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WIDESPREAD HEAVY RAINFALL EXPECTED ACROSS INDIA: IMD

As Himachal Pradesh is battling the worst natural calamity in 50 years, civil society organisations and environmental activists have urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to consider declaration of the situation as a national disaster or calamity of rare severity under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act of 2005. In a missive to the Prime Minister, they said the state is currently grappling with an unprecedented disaster scenario.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In its latest update on Thursday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said there is a likelihood of heavy rainfall over Eastern and adjoining Central India on Thursday and Saturday, as well as over the Northeast on Thursday and August 21.

In East India, there is a forecast of light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall, the weather forecast agency said in its update.

The IMD further predicted that there's a high likelihood of isolated heavy rainfall activity over Gangetic West Bengal on Thursday, over Odisha till Saturday, over Jharkhand on Thursday and Friday, Bihar on Thursday and August 21, and Sub-Himalaya West Bengal and Sikkim on the August 21.

Additionally, there is a possibility of isolated extremely heavy falls in Odisha on Thursday and isolated very heavy rainfall on Friday.

In Central India, the forecast includes light to moderate fairly widespread to widespread rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorm and lightning. "There is a strong likelihood of isolated heavy rainfall activity over Chhattisgarh from Thursday to Saturday, over East Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha on Friday and Saturday, and West Madhya Pradesh on Saturday," said the IMD. Isolated very heavy rainfall is also anticipated over Chhattisgarh on Friday. In the Northeast, the expected weather pattern consists of light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall, along with thunderstorm and lightning activity. "There's a very likely chance of isolated heavy rainfall activity over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura till August 21, as well as over Arunachal Pradesh from



Saturday to August 21," said the weather department.

For Northwest India, the forecast indicates light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorm and lightning activity.

The IMD said that there's a possibility of isolated heavy rainfall likely over Uttarakhand and East Uttar Pradesh on Thursday, Friday and August 21, and over West Uttar Pradesh on August 21.

In South India, the weather outlook includes light to moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall, with accompanying thunderstorm and lightning.

There's a very likely chance of isolated heavy rainfall activity over Coastal Andhra Pradesh on Thursday and Friday, as well as over Telangana on Friday and Saturday. "Moreover, Thursday and Friday, are expected to bring hot and humid weather to Tamil Nadu," said the IMD.

FAMILY LOSES 3 GENERATIONS IN SHIMLA LANDSLIDE, DISASTER REACHES 14

Shimla: Rescuers on Thursday retrieved a body when it resumed search operations on the fourth day in the Himachal Pradesh capital where a massive landslide washed away a Hindu temple. With this, the death toll rose to 14.

The surviving members of a family who lost seven of their loved ones - three generations in total - in a landslide in Shimla are desperately waiting for rescuers to find the bodies. They want to perform the last rites and pay their respects to the dead, including three children.

Seven members of the family, including the three children, were inside a temple when it collapsed due to the landslide triggered by a cloudburst on Monday.

Pawan's younger sister, who was not in Shimla, said one of the family members called her on phone and informed about the incident. "They said the road to Shimla is also blocked," she said.

Rain-related incidents in Himachal Pradesh has claimed over 60 lives this monsoon. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said the state has suffered a loss of 10,000 crore owing to environmental and property damage and casualties.

Nuh violence

Despite restrictions, Hindu activists carried swords, trishuls and illegal arms during yatra: police



Parvish Sharma | Gurugram

Hindu activists in the Brajmandal Jalabhishek Yatra were carrying swords, trishuls, and illegal weapons despite police restrictions, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Usha Kundu said in her complaint.

She also said that during peace committee meetings held before the yatra, the organisers were also urged not to carry any kind of weapons during the yatra.

In her complaint, Kundu said, "I was on law and order duty with my team 300 meters from the Nalhar temple at around 12.30 p.m. on July 31. We saw a mob of around 15-20 people carrying swords and trishuls marching to Nalhar temple. To maintain law and order, my team had tried to snatch swords and trishuls but they became furious and they started raising slogans against the police. They manhandled my team and even snatched their weapons back from the police vehicles."

"We kept their weapons in our vehicles but they went ahead and squatted in front of vehicles. Another police team came to intervene, but they opened the back door of our official vehicle and fled with the weapons. Bittu and

others who had misbehaved with us and threatened to kill us were identified in the footage," the ASP said in her complaint.

This fact came to the fore when the Nuh Police arrested cow vigilante Bittu Bajrang from Faridabad on Tuesday in connection with the communal clashes that erupted in the district on July 31.

On Thursday, Bajrang was produced in Nuh court which sent him to 14-day judicial custody in Neemka jail in Faridabad.

The police have identified 15 other accused involved in crime and raids are on to nab them.

With the arrest of Bajrang, and the entire yatra under the scanner, right-wing outfits Bajrang Dal and VHP have disowned him saying that he neither is a member nor do they support his videos.

An official document of the Nuh Police, a copy of which is in possession of IANS, disclosed that Bajrang has cited a threat to his life in the Nuh Police lockup as all other suspects lodged there are Muslims and his rivals. So, the police have requested before the court to shift him out of the district after interrogation. The accused is now lodged in Neemka jail in Faridabad.

Rupee at 10-month low adds to selling pressure in stock market

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Adding to the negative sentiment in stock markets, the rupee depreciated to near a 10-month low at 83.14, while the FII outflow of almost of Rs 10,000 crore in August so far also led to selling at higher levels, said Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Retail Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Domestic equities continued to witness pressure amid weak global cues. While Nifty opened lower and remained in the negative territory throughout the session to close with a loss of 100 points (-0.5 per cent) at 19,365 levels, Sensex was down 388.40 points or 0.59 per cent at



65,151.02.

However, action shifted to the broader market with the Nifty midcap 100 up 0.2 per cent and the Nifty smallcap 100 up 0.1 per cent. Except for PSU banks and consumer durables, all sectors ended in the red. Indian equities succumbed to global volatility following the hawkish tone of the FOMC minutes meeting and worries over the risk of a

downgrade in China's sovereign credit rating by Fitch, Khemka said.

Around 1,777 shares rose, 1,696 fell, and 152 remained constant. ITC, LTIMindtree, Divis Lab, Power Grid, and Reliance Industries were among the top losses on the Nifty, while Adani Ports, Titan Company, Adani Enterprises, Bajaj Auto and SBI were among the top gainers, said Omkar Kamtekar, Research Analyst, Bonanza Portfolio. Due to a strong dollar and sluggish domestic markets, the rupee dropped to a new 10-month low.

In July, India's inflation rate was 7.44 per cent, up from 4.87 per cent in June with a prediction of 6.4 per cent.

Majority of Muslims in India have converted from Hinduism: Azad

Jammu: DPAP chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said a majority of Indian Muslims have converted from Hinduism, adding that an example of this can be found in the Kashmir Valley where a majority of Kashmiri Pandits converted to Islam. Asserting that religion should not be used to get political mileage, Ghulam Nabi Azad said who ever takes refuge in religion in politics is weak. "Some BJP leader said some (Muslims) have come from outside and some have not. Nobody has come from outside or inside. Islam came to existence just 1,500 years ago. Hindu religion is very old. Around 10-20 of them (Muslims) must have come from outside, some were there in the Mughal army," the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) chief told a gathering in Doda district.

Pak caretaker govt appoints Yasin Malik's wife in key post, Jalil Abbas Jilani as FM

Hamza Ameer | Islamabad

Pakistan's caretaker government and its cabinet on Thursday officially took over as the selected cabinet members took oath at the President House.

The formation of the cabinet has a critical and symbolic India centeredness in it.

The selection of the ministers for relevant federal ministries has on one side raised questions and concerns by other political forces, but has also given a teaser on how Pakistan would be looking towards its foreign policy, especially towards its archrival neighbor India.

Among the most important members of the cabinet is Jalil Abbas Jilani. He is a seasoned diplomat with crucial and important experience is representing Pakistan as Ambassador in the United States (US) and the European Union (EU).



Jilani was also the Deputy High Commissioner to India between year 1999 to 2003 and was the Pakistan High Commissioner to Australia from year 2007 to 2009. Previously, Jilani also served as Foreign Secretary of Pakistan from March 2012 to December 2013.

Jilani's appointment showcases the direction of Pakistan's foreign policy as it mends ways with the west and focuses on policy responses to India.

A recent representation of this could be perceived from Jilani's statement on

social media platform X, where he responded to Indian former Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal's criticism on the recent church attacks in Jaranwala, Faisalabad, with these words:

Another critical appointment is of a Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights, which has been given to the wife of Kashmir separatist leader Yasin Malik, Mushaal Hussein Mullick.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick has been vocal about the Kashmir dispute and her husband Yasin Malik, who is in custody of the Indian authorities.

Mushaal's appointment also signifies the future policy of Pakistan towards raising the issue of Kashmir in view of alleged human rights violations, right to freedom of religion and freedom of speech for Kashmiris and use the foreign office and the human rights ministry to showcase it at global platforms.

MAJOR ASKED IIT FOR LIGHTER BULLETPROOF JACKETS, IT MADE WORLD'S LIGHTEST

New Delhi: Researchers at IIT-Delhi have developed the world's lightest bulletproof jackets, which are capable of stopping eight bullets fired from an AK-series rifle. The jackets, which weigh 8.2 kg, are over 2 kg lighter than the ones being used by the Indian Army.

Another version of the jacket weighs 9.5 kg and can stop as many as six bullets fired from certain sniper rifles. The bulletproof jackets that are being used by Indian soldiers currently weigh about 10.5 kg. Professor Naresh Bhatnagar, from the Centre of Excellence on Personal Body Armour in IIT Delhi said "In 2008, an Army Major requested us to focus on lighter bulletproof jackets. The jackets that they used at the time used iron as the primary material and weighed 22-25 kg. The Major, who had been shot at in the line of duty, stressed on the need for drastically reducing the weight of the jackets so that the soldiers could operate effectively on the frontlines."

The professor said that the new jackets are made of polymer and ceramic materials. He said the research on the jackets was so exhaustive that 25 M.Tech and 12 Ph.D students had done their theses on various aspects of them.

India's moon lander separates from main Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft

According to the ISRO, the lander is expected to make a soft-landing near the South Pole of the moon on August 23 at 5:47 p.m.

The lander will descend to the moon from a height of about 100 km from the moon's surface.

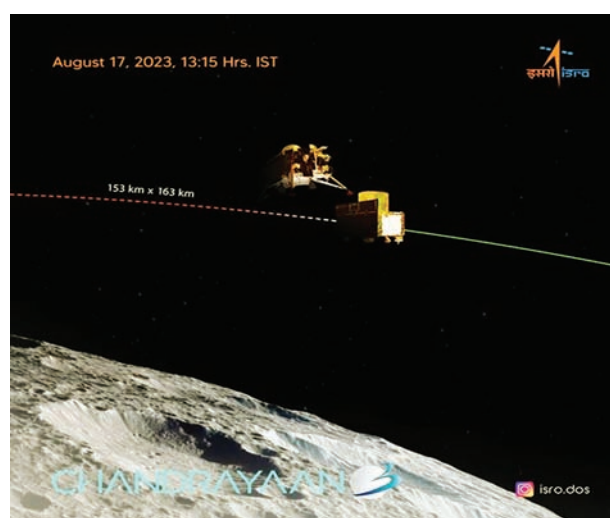
The soft landing is a tricky issue as it involves a series of complex manoeuvres consisting of rough and fine braking.

Imaging of the landing site region prior to landing will be done for finding safe and hazard-free zones.

Chennai | Agencies

Indian space agency on Thursday afternoon successfully detached the moon lander from the main spacecraft Chandrayaan-3.

The Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft comprises a propulsion module (weighing 2,148 kg), a lander (1,723.89 kg) and a rover (26 kg). "Thanks for the ride, mate! said the Lander Module (LM). LM is successfully separated from the Propulsion Module (PM). LM is set to descend to a slightly lower orbit upon a deboosting planned for tomorrow around 1600 Hrs., IST," Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) tweeted. According to ISRO, the lander was separated from the propulsion module at an orbit



of 153 km x 163 km around the moon. Meanwhile, the Propulsion Module continues its journey in the current orbit for months/years, said ISRO. The main purpose of India's

third moon mission costing about Rs 600 crore is to land the lander softly on the moon. The Chandrayaan-2 mission failed as the lander called 'Vikram' crashed on to the moon. Subsequent to the soft landing, the six-wheeled rover will roll out and carry out experiments on the lunar surface for a period of one lunar day which is equal to 14 earth days. The Chandrayaan-3 was put into orbit on July 14 in a copybook style by India's heavy lift rocket LVM3.

The spacecraft completed orbiting around the earth and headed towards the moon on August 1. On that day a successful perigee-firing performed at ISTRAC, the ISRO had injected the spacecraft into the translunar orbit.

NOW SEND YOUR PHOTOS IN HD QUALITY ON WHATSAPP: ZUCKERBERG

New Delhi: Meta Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Thursday announced that WhatsApp users can now send photos in HD quality.

To ensure sharing photos over WhatsApp remains fast and reliable, Standard Quality will continue to be the default option photos are sent in. "Sharing photos on WhatsApp just got an upgrade -- now you can send in HD," Zuckerberg posted.

If you receive a photo when you have low bandwidth connectivity, you can choose on a photo by photo basis whether to keep the standard version or upgrade it to HD. HD Photos is rolling out globally over the next few weeks, with HD Videos also coming soon, said the company. The Meta-owned messaging platform WhatsApp is also reportedly rolling out a new forwarding message feature for channels on Android and iOS.



BILKIS BANO CASE: 'WHY REMISSION POLICY IS BEING APPLIED SELECTIVELY', SC ASKS GUJARAT GOVT

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday questioned the Gujarat government for extending the benefit of remission policy "selectively" to convicts, stating that the opportunity to reform and reintegrate with the society should be given to every prisoner.

A bench comprising Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan made the above observation while hearing a batch of petitions challenging the remission granted to 11 convicts by the Gujarat government in the case of gang-rape of Bilkis Bano and murder of her family members during the 2002 post-Godhra riots in the state.

"Why is the policy of remission being applied selectively? The opportunity to reintegrate and reform should be given to every prisoner, and not only to a few convicts. Are all life sentence convicts after 14 years being given the benefit of remission," the bench asked Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S.V. Raju, appearing on behalf of the state of Gujarat.

ASG Raju argued that the 11 convicts deserved the chance of reformation and their applications seeking remission were considered pursuant to an earlier judgement of the Supreme Court.

In that judgement, the top court



had directed the Gujarat government to consider and decide the application for pre-mature release within two months in terms of remission of 1992 policy.

"If a specific mandamus (order of the court) cannot be removed by legislation, it cannot surely be done by a judgment," argued the ASG.

He said the opinion rendered by

the Sessions Judge in Maharashtra against remission will not be relevant as it was passed mechanically without entering into merits.

"He gave this opinion because the convicts did not fit into the (Maharashtra's remission) policy," he added.

Further, the ASG said that the trial judge while awarding the sentence

did not impose death penalty or specify that life sentence will run without remission.

The Centre, Gujarat government, and the 11 convicts have opposed the PILs filed by CPI-M leader Subhashini Ali, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, National Federation of Indian Women, Asma Shafique Shaikh and others, saying that once the victim herself has approached the court, others may not be allowed to intervene in a criminal matter.

Last week, senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra, had said that the crime committed against Bilkis Bano was a "crime against humanity" perpetrated on the basis of religion.

The final hearing is underway in the batch of petitions filed against the release of convicts, including the one filed by Bilkis Bano.

The court posted the matter for next hearing on August 24 to allow the counsels for Centre, Gujarat government and the convicts to advance their arguments.

The 11 men convicted in the case were released on August 15 last year, after the Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy. The convicts had completed 15 years in jail.

CAG report reveals beneficiaries paid money for treatment under AB-PMJAY

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In its performance audit report on the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) revealed that beneficiaries paid money for treatment despite the scheme intending to provide cashless services.

The AB-PMJAY provides a health cover up to Rs 5 lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation services. It provides cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiaries at the point of service -- hospital.

The CAG's audit report on AB-PMJAY which was presented in Parliament recently, said: "The agreement signed by the SHA (State Health Agency) and the private EHCPS (Empanelled Health Care Providers) states that the treatment/interventions to PMJAY beneficiaries should be provided in a completely cashless manner."

"After admission of a patient in hospital, expenditure for all diagnostic tests, medicines, implants, etc is to be borne by the hospital since the costs for the same have been included in the cumulative package amount. However, audit noticed instances where patients had to pay as part of their treatment under the PMJAY."

"In Himachal Pradesh, 50 beneficiaries of five EHCPS had to manage their diagnostic tests from other hospital/diagnostic centre and cost of tests was borne by the beneficiaries. The amount of expenses was not available with the SHA."

The report further revealed that at 10 public



EHCPS in Jammu and Kashmir, 459 patients paid Rs 43.27 lakhs initially out of their own pocket for which reimbursement was made to the patients after verifying the bills.

Reimbursement is yet to be made to 75 patients amounting to Rs 6.70 lakhs.

"In Jharkhand, the insurance company observed that 36 patients of Life Care Hospital, Godda paid varying amounts for purchase of medicines, injections, blood, etc. The details of expenses were not available with the SHA. On the basis of the insurance company's observation, SHA (on August 28, 2020) asked the hospital to submit its explanation within five days to avoid a penalty, failing which the hospital would be suspended. However, the hospital neither submitted any explanation, nor did the SHA initiate any action against the hospital," the CAG report said. In Meghalaya, out of 19,459 beneficiaries who availed treatment in five private EHCPS from February 2019 to March 2021, 13,418 (69 per cent) had to pay an additional amount of Rs 12.34 crore at the time of discharge, it added.

Govt tests 'emergency alert system', sends sample message to several users

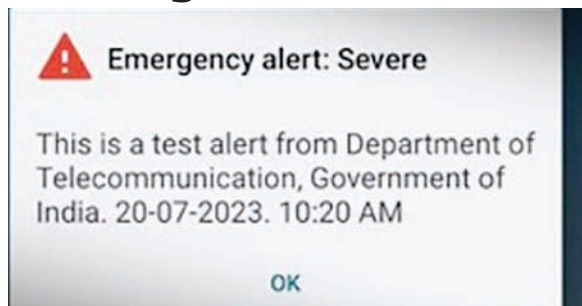
Team Absolute | New Delhi

The government on Thursday conducted a test of its "emergency alert system" by sending a sample message to several smartphone users.

A loud beep and a flash with the words 'emergency alert: severe' were received by users across the country.

"This is a SAMPLE TESTING MESSAGE sent through the Cell Broadcasting System by the Department of Telecommunication, Government of India. Please ignore this message as no action is required from your end. This message has been sent to TEST Pan-India Emergency Alert System being implemented by National Disaster Management Authority. It aims to enhance public safety and provide timely alerts during emergencies," reads a flash message received by multiple smartphone users.

The flash message was sent around 1.35 p.m. on all Android phones through the Cell Broadcasting System by the Department of



Telecommunication (C-DOT).

After receiving the alert on their smartphones, a number of users took to Twitter (now X) to share the development.

"Got an Emergency Severe Alert on my Mobile from Government with a Loud Beep! Interesting! Now came Twice First in English and then in Hindi," a user wrote.

"I got it too. Now I got another that says. Emergency alert: Severe. Police Warning in this area until 12.14 AM CDT Execute Action 200404. Anyone know what this means?" another user said.

According to Cell Broadcasting System by the Department of Telecommunication, such

tests will be conducted on a regular basis in various regions to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of mobile operators' and cell broadcast systems' emergency warning broadcast capabilities.

The government is working with the National Disaster Management Authority to improve preparedness for disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and flash floods. Last month, the government tested the same alert with several users in the country. People took to Twitter after they received a test "Emergency Alert - Severe" message from the government on their mobile phones.

People ask is our PM Modi weak, corrupt or arrogant, says Kejriwal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal while discussing Manipur issue in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that the way the PM is silent on the Manipur issue compels people to ask is our Prime Minister Modi weak, arrogant, or corrupt.

Kejriwal said that the BJP leaders were saying that the PM visited the North East the most in the last nine years. "But if relatives don't come during times of trouble, how will it feel? Why does the Prime Minister always sit in his room during a crisis? The entire nation is stunned and seeking answers from him," the Delhi Chief Minister asked.

He said when the women wrestlers were protesting at Jantar Mantar, alleging sexual harassment by Brij Bhushan, PM didn't say a word. But when these wrestlers won medals, the Prime Minister was taking videos and photos with them.

"At least, the Prime Minister could have reassured them saying not to worry as he was beside them and that



action will be taken against the accused. But he didn't," Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal said that the people of Manipur just needed the Prime Minister to say a few words, appealing for peace. They were eager to hear

just two words from the Prime Minister.

He said that for the last nine years, China has been staring at us but the PM is again silent.

"Not a single word against China is

coming out of the Prime Minister's mouth. In June 2020, our 20 soldiers were killed by Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley. They captured a 2000 square kilometer area. The PM remained quiet. He hasn't said anything," Kejriwal said.

He said business with China is going on. He said he wants to ask the people of the country whether they want a Prime Minister who focuses on business or a Prime Minister who protects and honors the country's defense.

"Our PM was roaming holding the hand in hand of the Chinese President. I say this is called an affair, take on China by showing him eyes, not by holding hands," Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal said that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said China was the biggest economy, and India was a small economy, and small economies don't fight with the big economies.

"How can a sitting minister say this," he asked. Kejriwal said that BJP insults former late PM Jawaharlal Nehru, but Nehru confronted China.

He said that the silence of the PM leads to rumours which are not good for the country.

UGC RELEASES DRAFT FOR FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The University Grants Commission on Thursday released the draft UGC (Recognition and Grant of Equivalence to Qualifications obtained from Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2023.

The UGC informed that many foreign universities have reached stages of setting up campuses in India's GIFT city. On the other hand some Indian universities are collaborating with foreign universities to offer joint degrees.

According to the ministry of education, the national education policy 2020 recommends several reforms in Indian higher education and intends to promote India as a "global study destination", providing quality education at affordable cost and attracting a greater number of international students.



UGC said that in order to facilitate the mobility of students in a seamless manner, UGC has drafted enabling regulations to provide a robust and transparent mechanism for recognising foreign qualifications and granting equivalence to such qualifications.

UGC said that while granting equivalence, the student must have pursued the programme through regular, in-person instruction and not through online or distance learning. It lays down minimum credit requirements, minimum duration, evaluation processes etc.

It said that qualifications obtained at the school level from schools affiliated with foreign boards in foreign countries shall also be recognised and granted equivalence, as per the draft norms. The draft norms also recognise qualifications obtained in the off-shore campus of Indian higher educational institutions, giving more flexibility to students.

BJP MLA registers FIR against his own party's MP, MLA

Patna | Agencies

Alinagar MLA Mishrilal Yadav in Darbhanga on Thursday registered an FIR against three persons including Madhubani BJP MP Ashok Yadav, Kewati MLA Murari Mohan Jha and BJP leader Rajendra Chaupal for allegedly conspiring to murder him.

The FIR was lodged in Reyam police station in Darbhanga. The incident was triggered when BJP leader Rajendra Chaupal alleged that Mishrilal Yadav and his son Dhiraj Yadav abused and assaulted him.

Following the FIR, Mishrilal Yadav also registered a FIR against him and Ashok Yadav and Murari



Mohan Jha. Chaupal is said to be a supporter of Ashok Yadav

and Murari Mohan Jha but living in the constituency of Mishrilal Yadav.

Housing Board Commissioner Pawan Arora took VRS, new shift starts from Friday

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

Housing Board Commissioner Senior IAS officer Pawan Arora has taken Voluntary Retirement ie VRS. Pawan Arora is currently also the President of RAS Association. Pawan Arora, who recently won accolades from CM Ashok Gehlot by completing the much-awaited project of 160 flats for MLAs on time, is the younger brother of media mogul Jagdish Chandra. Jagdish Chandra also entered the media sector by taking VRS from the post of IAS. Today he is successfully running 'Bharat-24' and 'First India' channel as well as 'First India' English newspaper. After taking VRS, now Pawan Arora is also going to join Jagdish Chandra's 'First India News' channel and English newspaper. Jagdish Chandra will now work to promote his national channel 'Bharat-24'. Everyone praises the activeness and punctuality of both the brothers while in official service. Both the officers are punctual and do not



believe in procrastination or procrastination. This trend makes both the brothers ahead of other IAS officers. The special thing is that both the officers were close to both Vasundhara Raje and Ashok Gehlot when they were CMs. Jagdish Chandra had worked to bring this government institution in plus while being JDC in Jaipur Development Authority living in a bad state. In the same way, Pawan Arora has made the Housing Board, which was on the verge of closure, a profit of thousands of crores.

'WHY ARE YOU SCARED OF INDIA': KHARGE ASKS MODI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday took a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that he is being arrogant and scared.

Kharge also taunted him for claiming himself to be the son of a poor man, remarking, "India would be a great and rich place if everyone was poor like you, wearing a coat worth Rs 10 lakhs".

Addressing the two day national convention of the Mahila Congress, 'Pratigya Ujwal Bharat Ki' (Pledge for a Brighter India) organised here today, Kharge exhorted upon the party workers to resolve, come what may you have to get rid of the BJP government which has failed all sections of the society, be they the minorities, the women, the youth, the poor or the students.

Asserting that the Modi was being arrogant and scared at the same time, he said that on the one hand the Prime Minister claims that he alone is



enough for the entire opposition by saying, "akela Modi, sab pe bhari", on the other hand he will keep on crying about the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) by maligning its leaders and accusing it of baseless things. The Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha said that if he thought himself alone to be enough to take on the opposition, why was he scared of INDIA and always crying out of fear.

Kharge said: "Modi has often been claiming that he was not being accepted and tolerated by the opposition as he was a 'poor man's son'. I wish every Indian were poor like him who could wear a coat worth Rs 10 lakh."

"We have tolerated you enough all these years as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for 12 years and Prime Minister for nine years and still you say you were not being tolerated," he reminded Modi.

The Congress President also referred to the arbitrary disqualification of Rahul Gandhi as an MP.



BJP ANNOUNCES 39 CANDIDATES FOR MP ASSEMBLY POLL, 13 SEATS RESERVED FOR SC/ST

Team Absolute | Bhopal

BJP's Central Election Committee (CEC) on Thursday releases the first list of 39 candidates for Madhya Pradesh assembly elections to be held later this year.

All these assembly segments for which candidates were announced have been won by the Congress during 2018 elections.

The names of candidates were finalised in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which concluded late on Wednesday. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and state BJP president V.D Sharma along with election in-charge of Madhya Pradesh - Union Ministers Narendra Singh Tomar, Bhupendra Yadav and Ashwini Vaishnav were also present in the meeting.

The BJP has fielded Sarla Vijendra Rawat from Sabalgarh, Priyanka Meena from Chachoura, Surendra Singh Gaharwar from Chitrakoot, Lalita Yadav from Chhatarpur, Anchal Sonkar from Jabalpur Purba (SC), Nirmala Bhuriya from Petlawad, Bhanu Bhuriya from Jhabua (ST), Alok



Sharma from Bhopal Uttar and Dhruv Narayan Singh from Bhopal Madhya, among others. The names of candidates announced for 39

seats in the first phase, of them 21 seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes respectively.

Of these 39 seats, 13 are reserved for ST and eight for SC candidates. The BJP has also fielded as many as five women candidates.

BJP RETAINS 14 CANDIDATES WHO LOST MP ASSEMBLY POLLS IN 2018

Bhopal: Out of the 39 candidates the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) announced on Thursday for the Madhya Pradesh assembly polls, 14 are those who lost the assembly elections in 2018.

Among the candidates who have been retained by the BJP -- are Madhu Verma (Patelabad), Nirmala Bhuriya (Kasrawad), Atmaram Patel (Gohad), Lal Singh Arya (Chhatarpur), Lalita Yadav (Pathariya), Lakhna Patle (Ginnor), Rajesh Verma (Chitrakoot), Surendra Singh Gahrwar (Shahpura), Om Prakash Dhurve (Sausar), Nanabhau Mohore (Maheshwar), Dhruv Narayan Singh (Bhopal North) and ex-Bhopal Mayor Alok Sharma (Bhopal East).

The BJP has also fielded former chief minister Uma Bharti's nephew Preetam Singh Lodhi from Picchor assembly seat. Lodhi had been removed from the BJP due to anti-party activities, but, he was later re-inducted into the party in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan a couple of months back.

Moreover, the BJP has selected at least three candidates who are the family members of the senior BJP leaders. Sarla Rawat, who has been fielded from Sabalgarh, is daughter-in-law of (late) Meharban Singh Rawat. Neeraj Singh Thakur, who would be contesting the election from Patan seat of Jabalpur district, is the son of former BJP MLA Pratibha Singh, while former MLA Manvendra Singh's son Kamakshya Singh has been fielded from Maharajpur seat in Chhatarpur district.

FULL LIST OF MADHYA PRADESH BJP CANDIDATES:

- Sabalgarh: Sarla Vijendra Rawat
- Sumawali: Adal Singh Kansana
- Gohad(SC): Lal Singh Arya
- Pichhore: Preetam Lodhi
- Chachoura: Priyanka Meena
- Chanderi: Jagannath Singh Raghuvanshi
- Banda: Veerendra Singh Lambardar
- Maharajpur: Kamakshya Pratap Singh
- Chhatarpur: Lalita Yadav
- Pathariya: Lakhna Patel
- Gunnaor: Rajesh Kumar Verma
- Chitrakoot: Surendra Singh Gaharwar
- Pushprajgarh: Heerasingh Shyam
- Barwara: Dhirendra Singh
- Bargi: Neeraj Thakur
- Jabalpur East: Anchal Sonkar
- Shahpura: Omprakash Dhurve
- Bichhiya: Vijay Anand Marawi
- Baihar: Bhagat Singh Netam
- Lanji: Rajkumar Karrahe
- Barghat: Kamal Maskole
- Goteogan: Mahendra Nagesh
- Saunsar: Nanabhau Mohod
- Pandhurna: Prakash Uikay
- Multai: Chandrashekhar Deshmukh
- Bhainsdehi: Mahendra Singh Chouhan
- Bhopal North: Alok Sharma
- Bhopal Central: Dhruv Narayan Singh
- Sonkatch: Rajesh Sonkar
- Maheshwar: Rajkumar Mev
- Kasrawad: Atmaram Patel
- Alirajpur: Nagar Singh Chouhan
- Jhabua: Bhanu Bhuriya
- Petlawad: Nirmala Bhuriya
- Kukshi: Jaydeep Patel
- Dharampuri: Kalu Singh Thakur
- Rau: Madhu Verma
- Tarana: Tarachand Goyal
- Ghatiya: Satish Malviya

BJP FIELDS HINDU NOMINEES IN 2 BHOPAL SEATS REPRESENTED BY MUSLIM MLAS

Bhopal: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday announced 39 candidates for the upcoming Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections, with the party fielding two new candidates for two out of seven seats in Bhopal currently represented by Muslim legislators.

The party has named two Hindu candidates in the two seats -- Bhopal North and Bhopal Central. While the BJP has fielded former Bhopal Mayor Alok Sharma from Bhopal North, currently represented by Congress MLA Arif Aqil, it has nominated Dhruv Narayan Singh from Bhopal Central, which is represented by Congress legislator Arif Masood.

There are a total of seven assembly seats in Bhopal. Of them, BJP won four while Congress bagged three in 2018. The seven sitting MLAs from Bhopal are -- Vishnu Khatri (Bairasia), Arif Aqel (Bhopal North), Vishwas Sarang (Narela), P.C. Sharma (Bhopal South), Arif Masood (Bhopal Central), Krishna Gaur (Govindpura) and Rameshwar Sharma (Huzur).

Meanwhile, the Congress is also likely to field its sitting MLA Arif Masood from his seat this time as well, while Arif Aqel, a senior Congress leader, who has been on bed rest for the last few months due to multiple health issues, would be seeking a ticket for his son.

Digvijaya's 18km barefoot padayatra to woo Gurjars in Bhopal

Team Absolute | Bhopal

With the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh nearing, veteran Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh undertook a barefoot padayatra of about 18 kms to woo the Gurjar community in Bhopal.

He started the parikrama of Lord Devnarayan pilgrimage area located in Barkhedi Dev village at around 3 p.m. on Wednesday. Singh, who has walked from Kanyakumari to Kashmir during the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Rahul Gandhi earlier this year, completed his circumambulation at around 9.30 p.m. walking barefoot on the pebble-stone paths.

The two-time former chief minister offered his prayers at a temple of Lord Hanuman enroute and also at another temple built on the hill.

Digvijaya Singh's barefoot padayatra wasn't a surprise as he has already proven his fit-



ness during Bharat Jodo Yatra and also during the 293-day Narmada Parikrama before the 2018 Assembly election.

This barefoot yatra has created a buzz in the political circles as the elections are just three and half months away in Madhya Pradesh.

Political observers said it was an attempt to convince the Gurjar community, which has a population of about 35 lakhs in Madhya Pradesh.

Singh chose the pilgrimage area of Lord Devnarayan of

Berasia Assembly constituency to help this large farming community. There are about 50,000 voters of the Gurjar community in the Berasia Assembly seat.

He also visited Acharya Vidyasagar Gurukul located in Imla village of Berasia, where he was welcomed by a group of students with Vedic chants. Singh took blessings from Acharya. After this, he kept on touring the villages of Berasia Assembly till late night.

CONGRESS APPOINTS RANDEEP SURJEWALA AS GENERAL SECRETARY IN-CHARGE OF MP

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Bhopal: Congress on Thursday appointed Randeep Singh Surjewala as general secretary in-charge of Madhya Pradesh, which will go to the polls later this year.

The party also appointed Mukul Wasnik as general secretary in-charge of Gujarat. Randeep Singh Surjewala is the AICC in-charge of Karnataka where the Congress registered an emphatic victory and ousted the BJP government in assembly polls held earlier this year. Of the five states going to the polls later this year, BJP is in power only in Madhya Pradesh. "Congress President has appointed Mukul Wasnik as general secretary in-charge of Gujarat and Randeep Singh Surjewala with additional charge as general secretary in-charge of Madhya Pradesh," an AICC release said. "The party appreciates the contributions of Raghu Sharma and Jai Prakash Agarwal. They are relieved from their responsibilities as AICC in-charge," the release added.

The BJP on Thursday released its first list of 39 candidates for the Madhya Pradesh Assembly Elections 2023. Five states, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram - will go to the polls by the end of this year.



As Assembly polls near, debate over Bajrang Dal heats up



Team Absolute | Bhopal

As a debate over the Bajrang Dal has broken out between the BJP and Congress, politics in the poll-bound Madhya Pradesh has heated up.

A day after former Chief Minister and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh said Bajrang Dal would be banned in MP (if the Congress forms the government), state Home Minister Navrotpam Mishra took a jibe at the Congress leaders. Responding to

Digvijaya Singh's statement that "there may be some good people also in Bajrang Dal", Mishra said things have started changing as elections are getting closer.

"Eye flu (of Congress) is getting clear gradually. Today they are seeing some good people in Bajrang Dal, soon they will see that all people associated with it are Rashtra Bhakts," Mishra said.

Hitting out at Congress veterans Digvijaya Singh and Kamal Nath, Mishra further said, "They have started participating in Kawad Yatra and religious kathas

are being organised. When there is elections, the Congress leaders start doing this," he added.

Organising religious programmes, Mishra was referring to four-day 'Ram Katha' of Dhirendra Krishna Shastri in Kamal Nath's home district Chhindwara held in the first week of this month.

"I have already made this statement that forgot about banning Bajrang Dal in MP, you can't even think of it," Mishra said while briefing the media on Thursday.

Woman seeking compensation for tower installation dragged by cops in Katni

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a viral video, a woman is seen being dragged by police personnel in the presence of people and government officials in Katni district of Madhya Pradesh.

The incident that happened a few days ago, however, came to the fore after the video surfaced on social media on Wednesday evening. The police, however, denied that the woman was beaten up, and said police had acted as per rules.

The woman being dragged has been identified as Chaina Bai Kachi. She was reportedly thrashed and taken into custody when she demanded compensation for the installation of an electricity tower on her land at Kauriya village in Katni district.

Chaina Bai Kachi has alleged that she received no compensation for the installation of an electricity tower on her land.

When a bulldozer rolled in to set up the tower, she and



her relatives tried to block its way. At this point, police allegedly thrashed her and took her and four others into preventive custody.

Later, she along with her family members approached the SP office to lodge a complaint against the police action.

The woman claimed she has not received any compensation against the installation of the tower as is the norm. "The contractors roped in by the power company, revenue officials and police personnel had tried to capture her land," she told the police. Manoj Kedia, a senior police official said the woman was creating public nuisance and blocking work to install the electricity tower.

Doctors Have Noblest Job to Perform - Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that no poor and needy person should be without treatment. They should be treated properly and should remain healthy. He assured of better health management and expected doctors to give their best services.

The Chief Minister Chouhan said that 3 crore 60 lakh Ayushman cards have been issued in Madhya Pradesh. We will ensure universal coverage of Ayushman Bharat and Ayushman cards will be issued to everyone except those who are financially well-off. The treatment of complex diseases is very expensive. It is necessary to assure people that the government is with them.

CM Chouhan was interacting with the doctors in a programme organized at Samatva Bhawan here today to give appointment letters



to the doctors and specialists of the Public Health and Family Welfare Department. Those received appointment letters included 83 pediatricians, 76 surgeons and 128 dental surgeons.

Public Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Prabhuram Chowdhary, Additional Chief Secretary Health Mohammad Suleman, Health Commissioner Dr. Sudam Khade, other officers were

present.

CM Chouhan today also gave appointment letters to Assistant Microbiologist, 6 Assistant Public Analysts and 24 Assistant Drug Analysts under the Food and Drug Administration. Shri Chouhan congratulated them wishing them a bright career.

Addressing the doctors, the Chief Minister Chouhan said that doctors' job is very pious. A doctor is fortunate

to have performed noble task of saving lives and making people healthy. He said that the duty performed with passion gives joy. People respect doctors. It is foremost duty to provide the visiting patients the best treatment. Without health, a person cannot live well cannot realise his resolves. There is no greater religion than serving the neediest. Appointment Letters Distributed Digitally

Expressing gratitude to the Prime Minister Shri Modi for the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, Chief Minister Chouhan said that the people suffering from diseases are getting assistance. Shri Chouhan said that it is a matter of happiness that 925 more doctors have been selected by the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission. A Doctors' Panchayat will soon be organized to discuss the problems and expectations of doctors.

'I Run A Family, Not Government', Says CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan while addressing an event in Bhopal said that he does not run the government in Madhya Pradesh but runs his family.

He said "It was our dream that the children of poor, lower middle class and middle class families of the state should also have access to the best schools in the country and the world. The merit of the children of these families is not less, they should get opportunities for good education in their surroundings and they can fulfil their dreams. With this purpose the state government conceptualised the CM Rise School and now its implementation is going on in the entire state." "No stone is being left unturned in the implementation of the new education policy implemented by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in the state. Be it school education, college level or getting education abroad or facing com-



petitive exams. The state government is with the students at every step," he added.

CM Chouhan performs bhoomi puja of CM Rise School Chouhan performs bhoomi puja of CM Rise Government Mahatma Gandhi Higher Secondary School building to be constructed at a cost of Rs 81.12 crore in Bhel (Barkheda) of Bhopal. He transferred Rs 207 crore to the accounts of 4.60 lakh students with a single click for buying cycles and interacted with the students. Students from all districts of the state got connected virtually in the state-level programme. Chouhan welcomed the students attending the programme by showering flowers and after Kanya Pujan, inaugurated the programme with lighting the lamp and Saraswati Vandana.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Vasundhara Raje: Irrelevant to Rajasthan Assembly elections?

The BJP on Thursday announced two poll panels for the Rajasthan Assembly elections, scheduled later this year, but surprisingly, former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje is not a part of any of them. The party announced that the state election management committee will be headed by former MP Narayan Panchariya, while Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal will lead state manifesto committee. Party leaders said, "The BJP has announced new teams of state election management committee and Manifesto Committee and has tried to accommodate leaders from different backgrounds to balance social engineering equations and to give a message of unity." Besides Panchariya, veteran leaders like Omkarsingh Lakhawat and Rajyawardhan Rathore and Bhajanlal Sharma have been announced as joint coordinators in election management committee. Meanwhile, besides Meghwal, RS MPs Kirodial Meena and Ghanshyam Tiwari are the joint coordinators for Manifesto Committee. Speaking on the occasion, state in-charge Pralhad Joshi said, "We have announced these committees. We are also set to commence the 'Parivartan Yatra'. I have full faith that people of Rajasthan will give the mandate to BJP, he said before the party's core committee meeting in Jaipur." Meanwhile as Raje has not been given any positions in these panels, so now, eyes are all set to see if she will be given a space in the election campaign committee. Meanwhile, questions were also being raised on Raje's absence once again from the core committee meeting even at a time when the party leaders are giving a message to all workers to contest assembly polls unitedly.

INDIA: CAPABLE OF GIVING STRENGTH TO HUMANITY

Lalit Garg
World Humanitarian Day is celebrated every year on 19 August. This day has special relevance and utility in the era of eroding human values. On this day, those people are remembered who sacrificed their lives to help others due to humanitarian causes. This day is also seen as an opportunity to promote humanitarian work and values around the world. The decision to celebrate it was made by the United Nations General Assembly on the basis of the Swedish proposal. According to this, in the event of an emergency, initiative can be taken by the United Nations countries for mutual assistance on humanitarian grounds. This day was specially started to be celebrated in 2003 as the anniversary of the attack on the headquarters of the United Nations in Baghdad, Iraq, which is also a way to celebrate the spirit of humanitarian work and inspire human values in the world. have the opportunity. Its purpose is to recognize those people who are facing adversity to help others and are committed to protecting humanity.
 Today, in the whole world, tragic and ironic situations playing with human consciousness, that is, humanity, are prevalent everywhere - in which terrorism is the most prominent. Humanity is suffering and affected by many situations like casteism, untouchability, communalism, inflation, poverty, beggary, luxury, increasing gap between rich and poor, indiscipline, greed, ambition, oppression and characterlessness. The above problems may have been effective at different times in some era, in this era they are being attacked in totality. When the attack is from totality, then its solution has



to be found from totality only. When violent circumstances prevail, the value of non-violence automatically increases. Mahatma Gandhi has said that you should not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean. Even if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.
 Religion is the main basis for developing humanism. That's why today the humanistic, rationalistic and democratic concepts of various religions cannot be denied and through these, a strong attack can be made on the system full of discrimination. Religious ideologies and organizations can provide peace to the sad, suffering and troubled humanity even today. Attacking high-low, discrimination, casteism, religion itself is developing unity in the minds of people. It has an important role in paving the way for the development of art, literature and culture by creating an environment of world peace and mutual brotherhood. Repeal of the humanistic approach is necessary for the upliftment of human consciousness by stopping the moral decline happening in any era. Social value-change and introduction of norms can lead to sophistication in public consciousness. That's why Audrey Hepburn said that as long as the world exists, there will be injustice and oppression. Those who are capable and capable, it is more their responsibility to give affection to those who are weaker than themselves.
 Every year, disasters and human error cause immense suffering to millions of people, especially the world's poorest, most marginalized and vulnerable. Humanitarian aid workers strive to provide life-saving assistance and long-term rehabilitation to these disaster-affected communities and people without discrimination on the basis of nationality, social group, religion, gender, race or any other factor. They reflect all cultures, ideologies and backgrounds and are united by their commitment to humanism. Such humanitarian assistance is based on a number of founding principles including humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. Highlighting its usefulness, Martin Luther King said that it is love and affection that will save our world and our civilization.
 The stings of violence, terror, inauthenticity, hoarding, selfishness, exploitation and cruelty etc. are making humanity unconscious. To break this unconsciousness, the

value of non-violence and co-existence will have to be increased and the concept of a healthy social structure will have to be shaped on the background of cooperation and compassion. Sensitivity to the existence of others is the basic element of humanity. As long as the person does not give his consent to the existence of another like his own existence, he will not be able to become sensitive towards it. In a country and culture where the source of sensitivity dries up, human relationships start getting sticky. If there is an attack on one's body or part, the soul gets hurt. But when such an incident happens to others, not even a corner of the mind gets affected. This is the result of insensitivity. One of the reasons for this insensitive mind is also the lack of co-existence.
 Today we have become so insensitive that others' pain, lack, pain, others' signs do not melt us anywhere. Murders of innocent people, violent incidents, terrorist attacks, abductions, burning alive, incidents of adultery and rape of women are seen and read in the country and the world, but the mind has become so habitual that it seems that all these Everyday work. Neither tears flow in the eyes, nor is sympathy associated with the suffering humanity. Neither the spirit of co-operation arises nor does the blood boil over the brutal cruelty. We are only concerned about saving ourselves. That's why they don't hesitate while exploiting others. We have to wake up the senses. That's why J.K. Rowling has also said that we do not need magic to change the world. We can do this easily by simply serving human beings.
 Inhuman incidents like murder, kidnapping, dacoit, assault, rape etc. are

related to cruelty. A cruel person can never be sensitive. In the absence of sensitivity, there is no participation of others in one's happiness and sorrow. This is possible only when the joys and sorrows of others are reflected in the mirror of one's own experience. Far from the matter of hurting someone by a sensitive person, he gets moved just by seeing his simple pain. If humanity has to suffer the brunt of neglect, no one will be able to save it from fainting. The main point of concern is not that the values are getting eroded. Today's biggest problem is faithlessness. The onslaught of this concept that life cannot be run on the basis of morality is so strong that even the minds of veterans are wavering. Faith is a positive emotion. It not only paves the way for living an abundant life, it infuses new enthusiasm in the soul. Today it is being felt that the country and the world are on the cross of distortions. Only on the basis of moral values man can experience the highness and get human light. The light of humanity is eternal, universal, and universal. The more widely this light is spread, the better will be the human society. For this, it is necessary to make immediate and long-term plans and remain committed to their implementation. This commitment under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi means empowering India as well as giving the world a new thinking, new economic ground, peace and co-existence from the point of view of human unity and humanity. Social value-change and introduction of norms can lead to sophistication in public consciousness. From this point of view, the usefulness of human values is coming to the fore.

international

PIOs, Indians among 2023 International Young Eco-Hero award winners

New York | Agencies

Nine youngsters from India and the US are among 17 environmental activists who will be honoured with the 2023 International Young Eco-Hero Award for their creative initiatives to tackle the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

The awards, presented by US-based non-profit Action For Nature, recognises youngsters from ages eight to 16 for raising awareness of environmental issues and finding innovative solutions to tough environmental problems.

The five eco-warriors from India include, Eiha Dixit from Meerut, Manya Harsha from Bengaluru, Nirvaan Somany and Mannat Kaur from New Delhi and Karnav Rastogi from Mumbai.

The Indian-American winners include Satvika Iyer from California, Rahul Vijayan and Anushka Godambe from Texas



and Nitya Jakka from Illinois. "

From bustling metropolises to remote villages, these young luminaries are sparking a green revolution that knows no bounds," said Beryl Kay, president of Action for Nature.

"Their ingenious projects are tangible, impactful solutions that are leaving indelible marks on their communities and the world."

Nine-year-old Eiha Dixit who won the first prize, has been growing saplings to protect the

environment since the age of four. Along with a group of volunteers, Eiha has planted over 20,000 saplings, creating mini forests, parks, and green belts in Meerut, and has also established a plant bank at her home, using plants donated by people who can no longer care for them.

Manya Harsha, 12, from Bengaluru engages in activities such as walkathons, planting saplings, distributing seed balls, and organising clean-up drives.

With over 5,000 sustainable

bags distributed, 3,500 saplings planted, and 3,000 seed bombs thrown, she continues to work tirelessly to create a better future for the coming generations, according to the award citation.

Nirvaan Somani, 16, repurposes used jeans into washable and insulating sleeping bags for the homeless, reducing landfill waste and providing better protection from harsh weather conditions.

With 6,000 pairs of jeans collected, he has distributed 800 sleeping bags to date.

Satvika Iyer, 15, from Milpitas in California has worked with various organisations and her school district to introduce a permanent plant-based menu with meat-free alternatives and salad bars. Pearlland in Texas has introduced an on-site hydroponic farming, an efficient water-based gardening technique that works well in urban environments.

He educates elementary and middle school students in his school district about sustainable gardening, and also provides

them with microgreen kits for hands-on plant-growing experiences.

Nitya Jakka, 16, from Naperville, Illinois, has developed a website and sensor system that addresses the issue of food waste through better climate-controlled transportation and storage.

Anushka Godambe, 16, from Austin, Texas, founded Plants in Classrooms to foster a love of gardening in K-12 students by teaching them to care for a classroom plant through practice, patience, and teamwork.

The winners will present their work at a virtual event anchored in San Francisco on August 26 via Zoom Webinar.

Since the beginning of this year, Action For Nature has honoured 339 Eco-Heroes from 27 countries and 32 US states.

The winning projects are selected by a panel of independent judges, including experts in environmental science, biology, and education.

Fierce clashes in Libya after commander's arrest kill 55 people

Tripoli | Agencies

At least 55 people were killed and 146 others injured in fierce clashes that erupted in Tripoli between two militia groups that back Libya's UN-supported government following the detention of a military commander, local media reports said.

Violence broke out in parts of the capital Tripoli late Monday evening between the 444 Brigade and the Special Deterrence Force after the latter reportedly arrested a powerful commander of the 444 Brigade, reports Xinhua news agency.

Confirming the death toll on Wednesday, Libya's Emergency Medicine and Support Centre said the victims included civilians and security personnel, while several bodies remain unidentified.

According to the centre, 234 families had to be evacuated from front-line areas with 60 ambulances deployed and three field hospitals set up to deal with the casualties.

The Interior Ministry announced on Tuesday that the clashes stopped when the warring factions agreed to a ceasefire "with the efforts of the Prime Minister and the elders of



Tripoli". During a meeting on Wednesday with many elders of Tripoli, Prime Minister Abdul-Hamed Dbeibah, rejected the "return of fighting" in the country.

"The Prime Minister said that the return of fighting is unacceptable and that the country does not tolerate any irresponsible behaviour, stressing the importance of cooperation with all security agencies to enforce security," said a statement issued by the government's information office.

Dbeibah and the elders agreed that joint efforts were needed to ensure that fighting won't return.

The fierce fighting had also forced the capital city's main airport to close.

It reopened later on Wednesday.

Death toll from Hawaii wildfires spike to 110

Honolulu | Agencies

The death toll from the devastating wildfires in Hawaii's Maui Island which first erupted on August 8, has increased to 110, the US state's Governor Josh Green said.

"Every day we are a little bit more heartbroken

because we do have to report that more of our loved ones have been confirmed lost and deceased," Xinhua news agency quoted Green as saying at a press conference late Wednesday night.

The Governor added that about 38 per cent of the burned area has been searched, while around 2,200 structures in Maui, 86 per cent of them residential, have either been completely destroyed or damaged.

Maui Police Chief John Pelletier said



on Tuesday that he hopes searchers will have covered 85 to 90 per cent of the area by the weekend.

The wildfires, which destroyed the historic town of Lahaina on Maui, is already

the deadliest in more than a century in modern US history.

About 2,000 customers remained without electricity in affected areas on the island, said the governor.

Also on Wednesday, the White House said in a statement that President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden will travel to Maui on August 21 "to meet with first responders, survivors, as well as federal, state, and local officials, in the wake of deadly wildfires on the island".

Tokyo area on red alert for heatstroke as summer heat lingers

Tokyo: Japanese authorities on Thursday issued the highest-level heatstroke alert for the Tokyo metropolitan area as the scorching summer heat continues to bake many parts of the country, according to the Ministry of the Environment.

The cities of Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, Yokohama, Mito, Utsunomiya, and Maebashi are expecting a dangerous level of heatstroke risks, as the Ministry issued a red alert for heatstroke, the highest in its five-tier warning system, reports Xinhua news agency.

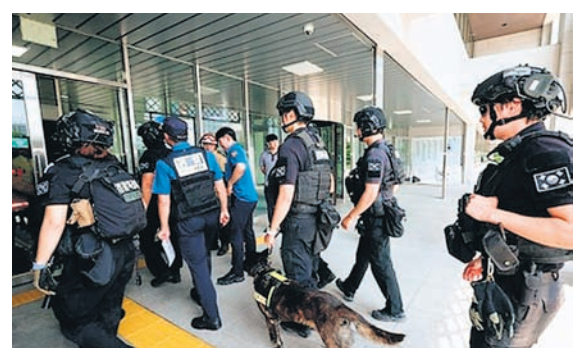
The Ministry advised people in these areas to avoid going outdoors and halt all exercise except for special cases, as the actual temperature is much higher than the skin temperature. Japan's weather agency issued heatstroke alerts on Thursday for eight prefectural regions, including Iwate and Fukushima, with temperatures as high as 35 degrees Celsius.

5th email bomb threat warns of blowing up S.Korea's Supreme Court

Seoul | Agencies

South Korean police are looking into an email bomb threat targeting the Supreme Court and other locations but have not found any explosives so far, after a fifth such email was sent apparently from Japan, officials said on Thursday.

The email, which was received just past midnight, claimed that "high-powered bombs with needles" had been planted at the Japanese Embassy, the Supreme Court and city halls across the country, and would go off from 3.34 p.m. on Friday to 2.07 p.m. on Saturday, reports Yonhap News



Agency.

Police searched the locations but found no explosives so far.

The email was sent in the name of a Japanese law firm with the same address as the one used for the four previ-

extremists are committing these crimes, as these types of offenses are sometimes not regulated in Japan," Karasawa said in a tweet last week.

Police said they are taking steps to ask Japanese police for cooperation in the investigation through the Ministry of Justice, but no significant developments were made for over 10 days.

Such phishing scams involving sending emails by stealing the accounts of law firms or lawyers are prevalent in Japan, sources said.

The Dai-Ichi Tokyo Bar Association also warned of such scams multiple times on its webpage.



WELFARE OF CHILD PARAMOUNT WHILE DECIDING CUSTODY MATTERS: BOMBAY HIGH COURT

WELFARE OF A CHILD INCLUDES BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING, HEALTH, COMFORT AND OVER-ALL SOCIAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT, THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT HAS SAID WHILE UPHOLDING A FAMILY COURT'S ORDER HANDING OVER THE INTERIM CUSTODY OF A GIRL TO HER MOTHER.



woman's husband challenging a February 2023 order passed by the Bandra family court directing him to hand over the custody of the eight-year-old daughter to the estranged wife. "The word 'welfare' is to be understood in the widest sense taking within its fold the physical and mental well-being, health, comfort and overall social and moral development of the child. All that is essential for a well-balanced upbringing of the child amounts to welfare of the child," the order said. Justice Deshmukh noted in the order that while deciding the custody matters, the paramount consideration is the welfare of the child.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Welfare of a child is of paramount consideration in deciding the custody matters and child's comfort is one of the factors that is to be taken into account, it said. A single bench of Justice Sharmila Deshmukh in the order of July 21 dismissed a petition filed by the

to the mother who is also a qualified doctor," it said. "During this phase of life, the girl child requires care and attention of a woman who would be better equipped to understand the process of transformation which the girl child will undergo and as such, the mother at this stage is preferred against the father," the high court said. As per the plea, the couple got married in 2010 and their daughter was born in 2015. The couple separated in 2020 following allegations by the man that the woman had indulged in extra marital affairs. The daughter was staying with her father. The husband then filed a divorce plea in the family court and also sought permanent custody of the girl. In February 2023, the family court granted interim custody of the minor girl to the mother and granted visitation rights to the father. The man in his plea in the HC said his daughter was attached to his family and that her comfort, safety and convenience needs to be considered. The man further alleged that his estranged wife had indulged in extra-marital affairs and hence would have little regard for the welfare and upbringing of the minor child. The woman opposed the plea and said the girl was with her during the weekdays and with her father during the weekends.

20-year-old man kills minor for rejecting love proposal

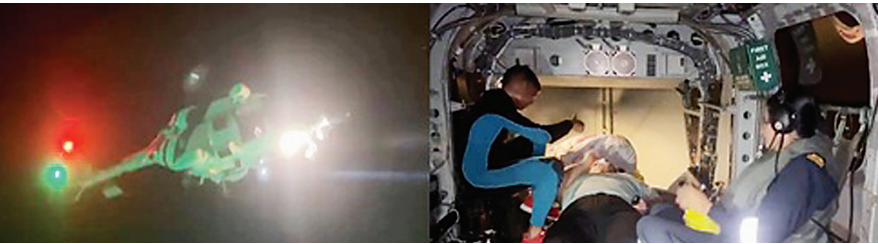
Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a distressing incident, a 12-year-old girl lost her life after being fatally stabbed by a 20-year-old man for rejecting his love proposal in Teesgaon in Maharashtra's Kalyan district. The assailant, identified as Aditya Kamble, on Wednesday targeted the young girl in front of her mother in what appears to be a result of a one-sided love affair. Reports indicate that Kamble, driven by his unrequited affection for the girl, resorted to a violent act after the girl's mother rejected his proposal for a romantic relationship. The tragic incident took place while the girl and her mother were returning home from tuition classes. Upon their arrival at their building, Kamble forcefully pushed the girl's mother aside and proceeded to stab the minor repeatedly with a knife. The 12-year-old girl succumbed to her injuries while receiving medical treatment. Kamble took a drastic step



following the attack by consuming phenyl, a disinfectant, in an attempt to end his own life. He is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital under police supervision. On this Kalyan East BJP MLA Ganpat Gaikwad said, "The incident is disgusting. As the population is increasing in Kalyan area, manpower in police in Kalyan area is less for the population." Authorities have taken action against Kamble, charging him under the provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). He has been booked under IPC section 309, which pertains to the attempt to commit suicide. Initially, a case was registered against Kamble under section 302, dealing with murder.

Indian Coast Guard's daring mid sea medical evacuation of Chinese national



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Indian Coast Guard has successfully conducted the medical evacuation of a Chinese national in the Arabian sea, the ministry of defence said on Thursday. Officials at Indian Coast Guard said that considering the best feasible options for speedy evacuation and subsequent medical management, the patient was airlifted by CG ALH MK-III, and was administered with first aid. He was later transferred to agent of the vessel for further medical manage-

ment. According to the Indian Coast Guard, the Chinese national was rescued from a Panama flagged research vessel, MV Dong Fang Kan Tan No 2. This is situated around 200 Kms in the Arabian sea off Mumbai on the intervening night of August 16-17. The rescue team informed that the evacuation was carried out amid challenging weather conditions and dark night. The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Mumbai received information that one of the crew, named Yin Weiyang, onboard the research vessel

had a cardiac attack and required urgent medical attention. The communication was established immediately with the vessel, which was enroute from China to UAE, and provided necessary telemedicine advice, the Indian Coast Guard added. The official said that the swift operation undertaken by CG ALH and CGAS Daman during the dark hours enabled the saving of a precious life of a foreign national at sea, reaffirming the Indian Coast Guard's commitments to the motto 'We Protect'.

PM doesn't understand the pain of Manipur women: Sharad Pawar

Team Absolute | Bhood

Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not go to Manipur and spoke about it only for the briefest time, veteran opposition leader Sharad Pawar said today, slamming the Central government and the BJP and Eknath Shinde's alliance government in Maharashtra. "In Manipur, there's a division among society, villages, people are attacking each other, houses are being burned, women are being paraded naked but despite that the BJP government doesn't do anything," Mr Pawar said today, pointing out that the job of maintaining law and order belongs to state. Manipur has a "double-engine" government -- the BJP rules the state as well. "The Prime Minister of India



should have gone to Manipur but he didn't do that. He spoke about Manipur for 3 minutes before the session and only for 5 minutes during No-Confidence Motion," he said,

speaking at a rally in Maharashtra's Beed. "The Prime Minister didn't understand the pain of the women in Manipur," added Pawar, whose fac-

tion of Nationalist Congress Party was among those which moved a No-Confidence Motion against the Narendra Modi government. The idea was to compel the Prime Minister to speak to Manipur -- a key Opposition demand that the government refused to meet. PM Modi had spoken of Manipur only twice since ethnic violence broke out in the northeastern state on May 3. During his response to the No-Confidence Motion in Lok Sabha last week, he referred to the issue after nearly 90 minutes, once the Opposition members had walked out. Holding the Congress responsible for "being the origin of all problems in the northeast", PM Modi said the country was with the people of Manipur and the "sun of peace" would rise in the state again.

Maharashtra Techie loses rs 17.2 lakh to cyber fraud

Team Absolute | Thane

A 42-year-old software professional from Maharashtra's Thane district lost 17.2 lakh after he was scammed by two persons who promised him easy money through a "part-time" job, an official said on Thursday. A man and a woman got in touch with the complainant, who is employed with a top Indian IT firm, on August 3 and offered him a part-time job related to hotel bookings, the official said. The duo sent him a link through the Telegram app to carry out the job, the police said. The techie was first told to make some payment towards registration. The duo then smooth-talked him to pay more on some pretext or the other promising him easy money. After extracting Rs 17.28 lakh from the IT professional over the next few days, the duo became evasive when he asked them about the



money promised to him, the official said. Based on a complaint from the techie, the Ambernath police on Tuesday registered a case under the IT Act. The police gave the names of the accused as Rahul Sharma and Sneha.

MAN FALLS ON TRACKS AFTER BEING SLAPPED. TRAIN RUNS HIM OVER MOMENTS LATER

Mumbai: Slapped hard in the face during an argument, he lost his balance and fell on to the tracks at a Mumbai station. As he tried climbing back up, he got crushed under an incoming train, showed a chilling video. He was 26. The incident, which took place on Sunday, is from Sion Station at around 9:15 pm. The victim has been identified as Dinesh Rathod. Avinash Mane, 35 and his wife Sheetal Mane, 31, had just got off a train at Sion and were planning to head to Mankhurd, a suburb in eastern Mumbai. Ms Mane was allegedly pushed by the victim and an argument broke out between the two, said the police. He also attacked the man with an umbrella, it added. At this point, the husband too joined in. He slapped him so hard, that the man got pushed off the platform, showed a video from the scene. A crowd assembled. As the train approaches, the people get back, the victim desperately tries to climb up but gets brutally crushed under the train, the horrific video showed further. He died on the spot, said the police. The arrested couple who pushed the man off the rail platform. After the incident, the couple fled the spot. Based on the CCTV footage and the information given by witnesses, the police arrested Avinash Mane from the Dharavi area and later arrested his wife too. The couple has been charged for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, said the police.

IndiGo pilot scheduled to flew to Pune falls unconscious at boarding gate, dies

Team Absolute | Nagpur

An IndiGo pilot scheduled for a flight from Nagpur to Pune lost consciousness and collapsed at the boarding gate on Thursday, said the airline official, adding that unfortunately, he was declared dead after being taken to a hospital. "We are saddened at the passing of one of our pilots in Nagpur. He took unwell at Nagpur airport and was rushed to the hospital where he unfortunately passed away. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones," said the IndiGo spokesperson. This is the third instance of pilots experiencing sudden fatalities this week, with two



of the individuals being Indian pilots. On Wednesday, a seasoned pilot from Qatar Airways, who was a passenger on a flight from Delhi to Doha, fell seriously ill during the journey and passed away. In response to the medical crisis, the flight QR 579 was rerouted to Dubai. Notably, this pilot had previously been associated with Alliance Air and Spicejet.

Railway Cop who killed 4 on train sacked, had faced 3 probes before

Team Absolute | Mumbai

RPF constable Chetan Singh, who shot dead his senior and three passengers on board a moving train last month, has been dismissed from service and he was involved in at least three discipline-related incidents, including the harassment of a Muslim man in 2017, an official said on Thursday. The order to sack Singh was issued on Monday by Railway Protection Force (RPF) senior divisional security commissioner, the official said. As per the official, Singh was part of the force's dog squad in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain in 2017 when he once brought a Muslim man to the RPF post and harassed him for no reason. Superiors ordered an inquiry against Singh over the harassment and action was taken against him as per disciplinary rules, he said. During his posting in Gujarat, Singh assaulted a colleague on one occasion. In another incident, he withdrew money using a



co-worker's ATM card, the official said. The decision to sack him was taken based on the train killing incident, he added. Singh (34) is accused of gunning down his senior officer, Tikaram Meena, and three passengers when the Jaipur-Mumbai Central Superfast Express was near Palghar station on the outskirts of Mumbai in the early hours of July 31. The three passengers, Abdul Kadar Mohamed Hussain Bhanpurawala, Sayyad Saifuddin and Asgar Abbas Shaikh, were travelling in different bogies of the train. Singh was later arrested by the Government Railway Police (GRP). The motive behind the chilling crime is still not clear.

Congress to take up Sharad Pawar-Ajit Pawar meet at INDIA Conclave

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole has said that his party's top brass will discuss with NCP founder Sharad Pawar his much-debated meeting with politically estranged nephew and state deputy CM Ajit Pawar when the INDIA alliance holds its conclave in Mumbai later this month. Talking to reporters after a core committee meeting of the state Congress, Patole said on Wednesday that there was no confusion in his party about Sharad Pawar, who is part of the anti-BJP alliance, but confusion prevails among people. Mr Patole said two representatives of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge were part of the MPCC core committee meeting during which discussions took place on preparations for the conclave of INDIA alliance, a grouping of anti-BJP parties, to be held in Mumbai on August 31 and September 1. "Sharad Pawar has a different party. There is no confusion about Pawar sahab's (com-



mitment towards the INDIA alliance) in the Congress," he said. Patole rejected speculation that a 'Plan B' was in place wherein the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Congress will contest the Lok Sabha polls together if the NCP (Sharad Pawar faction) aligns with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He said the Congress's target is to defeat the BJP and its wants to take onboard those who will help in achieving that goal. "Sharad Pawar is capable of taking his decisions. Our high command, during the INDIA alliance meeting, will discuss this (meeting with Ajit) with Sharad Pawar because he is a

senior leader," Patole said when asked about the hush-hush huddle between the uncle and nephew in Pune last week. The meeting between the NCP patriarch and party rebel Ajit Pawar on August 12 at businessman Atul Chordiya's residence in Pune had sent political circles abuzz with speculation. It did not go down well with the Congress and the Shiv Sena group led by former CM Uddhav Thackeray. The Sharad Pawar-led faction of the NCP is a constituent of the state opposition grouping Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) which also includes the Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT). Speaking to reporters in Aurangabad earlier in the day, the senior Pawar clarified his meeting with Ajit Pawar was related to a family issue and that there was no political angle to it. The former Union minister also ruled out aligning with the BJP. The state Congress chief said Sharad Pawar and Kharge also spoke over the issue and that the NCP founder stressed the meeting was just a family affair.

Greta reveals Timothee Chalamet was disappointed at not being cast in 'Barbie'



Los Angeles | Agencies

Director Greta Gerwig dropped a surprising announcement when she revealed that during mid-production of 'Barbie', actor Timothee Chalamet had walked in and told her that he too wanted to be a part of the project.

Greta revealed that not only was the 'Dune' actor greatly interested in the film, but was rather disappointed that he wasn't cast.

The 27-year old actor had apparently also wanted to portray one version of the many Ken dolls in Barbieland. As reported by The Daily Mail, Gerwig said: "Timothee did come by the set during production and then said, 'I should have been in the 'Barbie' movie'. And I was like, 'I know! Why aren't you in this?'"

This was due to Chalamet himself being a good singer who would have perfectly fit the movie with both his acting, age and singing abilities.

Prior to that, the filmmaker had previously told CinemaBlend that Chalamet and her muse Saoirse Ronan were courted for cameo appearances in 'Barbie' but scheduling conflicts got in the way much to her and Timothee's disappointment.

She went on to reveal that these delays very much annoyed her, adding "But I love them so much. But it felt like doing something without my children. I mean, I'm not their mom, but I sort of feel like their mom."

Chalamet was unable to appear in the 'Barbie' film as production for the movie occurred around the same time he was shooting for the films 'Dune: Part Two' and 'Wonka' which also clashed with the release date of 'Barbie' which was competing against 'Oppenheimer', and to avoid losses both Timothee and Ronan were unable to get cast.



LILY ALLEN'S DAD CALLED COPS ON HER AT AGE 12

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Lily Allen reveals her dad called police on her after she lost her virginity aged 12. The mum-of-two 'Smile' singer, 38, who has been hitched to 'Stranger Things' actor David Harbour, 48, since 2020, first had sex when on holiday with her 'Trainspotting' star dad Keith Allen, 69, and younger brother Alfie, 36, famed for his role in 'Game of Thrones', reports aceshowbiz.com. "I actually went missing. I lost my virginity to a guy called Fernando in Brazil. When I was about 12, no I am joking," she told comedian Alan Carr, 47, on his 'Life's a Beach' podcast about how her father thought she had gone missing when she was really having sex with a man she was having a secret summer fling with.

"They thought I actually went missing. I went to his hotel room, and I was on holiday with my dad and brother, and obviously didn't come back to my room."

Lily added she "slept in the next day," and said, "I woke up and there was police all over the hotel. They were literally combing the beach and had T-shirts (asking), 'Is this what she was wearing?' I didn't have the heart to say, 'No, I was just losing my virginity.' It was all a bit traumatic, and I didn't have sex again then for a while." Her family life is now far more settled than her wild youth, especially since Lily got hitched to actor David in a Las Vegas wedding attended by her two daughters Ethel, 11, and Marnie, 10, who she had with her ex-husband Sam Cooper, 45. She and Sam tied the knot in 2011 before splitting in 2018.

DEMI MOORE POSTS PIC OF DAUGHTER IN AGONISING THROES OF CHILDBIRTH

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood actress Demi Moore has posted a moving photo of her daughter Rumer in the agonising throes of labour to celebrate the actress' 35th birthday. Rumer, who 60-year-old Demi shares with ex Bruce Willis, 68, welcomed daughter Louetta Isley Thomas Willis in April. 'G.I. Jane' star Demi's 4.7 million followers were stunned by the photo, with many taking to the comment section of her post to let Demi know they found it "beautiful".

Demi could be seen grasping Rumer's hands as she lay with her face creased in agony during her home birth, Female First reported.

Louetta is now three months old. Demi, who divorced Bruce in 2000 after marrying him in 1987, captioned the images posted on her Instagram: "My life changed the day you were born. You brought a depth, meaning, and purpose to my existence along with an understanding of love that I had never known."

"Now here you are my baby, with your own baby, bringing even greater meaning, magic, and love into all of our lives," the proud mom continued. "So proud of you. Happy Birthday Ru! Happy New Year! Happy Celebration of Life! I Love You!" Rumer, who had her little girl with boyfriend Derek Richard Thomas, 28, commented on the post by saying: "Oh mama (red heart and heart-eyed smiley face emojis) I love you so."

"Knowing what it takes to help bring a soul into this world gives it a whole new meaning for me. I always thought this was my day but I know now it has always been ours. Happy birthday mama," she added.

Bruce's current wife Emma Heming Willis also paid tribute to Rumer on her birthday. The 45-year-old model is devoting her life to caring for Bruce as he battles dementia, and told Rumer she loved her in a post to mark her birthday on Wednesday. She captioned an image that showed 'Chicago' actress Rumer holding who is thought to be one of Emma and Bruce's kids: "We love you so much @rumerwillis. Happy birthday my sweet."

Cole Sprouse talks about death threats from 'Riverdale' fans over Lili Reinhart split

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Cole Sprouse got candid about the backlash from 'Riverdale' fans after he broke up with co-star Lili Reinhart.

In a new interview, the Jughead depicter on the hit CW series talked about how fans were so "invested" in the show to the point he received death threats following the split, reports aceshowbiz.com.

"I get a lot of stuff sent to my house or my loved ones' houses. Death threats, really nasty, honestly criminal stuff," Cole told Vulture.

"And I do think it's because at least four of us at this table have dated our co-workers," he added, referring to co-stars Camila Mendes and Charles Melton who dated each other for a year.

He continued, "Is that just a consequence of an incredible love? Or is that what fanaticism looks like? Perhaps because those lines were blurred to our audience, it's hard to break those things up when life moves on."

This wasn't the first time Cole opened about his split from Lili, who plays Betty Cooper on 'Riverdale'. In the March 8 episode of 'Call Her Daddy', Cole revealed to host Alex Cooper that many of his exes have cheated on him.

"Yeah, by almost every single one of my girlfriends," he said. He added that the split from Lili "was really hard," noting, "I know we both did quite a bit of damage to each other."

Cole wasn't the only 'Riverdale' cast member who fell victim to fans' nasty behavior. Casey Cott, who portrays Kevin Keller on the series, noted that "there's sometimes a failure to differentiate the characters from the humans."

He elaborated, "You can go down an extreme hole if you're looking at that. Someone got my mom's phone number and started leaving voice-mails saying that they were going to come get her."

The 'Riverdale' cast's exit interview arrives a week ahead of the show's final episode on August 23.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Chole Sims

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hours after the reports of Sam Asghari filing for divorce from Britney Spears emerged, the singer has made her first post to Instagram post-divorce news to announce her plans to buy a horse.

Taking to her social media, the singer shared a picture of herself on a horseback, reports People magazine.

"Buying a horse soon. So many options it's kinda hard!!!" Spears shared with her 42 million followers while posing on horseback from

BRITNEY SPEARS MAKES 1ST SOCIAL MEDIA POST AFTER DIVORCE

an undisclosed beach location.

"A horse called Sophie and another called Roar??? I can't make up my mind. Should I join the camaraderie and put a pink cowboy hat on?? Either way I think I found my sweet spot with Roar", she added.

The 41-year-old did not make mention of her estranged husband in the caption, nor did she mention the divorce. The post's comments were also turned off.

As per People, this was the Britney's third trip down the aisle.

She first wed childhood friend Jason Alexander in January 2004, with the marriage annulled 55 hours later. She went on to marry former backup dancer Kevin Federline later that same year, with whom she shares sons Sean Preston, 17, and Jayden James, 16. Federline and Spears divorced in 2007.

After Spears and Asghari met in 2016 on the set of her "Slumber Party" music video, the couple married in June 2022.

However, in February, sources told People that her inner circle had "grown concerned."

Rumours began circulating in March that the couple were having marital struggles - but Asghari's representative shut them down at the time.

When addressing photos that showed Asghari and Spears without their wedding bands, Asghari's representatives said that he simply took off his ring because he was filming a movie. While it was unclear which movie Asghari was filming, he announced in November that he landed a role in the Taylor Sheridan-created television series 'Lioness'.



MAN CITY LIFT MAIDEN UEFA SUPER CUP AFTER PENALTY SHOOT-OUT WIN OVER SEVILLA



At the 32,115-seat Karaiskakis Stadium in Athens' southern coast, Morocco star Youssef En-Nesyri gave the Spanish side the lead in the 25th minute, while Cole Palmer netted the equalizer in the 63rd minute from Rodri's pass on Wednesday evening.

Athens (Greece) | Agencies

At the 32,115-seat Karaiskakis Stadium in Athens' southern coast, Morocco star Youssef En-Nesyri gave the Spanish side the lead in the 25th minute, while Cole Palmer netted the equalizer in the 63rd minute from Rodri's pass on Wednesday evening. During the penalty shootout, Manchester City beat Sevilla 5-4 to

lift their fourth trophy of 2023, reports Xinhua. After five successful penalties for City, a miss by Sevilla's Nemanja Gudelj secured the prestigious prize for Pep Guardiola's side after a clash played out at the home of Greek side Olympiakos. The Catalan has now overseen 15 major trophies since taking charge at Manchester Club in the summer of 2016. The remarkable collection comprises five Premier League titles, two FA Cups, four League Cups, one Champions League, two Community Shields and now

the UEFA Super Cup. City also have the opportunity to further add to their haul of silverware before 2023 is out. In December, City will be travelling to Saudi Arabia to take part in the FIFA Club World Cup for the first time. Both sides could have won the game in normal time with Ederson making several key saves to deny En-Nesyri and Nathan Ake twice seeing goal-bound headers blocked.

Shooting World Championship

India start with Men's Air Pistol team bronze in Baku



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian shooters started their campaign at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Championship (All Events) in Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku, with a bronze in the Men's 10m Air Pistol Team competition. The trio of Shiva Narwal, Sarabjot Singh and Arjun Singh Cheema shot a combined 1734 to finish behind gold medalist China (1749) and silver winner Germany (1743). China won both the Air Pistol individual gold medals on the day and are currently on top of the leaderboard with four gold medals, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) informed in a release on Thursday.

In the individual 10m Air Pistol events, Shiva was the best Indian finisher, shooting 579 in qualification for a 17th place finish. He missed qualifying for the finals by three points. Sarabjot was a place behind with 578 while Arjun Cheema finished 26th with a qualifying round score of 577. In the Women's 10m Air Pistol individual competition, Esha Singh shot 572 to finish 32nd to miss out on qualification by four points. Palak shot a 570 to finish 40th while Divya T.S. with a score of 566, finished 66th overall. The men's and women's skeet shooting qualifications also began on the day. Friday has both those finals lined up, but the first final of Friday will be the 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team.

Jamshedpur ride Ashley's strike for first win in league

Kolkata | Agencies

Jamshedpur FC picked up their first win of the 132nd Durand Cup, courtesy of an Ashley Koli header, defeating Indian Navy Football Team (INFT) 1-0 in a Group B fixture at the Mohun Bagan ground here on Thursday. Ashley, who was the standout player in the match, scored the all-important goal of the match in the 70th minute. As it stands in Group B, Mumbai City are sitting pretty at the top of the group with six points and Jamshedpur now joining Mohammedan Sporting on two points each, the final fixtures in this group will be interesting. Manager Steven Dias made six changes to his Jamshedpur playing XI that went down 0-5 to Mumbai City FC in their last match. He also changed tactics going in with two wingers up front instead of a 4-3-3 in the game against Mumbai. Abhilash Nair, the Navy coach, made just one change in replacing his keeper Mohit Singh with Ayush Jena, but eventually the former had to play as the latter hobbled out in the second half after picking up an injury. It was open end-to-end football from the get-go with Ashley and Sadhu Marandi showing great intent for the Red Miners while the experienced P.M Britto and Pintu Mahata were the main threats for Indian Navy up front.



The first proper chance came the way of Jamshedpur captain S.K. Sahil in the 26th minute of the game. A wonderfully weighted cross from the right flank from Asem Singh turned into a free header for Sahil, but the former Mohun Bagan midfielder could not keep it on target. In the 35th, Navy wing-back Navjot Singh got hold of a loose ball outside the Jamshedpur half and unleashed a left-footer who had power but lacked direction. Then in the 40th minute, Pradeesh was adjudged to have brought down the sprightly Ashley inside the box. The resulting penalty was saved by Navy keeper Robinson, who had a good match overall. It was the first penalty save of the tournament and Chawngthu of Jamshedpur was at the receiving end. Navy ended the first half with 64% possession and could have finished the

game with 62%, however, that did not count for much in the end. The first good chance of the second half also fell to the Red Miners in the 56th minute, when Ashley after one of his dazzling forays down the left, found Asem's run inside the box, but the diminutive forward inexplicably misdirected a free header from near hand-shaking distance, with Robinson at his mercy. To Steven Dias's disbelief, Asem did it again from the same provider about 10 minutes later, albeit the distance from the goal this time was a tad greater. Steven Dias had had enough and promptly replaced him with Laishram Meetei. The goal came thereafter in the 70th minute and deservedly to Ashley. Chawngthu, who had missed the penalty earlier took the corner and his floater to the far post was put back across towards the six-yard box by Rosangzuala who had come up from defense for the flag kick. Ashley rose to meet the bouncing ball and beat Robinson with his header. He then had a chance to get a second for himself, but his attempt in the 80th after yet another good run on the left, beat the keeper but landed on the roof of the net. The referee played seven minutes of added time, but the score-line remained the same and Jamshedpur walked off with a deserving victory.

Cincinnati Masters

Rybakina, Sabalenka advance to pre-quarters; Swiatek also prevails

Cincinnati (US) | Agencies

In a showdown between former Grand Slam champions, No.4 seed Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan held off Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko 6-7(6), 6-2, 6-4 on Wednesday to make the Round of 16 at the Cincinnati Masters. Last year's Wimbledon champion Rybakina took 2 hours and 17 minutes to pull off the come-from-behind victory on Wednesday night and edge ahead 3-2 in her head-to-head with 2017 Roland Garros titlist Ostapenko. Rybakina will face Italian qualifier Jasmine Paolini on Thursday for a quarterfinal spot. Paolini defeated fellow qualifier Cristina Bucsa of Spain 6-1, 6-3 earlier on Wednesday. On the other hand, World No.2 Aryna Sabalenka was also pushed to three sets in her opener, holding off No.192 Ann Li 7-5, 2-6, 6-4 to advance in 2 hours and 3 minutes. A semifinalist last year, Sabalenka struggled against Li's all-court game before steeling herself in the third set to wrench back control of the match and get the win. The Australian Open



champion will next face Daria Kasatkina in the round of 16 on Friday. Meanwhile, World No.1 Iga Swiatek defeated 34th-ranked Danielle Collins for the second time in less than a week with a 6-1, 6-0 victory in the second round of the Western & Southern Open on Wednesday. Swiatek needed just 59 minutes to beat former World No.7 Collins for the fourth time in their five meetings and booked her spot in the Cincinnati Round of 16 for the second straight year, where she will lock horns with Chinese player Qinwen Zheng. The Pole is currently enjoying her 72nd week at World No.1, an unbroken stretch since she first ascended to that position on April 4, 2022. It is the 10th-longest streak at World No.1.

Leadership duties in T20Is against Ireland will help Bumrah understand his body better: Saba Karim

Team Absolute | New Delhi

On Friday, fast-bowler Jasprit Bumrah will be the center of attention when he takes the field for India in the first T20I against Ireland after a long gap of 11 months. Coming back after a back injury layoff which needed surgical intervention, many will be keen to see how Bumrah fares as a bowler from a fitness perspective, especially with the ODI World Cup less than 50 days away. Apart from his return as the leader of the pace attack, Bumrah will also be captaining the Indian team at Malahide, making him the first bowler and overall, the 11th player to lead India in T20Is. Saba Karim, the former India cricketer, who has served as a national selector, feels that being trusted with leadership duties will help Bumrah understand his body



better and help him divide his bowling duties on his return to international cricket. "In the T20I format, the leadership duties won't add more burden on him. I think it will help him understand his body better, which is the direction I am seeing it from. He would know how many spells he will bowl with the new ball and with India playing three T20 games, he can bowl in any phase of the game. Maybe he can bowl one over in the start, then one over in the middle and a couple of overs in the back-end of the innings. He can do all of that as a captain. Instead of seeing as pressure, I feel it is an area where Bumrah can contribute and with his experience of playing for long, he can use it to understand his body better as a leader, which is the way I am looking at it," said Karim, an expert for JioCinema, in a select virtual interaction.

Jaydev Unadkat joins Sussex for County Championship

Sussex (England) | Agencies

Sussex Cricket on Thursday announced the signing of Indian fast bowler Jaydev Unadkat for the first three County Championship matches in September. Unadkat will be available for selection for the games against Durham, Leicestershire and Derbyshire as Sussex look to secure promotion to the first division. "I am excited to join Sussex for their Championship games in September. I have been following the team's recent run of success and I had a nice conversation with Paul and it looks like I can definitely add value and contribute towards the team's goals," Unadkat was quoted as saying in a



media release, issued by Sussex. "The English County Championship has a wonderful legacy and I was keen to grab the opportunity whenever I can and it seems to be the right time for me at this point in my career. I hope to add to the laurels that my dear friend & teammate, Cheteshwar has been adding aplenty while representing Sussex for the last couple of seasons, and more importantly helping the team win games. I am looking forward to joining everyone at Sussex," he added.

India's Sumariwalla elected vice-president in World Athletics Governing Council

Budapest (Hungary) | Agencies

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) President Adille Sumariwalla was on Thursday elected as one of the four vice-presidents of World Athletics, even as track and field's global governing body re-elected Sebastian Coe as its president. Sumariwalla made history by becoming the first Indian to be elected as vice-president in World Athletics' 26-member Governing Council for the term 2023-2027 during the polls held at the World Athletics Congress in Budapest, ahead of the upcoming World Athletics Championships in the Hungarian capital. Sumariwalla was elected as vice president along with Raul Chapado, Jackson Tuwei and Ximena Restrepo. In the elections held on Thursday, Sumariwalla polled 115 votes as the



Colombian sprinter Ximena bagged 154 votes, Spanish triple jumper Raul Chapado got 119 votes and Kenya's Jackson Tuwei received 104 votes in the polls conducted on Thursday.

People don't give Shikhar Dhawan the credit he deserves, says Ravi Shastri

Team Absolute | New Delhi

With the Asia Cup 2023 on the horizon, the Indian team management and selectors are in the midst of intense discussions to determine the best players for the top seven positions in the line-up. As of now, the team's configuration seems to lack a sense of certainty and stability. Notably, a decision is pending regarding who will partner with Rohit Sharma as the opening batsman, with both Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill being strong contenders for this role. Meanwhile, former India coach Ravi Shastri has provided insightful

perspectives on the upcoming Asia Cup 2023 and the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup. Speaking on Star Sports Selection Day show, Shastri spoke about where Ishan Kishan will feature in the batting line-up for the Asia Cup 2023 and the impact the seasoned player Shikhar Dhawan has had on the squad and how the team missed in the 2019 World Cup campaign. Reflecting on the team's past experiences, particularly the 2019 World Cup campaign, Shastri emphasised the pivotal role the veteran Indian opener played in the team's composition. "At the top of the order, nowhere else. And the others have to be flexi-

ble. Between Rohit, Virat, and Shubman Gill, that can be 2, 3, 4. And a very important point is, I was a coach at that time, and I keep saying that people don't give the credit that Shikhar Dhawan deserves. I mean, that guy was an amazing player. "You mention the World Cup in 2019 where we lost that semifinal when we had a brilliant World Cup, he was the missing man there. You know, that made such a big difference -- a left-hander at the top of the order, as opposed to three right-handers with the ball swinging away, which allowed teams to get a grip of where to bowl and bowl consistently," he said.





Sunny Leone reveals how a normal day looks for her

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Sunny Leone, who is also a mum-of-three, has revealed what a normal day in her life looks like and she says every single day is different for her. Sunny, whose film *Kennedy* will be premiering at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, in a conversation she, said: "Well, right before this interview I was in a meeting at my children's school and then I was in an interview." "Then I will go pick them up and then do more work. Then I would go to another meeting. Then I would do more stuff with my kids... Every single day is very different. I am very thankful that I get to balance it all out with my family."

What is the tough part of being an actor?

"I think the difficult thing that maybe some people are facing is maybe navigating through what is correct. What you should do and what you shouldn't do and how jobs are acquired now versus some of the other methods that were used in the past that's difficult." "I think social media and influencers have definitely changed the name of the game and how different celebrities function. I have always been a part of social media so that's not like a huge."

'Kennedy' is directed by Anurag Kashyap, it also stars Rahul Bhatt. The neo-noir thriller film marks the third collaboration of Kashyap and Bhat after 'Ugly' (2013) and 'Dobaaraa' (2022).

The film follows the story of an insomniac former cop, Kennedy, who has been presumed dead for years. 'Kennedy', an insomniac ex-police officer who operates secretly for the corrupt system, lives in different conditions and goes on a lookout for salvation.



'Life is short, make your weekends long': Arjun Kapoor



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actor Arjun Kapoor took to social media and shared a photo dump giving us a glimpse of his long weekend. Taking to Instagram, Arjun dropped a string of photos, wherein we can see Arjun, who is shirtless enjoying his meal, while he watches something on the screen. The second picture shows him enjoying a swim in the pool, another photo shows the image of his lunch which is pasta. Another photo shows him scrolling through his phone. He is wearing an olive green shirt, paired with black joggers and sunglasses. There is also a cute picture of a dog, sunset, and Arjun working out in the gym. He captioned the post as: "Life is

short, make your weekends long... #longweekend #mood #photodump".

The post is liked by Janhvi Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, Kartik Aaryan, Tara Sutaria, and Ayushmann Khurrana.

Rhea Kapoor dropped a red heart emoji in the comment section, while Dino Morea said "Okay". Amit Sadh commented, "Peaceful and gentleman!!" Armaan Malik wrote, "vibes". Indian cricketer Suryakumar Yadav dropped a fire emoji. Abhimanyu Dasani said, "Fresh".

On the film front, Arjun was last seen in action thriller film 'Kuttye', directed by Aasmaan Bhardwaj.

He will be next seen in 'The Lady Killer', which is a noir thriller film, also starring Bhumi Pednekar. Arjun also has 'Meri Patni Ka Remake' in the pipeline.

VICKY KAUSHAL WAS DRUNK DURING 'YE SAALE DUKH...' SCENE FROM 'MASAAN', REVEALS NEERAJ GHAYWAN

Mumbai: Filmmaker Neeraj Ghaywan, who has been receiving a lot of positive response to his recently released streaming show 'Made in Heaven 2', has shared an anecdote from the shoot of his debut film 'Masaan' which starred Bollywood star Vicky Kaushal, Richa Chadha, Pankaj Tripathi and Shweta Tripathi Sharma. The director while speaking with IANS, shared that the famous scene from the Cannes return 'Masaan', in which Vicky's character says, "Ye saala dukh kaabe khatam nahi hota be (why doesn't the sorrow end)?" was improvised by Vicky and that too when he the actor was purposely drunk in line with his character of Deepak. Neeraj said, "It was an independent films, we didn't have much budget so, the controlled conditions on set were very few."

There's one shot in the sequence wherein a train in a very shallow depth is passing in the background and Vicky sings the opening lines from the song "Tu kisi rail si guzarti hai". The director said despite being drunk, Vicky improvised on this bit and it just propelled the whole scene. Neeraj said: "Vicky was drunk during that scene and he kept saying sorry for his actions although he did nothing wrong. It was a creative call for him to get drunk, and he performed exceptionally well."



BACHCHAN BRILLIANCE: ABHISHEK'S RIVETING PERFORMANCE ELEVATES R. BALKI'S 'GHOOMER'



FILM REVIEW

Director: R. Balki
Cast: Abhishek Bachchan, Saiyami Kher, Angad Bedi and Shabana Azmi
Ratings: **** (Four stars)

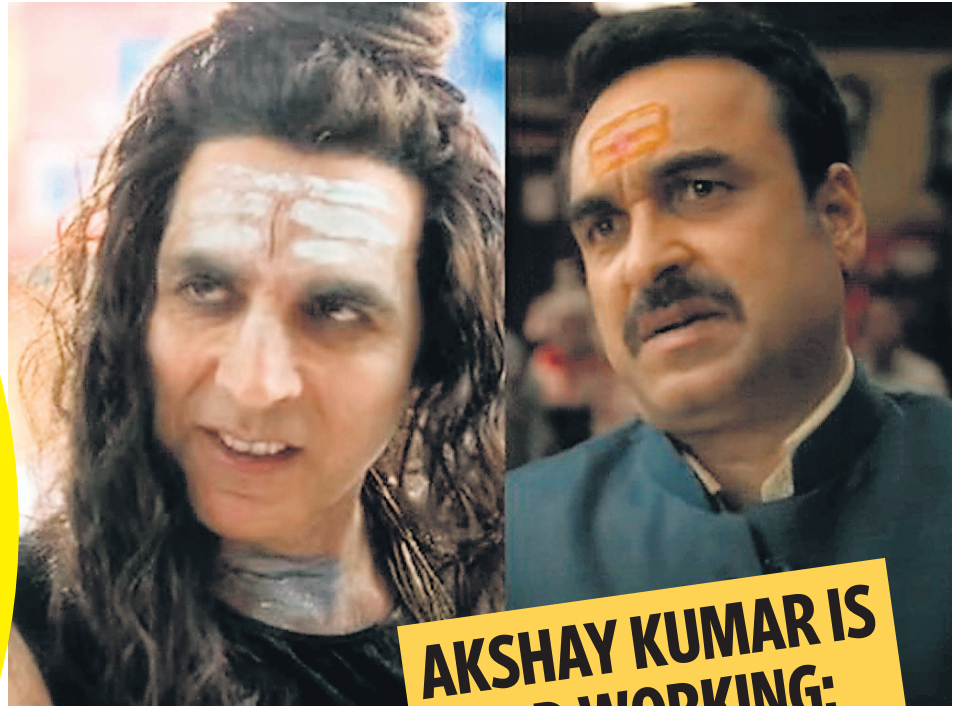
Mumbai | Agencies

In R. Balki's latest, Abhishek Bachchan takes centre stage in a role that defies conventions and expectations. Supported by Saiyami Kher and Angad Bedi, he goes on to deliver an inspiring performance that cements his position as an acting powerhouse.

'Ghoomer' depicts an extraordinary journey of a cricketer whose life meets tragedy with an unexpected accident that

leaves Saiyami with only one hand. Post the accident, Saiyami becomes a lefty and contemplates ending her life, but that's when Abhishek enters it. Playing the coach, Abhishek's versatility shines. Saiyami's transformation is brilliant. Despite his character's persona, Abhishek infuses the narrative with renewed energy, aiding Saiyami's character development from a promising batter to an innovative spinner.

Her character makes you feel the pain with every shot and angle. It is also a perfect example of how with the right grit and determination, everything is possible. Abhishek's character in 'Ghoomer' is one that allows his performance to talk through his eyes. His portrayal of a troubled drunkard, a deeply flawed and tormented soul battling his inner demons, is mesmerising. He is also seen grappling with a



AKSHAY KUMAR IS HARD WORKING: PANKAJ TRIPATHI

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actor Pankaj Tripathi, who is currently enjoying the success of his latest release 'OMG 2', has talked about his relationship with his co-actor Akshay Kumar, who he says recommended his name for the movie.

'OMG 2' was the second time Pankaj and Akshay were seen together on the silver screen. The two had earlier worked in 'Bachchan Pandey', which released in 2022. Pankaj in a conversation said: "It was great working with him the second time. My name in the film was recommended by him only."

"The relationship is strong with him and he is a very hard working actor. He has worked beautifully in the film. I have seen it, that's why I am saying it. I have a great relationship with him and I believe him and admire him," he said.

'OMG 2' released alongside 'Gadar 2' starring Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel on August 11. Upon its release the film

collects Rs 10.26 crore on day 1. However the film is now inching towards Rs 100 crore as on its fifth day the film has managed Rs 79.47.

Trade analyst Taran Adarsh tweeted: "#OMG2 continues to win hearts and mint money, after the big jump on #IndependenceDay... Will hit CENTURY (100 crore) in Weekend 2... Fri 10.26 crore, Sat 15.30 crore, Sun 17.55 crore, Mon 12.06 crore, Tue 17.10 crore, Wed 7.20 crore. Total: ? 79.47 crore. #India biz."

Akshay on Thursday took to Twitter, now known as X, to thank everyone for loving the films.

He wrote: "A big thank you to our audiences for all the love for #OhMyGadar and giving us the greatest week in Indian Film History! Pyaar aur Abhaa #Gadar2 in cinemas and #OMG2 in cinemas."

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actor Dulquer Salmaan, who has been a part of several hit films, and has impressed masses with his acting skills, revealed that he always looks up to his father-the legendary star Mammooty as his 'biggest inspiration' in the industry, but despite that, he would never remake any of his father's films. Dulquer started his career as a business manager at a construction company in Dubai. However, his love for cinema and acting, made him leave the job and follow in his father's footsteps.

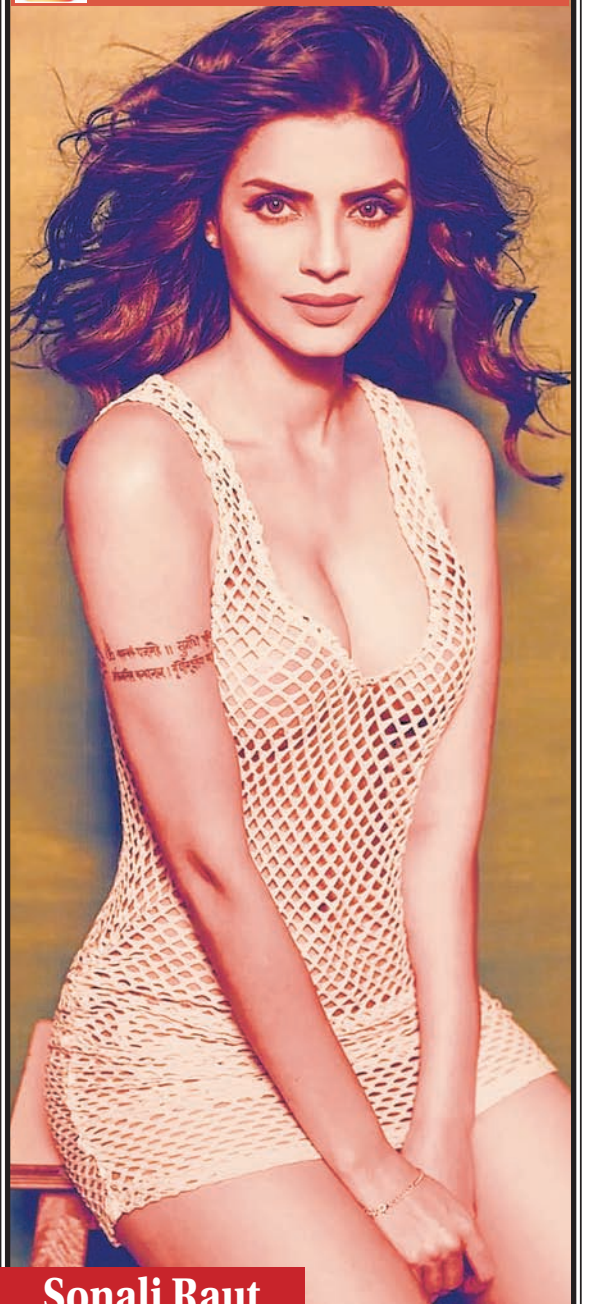
During a live show on Roposo, which is the creator-driven live platform, when Dulquer was asked about his biggest inspiration, he revealed, "My father, Mammooty, is my greatest inspiration in the film industry." He further added that his father was the one who supported him when he decided to shift his career from being a business manager to being an actor.

However, when he was asked if he would work in any remake of his father's film, he left everyone surprised with his answer. In a day and age when remakes and recreations of songs and movies are a trend, Dulquer said: "None! I don't believe in remakes actually. I feel that classics should be left untouched. In fact, music, as well as movies, shouldn't be remade."

Furthermore, he also spoke about his upcoming series 'Guns & Gulaabs', as well as his fan-boy moment with Deepika Padukone, how he celebrates Valentine's Day with his wife, daughter, and mother, among many other such exciting revelations during his live show on Roposo. 'Guns & Gulaabs' is a captivating narrative of 'firsts', set in the early '90s in the unpredictable and precarious town called Gulaabganj. The series is an ode to Bollywood in the nineties, bringing back the charms of the decade.

On the work front, Dulquer will be seen in Raj & DK's 'Guns & Gulaabs'.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Sonali Raut