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HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT

Bhavani Devi wins India's first ever medal at Asian Fencing Championships

Wuxi, (China) | Agencies India's top fencer Bhavani Devi on Monday scripted history as she secured a bronze medal in the women's sabre event at the Asian Fencing Championships.

This remarkable achievement marked India's first medal at the continental meet. Bhavani defeated the reigning world champion and world No.1 Misaki Emura of Japan 15-10 in the quarterfinals of the women's sabre event. It was also the Indian's first win over the Japanese in four meetings.

The 29-year-old settled for bronze after suffering a close 15-14 loss to Uzbekistan's world No.79 Zaynab Dayibekova in the semifinals.

Earlier, the Indian fencer received a first-round bye. She got the better of world No.95 Dospay Karina of Kazakhstan 15-13 in the next round and stunned world No.40 and third seed Serik Ozaki of Japan 15-11 in the pre-quarterfinals.

The 29-year-old became the first Indian fencer to represent India at the Olympic Games when she competed at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.



WORLD BRACES FOR EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AS EL NINO IS OFFICIALLY HERE

Global temperatures have accelerated to record-setting levels this month, an ominous sign in the climate crisis ahead of a gathering El Nino that could potentially propel 2023 to become the hottest year ever recorded.

Extreme hot weather caused by the El Nino phenomenon is predicted to drag up to 8,70,000 hectare of agricultural lands in Indonesia into drought and crop failures.

In India, El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) led to a delay in monsoon, while cyclone Biparjoy also played a crucial role in the delay, according to experts.

The last El Nino event occurred between February and August 2019 but its impacts were relatively weak.

Depending on its strength, El Nino can cause a range of impacts, such as increasing the risk of heavy rainfall and droughts in certain locations around the world, Michelle L'Heureux, a physical scientist at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, said in a statement recently. "El Nino could lead to new records for temperatures, particularly in areas that already experience above-average temperatures during El Nino," he added.

Last month, Kelvin waves, a potential precursor of El Nino conditions in the ocean, rolled across the equatorial Pacific toward the coast of South America.

According to NASA, the data showed Kelvin waves -- which are roughly 2 to 4 inches (5 to 10 cm) high at the ocean surface and hundreds of miles wide -- moving from west to east along the equator toward the west coast of South America. The advent of El Nino this year could push global temperatures into uncharted territory and contribute to global warming crossing the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold within the next five years, which



would lead to catastrophic and irreversible climate breakdown, according to reports. "In April 2023, an El Nino 'watch' was issued, signaling the beginning of the warm phase of the ENSO phenomenon. Since then, all the Nino indices have remained positive-neutral or above the designated threshold. The Nino indices in the western half of the equatorial Pacific Ocean are still on the borderline, while the eastern portion consistently displays sufficient warming," said a Skymet official.

HEATWAVE LIKELY TO CONTINUE IN SEVEN STATES FOR NEXT 2 DAYS

New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said that heatwave conditions are very likely to continue in some pockets over East Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Vidarbha (Maharashtra), Chhattisgarh and Telangana for next two days.



The IMD also predicted that light to moderate rainfall at most places with isolated heavy to extremely heavy rainfall is very likely over East Rajasthan on Monday while isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall on June 20 and isolated heavy rainfall on June 21.

The IMD also said that light to moderate rainfall at most places is likely with isolated heavy rainfall over adjoining areas of Northeast Madhya Pradesh on June 20 while light to moderate rainfall at most places is likely with isolated heavy rainfall over Southwest Uttar Pradesh on June 20 and 21.

Meanwhile, the Southwest monsoon has further advanced into some more parts of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Westcentral, Northwest Bay of Bengal, some parts of Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, some more parts of Bihar and remaining parts of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim on Monday.

Maha orders Mumbai Police SIT probe into BMC's Rs 12,000-cr 'scam'

Mumbai | Agencies Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced a Mumbai Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe into the irregularities worth a whopping Rs 12,024-crore of spending by the country's biggest and richest civic body, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) between November 2019 and 2022, here on Monday.

The Comptroller & Auditor

General (CAG), in a special probe last year had found out Rs 12,024-crore alleged misappropriation in the civic body's expenses related to various projects during that period. "Based on the CAG Audit, the Maharashtra government has set up a SIT under the guidance of Mumbai Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar, Joint Commissioner of Police, the officers of the Economic Offences Wing and senior officers of the city police," said Shinde.

Manipur Violence: Soldier shot, five houses burnt by militants



Imphal | Agencies A soldier was injured during an encounter with the militants, who also torched five houses in Imphal West district, officials said on Monday.

Defence sources said that armed miscreants resorted to unprovoked firing from Kanto Sabal towards the Chingmang village in Imphal West district during the intervening night of Sunday and Monday, injuring a soldier. "Army Columns resorted to controlled retaliatory fire keeping in view the presence of villagers in the

area. "One Army soldier sustained a gunshot wound and he was immediately evacuated to the Military hospital at Leimakhong and is now stable. "Additional columns of Army inducted in the area and joint operations are in progress," a defence spokesman said.

A police official said that before the gun battle with the Army, militants burnt down five houses at Leimakhong village.

Over 100 people have died and many have been living in relief camps.

WHEN WILL SELF-STYLED 'VISHWAGURU' LISTEN TO 'MANIPUR KI BAAT': CONG

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday once again questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on violence in Manipur, asking him when will the self-styled 'Vishwaguru' listen to 'Manipur Ki Baat'.

In a tweet, Congress General Secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said, "Manipur is burning since 49 days. On Day 50, will PM Narendra Modi fly away to foreign lands, without uttering a single word on the ongoing crisis? Hundreds dead, thousands rendered homeless, countless churches and places of worship destroyed, and a state administration that is part of the problem, not the solution. To make matters even worse, the violence is now spreading to Mizoram as well."

He said, since the last many days, Manipuri leaders have been seeking time from the Prime Minister to ensure his intervention. "Every passing day of neglect confirms the belief that PM Modi and the BJP are interested in prolonging the conflict, not finding a solution. When will the self-styled Vishwaguru listen to Manipur Ki Baat? When will he speak to the country, to make a simple call for peace? When will he demand accountability from the Union Home Minister (Amit Shah) and the Manipur CM (N Biren Singh) for their total failure in bringing peace?" Venugopal asked.

His remarks came a day after the RSS appealed for peace in violence-hit Manipur, which has been witnessing clashes since May 3.

INDIA'S 'WANTED TERRORIST' NIJJAR SHOT DEAD BY TWO GUNMEN IN CANADA

Chandigarh: Canada-based pro-Khalistan leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was declared a 'wanted terrorist' by the Indian government, was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen at the parking lot of Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in the Punjabi-dominated Surrey city of British Columbia province.



He was the president of Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara.

Nijjar, a resident of a village in Jalandhar, was associated with the separatist organisation, Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), which is banned in India. He had played a key role in organising the Khalistan referendum in Brampton city. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) last year filed a charge sheet against four persons, including Nijjar, in connection with a conspiracy to kill Hindu priest Kamaldeep Sharma in Jalandhar on January 31, 2021.

The three others charge-sheeted in the case are Kamaljeet Sharma and Ram Singh, who attacked the priest on the directions of Nijjar and his associate Arshdeep Singh alias Prabh.

Ravi Sinha is new RAW chief

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Centre on Monday appointed Ravi Sinha, a 1988 Indian Police Service (IPS) officer as the new Secretary of the Research & Analysis Wing (RAW). The government in its order said, "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Ravi Sinha, IPS (CG:88), PSO, Special Secretary, Cabinet



Secretariat (SR) as Secretary, Research & Analysis Wing vice Shri Samant Kumar Goel, IPS (PB:84) on completion of his tenure on 30.06.2023 for a tenure of 2 years from the date of assumption of the charge of the post, or until further orders,

whichever is earlier." Sinha, a 1988 batch officer, has been known for his operational and spy skills. He is currently serving as the PSO (Personal Security Officer) and Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat (SR). Samant Kumar Goel, a 1984 batch IPS officer from the Punjab cadre, had held the position of agency's secretary since 2019. In June 2019, Goel succeeded Anil Dhasmana as the Chief of RAW.

Sarva Brahmin Mahasabha on 'Adipurush': 'Changing dialogues won't stop us'

Jaipur | Agencies

The national President of Sarva Brahmin Mahasabha, Suresh Mishra, has demanded a ban on the film 'Adipurush' starring Prabhas, Kriti Sanon and Saif Ali Khan with immediate effect. Claiming that a conspiracy has been hatched to insult 'Hanuman ji' and other deities through 'Adipurush', Mishra slammed the poor usage of computer graphics for the main characters of the film.

Mishra also said that all the dialogues in the film are baseless.

On the recent statement of writer Manoj Muntashir about changing dialogues of the film, Mishra said, "Changing the dialogues will not stop our protest.

The film should be banned with immediate effect. Misrepresentation of Ramayana is



beyond tolerance." "The film is sending a very contradictory message to the society. Movies impact people's mind. That's why special care should be taken so that films don't tamper

with religion and culture. The looks of the mythological characters and their dialogues in the film are sub-par. The film wrongly depicts the characters of Lord Rama, Hanuman, Sita and Ravan. The film

is an insult to Ramayana. It is like playing with the faith of crores of Hindus," Mishra said.

"Gods and goddesses have been shown in a fictional manner in the film, which is absolutely wrong. We will not tolerate this.

The Sarva Brahmin Mahasabha had sent a notice to the film's director, Om Raut, through advocate Kamlesh Sharma a year ago.

At that time, Raut had said that nothing wrong will be shown in the film. But we now see that all the characters of Ramayana have been made fun of in the film," he added.

Mishra demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot to ban the film with immediate effect, and appealed to the general public to boycott the film. An appeal to this effect has also been filed in the court, Mishra said.

Foodies have a chance to win money with 'Bahubali samosa'

Meerut | Agencies

If you are a foodie, here is your chance to win some money too. A Meerut-based sweet shop is making 'Bahubali samosas' each weighing around 12 kg.

The eatery has also thrown a challenge, inviting customers to try and eat the entire samosa in 30 minutes, and take home a cash prize of Rs 71,000.

Ujjawal Kaushal, 30, the third-generation owner of Kaushal Sweets in Lalkurti, said: "As many as four cooks prepare one 12 kg samosa in six hours. The samosa is stuffed with 7 kg of traditional filling such as potatoes, peas, spices, paneer, and dry fruits and it takes around 90 minutes to get it fried." He added that he is now



getting orders from several people who prefer to cut a 12 kg samosa on their birthdays, instead of a cake.

Kaushal, whose family has been in the sweets business for over 60 years, came up with the idea to make a giant samosa that weighs 4 kg in July last year. "Seeing the response we

got, we started making samosas in 8 kg and 12 kg as well. One 12 kg samosa costs Rs 1,500 and we take orders in advance only," he said.

Families, he claims, are ordering the Bahubali Samosa for special occasions and some even use the left-over filling to make parathas the following day.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Fate of Siddaramaiah!

The debate on whether Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will remain at the post for a full term has started again in Karnataka. Bharatiya Janata Party MP from Mysuru Pratap Simha on Monday challenged the Congress leaders to ask Siddaramaiah to proclaim that he will be the CM for five years. Speaking to reporters, Pratap Simha claimed that Siddaramaiah is making his stooges give statements that he will be a full term CM. "Siddaramaiah lacks courage to say this by himself," he taunted. Siddaramaiah is getting Minister for Social Welfare H.C. Mahadevappa and Minister for Large and Medium Industries M.B. Patil to speak on his behalf. D. K. Suresh, Congress MP and brother of Dy CM D.K. Shivakumar, has already made his displeasure clear. Siddaramaiah lacks the courage to say that he is a full term CM. Shivakumar's role is very big in winning the elections, Pratap Simha maintained. Mahadevappa had stated in Mysuru on Sunday that Siddaramaiah will be a full term CM. Minister for PWD Satish Jarkiholi also said there is no sharing of power in the state and Siddaramaiah would be the CM for the full term. Former Minister R. Ashoka had stated that Shivakumar's dream to become CM will remain just a dream. Siddaramaiah has successfully challenged former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and Shivakumar won't get any chance. Reacting to the debate on his term as CM, Siddaramaiah on Monday asked the media what have they got to do with it. When asked about Mahadevappa's statement, he said that a clarification should be taken from him. "Why are you asking that question? You have created it," he slammed a reporter. Shivakumar's camp maintains that there is a power sharing formula between the leaders and both will have a 2.5-year term as CM.

BIPARJOY: PM MODI EMERGES AS THE HERO DHIRODATTA

Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Cyclonic storms keep hitting India almost every year be it in the Arabian Sea or in the Bay of Bengal. Generally, cyclones are generated by atmospheric disturbances around a low pressure area. Cyclones are usually followed by severe storms and bad weather. If we look at the events of the last 2 to 3 decade, the dangerous storms that India had to face, a large number of people had to suffer in addition to the loss of life and property. On the contrary, the precautionary preparations made by the Central and State Government after receiving information about Cyclone Biparjoy, which hit Gujarat recently, at least saved lives.

The alertness, patience, prudence and seriousness with which the head of the house succeeds in reducing the magnitude of the crisis to zero during calamities, such characters are the ones who are established in history as Dhirodattra heroes. In the last nine years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tenure, it has been proved time and again that he does not lose patience in any disaster when it comes to saving the lives of the countrymen and confronts them with well-thought-out strategies; be it cyclones, other natural calamities or heavy rains and floods, any threat to the security and integrity of the country or a global pandemic like Covid-19. With his action plans, he has been able to manage the prevention of loss of life and other damages effectively.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance and strategies proved effective in dealing with the recent cyclone Biparjoy. He alerted the governing and administrative machinery ahead of time to deal with the crisis of Biparjoy. He himself taking high level meeting with the agencies, Center and Gujarat to ensure that the residents of the affected area of the cyclone were transported to safer places and maintenance of essential arrangements like electricity, water, health and telecommunication was ensured. The Prime Minister also ensured the safety of the animals, which is a testimony to his sensitivity. As a result of the instructions of the Prime Minister, that the control rooms, that are an integral part of the preparedness to deal with the cyclone, worked day and night and con-



tinue to do so. In the last about one decade, a lot of efforts have been made to prevent loss of life due to cyclones in different regions of India. Some dangerous cyclones also resulted in loss of life. But in the advance arrangements made to deal with Biparjoy cyclone, public safety was kept on priority. The Meteorological Department had forecast that there could be rain with strong winds in many states of India. In view of these circumstances, concrete security arrangements were made in the respective states by chalking out an effective action plan. I believe that due to all these arrangements, loss of lives due to the effect of Biparjoy could be prevented.

How could all this have been possible?

As we know that about 58 percent of the land area in India is prone to earthquakes of moderate to very high intensity and more than 40 million hectares of area i.e. 12 percent of the country's land area remains prone

to floods. We have about 5700 km of coastal area up to 7516 km of cyclone and Tsunami prone area. Keeping all these things in mind, the Prime Minister has paid a lot of attention to the strategies of disaster management so that the poor people affected by the disaster do not suffer loss of life and property.

The first and most important point in the disaster management strategy adopted by the Prime Minister is pre-disaster management and preparation. Despite this, if a disaster occurs and the preparations prove to be inadequate and if the disaster causes damage, then complete preparations for rehabilitation should be made besides reconstruction and restoration of normalcy after rehabilitation. The Prime Minister has put together all these points in his management strategy. Due to his efforts, today disaster management is essentially included in the process of development in our country.

Apart from this, the Prime Minister has further strengthened the role of all the ministries related to disaster management. He has linked ministries like Atomic

Energy, Civil Aviation, Earth Sciences, Environment and Forests, Home, Health, Railways, Space and Water Resources to preparedness for the management of disasters.

The Prime Minister has also emphasized on modernizing the systems for forecasting and warning of disasters and using the latest systems, so that all the concerned agencies are aware of the forecasting of disasters by playing their active role. PM Modi is also in constant contact with the World Meteorological Organisation, the Pacific Tsunami Warning System and other regional and global organizations.

I, on behalf of the citizens of Madhya Pradesh, heartily congratulate Prime Minister Modi, whose farsightedness and effective strategy has given the countrymen a protective cover along with happiness and prosperity.

(Blogger is Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh)

international

BLINKEN MEETS XI IN BEIJING

Beijing | Agencies

After much speculation, visiting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Monday -- becoming the highest-ranking American official to meet the Chinese leader since 2018.

According to Xinhua news agency, the meeting took place in the afternoon at the Great Hall of the People. More details are awaited.

Blinken is also the first Secretary of State to travel to China in five years, as well as the most senior official making the visit since President Joe Biden took office in early 2021.

Ahead of Xi's meeting with Blinken, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning confirmed the talks and said the government would "release news in due course".

Earlier on Monday, the Secretary of State met top Chinese diplomat Wang Yi at the capital city's Diaoyutai State Guesthouse -- a lavish estate typically used to host visiting dignitaries, reports the BBC.



The meeting is part of efforts to improve the strained relations between the two largest economies.

According to a State Department official, Blinken's primary goal in China is to re-establish channels of communication, especially direct military-to-military communication between Washington and Beijing, reports CNN.

Upon his arrival in Beijing on

Sunday, the Secretary of State met Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, who took up the post six months ago after ending a stint as Beijing's Ambassador to Washington.

Blinken and Qin shook hands in front of reporters at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse on Sunday afternoon, their first in-person meeting in their current positions, CNN reports.

During the meeting, which lasted for more than five hours, Blinken invited Qin to visit Washington and the invitation was accepted, State Department spokesperson Matt Miller said in a readout of the meeting.

The Biden administration's relationship with Beijing is one of its most complicated and consequential, and one that has seen months of strain, including two military-related incidents in recent weeks.

Biden and Xi met in person for the first time as presidents on the sidelines of the Group of Seven summit in Indonesia last November.

Blinken's trip, which had been announced by Biden and Xi after their meeting, was originally scheduled to happen in February and had been seen as a key follow-on engagement.

However, it was postponed after the discovery of a suspected Chinese spy balloon transiting the US, which Blinken said at the time "created the conditions that undermine the purpose of the trip".

Film distributors stop screening 'Adipurush' across Nepal

Kathmandu | Agencies

The sole distributors of 'Adipurush' in Nepal on Monday decided to stop screening of the controversial Indian film based on the Hindu epic Ramayana, across the Himalayan nation after it courted controversy over the birthplace of Sita.

Manoj Rathi, the sole distributor of the movie in Nepal, said the screening has been stalled across the country. The latest development comes after Kathmandu Mayor Balen Shah on June 15 instructed cinema halls in the Nepal capital not to screen the film until the makers correct the mistake of Sita's birthplace.

Citing Articles 5 and 56 (6) of the Constitution of Nepal, Shah said that the federal, provincial and local governments have the responsibility to protect the national inter-



est and that allowing the screening of the film without any changes could do irreparable damage to Nepal's nationality, cultural unity and national identity.

A day after the Mayor's warning, cinema halls across Kathmandu stopped showcasing 'Adipurush' due to security reasons.

The Mayor renewed his opposition against the film on Sunday and urged cinema halls not to screen the movie

until the filmmakers did not correct the alleged mistake. Nepal's Censor Board has also decided to hold back permission to film.

"We have decided to stop screening of the movie due to security reasons," Bhaskar Dhungana, Vice Chairman of the Nepal Film Union, said.

As per the Ramayana, Sita was born in Janakpur, which falls in Nepalese territory, and Lord Ram came and married her.

628 evacuees fall ill due to volcanic eruption in Philippines

Manila | Agencies

At least 628 people have fallen ill after being displaced due to the eruption of Mayon Volcano, the most active volcano in the Philippines, a government agency reported on Monday.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council recorded at least 10 kinds of sickness affecting the evacuees aged between 2 to 64, including coughs, colds, fever, gastroenteritis, acute respiratory infection, and skin disease, reports Xinhua news agency.

The disaster management agency said nearly 39,000 people have been affected by Mayon's eruption, which started on June 8.

Local authorities have evacuated over 20,000 villagers living in the danger zone around the picturesque, cone-shaped Mayon Volcano in Albay province, approximately 500 km southeast of the Philippine capital Manila.

The province, under a state of calamity, has set up 28 evacuation



centres for displaced people, usually in school classrooms.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology on Monday recorded pyroclastic flows from the volcano's collapsed lava domes that lasted three minutes.

Steam-laden plumes rose to 600 meters, and the institute maintained the volcano's alert level at 3 on a scale of 5.

Mayon Volcano last erupted in 2018, resulting in the evacuation of more than 23,000 people from nine cities and municipalities.

North Korea cites failed satellite launch as 'most serious' failure

Seoul | Agencies

North Korea called its failed attempt to launch a purported military reconnaissance satellite the "most serious" shortcoming in the first half of this year and reaffirmed its pledge to put it into orbit soon, Pyongyang's state media said on Monday.

North Korea made the assessment following a plenary meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, attended by leader Kim Jong-un, that wrapped up this previous day, referring to its botched attempt to launch a rocket carrying a military spy satellite on May 31, Yonhap news agency reported.

The "Chollima-1" rocket carrying a military reconnaissance satellite, "Malligyong-1", took off from a new launch pad at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground but crashed into the

Yellow Sea following what Pyongyang claimed was the "abnormal starting" of the second stage engine of its space rocket.

"The most serious one was the failure of the military reconnaissance satellite launch, the important strategic work in the field of space development, on May 31," the North's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in an English-language dispatch, citing the failure as among the "shortcomings that cannot be overlooked".

The KCNA said that officials who were responsible for the launch were "bitterly" criticised and that an order was made to thoroughly analyse the cause of the failure to "successfully launch the military reconnaissance satellite in a short span of time and thus make a shortcut to improving the capabilities of the Korean People's Army's reconnaissance intelligence".

Pyongyang has vowed to "correctly" put the satellite into orbit soon despite global condemnation that the move "breaches multiple UN Security Council resolutions banning any launch using ballistic missile technology".

During the three-day meeting that discussed the regime's defence and diplomatic strategies, the North made clear its push to increase the "production of powerful nuclear weapons" to counter the "changed security situation".

"The complicated and serious situation on the Korean peninsula which is getting out of control requires the DPRK to ceaselessly renew its military potentials and make a faster advance toward the bolstering up of its capabilities for self-defence," it said, using the acronym of its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

LEFT TO DIE BY GREEK COASTGUARDS, PAK SURVIVORS SAY BOAT WAS DELIBERATELY SUNK

Islamabad | Agencies

Pakistani survivors on the ill-fated boat that capsized off the Greece coast have blamed Greek coastguards for the incident, saying the ship - carrying hundreds of people - was deliberately sunk and no rescue was provided, media reports said.

The video account of the victims exposed the inhuman attitude of Greece authorities in the last hours leading to the tragedy, Geo News reported. Authorities in Europe still have no clear idea as to how many people were aboard the boat when it sank - estimates range from 400 to over 700 - but likely hundreds came from Pakistan. The accounts of two Pakistani survivors emerged days after the tragic incident.

"They have done this [on purpose]. They have sunk it themselves," one of the survivors said, while the other added that they had been still for five days and six nights before the ship sunk "in a minute". "We did not sink for five

days, so why would we sink now?" They recounted that the ship's engine had broken down, leaving them still for almost a week, Geo News reported.

"We did not drown even though our engine had [completely] shut down. On the sixth night, around 2:30 a.m., I checked the time; it was 2:15 a.m. Around 10 minutes later, this incident occurred," one of them said, adding, "It [the boat] sunk because of the one-maund-rope they threw into the boat."

They further alleged that the coastguards did not help despite the presence of two-speed boats, one cargo boat and one receiving ship at the location, Geo News reported. This statement endorsed an independent investigation reported by the BBC that poked holes in the Greece authorities' account of the incident. An analysis of the movement of other ships in the area suggests that the boat remained stationary for at least seven hours before drowning.



GAL GADOT

is passionate about is 'an incredible thing'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Gal Gadot is ready to focus on her future after 'Wonder Woman 3' was canceled. The star of 'Heart of Stone' is opening up about what her next projects will look like as she continues to make strides in the industry, reports 'Deadline'.

"To me, starting and developing stories that I'm passionate about is an incredible thing," Gadot told Total Film.

"The fact that I don't have to sit still at home and just wait for the next offer is something that makes me feel empowered. I enjoy doing it, it keeps me alive."

"I'm not only going to do my own projects, I'm going to work as an actress-for-hire still. But the fact that I can go ahead and tell the stories that I'm passionate about -- from ideas that I conceived, or from ideas that I find fascinating from people that want to partner with us -- it's an incredible thing," she added.

As Peter Safran and James Gunn take hold of the DC Universe, they opted to not move forward with a third installment of 'Wonder Woman' under Patty Jenkins' direction.

The future of Gadot's 'Wonder Woman' is not clear yet, but ahead of the news that the film was getting scrapped, Gadot shared a heartfelt message.

"A few years ago it was announced that I was going to play Wonder Woman. I've been so grateful for the opportunity to play such an incredible, iconic character and more than anything I'm grateful for YOU. The fans. Can't wait to share her next chapter with you," the actress posted on Twitter.



HENRY CAVILL IS AT HIS FIERCEST BEST IN NEW 'THE WITCHER' SEASON 3 CLIP

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Henry Cavill goes all out as the monster slayer Geralt of Rivia, in his final outing as the character from the popular fantasy web series, 'The Witcher'. A new short clip of the soon-to-release season 3 of 'The Witcher' was recently dropped on YouTube.

The clip shows a tightly produced, gory fight scene, which starts off with Geralt's ward Cirilla being attacked by

a bunch of bounty hunters which includes the evil mage Rience from the books. After

being attacked Ciri manages to fight off and kill some of the bandits in hand to hand combat, but as the odds start to go against her she is saved by the witch Yennefer of Vengerberg who is both Geralt's lover and eventually Ciri's mother figure in the books. Soon, Geralt also joins the fight and kills several, with his friend Dandelion and his Dwarvish friends coming to his help. Later, the clip shows Geralt brutally slaughtering the rest of Rience's men in an extremely well-choreographed sword fight which is all done in one shot.

Based on Polish author Andrzej Sapkowski's dark fantasy book series of the same name, 'The Witcher' season 3 will follow the second novel in the series 'Time of Contempt'.

The official plot synopsis for season

3 reads: "As monarchs, mages and beasts of the Continent compete to capture her, Geralt takes Ciri of Cintra into hiding, determined to protect his newly-reunited family against those who threaten to destroy it."

It further mentions: "Entrusted with Ciri's magical training, Yennefer leads them to the protected fortress of Aretuza, where she hopes to discover more about the girl's untapped powers; instead, they discover they've landed in a battlefield of political corruption, dark magic, and treachery. They must fight back, put everything on the line - or risk losing each other forever." Season 3 of 'The Witcher' is set to premiere on Netflix in two volumes, with Volume 1 coming out on June 29, 2023 and Volume 2 on July 27.

Schwarzenegger hits gym 320 days a year

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Arnold Schwarzenegger considers workouts to be a "survival" mechanism. The 75-year-old actor became an award-winning bodybuilder in the years before he became a Hollywood star and explains that he still tries to work out "almost every day" because he wants to keep his physique for as long as possible, reports aceshowbiz.com.



"I bicycle down, it gives me a nice warm up, it's like a half an hour ride and then I work out for another half an hour or 45 minutes. I try to come (to the gym) every day, but by trying every day I end up doing maybe 320 days a year," he told CNN.

"It never stops. I do a combination, some days I go from one machine to the other but some days it's the leg day, then it's the back, then it's shoulders then it's arms and it and it's calves. Just like the old days but with less weight, it's the same kind of draining."

"It doesn't feel the same as it did in the olden days, I have to say because now it's about survival. It's about keeping as long as I can to keep what I have."

The 'Terminator' star, who was born in Austria but moved to the US in 1968, was speaking from Gold's Gym in Venice Beach where he used to train during his heyday and explained that the establishment gave him the chance to train with the best equipment and people which led him to become an "unbeatable" heavy-weight champion.



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Sarita Choudhury was nervous due to how much sex features in the new season of 'And Just Like That'.

The 56-year-old actress - who plays real estate agent Seema Patel in the 'Sex and the City' spin-off - teased that "a lot is happening" in the upcoming episodes and she had a lot of fun because her character is single, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"Let's just say the intimacy coordinator was there every day. (There's so much sex) I'm almost scared. When we were shooting it, I was like 'Oh my God, it's going to be so much fun.' Literally, everyone's up to something. (With Seema being single) a lot can be thrown at me. And Carrie. This year "A lot is happening,"

she told Britain's Grazia magazine. Joining an established cast, Sarita said she felt a lot of pressure not to "f*** up" the show.

She said, "I always thought, I cannot believe I'm in such an iconic show. Like, I can't f*** this up. It really gets to you." While she found Sarah Jessica Parker, Kristin Davis, and Cynthia Nixon to be "like sisters," they were very welcoming to Sarita and a conversation with the Carrie Bradshaw actress helped reassure her nerves.

Sarita said of her friendship with Sarah Jessica, "(We catch up mostly) after work. Like, on a bench outside the studio when it's dusk and no one's really around. One day she said the nicest thing. Something like, 'We love you for your instinct. That's all you need. Just come play.' And it was weird, it kind of released something."

Fans are convinced John Corbett is making a return as Aidan after he was pictured on set but Sarita teased viewers will be in for a surprise.

She said: "The fans won't be able to guess where it's going. But they're gonna love it. On some level. Yeah. On some level."

Sarita Choudhury daunted by sex scenes in new season

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Maya Jama

'AVATAR: THE LAST AIRBENDER' FIRST LOOK BRINGS TOGETHER WATER, FIRE, EARTH, AIR

Los Angeles | Agencies

Fans just got their first look of the upcoming live action adaptation of 'Avatar: The Last Airbender' which shows the four elements of water, fire, earth and air coming together.

The vague 54-second teaser showcases the symbols of the Water Tribe, Earth Kingdom, Fire Nation and Air Nomads, accompanied by music reminiscent of the original series which fans would identify with.

Each of the nations has people referred to as

Benders, these people can telekinetically manipulate and control the respective elements of their nation.

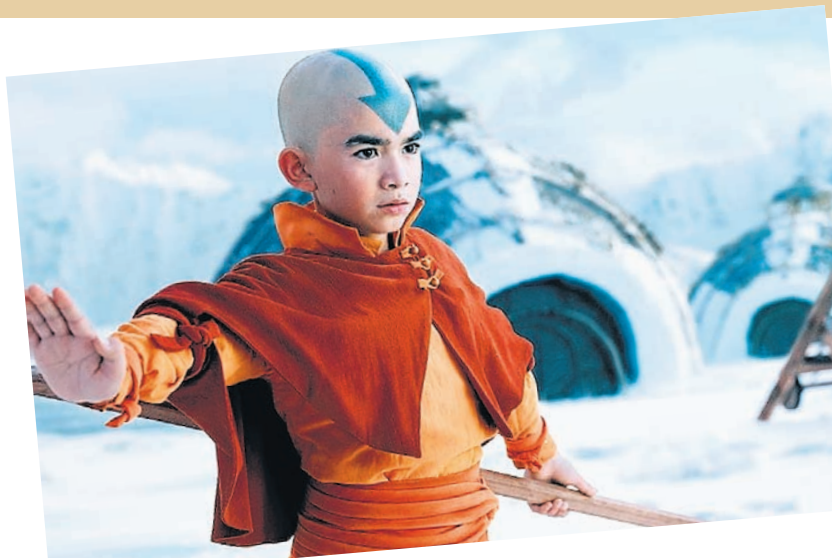
The 'Avatar', however, is the only individual with the ability to bend all four elements.

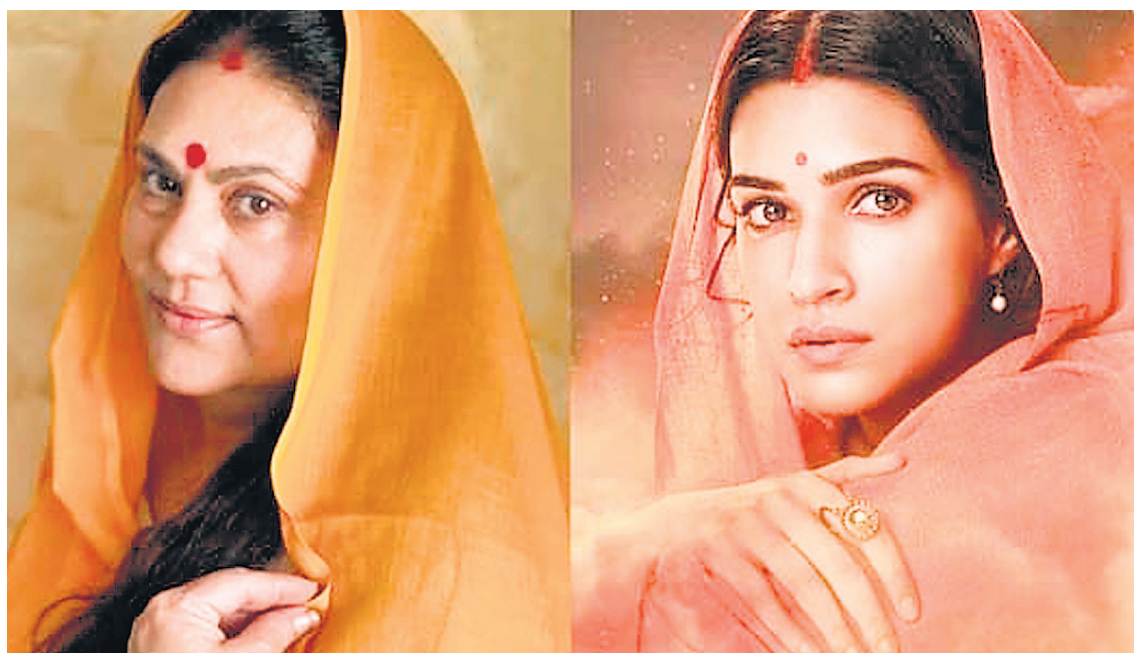
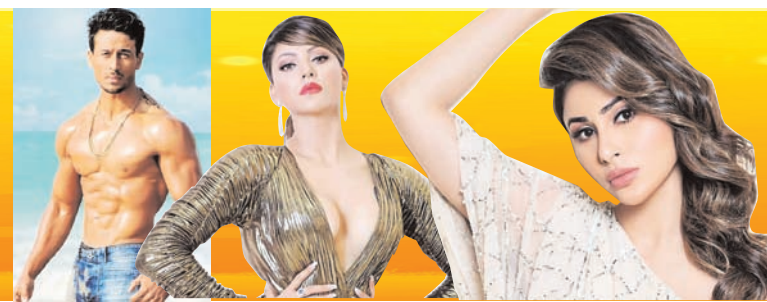
The series will see Gordon Cormier starring as Aang, Kiawentiio as Katara, Ian Ousley as Sokka and Dallas Liu as Zuko with Daniel Dae Kim joining the cast as Fire Lord Ozai and Paul Sun-Hyung Lee starring as General Iroh.

As per Deadline: Albert Kim ('Sleepy Hollow', 'Nikita') will serve as

showrunner, executive producer, and writer; while Kim, Rideback's Dan Lin ('The Lego Movie', 'Aladdin') with Lindsey Liberatore serving as executive producers, and Michael Goi acting as co-executive producer, while Jabbar Raisani and Jet Wilkinson direct.

The teaser debuted at the Netflix Tudum in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The series is an adaptation of Nickelodeon's much-loved award-winning animated series of the same name. The show will debut in 2024.





Dipika Chikhlia decks up as Maa Sita on 'public demand', netizens call it better than 'Adipurush'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The mythological drama, Adipurush directed by famous filmmaker, Om Raut is currently receiving a lot of backlash from the audiences. Despite reworking on the film's VFX, Om Raut's film featuring

Prabhas as Lord Ram and Kriti Sanon as Mata Sita has failed to impress viewers.

Amidst all the criticism that

Adipurush is receiving, a video was shared by veteran actress Dipika Chikhlia, recreating her famous look as Maa Sita from Ramanand Sagar's. Sharing the video she captioned, "This post is on public demand ... I am grateful for the love I

have always received for the role I played ... Me ... as sitaji ... could not have asked for more."

The video went viral in no time. Fans flocked to the comments section and showered immense love on her.

Helmed by Om Raut, Adipurush is a modern-day adaptation of Valmiki's Ramayan. The film stars Prabhas, Kriti Sanon and Saif Ali Khan in the main roles. Along with them, the film also features Vatsal Seth, Devdutta Nage and Sunny Singh in pivotal roles.

Sony MAX announces the World Television Premiere of the blockbuster rom-com Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar

Team Absolute | Mumbai

With an astounding run at the domestic and international box offices, Luv Ranjan directorial Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar is set to premier on television, releasing on India's leading Hindi movie channel, Sony MAX on 25th June at 8 PM. The lead pair of Ranbir Kapoor and Shraddha Kapoor is also joined by Bollywood stalwarts Dimple Kapadia and Boney Kapoor in key roles while Bollywood heart-throbs Kartik Aaryan and Nushratt Bharuccha add a surprise element with an entertaining appearance in the movie.

Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar highlights the relationship between Rohan aka Mickey (played by Ranbir) and Tinny (played by Shraddha). Mickey belongs to a wealthy Delhi family and ingeniously works as a break-up consultant, joined by his friend and business partner Manu (played by Anubhav Singh Bassi). Mickey and Tinny meet each other and fall in love during Manu's Bachelor trip in Spain, but love in modern times is not easy. The movie takes viewers on a journey which is full of fun and entertainment till Rohan's break up service backfires on himself. The story that follows is about how the couple deals with their relationship.

"Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar is a rom-com that underlines the anxieties and diverse expectations of a modern couple, while at the same time it caters to family audience too. The movie gives a warm and happy feeling, making audiences laugh along, enjoy the romance,



get emotional and maybe even take away some learnings at the end of it. We are glad the movie is set to reach people in every part of the country through its television release on Sony MAX and a large audience will be able to watch the movie and enjoy it with their families."

The chartbuster heartbreak song 'O Bedardeya' along with other songs from the movie evoke various emotions in the

audience. Music Director Pritam, Lyricist Amitabh Bhattacharya and singer Arijit Singh have spread their magic through the music of the film. Packed with a range of emotions, the melody of the movie has something to offer to each situation in a person's life. The songs have the most relatable and unforgettable lyrics for all generations!

'NAATU NAATU' SINGER KAALA BHAIRAVA GIFTS A SPECIAL TUNE TO RAM CHARAN, UPASANA



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Telugu star Ram Charan and his wife Upasana Kamini, who are all set to welcome their child, received a special gift - a special tune by the Oscar Winning singer Kaala Bhairava, who sang 'Naatu Naatu'. The singer is very close to Ram and Upasana.

Talking about the gift, Upasana said: "It is very heartwarming to see the love our baby is receiving. We are overjoyed at these gestures from all those who love us. Kala Bhairava is a dear friend and it is sweet of him to prepare a special tune that soothes our baby when he comes into this world."

She further mentioned: "Giving our child the comfort it needs through music is a really special thought. I thank him for spreading happiness in the lives of not just ours but so many other children who will get happy listening to this tune." Earlier, the couple received a hand-crafted wooden cradle by women survivors of sex trafficking, the glimpse of which was also shared by Upasana.

acknowledged my addiction and made the decision to quit."

She then spoke about how she was labelled as an "alcoholic" by people and how she tackled that.

Pooja was heard saying that men get the license by the society and hence, freely talk about being "addicted and recovering from alcoholism."

"Women don't openly drink and so they don't openly recover. I used to drink openly so when I thought of recovering from alcoholism I realised that why should I recover in the closet? People used to call me an alcoholic but then I said 'I'm a recovering alcoholic,' she explained.

POOJA BHATT SAYS SHE WAS TAGGED 'ALCOHOLIC'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

It's been just a few days since the controversial reality show 'Bigg Boss OTT 2' commenced and the contestants seem to be warming up to each other and sharing details about their life.

Filmmaker-actress Pooja Bhatt, who is seen as a contestant in the show, spoke about her battle with alcoholism at the age of 44 and then her journey to sobriety.

Pooja was seen talking to co-contestant Cyrus Broacha and said: "I had a drinking problem, and that's why I



Rashmika Mandanna's

Manager Reportedly Cheats Her Of Rs 80 Lakh

Team Absolute | Mumbai

After winning hearts and having a high fan base in South Cinema, Rashmika Mandanna managed to captivate audiences in Hindi cinema as well. After her stint in Goodbye and Mission Majnu, citizens are excited about her upcoming projects.

However, a disheartening news pertaining to the actress has come forward. The actress has been reportedly cheated of Rs 80 lakh by none other than her long-time manager, who has since been fired.

As per a recent report, upon learning about the incident, Rashmika Mandanna immediately fired her manager, who had been with her from the very beginning of her career.

As for Rashmika's upcoming projects, they include 'Animal', which is directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga and also stars Ranbir Kapoor, Anil Kapoor and Bobby Deol. The film will hit the theatres on August 11. She also has 'Pushpa: The Rule', the second part in the franchise, in the pipeline. It is directed by Sukumar and features Allu Arjun in the lead.

Hrithik uploads shirtless pic, Saba Azad reacts with fire and heart emojis

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Hrithik Roshan treated his fans to a shirtless picture, where he was seen flaunting his muscular back.

Hrithik took to Instagram, where he posted the picture.

In the image, his back is towards the camera, and is wearing black pants and a cap.

For the caption, he wrote: "Back day."

Apart from the picture, it was the comment by his rumoured girlfriend Saba Azad that caught the eye of many.

She took to the comment section and posted a bicep, fire and heart emojis.

On the work front, Hrithik will be next seen in 'Fighter' with Deepika Padukone and Anil Kapoor. The film is directed by Siddharth Anand. It is all set to hit the theatres on January 25, 2024.

The actor will also be reprising his role in 'War 2', where he will reportedly be pitted against NTR Jr. The film, directed by Ayan Mukerji, is said to also star Kiara Advani.



Esshanya Maheshwari