded and shouted "bravo" at the ceremony, which marked a historic realignment of Europe's security landscape. US President Joe Biden warmly welcomed the completion of Finland's accelerated accession process, saying NATO had shown itself more united than ever after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The two Nordic countries, Finland and Sweden's inclusion in NATO was being watched as the war of nerves between the West, represented by the US and its allies and the Communist-Socialist bloc led by Russia. Though initially Russia showed less apprehension about the inclusion of these two Scandinavian countries in NATO, however, after Finland becoming the latest member to join the alliance, Kremlin's spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, said that NATO's embrace of Finland was an "encroachment on our security and on Russia's national interests", adding that Moscow would watch closely for any NATO military deployments there. The Ministry added that the development marked "a fundamental change in the situation in northern Europe, which had previously been one of the most stable regions in the world". Russia said on Monday it would bolster its military capacity in its western and north-western regions in response to Finland's accession. Sweden and Finland together share a 1,340 km-long border with Russia, and both submitted simultaneous membership applications last May, abandoning decades of military non-alignment to seek security as NATO members after the Russian invasion. The Guardian has commented that joining NATO means Finland falls under the



alliance's Article 5, a collective defence pledge that stipulates that an attack on one NATO member "shall be considered an attack against them all". Finland is one of the few European countries to have retained a conscription army through decades of peace, wary of its eastern neighbour Russia after the former Soviet Union tried to invade the country during WW II. Finland's ground, naval and air forces are all trained and equipped with one primary aim - to repel any Russian invasion. Finland has what it calls "Western Europe's strongest artillery" that includes some 1,500 weapons: about 700 howitzers and cannon, 700 mortars and about 100 heavy and light rocket launchers. By joining the NATO now it can purchase more arms from diverse sources such as Israel. NATO has an open-door policy, meaning that any country can be invited to join if it expresses an interest, as long as it is able and willing to uphold the principles of the bloc's founding treaty. However, under the accession rules, any member state can veto a new

country from joining. Turkey and Hungary, presumably at the behest of Russia tried to stall this process for the last one year. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accuses Finland and Sweden of housing Kurdish "terrorist organisations", while Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban claimed they were spreading "outright lies" about his country's rule of law record. However, there was a limit to which both could stall the process and with many behind the scenes manipulations at last they bowed down to the NATO's pressure. Turkey and Hungary later softened their stance on Finland's accession, opening the door to its membership earlier this month. However, they remain opposed to Sweden joining -- at least for now. Ankara accuses Stockholm of sheltering Kurdish militants, while Budapest has "grievances" about Swedish criticism of the rule of law in Hungary. Finland joining NATO marks one of the most significant geopolitical consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine to date

and represents a dramatic realignment of Europe's security framework. The Nordic country moved to join NATO alongside Sweden as a direct response to Russia's assault on Ukraine in February 2022. Russia has repeatedly blamed NATO expansion, among other grievances, for what in reality was an unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. Despite Russia's complaints, Ukraine was not on the formal path to join NATO at the time, and there wasn't a big push among the alliance's members to expand. But now, as a result of invading Ukraine, Russia has seen its land border with NATO double in size. Last week, ministers formally convened in a NATO-Ukraine Commission format - a symbolic move acknowledging Kiev's aspirations for a closer relationship. Hungary, which has long blocked the body from meeting, grudgingly attended the session but vowed to continue opposing Ukrainian integration. NATO pledged in 2008 that Ukraine would eventually join the alliance, but the process stalled. In the current situation, numerous Western capitals argue that the priority now is helping Ukraine win the war - and that discussion of NATO's political relationship with Kiev should wait. But we cannot discount Ukraine too joining NATO sooner or later. If and when that happens, that would strategically translate into Russia spreading thin its military resources, which have already taken a strong beating in the on-going Ukraine war. This may add to Russian President Vladimir Putin's headaches, but we also cannot discount its close ties with China and say that Russia has been pushed into a corner. In case of any direct confrontation with NATO, Russia can always be sure of support from China, and if it really happens that it may not augur well for the global peace. However, in the whole membership fracas, Russia seems to be the ultimate loser, as now it borders shared with NATO member or aspiring member countries have doubled in two different directions. Finland's inclusion in NATO indeed means a historic realignment of Europe's security landscape.

international

CALIFORNIA ROLLS BACK CASTE-BIAS CASE PARTIALLY, RIGHT-WING HINDUS CLAIM VICTORY

Yashwant Raji Washington

California state has dropped its allegations of caste-based bias by two Indian-descent employees of IT giant Cisco but will continue the larger case against the company. California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing had filed this case in 2020 based on a complaint from an unidentified employee of the company making it the first case of caste-based discrimination reported in the US. This case went on to be seen as a confirmation of the existence of a typically South Asian form of discrimination in the US and it was subsequently cited in support of moves to add this practice to the list of banned grounds for bias elsewhere in the country such as in Seattle. The California civil rights department (CRD) filed its request for "partial dismissal" in the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara on



Monday. "Only the two individual defendants are being dismissed," said the department's press office in response to a request for clarification. "CRD's case against Cisco remains ongoing. We will continue to vigorously litigate the matter on behalf of the people of California." The lawsuit by California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing was filed against Cisco System Inc in 2020 on the basis of a complaint from a Indian-descent Dalit employee of

the company who had alleged caste-based discrimination against him by two of his supervisors - also of India-descent - and alleged retaliation when he complained. The suit was filed against the company - Cisco Systems Inc; and the two supervisors - Sundar Iyer and Ramana Kompella. The department of civil rights has dropped the allegations against the two supervisors, but said its larger case against the company will continue. "Two Indian Americans

endured a nearly three year nightmare of unending investigations, a brutal online witch hunt, and a presumption of guilt in the media after the CRD sullied their reputation alleging that they engaged in discrimination based on caste," said Suhag Shukla, Executive Director of Hindu American Foundation (HAF), which has opposed the listing of caste among banned ground for discrimination. "We are thrilled that Iyer and Kompella have been vindicated along with our position that the state has no right to attribute wrongdoing to Hindu and Indian Americans simply because of their religion or ethnicity," she added. HAF was among a group of organizations of Hindu Americans who tried to stop Seattle city from adding caste to the banned list of kinds of bias and it is also now part of an effort to stop California from adopting a legislation banning caste-based discrimination, the first American state to do so, when, and if, that legislation

becomes law. A debate is raging in the Indian American community, joined by other South Asian communities, on the question of adding caste to the list of many kinds of bias banned in the US, with history/origin, religion, color and ethnicity. HAF, Vishwa Hindu Parishad America and other rightwing Hindu Americans argue that caste-based discrimination is reprehensible, any law banning it here in the US puts a target on the backs of the entire South Asian community, specially Hindus, by portraying them all as purveyors of this practice. They also argue that discrimination based on caste is covered by existing laws that outlaw all kinds of bias and discrimination and there is no need for a new ban. Their third, and the final argument, is that the caste-bias in the US is rare and not as rampant as it has been made out to be. They have questioned data cited by supporters of the ban.

Volcano erupts in Russia's Far East, posing threat to aviation

Moscow | Agencies

The Shiveluch volcano in Russia's far eastern Kamchatka Peninsula erupted on Tuesday and spewed an ash plume up to 15 km into the sky, posing threat to air traffic. The Institute of Volcanology and Seismology of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences has declared the highest "red" hazard designation for aviation. Xinhua news agency reported. There was a threat that streams of hot lava could block the road, it warned. The Institute also noted the volcano ash could travel up to 20 km and block the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky-Ust-Kamchatsk highway. The sky was covered with a black cloud within a radius of several kilometres from the volcano, with thunder rumbling due to static electricity in the ash cloud. Ash began to fall in the village of Klyuchi in the Ust-Kamchatsky District of the Kamchatka Territory,



where about 4,000 people live. The thickness of volcanic ash in Klyuchi village has reached 8.5 cm. Due to the eruption, some schools are closed on Tuesday. Shiveluch is one of Kamchatka's largest volcanoes, with a height of more than 3,200 meters. It includes three main structures: the Old Shiveluch volcano, an ancient caldera and the active Young Shiveluch volcano. The most recent eruption of Young Shiveluch started on August 15, 1999, and continues as of 2021. On February 27, 2015, Shiveluch erupted shooting ash into the atmosphere about 30,000 ft crossing the Bering Sea and into Alaska.

Shots fired near Sikh temple in UK, three arrested

London | Agencies

Police in the UK have stepped up patrols and arrested three people after shots were fired near a Sikh temple in Wolverhampton in central England. "We were called shortly before 7 p.m. yesterday (April 9) to Upper Villiers Street, where an argument took place between occupants of two cars and shots were fired," the Wolverhampton Police said on Monday. One of these cars struck a vehicle being driven by a member of the public, who escaped unhurt. Following initial enquiries at the scene, police stopped a car involved in the incident and arrested three men, who remain in custody as officers continue with their investigations. Calling it an "isolated incident", Chief Superintendent Richard Fisher said that the worshippers were safe and there was no reason for concern. "We are confident this was an isolated inci-



dent and that there is no cause for wider concern in the community, including worshippers at the nearby gurdwara, we will maintain a presence to provide reassurance," Fisher said. A car park belonging to the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara is currently closed, according to a local media report.

'Not for India...go away'; couple denied free Ramzan treats in Singapore

Singapore | Agencies

A supermarket chain in Singapore has apologised after an Indian Muslim couple was turned away from one of its booths offering free refreshments to those breaking fast during Ramzan. Farah Nadya and her husband Jahabar Shalih had gone to the FairPrice outlet at Our Tampines Hub on April 9 at around 7 p.m. for grocery shopping when an employee allegedly told them that the freebies were "not for India (sic)", The Straits Times reported. Nadya, 35, is a Malaysian-Indian and runs her own healthcare company, while her 36-year-old husband is an Indian who works in the technology sector. Shalih told The Straits Times that he was standing at the booth



reading about free refreshments when a FairPrice employee approached him and said: "Not for India, not for India. Further, the employee told the couple not to take anything from the stand, and 'go

away". Sharing her ordeal in a Facebook post, Nadya said that they did not intend to take the free items, and had stopped by the stand "to applaud such an inclusive initiative". The couple said they shared the experience on social media to "be accountable" to their children, who are of mixed-race. "I have encountered such things before, but this time I had to explain to my son what had happened," Shalih told The Straits Times. "I don't think it's the fault of the staff. I just feel that such things (can) happen, this is purely a lack of awareness." Apologising for the incident, a FairPrice spokesman said "we take this matter seriously", adding that the employee in question has been "counselled". The initiative by FairPrice Group, launched at the end of March and running till April 21, sees 60 FairPrice outlets giving away free drinks, snacks and dates to those breaking fast during Ramzan.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Tampa Mayor Jane Castor has invited singer Taylor Swift to take over her responsibilities for a day during The Eras Tour. Cities that have hosted the singer during The Eras Tour have changed their names, illuminated landmarks, and even created street signs in honour of Taylor Swift and her fans, but Florida city has decided to up the ante, according to an official statement by Tampa government.

"We know Glendale changed its name, Arlington made a street sign, and Vegas illuminated their Gateway Arches. But here in Tampa we've got a reputation to uphold... and we want to go BIG-GER," the statement quoted the Mayor

as say-

ing. In videos shared to the City of Tampa's Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms, Castor presents a key to the city to Swift and invites her to be Myor for the day.

The city is asking Swift's fans everywhere to help share the video and tag the singer on social media to help grab her attention and invite her to be "Mayor Swift".

In addition, the Old City Hall, Tampa Riverwalk, and downtown bridges will shine "Taylor Swift Red" from sundown to sunrise on Thursday.

Taylor Swift invited to be Tampa Mayor for a day during The Eras Tour



Jeremy Renner recounts snow plough accident

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Jeremy Renner made his first late-night appearance since his snow plough accident, guesting on 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' to discuss the traumatic incident and his forthcoming series

'Rennervations'. Renner was met with a standing ovation by the talk show's crowd, taking the stage with the help of a cane, reports 'Variety'.

A big grin on his face, the actor performed a small dance before taking his seat.

"If there was any question as to who the toughest Avenger is, that's settled now, right?" Kimmel asked.



Renner shut him down quickly, retorting "Scarlett Johansson."

Renner offered a detailed account of his accident in an interview with ABC News' Diane Sawyer last week.

Renner explained that he and his 27-year-old nephew were attempting to tow a Ford Raptor out of the snow with his snow plough.

After his nephew stepped out to chain the two vehicles, the snow plough began to slide on the ice. Renner lost his footing as he stepped out of the plough to look back at his nephew, but neglected to set the parking brake. Attempting to re-enter the vehicle, Renner was run over.

RADCLIFFE EXPLAINS WHY HE ACTED LIKE 'ABSOLUTE D**K' DURING 'HARRY POTTER' KISSING SCENE

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Daniel Radcliffe acted like an "absolute d**k" during a crucial 'Harry Potter' kissing scene.

The actor has offered an apology to his castmates Emma Watson, and Rupert Grint after the movie star confessed he wasn't on his best behaviour when the pair were called on set to film a smooch between their characters Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley for 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part II', reports aceshowbiz.com.

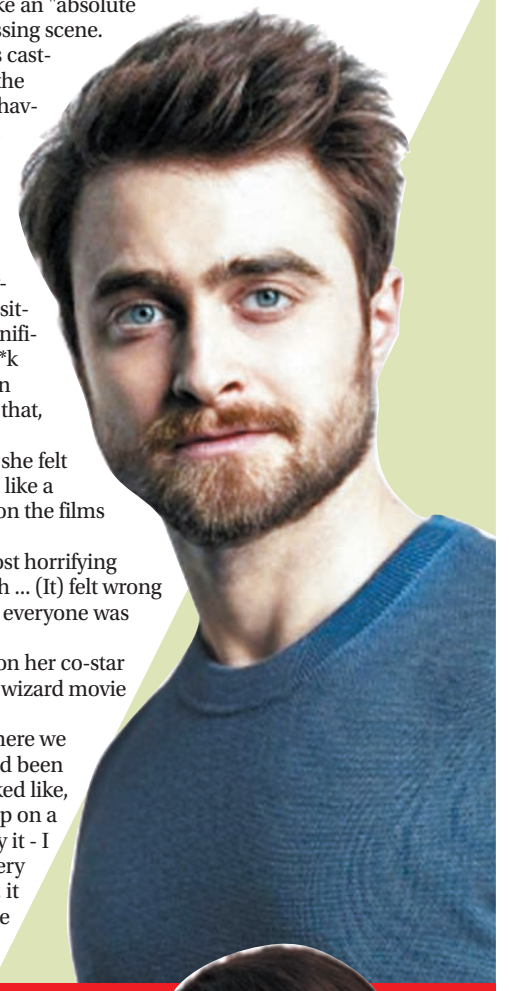
Speaking in HBO special 'Harry Potter 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts', the 33-year-old explained: "I did not make this (awkward situation) better, because I've been told significantly that I was just being an absolute d**k about this and was like, 'I'm gonna come on set and watch you guys kiss. I'm sorry about that, guys.'"

During the reunion show, Emma revealed she felt uncomfortable kissing Rupert because he felt like a brother to her after they all grew up working on the films together.

She said, "Obviously us kissing was the most horrifying thing either of us have ever had to go through... (It) felt wrong... Everyone wanted to be on set for it. Cause everyone was like: 'This is gonna be good, guys.'"

She also opened up about having a crush on her co-star Tom Felton, who played Draco Malfoy in the wizard movie series and was three years older than her.

Emma recalled: "I walked into the room where we were having tutoring. The assignment that had been given was to draw what you thought God looked like, and Tom had drawn a girl with a backward cap on a skateboard." "And I just don't know how to say it - I just fell in love with him. I used to come in every day and look for his number on the call sheet, it was number seven, and if his name was on the call sheet, it was an extra exciting day," she continued.



Michelle Dockery to star alongside Tom Hanks in Robert Zemeckis' 'Here'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Four-time Emmy nominee Michelle Dockery has joined the cast of 'Here', filmmaker Robert Zemeckis adaptation of Richard McGuire's graphic novel. The project reunites Zemeckis with writer Eric Roth, Tom Hanks and Robin Wright for the first time since their collaboration on 'Forrest Gump' earned six Oscars including Best Picture.

Paul Bettany also co-stars. Based on McGuire's novel, 'Here' is a breathtaking and revolutionary odyssey through time and memory.

The innovative story is centered on a place in New England where from wilderness and then, later, from a home - love, loss, struggle, hope and legacy play out between couples and families over generations.



Jennifer Aniston, crush David Schwimmer let 'feelings play out' on 'Friends'

Los Angeles | Agencies

They could've been each other's Lobsters! 'Friends' stars Jennifer Aniston and David Schwimmer are the Hollywood couple everyone would have loved to have seen hook up off-screen.

However, despite the 'Friends' stars' apparent crushing on each other, it just never materialised - and instead they "let their feelings play out" on screen, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.

That's the thoughts of Jennifer, 54, who has further opened up on the pair's relationship in the 1990s.

They both confessed that they could have made a go of things if circumstances were different, but the timing just never fit.

'Mirror.co.uk' further states that, while chatting on 'Live with Kelly and Ryan', Jennifer discussed her crush on David, who played on-screen on-off lover Ross Geller.

Hosts Kelly Ripa and Ryan Seacrest asked the actress how she dealt with her feelings at the time. She responded: "We just let it play out on TV".

And when

Seacrest further probed on the subject, he asked if the pair's first kiss was ever caught on camera.

"Yes," was the response, before she gushed "it was quite enjoyable actually" after Ripa asked if it was weird.

Jennifer and David were fresh-faced stars when the world watched as their on-off relationship evolve over the seasons.



'STRANGER THINGS' ANIMATED SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT AT NETFLIX

Los Angeles | Agencies

Streaming giant Netflix is continuing to build out the 'Stranger Things' franchise, digital platform ordering an animated series set within the world of the show.

Nearly all details about

the show are being kept under wraps, aside from the fact that it was developed by Eric Robles and Flying Bark Productions, reports 'Variety'.

Robles has previously created the animated shows 'Random! Cartoons', 'Fanboy & Chum Chum',

and 'Glitch Techs'.

'Stranger Things' creators the Duffer brothers executive produce via Upside Down Pictures along with Robles of Flying Bark as well as Shawn Levy and Dan Cohen of 21 Laps. Upside Down Pictures and 21 Laps are currently under overall deals at Netflix.

"We've always dreamed of an animated 'Stranger Things' in the vein of the Saturday morning cartoons that we grew up loving, and to see this dream realised has been absolutely thrilling," the Duffer brothers said in a statement.

"We couldn't be more blown away by what Eric Robles and his team have come up with -- the scripts and artwork are incredible, and we can't wait to share more with you! The adventure continues..."

'Stranger Things' has proven to be a global hit and one of Netflix's most popular original series since it originally debuted in 2016. It was renewed for a fifth and final season in February 2022. Netflix announced plans for a live-action spin-off series and a stage show in July 2022, with the Duffers forming Upside Down Pictures at that time. No details are available about the live-action spinoff, though the Duffers have previously said it would not focus on characters like Eleven or Steve Harrington.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Katie Maloney



SALMAN'S UPCOMING FILM'S TRAILER GETS BRUTALLY TROLLED

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The trailer of the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer film 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan' was unveiled recently. While Salman Khan fans are in a state of ecstasy as they will get to see their favourite superstar on the silver screen after a gap of almost four years, a section of people on the Internet are not pleased with the trailer and have trolled it heavily calling the scenes and sequences nonsensical, over the top, cringe and unbearable. The trailer, which is over three minutes in length, features many sequences that serve as a reminiscent of older Salman Khan hits like 'Wanted', 'Jai Ho' 'Dabangg' and several others.

The trailer is being criticised for loose narration, poor editing, Salman's look in the film and action sequences that have no regard for reality.

One user commented, "Another kachra reloading." Another wrote, "Salman Khan's hair has more volume than his acting. PATHETIC."

Another user commented, "This film is still stuck in early 2000s, it seems".

'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan', directed by Farhad Samji, features an ensemble cast of Pooja Hegde, Venkatesh Daggubati, Palak Tiwari, Siddharth Nigam and Shehnaaz Gill.

The film will bow in theatres on April 21 on the occasion of Eid.

Shreyas Talpade finds dubbing for the trailer of Allu's next

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shreyas Talpade, who is known for his work in the Marathi and Hindi film industry, talked about the challenges of dubbing the dialogues in Hindi for the Telugu blockbuster 'Pushpa: The Rise' and also for the trailer of its sequel, 'Pushpa: The Rule'.

Written and directed by Sukumar, 'Pushpa: The Rise', stars Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna. The story is about a labourer Pushpa Raj, who smuggles red sandalwood in the Seshachalam Hills of Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh. Shreyas recalled working with the team of 'Pushpa: The Rise' and said: "When I dubbed for the first part, I had never imagined for the film to go so big, and this time when I returned to dub, I knew how huge a project this was. But that particular line, in the end, was what hit me hard, it gave me goosebumps, and that nostalgia of my journey with 'Pushpa' was just amazing to revisit."

Shreyas has been part of several movies such as 'Om Shanti Om', 'Golmaal Returns', 'Welcome To Sajjanpur', 'Golmaal 3', 'Housefull 2', 'Golmaal Again', and many more. He also did Hindi dubbing in 2009 for the English film, 'The Lion King'. Shreyas will be seen playing the role of former late prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Kangana Ranaut-starrer 'Emergency'. He has recently also done the dubbing for the trailer of 'Pushpa: The Rule' and said that it is quite a challenging job.



Self-love is more important than Salman Khan: Shehnaaz Gill

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Punjabi actress-singer Shehnaaz Gill, who is awaiting the release of "Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan", her big-ticket film, has declared with her characteristic candour that self-love matters most to her. Gill, who became popular after "Bigg Boss 14", especially because of her reported off-screen romance with the late Sidharth Shukla, said she has known Salman Khan for many years and shares a good camaraderie with him, but nothing trumps self-love for the actress.

Gill also appeared on "Bigg Boss" as a guest star in seasons 15 and 16.

Speaking to the media at the film's trailer launch, Shehnaaz said: "I didn't feel nervous at all while working on the film. In fact, I love how I look in the final output of the film."

She said: "Khud ko dekh ke achcha lagta hai. Pehle apne aap se pyaar karna chaahiye na, baaki baad mein Salman sir aur baaki sab (How good it is to look at oneself. It's so good to love oneself. For me, I'm my most favourite person, then comes Salman sir and everyone else)." Scheduled to hit the big screen on April 21, coinciding with Eid, "Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan" is a Hindi action drama directed by Farhad Samji and produced by Salman Khan Films.

Eisha Singh

My four feline cuties taught me that love knows no boundaries

Team Absolute | Mumbai

'Bekaaboo' actress Eisha Singh believes that pets are the best friends, and on Pet Day, she has shared how she is attached to her four cats and enjoys playing different games with them.

She said: "I always thought I was a dog person until I met my four feline cuties who stole my heart and taught me that love knows no boundaries. It's true what they say, one cat always leads to another. That's how I have a full-fledged cat family now. Amongst the four, Ginni and Simba are the mom and dad of little bundles of fluff, Gucci, and Prada. My cats are all very gentle and they don't claw people who hold them."

At the age of 17, Eisha made her TV debut in 2015 as Dhaani Tripathi in the show 'Ishq Ka Rang Safed'. Later, she acted in 'Ek Tha Raja Ek Thi Rani', 'Ishq Subhan Allah', 'Pyaar Tune Kya Kiya', 'Sifir Tum', among others.

The actress, who is busy shooting for her show, makes sure to pay attention to their needs. She also added that the cats have certain traits similar to dogs and despite being fond of dogs now she has become a cat lover.

"They have dog-like traits. This is true, especially for Simba and Prada. Simba loves to go out often and meet

new

people and Prada is very emotional. This is because they receive a lot of attention from everyone, especially from my mother who keeps talking to them and that's why they think of themselves as dogs. Life without cats? I don't think so. For me, they're not just pets, they're family. I wouldn't have it any other way," she concluded.



GOLDEN AGE OF INDIAN CINEMA HAD CERTAIN INNOCENCE:

WAMIQA GABBI

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, who is receiving a lot of appreciation for her work in the recently released streaming series 'Jubilee', feels that there was a certain kind of innocence in the Golden era of the Indian cinema which seems to be lost in current times.

'Jubilee', which also stars Aparshakti Khurana, Aditi Rao Hydari, Prosenjit Chatterjee, Sidhant Gupta, Nandish Sandhu, and Ram Kapoor, is set against the backdrop of the golden age of Indian cinema and explores the evolution of Hindi cinema.

Wamiqa, who is plays the role of a yesteryear actress, said, "There's a splendid innocence about the golden age of cinema and its actors, which is lost today and it needs to be touched upon. Even if things were not perfect, it was all part of learning".

She further mentioned, "Being an actor or showbiz during that time was a profession without any frills attached to it. I am glad I was able to live that time through 'Jubilee'".

The series, helmed by Vikramaditya Motwane of 'Lootera' fame, is currently streaming on Prime Video.



SSR's sister Priyanka drops cryptic post after Rhea Chakraborty 'Roadies' announcement

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Late Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's sister Priyanka took to social media where she wrote a cryptic post saying "tum kiyu darogi" (why will you be scared) after actress Rhea Chakraborty was announced as a gang leader for the upcoming season of 'Roadies'.

It was on Monday, that Rhea was named as one of the gang leaders in the 19th season of the youth-based reality show 'MTV Roadies'. She had shared a promo on Instagram.

Rhea was heard saying: "Aapko kya laga main wapas nahi aungi, darr jaungi? ab darne ki baari kisi aur ki."

Taking to Twitter, Priyanka Singh wrote: "Tum kiyu darogi? Tum to vaishya thi aur rahogi! Prashna yeh hai ki tumhari upbhogta kaun hai? Koi Sattadhari hi ye himmat de sakta hai. Who responsible 4delays InSSRCs is obvious (sic)."

Sushant Singh Rajput died in 2020 in mysterious circumstances which created a nationwide uproar. He was found hanging in his flat in Juhu. Days after his death, the actor's father filed a case against Rhea, the actor's then girlfriend, accusing her of abetment of suicide and money laundering.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Disha Patni