



EDITOR'S SPECS

Hanuman flag removal controversy spreads to other parts of K'taka... The Hanuman flag removal row, that became a flashpoint between the Congress government, BJP and Hindu organisations in Karnataka...

PORTAL OF TROUBLE OPENS AGAIN FOR MADHYA PRADESH TRIBALS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR PATTAS

Sanavver Shafi

Ravalusindh Baiga (50) had been cultivating four to five acres of land since 1998. When the Forest Rights Act (FRA) came into existence in 2006, he filed a lease claim for those eight fields. However, the lease copy he got in 2016 gave him the right to only an acre, or four fields...



rules of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, and FRA. This task force is functional only on paper now. Task force's suggestions ignored... Tarek Bhatia says they had suggested that the forest lease hearing should be held offline at gram sabhas because the rules itself say that the decision should be taken at gram sabha public meeting...

not made a final decision on the mandatory online process. The district magistrate had written to the state government in October itself to allow offline process, but there has been no response. Not much luck with offline revision... The lease of most of the people in our village is yet to be amended...

international

TRUMP RUNS LOW ON CASH FOR CAMPAIGN AS LEGAL FEES DRAIN HIM, BIDEN FLUSH WITH FUNDS

Washington | Agencies

Former President Donald Trump is literally roughing it out in the 2024 presidential race, despite being a front runner for the GOP nomination, as he is facing a cash crunch with legal fees draining him out...



The former president's prodigious legal fees. Similarly, Trump's official campaign blew through more cash than it took in over the last three months of the year...

Trump's campaign held before the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. Flash to the Future, the main super PAC backing Biden, held a little bit more in the bank than MAGA Inc...

IDF will stay in Gaza, hostage deal not at any cost: Netanyahu

Tel Aviv | Agencies

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that Israel will not end the ongoing war with Hamas and that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would stay in Gaza...



working on another outline for the release of hostages and that won't be at any cost. It may be noted that active mediatory talks are being held at various places between Qatar, Egypt and the US for the release of Israeli hostages...

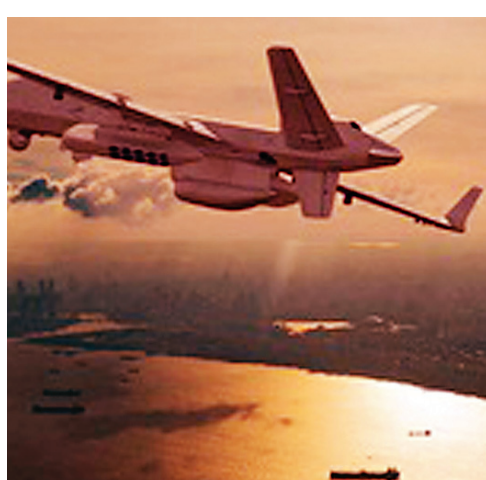
207 CAPTIVES RETURNED TO UKRAINE FROM RUSSIA: ZELENSKY

Kiev: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said that 207 Ukrainian captives returned home from Russia. "Our people are back. 207 of them. We return them home no matter what," Zelensky wrote on Wednesday...

US addressing 'questions' lawmakers have on drone deal with India

Washington | Agencies

US State Department Spokesperson on Wednesday did not deny or confirm a news report that the proposed sale of MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones to India was being blocked by lawmakers but did say that officials "routinely consult" with members of the foreign relations committees of the US Congress...



Congress, over the alleged assassination attempt was much broader.

The proposed sale of these SeaGuardian drones was among two big-ticket announcements by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden in June. The other was the joint production of GE jet engines in India...

Yemen's Houthis claim new attack on US vessel in Gulf of Aden

Sanaa | Agencies

Yemen's Houthi group has said that they launched a missile attack on a US commercial ship in the Gulf of Aden, claiming a "direct hit". The group added on Wednesday that they targeted the vessel KOI, a container ship that was heading to Israeli ports...



the USS Gravelly, in the Red Sea, Xinhua news agency reported. He noted the Houthis would confront "any US-British escalation with escalation" and would not hesitate to launch more attacks in retaliation for any "foolishness" against Yemen...



RAPED, THROAT SLIT 5 YEARS AGO, SURVIVOR WAITS FOR PROMISED EDUCATION FUND

Team Absolute | Bhopal

She was gang-raped and left to die when she was only 7 years old. The then Madhya Pradesh government had promised her a better life, complete with proper housing and fully-funded education. Five years later, the survivor is still struggling and waiting for the current dispensation to fulfil the promises made by the previous government.

On June 26, 2018, she was kidnapped from near her school by two men in Mandasaur district. After raping her, the accused slit her throat. She survived the brutal incident.

The then Shivraj Singh Chouhan government announced proper housing and assured to fund her and her sister's education. They soon got a house and shop in Indore.

In 2019, however, when the Kamal Nath-led government came to power, the Indore Development Authority asked the family of the minor rape survivor to vacate the home as, they claimed, no official order was issued by the previous BJP government. Later, the Congress government issued the orders and they got back their house.

Five years after she was brutalised,



there seems no end in sight for the survivor's distress. Her family has alleged that the government is yet to pay their daughters' school fees that now run in lakhs.

The school authorities sent a letter, dated December 22, 2023, to the father that cited financial problems being faced by them. They said that

the pandemic-caused economic slump and rising prices of essential commodities have led to the worsened financial situation.

The survivor is a class 6 student and her sister is in class 11.

They have written a letter to the Indore district collector, mentioning an outstanding payment of ₹ 14.16

lakh. Even in 2022, the results of the two sisters were withheld over non-payment of dues. At that time, Shivraj Singh Chouhan intervened and the issue was resolved. The rape-accused men were caught within 24 hours of the rape after police examined the photographs and CCTV footage from the neighbourhood.

All sections including poor, women, youth and farmers have been considered in the budget: Chief Minister Dr. Yadav

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav, while reacting to Union Budget during his stay in Morena said that persistent efforts are being made to make the country progressive under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Today's budget presented in the form of Vote on Account is all-inclusive and comprehensive. All sections including the poor, women, youth and farmers have been taken care of in the budget. The ongoing development and public welfare works in the country, has brought 25 crore population out of the poverty line, which is a big achievement.

Thanks to the efforts of Prime Minister Modi, India has emerged as the fourth economy of the world. In the coming times, we will realize the resolve of Modi for making India the third economy of the world. In Amrit Kaal by the year 2047, India will be the first nation in the world. The country will move ahead with the concept of Digital India.

Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that the idea of providing housing to two crore people in the country is extraordinary. Prime Minister Modi has resolved to ensure "Pakka Makan" for all. The new housing scheme for the middle class is also an achievement. Arrangements have been made to provide benefits of Ayushman Yojana to Anganwadi workers and ASHA workers in the budget. There was a long standing need to provide such facilities to poor families. India will move ahead with the promotion of Digital India and the reforms being implemented through it. The Union Finance Minister deserves congratulations for facilitating cervical cancer vaccination for girls in the 9-14 age group. In the coming time, the new



scheme made under roof top solar plant in one crore houses will pave the way for saving 300 units of electricity in these houses. This will prove to be a revolutionary step towards energy conservation and we all will reap benefits from it. Madhya Pradesh has immense potential for tourism. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that there is immense potential for tourism in Madhya Pradesh. The decision to provide interest free long term loan in the tourism sector will lead to all-round development of tourism. Construction and expansion of airports on 517 new routes under the UDAN scheme will prove to be a milestone in the progress of air traffic and this will also expand air traffic in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that the budget extends much hope for India's economic and all-round progress. The state government will take advantage of the budget in Vote on Account and we will move towards making Madhya Pradesh number one in the country. Congratulations and best wishes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for an all-encompassing welfare budget.

People took to the streets over vandalism of temple in Guna

Team Absolute | Guna

Some anti-social elements vandalized a temple in Guna district of Madhya Pradesh. When this matter came to light, local people took to the streets on Thursday and started searching for the culprits and demanding action.

According to the information received, there is a Shiva temple on the outskirts of Bamori, Guna. Anti-social elements vandalized this Shiva temple late on Wednesday night and also uprooted the Shivalinga.

When the local people came to know about this information on Thursday, they came out on the streets and started demanding the arrest of the accused.

In view of the increasing tension, heavy police force



has been deployed. Police have registered a case against unknown people and are searching for those who carried out this incident.

Junior got promotion first due to lack of ACR, High Court imposed cost of one lakh on the department

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

Due to non-submission of ACR, promotion was given to the junior first. After submitting the ACR, he got promotion, but his seniority got affected. A petition was filed in the High Court challenging this. High Court Justice Vivek Aggarwal has ordered to provide seniority and other benefits to the petitioner. While imposing a cost of Rs 1 lakh on the department, the single bench has also ordered to provide the said amount to the petitioner as litigation expenses. In the petition filed on behalf of petitioner Santosh Kumar Srivastava, it was said that he was appointed to the post of Testing Assistant Grade 2 in the Electricity Department in September 1977. After this he got promotion to the post of Testing Assistant Grade 1. He was posted in the transmission company. Departmental DPC was held in October 2010 for promotion. His seniority order was seven, but due to lack of ACR report, promotions



were given to those who were ranked 21st and 40th in the seniority order. After submitting the ACR, he was given promotion in November 2010. Due to this his juniors became senior to him. He had presented a representation before the department in this regard. His representation was rejected by the Department of Justice without giving any proper reason. Due to this the said petition has been filed. Issuing the above instructions, the single bench has said in its order that it was the responsibility of the department to submit the ACR. Due to the mistake of the department, the petitioner got promotion late, even though there was no fault of his.

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INTERIM BUDGET IS LIKE A PALM TREE: KAMAL NATH

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the interim budget in Parliament on Thursday. Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Kamal Nath has compared this budget to a palm tree.

Kamal Nath has said in his reaction on the interim budget, "What if it has grown, it is like a palm tree. There is no shade for the birds and the fruits grow very far away. The situation of the interim budget presented today by the Modi government is something like this. We had hoped that in this pre-election budget, will the Finance Minister tell whether the target of providing 20 crore jobs as per the promise of providing 2 crore jobs every year by the Prime Minister



has been achieved or not? Referring to the expectations of the middle class, Kamal Nath said that the middle class had hoped that the

government would give some relaxation in the income tax slab, but once again exposing its anti-people face, the Modi government did not give any relaxation in the income tax. Modi government had promised that the income of farmers will be doubled by 2022, but today even in the budget of 2024, the government could not say even a single thing in favor of the farmers.

Referring to youth and women, Kamal Nath said that there is nothing in the budget for youth, women, unemployed, farmers and soldiers. The government has not presented any blueprint for the economic development of the country and the things it has said are things 15 and 20 years away. It's not a budget, just a quibble.

Madhya Pradesh government's anti-employee attitude has come to the fore again: Congress

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Employees of Madhya Pradesh are not getting their demand. I support. Before voting for the assembly elections, the BJP government had sought permission from the Election Commission to increase the dearness allowance.

The BJP government knew very well that the Election Commission cannot do this amidst the code of conduct. That's why BJP did this hypocrisy to show itself as employee friendly."

Kamal Nath alleges that now that the BJP govern-

demanding for a long time to give 46 percent dearness allowance at par with the Centre. I am supporting their demand. I support. Before voting for the assembly elections, the BJP government had sought permission from the Election Commission to increase the dearness allowance.

The BJP government knew very well that the Election Commission cannot do this amidst the code of conduct. That's why BJP did this hypocrisy to show itself as employee friendly."

Kamal Nath alleges that now that the BJP govern-

ment has been formed again, the file for increasing the dearness allowance of the employees is not being moved forward. This shows that the Bharatiya Janata Party talks about public interest at the time of elections and after winning the elections, it ignores all sections of society.

Kamal Nath demanded from the Chief Minister that instead of playing tricks with the government employees, he should give their rights to the employees and ensure to pay 46 percent dearness allowance.

UGC: 18 universities of Madhya Pradesh declared defaulters...

Team Absolute | Bhopal/New Delhi

University Grants Commission i.e. UGC has declared 18 universities of Madhya Pradesh as defaulters. The matter is about the appointment of Lokpal. Ombudsman has not been appointed in the university declared a defaulter. The University Grants Commission has declared 421 universities across India as defaulters in this matter. Despite the university becoming a defaulter, there will be no impact on examinations, mark sheets, degrees, diplomas in the current session, because these are recognized universities. It is believed that in the coming 3 months all the universities will appoint the ombudsman and due to this their names will be removed from the list of defaulters.

Defaulter Universities
Avedhash Pratap Singh University, Rewa, Pandit SN Shukla University, Shahdol, Mahatma Gandhi Gramodaya University, Chitrakoot, Music and Arts University, Gwalior, University of Veterinary Sciences, Jabalpur, University of Journalism and Communication, Bhopal, Sanskrit and Vedic University, Ujjain, Chhatrasal Bundelkhand University, Jabalpur, MP University of Medical Sciences, Jabalpur, Jiwaji University, Gwalior, Agricultural University, Jabalpur, University of Social Sciences, Indore, Law University, Jabalpur, Hindi University, Bhopal, Raja Shankarshah University, Chhindwara, Rajiv Gandhi University of Technology, Bhopal, Rani Durgavati University, Jabalpur, Sanchi

Participation in the Republic Day Parade is an inspiring accomplishment: Governor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The officials and volunteers of the National Service Scheme, who participated in the parade and contingent of the National Service Scheme in the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi, paid a courtesy visit to Governor Mangubhai Patel at the Raj Bhavan. They shared their experiences from the month-long camp held in New Delhi during the Republic Day celebrations. Information about awards and certificates earned in various programmes and competitions during the camp was given and photographs were shown. In the programme, the volunteers welcomed Governor Patel by presenting a bouquet and the officials of the National



Service Scheme presented mementos. On this occasion, Principal Secretary to the Governor Sanjay Shukla, Higher Education Commissioner Nishant Warwade, Vice Chancellor of Barkatullah University SK Jain, officials of the National Service Scheme Regional Directorate and volunteers were present. Governor Patel expressed that participating in the Republic Day Parade in the nation's capital is a truly

inspiring accomplishment. The success of the participant fills his family, community, region and state with joy and enthusiasm. The participants become a source of inspiration for the future generations. Congratulating the volunteers, he said that he himself is feeling proud of their achievement. The parade of women in front of the President, Droupadi Murmu, who holds the highest post of the Republic, symbolizes the pleasant changes

occurring in the country. Governor Patel said that the volunteers experienced the feeling of national unity in the camp. It is their responsibility to spread it in the society. Working with the feeling that their actions should bring glory to the nation is the way to make a developed India. He appreciated the efforts of the National Service Scheme to create public awareness about environmental, health and social challenges and responsibilities. He said that nature has bestowed more intellectual and physical powers to humans than any other creature. Nature intends that humans should help in the development of other living beings. The relevance of human life lies in this.

Transgender Clinic inaugurated at AIIMS Bhopal

Bhopal: A dedicated specialty clinic named "Transgender Clinic" is inaugurated today at AIIMS Bhopal to cater to the unmet needs of transgender. This is the first such clinic amongst all AIIMS in the country. This specialty clinic will have collaborative services from the Department of Psychiatry, Endocrinology, Urology, and Plastic Surgery. Clinic will function on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month from 2 pm - 4 pm. All the involved departments will function along with the need-based assistance from other medical and surgical specialties to provide comprehensive clinical care.

Inaugurating the clinic Prof. (Dr) Ajai Singh, Executive Director AIIMS Bhopal said that this is a unique initiative by departments of Psychiatry, Endocrinology, Urology and Burns and Plastic Surgery. He further said that this clinic will provide comprehensive services to transgender populations and their families in a special manner, keeping in view the sensitivities involved in their care. The services will be provided in collaboration with private initiatives such as NGOs working in the field of Transgender sensitization and destigmatization programs and workshops with a focus on the overall health of Transgender and LGBTQ+ members. During the session Abdul Majid, President of Anmol NGO, shared the ground level difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ members and he has assured to facilitate the reach the needy individuals to the said clinic. In the inaugural function some transgender also participated and expressed happiness on starting an exclusive clinic for them. Earlier, Dr. Vijender Singh Head of Psychiatry department welcomed the gathering and highlighted the services that will be available.



Priyanka Chopra, Nick Jonas forced to move out of \$20M mansion over health concerns

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas and her husband Nick Jonas, who recently performed at the Lollapalooza India music festival, have moved out of their lavish California mansion. Their dream home turned into a nightmare when water damage led to a mould infestation in their home, sparking a legal battle that is still ongoing, reports Page Six. The couple purchased the luxury property — which boasts seven bedrooms, nine bathrooms, a chef's kitchen, temperature-controlled wine room, an indoor basketball court, interior bowling alley, a home theatre, an entertainment lounge, a spa with steam shower, a full service gym and a billiards room — in September 2019 for \$20 million.

However, as per a copy of a lawsuit filed in May 2023 and exclusively obtained by Page Six, the pool and spa began to present a series of issues for the then-newlyweds around April 2020, including "porous waterproofing" that "fostered mould contamination and related issues".

"At or about the same time, a water leak appeared at the barbecue area on the deck. This leak damaged a portion of the interior living area immediately below the deck," the complaint states.

As per Page Six, the home's problems allegedly made the premises "virtually unlivable" and "dangerous from a health perspective to occupy."

This has resulted in substantial and significant damage along with a failure of consideration which requires that the purchase and sale be rescinded," the lawsuit also states, further noting that Jonas and Chopra are seeking via their trustee "consequential damages".

"In the alternative, the plaintiff should be reimbursed for all costs of repair, plus compensation for the loss of use and other damages caused by defendants' conduct," their attorneys further argue.

The exact costs have not yet been determined but, as per the complaint, the waterproofing issues "will exceed" \$1.5 million and "general damages" are estimated to be at around \$2.5 million.



Austin Butler reveals his secret childhood crush

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Austin Butler, who essayed the role of Elvis Presley in the film 'Elvis', has revealed his first crush. The actor said that his first crush was Danielle Fishel's character Topanga Lawrence, reports Female First UK.

Speaking on "The Drew Barrymore Show", he said: "I think like Topanga on that show, 'Boy Meets World'."

The 32-year-old actor was joined on the couch by his 'Masters of the Air' co-star Callum Turner, 33 - who is dating pop star Dua Lipa, 28 - and they both said the way to a woman's heart is penning love letters.

Austin said: "I think writing love letters, little notes."

Callum agreed: "I was going to say love letters as well. I think writing to each other is a beautiful thing."

As per Female First UK, Callum Turner also revealed that his childhood crush was Jessica Rabbit. Austin, who previously dated model Kaia Gerber, also revealed his romantic secret talent.

He said: "I can make a rose out of a paper napkin."

Meanwhile, Austin recently revealed Tom Hanks recruited him for 'Masters of the Air' while they were working on 'Elvis' together. The former Disney star played Elvis Presley in Baz Luhrmann's 2023 blockbuster opposite Hanks as the singer's manager Colonel Tom Parker, and Austin has revealed his co-star found him his next job in the Apple TV Plus war drama before they'd even wrapped filming.



'Not sad', says Margot Robbie as she breaks her silence over Oscars snub

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Margot Robbie is "not sad" about her lack of Oscar nomination for 'Barbie'. The 33-year-old actress starred as the iconic Mattel doll alongside Ryan Gosling as her boyfriend Ken in Greta Gerwig's summer blockbuster. While her co-star received a nod for Best Supporting Actor and the movie is up for Best Picture at the upcoming Academy Awards, both she and the film's director missed out

on a nomination, reports Female First UK. But Margot admitted that she feels so "blessed" in the first place, although she believes that moviemaker Greta, 40, should have been nominated.

Speaking as part of a panel at a SAG screening of 'Barbie', she said: "There's no way to feel sad when you know you're this blessed. Obviously I think Greta should be nominated as a director, because what she did is a once-in-a-career, once-in-a-lifetime thing, what she pulled off, it really is. But it's been an incredible year for all the films."

As per Female First UK, upon its release in July 2023, 'Barbie' pulled in almost \$1.5 billion at the box office whilst its competitor 'Oppenheimer' - which leads the way with a total of 13 nominations - made just over \$950 million.

Margot speculated that the reaction 'Barbie' has simply become "bigger" than the industry itself. She said: "I just suspect it's bigger than us. It's bigger than this movie, it's bigger than our industry."

As well as Best Picture and Best Supporting Actor, 'Barbie' is up for Best Supporting Actress for America Ferrera, costume design, production design, and adapted screenplay whilst 'I'm Just Ken' and Billie Eilish track 'What Was I Made For?' are up for Best Original Song.

Margot added: "Everyone getting the nods that they've had is just incredible, and the best picture nod. We set out to do something that would shift culture, affect culture, just make some sort of impact. And it's already done that and some, way more than we ever dreamed it would. And that is truly the biggest reward that could come out of all of this."



Tracy Chapman to perform 'Fast Car' with Luke Combs at Grammy Awards

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter Tracy Chapman, who has not performed in public in years, will return into the spotlight to perform a duet of 'Fast Car' with Luke Combs at the Grammys on Sunday night. Luke Combs, who had a massive hit with his cover version of 'Fast Car' last year, was already announced as a performer on the show, reports Variety. Chapman's appearance

comes as a significant surprise, as she has only performed for the cameras three times since wrapping up her last tour in 2009, and the singer had thus far resisted the popular demand to take advantage of the resurgence of 'Fast Car' as an international phenomenon.

As per Variety, Luke's version of 'Fast Car' was a multi-format crossover hit for the country superstar, topping Billboard's Radio Songs chart for four weeks, making it to Number 1 on the adult pop and country formats for two weeks each, and topping out at an impressive Number 6 at Top 40 radio and Number 2 on the Hot 100.

Chapman's original version came out in 1988 and peaked at Number 6 on the Hot 100, not really a reflection of how massive it was across demographics at the time. It reached the top 5 in the U.K. twice, once in 1988 and then again 23 years later in 2011. Chapman issued a statement of support for Combs' version but otherwise has stayed out of the public eye since her song became dominant again last year.

The country star's camp got permission from Chapman's to release the tune as a single, even though legally they could have put it out without her blessing. Combs, for his part, said last year that he had not had any conversations with Chapman about the tune, but added that getting her approval was enough.

Along with royalties, Chapman has subsequently received accolades like a song of the year award from the Country Music Association.

Trevor Noah got a 'random call' from Jennifer Lopez to appear in her new movie

Los Angeles | Agencies

Comedian Trevor Noah has revealed that he received a call from singer-actress Jennifer Lopez to appear in her upcoming streaming musical film 'This Is Me...Now: A Love Story'. However, upon learning about the opportunity, he couldn't believe it was real, reports People magazine.

"That was a random call where your phone rings, and it's Jennifer Lopez, and you're like, 'This must be a prank,'" Noah, 39, told 'People'. "And she wants you to come and do a cameo in her visual experience, and you're like, 'Whoa. I mean, I don't know what I'm doing, but OK, I'll join in!'"

Earlier this month, Lopez, 54, unveiled the trailer for her Prime Video movie 'This Is Me...Now: A Love Story', which arrives in tandem with her new album on February 16.

As per People, the preview featured the ' Hustlers' star on a journey through both dreamscapes and challenges grounded in reality in order to find love. In the film, the 'Jenny from the Block' singer will be joined by her husband Ben Affleck — who was famously the inspiration for her 2002 album 'This Is Me... Then' as well as celebrities including Noah, Fat Joe, Kim Petras, Post Malone, Keke Palmer, Sofia Vergara, Jenifer Lewis, Jay Shetty, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Sadhguru and Derek Hough.

"There's just a fun collection of people who've come together to celebrate an icon and somebody who has, across different genres, really just blazed her own trail," said Noah. "It was a lot of fun."

Despite taking part in the project, however, the Daily Show alum still isn't exactly sure of what



fans can expect from This Is Me...Now: A Love Story. "I'm really excited to see what it is. The funny thing is I don't know too much about it because they were very secretive about how they did it," he said. "I only know about my parts of what it is, but I don't know about all of it. I too am waiting to see what it's going to be."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY

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LIONEL MESSI TEAMS UP WITH 'TED LASSO' STAR JASON SUDEKIS FOR SUPER BOWL AD

Los Angeles | Agencies

Soccer great Lionel Messi will show off fancy footwork in Michelob beer's latest Big Game commercial, which is slated to run during the CBS broadcast of Super Bowl LVIII on February 11, reports 'Variety'.

Messi is joined in the spot by 'Ted Lasso' actor and producer Jason Sudekis as well as NFL Hall of Famer Dan Marino. The action takes place on a beach with plenty of moves from Messi as he waits for his next glass of Michelob Ultra, adds 'Variety'.

The three personalities got together for the first time on the set of the commercial, says Marques, but hit it off relatively quickly, says Ricardo Marques, Michelob Ultra's vice-president of marketing.

Last year, according to 'Variety', the Anheuser-Busch InBev beer teamed up with Netflix to highlight 'Full Swing', a documentary series that follows a group of golfers across an entire PGA Tour season. In 2024, the emphasis is on football, of course, but not necessarily the American kind. Soccer is "approaching, I believe,



what is a golden era in the US," says Marques. "There is a bigger play for us as a brand in the space of soccer

and we could not make that happen without having the GOAT himself be a part of that story." He also sees the

Super Bowl ad serving as "a great kickoff" to a year that will include the Paris Olympics.

Hitaashee takes a three-shot lead over Ananya in third leg of WPGT

Kolkata | Agencies

Hitaashee Bakshi fired four birdies in a five-hole stretch in the middle of the round to grab a handy three-shot lead over Ananya Garg after the second round of the third leg of the 2024 Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Tollygunge Club.

Hitaashee, starting in the final group, had a bogey-bogey start, but then a series of birdies saw her roar into contention. She dropped a shot on the Par-4 12th but got that back with her fifth birdie of the day on the Par-4 15th. Her round of 68 put her at 1-under 139 and three clear of Ananya (68).

Ananya, looking for her maiden win on the WPGT made up for her opening round of 74 as she had four birdies against two bogeys. Ananya is now 2-over for 36 holes at 142.

Seher Atwal (71-71) tied second (T2), could have been better but for a bogey finish. She also had a double bogey on Par-4 12th. She had three



birdies during the day.

Three players, Ridhima Dilawari (69), amateur Anaahat Bindra (71) and Gauri Karhade (73) were in a tie for fifth place at 4-over 144, while Amandeep Drall, who actually went into the lead after a birdie on the second hole, slipped later.

Amandeep, playing in the lead group, birdied the second, while her playing partners, Hitaashee and Khushi started bogey-bogey.

Amandeep suffered three bogeys in a row from third to fifth and then had two more bogeys and a double bogey

against just one birdie for a round of 76 that saw her drop down to eighth.

Karishma Govind (75) and Khushi Khanijau (80) were tied for ninth place, while Sneha Singh (72), winner of the last event, was Tied-11th with Kriti Chowhan (72).

Overnight leader Khushi Khanijau had a rough day with a round of 80 that included a finish with two double bogeys on the last two holes as she slipped to tied ninth at 149.

The cut fell at 157 and 20 players made it to the final round.

India's Ankita, Rutuja, Sahaja get wild cards for Mumbai Open Tennis Championships



Team Absolute | Mumbai

To provide level playing opportunities and world-class competition to top Indian players Ankita Raina, Sahaja Yamalalpalli and Rutuja Bhosale and promising teenager Vaishnavi Adkar of Maharashtra, have been awarded the singles main draw wild cards for the Mumbai Open WTA 125K Series Tennis Championships, starting here on February 5.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, the Organising Committee members, Sanjay Khandare and Pravin Darade stated, "We are happy to get this world-class event back to India to provide world-class

competition to our players. We also thank our Sponsors, L&T, for coming forward and supporting women's tennis in the country. I'm sure that having such a major event at the beginning of the year will help our players to improve their ranking and participate in higher-level events globally." "Our players do not get to play such high-level events due to various reasons and that is why we decided to organise this event here so at least 8 to 10 Indians can get a chance to gain valuable WTA points and thereby improve their world rankings," added Khandare and Darade.

The event is being organised by the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) and the Cricket

Club of India (CCI).

Prashant Sutar, Chairman of MSLTA, thanked the Maharashtra Government for their continued support. "We are thankful to the Government of Maharashtra for their support to tennis, with their backing we have been able to organise ATP tour events, Davis Cup ties, ATP Challengers and the WTA 125 Series events," he said.

He further added, "With the government support, we are launching the Lakshyavedh project for Maharashtra players. Under this initiative, we have joined hands with JC Ferrero Academy to start a world-class tennis academy in Pune.

Hockey India name 24-man squad for FIH Pro League 2023-24

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Hockey India on Thursday announced the 24-member men's squad that will participate in the Bhubaneswar and Rourkela legs of the FIH Pro League 2023-24.

The Bhubaneswar leg will begin on February 10 and end on February 16 while the Rourkela leg will commence on February 19 and conclude on February 25.

India will play against Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, and Australia twice each across both legs, beginning their campaign against Spain on February 10.

Taking charge of the team will be the seasoned duo of captain Harmanpreet Singh, known for his drag-flicking prowess, and vice-captain Hardik Singh, an accomplished midfielder. Speaking on the team selection, chief coach Craig Fulton said: "We've carefully selected a well-balanced squad, blending seasoned expertise with the vigour of youth. Our goal is to forge a cohesive unit capable of competing at the highest level.

"The FIH Pro League serves as an ideal platform to refine our strategies and measure our skills against top-tier opponents. The league's significance is paramount, with champions earning a coveted spot in the FIH

SQUAD ANNOUNCEMENT
FIH PRO League 2023-24
Bhubaneswar (10th to 16th February)
Rourkela (19th to 25th February)

GOALKEEPER Sreejesh PR Krishan Bahadur Pathak	MIDFIELDERS Vivek Sagar Prasad Nilakanta Sharma Manpreet Singh Shamsher Singh Hardik Singh (VC) Rajkumar Pal Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem
DEFENDERS Harmanpreet Singh (C) Jarnmanpreet Singh Varun Kumar Amit Rohidas Sumit Sanjay Jugraj Singh Vishnukant Singh	FORWARDS Mandeep Singh Abhishek Sukhjeet Singh Lalit Kumar Upadhyay Gurjant Singh Akashdeep Singh Arajeet Singh Hundal

Hockey World Cup 2026.

"Additionally, it offers a valuable opportunity to pinpoint areas for enhancement, playing a pivotal role in our preparations for the Paris Olympics. We hold the belief that this exposure will elevate our performance and equip us to confront the impending challenges with con-

fidence." Indian Men's Hockey

Team:
Goalkeepers: Sreejesh Parattu Raveendran, Krishan Bahadur Pathak

Defenders: Harmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Jarnmanpreet Singh, Varun Kumar, Sumit, Sanjay, Jugraj Singh, Vishnukant Singh

Midfielders: Hardik Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Shamsher Singh, Rajkumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Rabichandra Moirangthem Forwards: Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Mandeep Singh, Gurjant Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Abhishek, Akashdeep Singh, Arajeet Singh Hundal

IND v ENG: Ravindra Jadeja likely to miss Rajkot Test: Report

New Delhi | Agencies

India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who was ruled out of the second Test against England due to a hamstring injury, might miss the third Test scheduled to be played at Rajkot from February 15, as per reports.

Jadeja's hamstring injury appears to be more severe than initially anticipated, possibly sidelining him for an extended period, according to a report on Cricbuzz.

Speculation suggests it would be remarkable if he manages to return for the fourth Test in Ranchi, with the third Test in Rajkot also likely to be beyond his reach. The BCCI's recent release only confirms his absence for the second Test.

India, who are currently trailing 0-1 in the five-match series, might also miss the services of key players such as Virat Kohli, K.L. Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, and Mohammed Shami.

Shami, grappling with an ankle issue, is currently in London, undergoing treatments and injections. His participation in any match of the ongoing five-match Test series seems unlikely, raising questions about his readiness for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) scheduled for March to May.

The silence surrounding Virat Kohli's absence leaves uncertainty over his availability for the remaining matches. While the BCCI initially stated his withdrawal was limited to the first two Tests, Kohli's current absence from the country adds a layer of mystery to the situation.

In contrast, K.L. Rahul's situation appears less alarming. Complaints of right quadriceps pain, related to a thigh surgery in 2022,



prompted precautionary measures. Rahul is currently at the National Cricket Academy (NCA), and indications suggest he could

recover in time for the third Test, given the substantial gap between the second and third Tests.

Prithvi Shaw to make Ranji Trophy return after injury layoff; included in Mumbai's squad

Kolkata | Agencies

India batter Prithvi Shaw set to make a return to competitive cricket after a six-month hiatus due to a knee injury as he has been included in Mumbai's squad for the fifth round of the 2023-24 Ranji Trophy against Bengal here at Eden Gardens.

The decision to include Shaw in Mumbai's squad came after a clearance from the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru, following a fitness test in which he was deemed fit for competitive cricket.

"Prithvi Shaw is progressing well in his batting and fielding drills. He will undergo higher volumes of acceleration, change of direction, and agility drills over the next 3 weeks to develop the required robustness for his injured knee ligament before making a return to sports," The NCA had informed the Mumbai Cricket Association, as quoted by Cricbuzz.

The 24-year-old, who sustained the injury during a county stint with Northamptonshire in August, underwent surgery in London, followed by three-month rehabilitation process at NCA.

Shaw's injury came at a time when he was in peak



form, leading the run charts in England's domestic one-day competition with 429 runs, including a record-breaking 244 off 153 balls

against Somerset.

Mumbai, the 41-time Ranji champions, currently leads Group B with three wins in four matches.

Ajay Devgn strategically invests in UK-based global T20 cricket tournament

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn, who is currently busy with his action film 'Singham Again', has strategically invested in the cricket World Championship Of Legends.

Iconic cricketers like Yuvraj Singh, Brett Lee, Kevin Petersen, Suresh Raina and Shahid Afridi will be a part of World Championship Of Legends which is set to be held at the Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham in the UK. The star-studded event guarantees a nostalgic reunion of cricketing legends, injecting brilliance and experience into this global T20 spectacle.

Expressing his passion for the sport, Ajay Devgn said: "As a cricket lover,



witnessing celebrated cricket legends back in action is a dream come true.

The tournament not only brings forth cricketing nostalgia but also marks a unique collaboration between cinema and cricket, offering an extraordinary gift for fans worldwide."

Harshit Tomar, the visionary founder of the World Championship Of Legends, said: "We are thrilled to welcome Indian Legend Mr. Ajay Devgn on board.

His passion for the game and commitment to promoting cricket align perfectly with the values of WCL. With an anticipated list of renowned players, we are confident that WCL 2024 will be an unparalleled success."

Divyah Khosla Kumar starts shooting for 'Hero Heeroine' in Hyderabad

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Divyah Khosla Kumar has started shooting for the first schedule of her upcoming film titled 'Hero Heeroine' in Hyderabad. On Thursday, the makers of the film shared the second poster of the film as well.

While Divyah's first look offered a chic and classy diva like vibe, the second poster is a strong reminiscent of the era of Meena Kumari and Vyjayanthimala with sheer elegance. Directed by Suresh Krishna, the film explores the unscripted journey of on-screen romance turning into real-life love.

Divyah Khosla Kumar said, "It's the most promising role I am playing so far and I can't express how happy and thrilled I am to see so much love coming my way already with first look coming out. Stepping into the world of 'Hero Heeroine' is an experience that will be engraved in me forever. The script is a captivating blend of glamour and substance, and I am

thrilled to be part of a project that promises to be a visual and emotional spectacle."

She further mentioned, "The second poster offers a sneak peek into the dual worlds of Priyadarshini and I am excited how this film holds many aspects that will blow your mind, can't wait for audiences to join us on this cinematic journey". Producer Prema Arora said, "Thrilled with the response so far, it's a film very close to my heart. It unravels a tapestry of emotions, where love takes unexpected turns. The posters give a sneak peek into what to expect from this cinematic journey, I promise the story will keep you on the edge of your seats".

She added, "This film is a celebration of modern love, and we can't wait to share the magic we've created. I hope this film will be accepted in the same way that my past films have, its the constant love and support from my fans that keeps me going and want to offer you the best, can't wait to share more soon".



Kartik Aaryan tastes sugar after a year

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Kartik Aaryan, who was last seen in the film 'Satyaprem Ki Katha', finally got to taste the sugar after a year as he wrapped up the shooting of his upcoming film 'Chandu Champion'.

The actor took to his Instagram recently, and shared a video from the wrap up of the film. The video shows director Kabir Khan feeding Kartik a Rasmalai to mark the end of the journey on a sweet note. For 'Chandu Champion', the actor underwent a physical transformation to star in the real-life story of a sportsman.

Kartik, who seemed surprised by the gesture at first, proceeded to eat the sweet and give his director a hug. The rest of the crew was seen cheering and smiling at the sweet moment, one person even spoke about Kartik getting a sugar rush since he consumed sugar after a year. The actor penned a note in the caption: "This RasMalai Tasted Like Victory! Finally eating sugar after a year!! After more than a year of intense preparation and 8 months of day-n-night shoots across the globe, today we complete the shooting journey of #ChanduChampion. And it couldn't have been sweeter



than my fav, Rasmalai - from the Man himself who carved this challenging path for

me... you have been a profound inspiration Sir! @kabirkhankk"



Varun Sood opens up on intimate scenes with actress Namrata Sheth

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Varun Sood, who essays the role of Ahaan Kothari in the streaming show 'Karma Calling', has opened up on the intimate scenes with his co-actor Namrata Sheth on the show.

Shooting intimate scenes can be a little tricky at times and needs a delicate balance to bring out the scene aesthetically and ensure comfort of the actors. The two actors found their comfort as they developed good understanding between each other and the show director Ruchi Narain.

Talking about the same, Varun Sood said, "There was actually no preparation that we

took for shooting the intimate scenes because I think there was a very nice understanding between Ruchi, Namrata and I. And obviously people who watch it think that Oh my god, how was this shot and all. But actually it is pretty technical and professional. You decide the whole thing, you catch the light you are listening to the director while it is happening".

He further mentioned, "You have to just build that rapport with your co-actor, build that comfort and be like okay, let's get this done, it's another scene because we have more things to shoot after this. So there was actually no nerves or fear when shooting that scene. Everything was very comfortable and everything was natural".

Sushmita Sen:

'I feel Aarya's pain as it's my own'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Sushmita Sen, who is gearing up for 'Aarya Antim Vaar', has said that the pain of her titular character of Aarya Sareen feels very personal to her. The International Emmy nominated series follows the journey of its titular character, who is an independent woman putting all her might to protect her family. She joins a mafia gang in order to get revenge for her husband's murder.

Elaborating on the same, Sushmita Sen said:

"Just like I always say, playing Aarya for three seasons makes me feel her pain as if it's my own. When we filmed the scenes where all her kids - Veer and Aaru turn against her, it broke my heart. There is a point in the series where she feels totally alone against the odds, even felt short of a family." She further mentioned: "I think that truly got to me and felt gratitude towards my own family and felt inspired by how Aarya handled it so well. She is like one of us, working hard every day to protect her family. I was really emotional, and it felt like every part of me was sharing Aarya Sareen's feelings, but again she fought through them and you'll know the how and why in Aarya Antim Vaar."



Vintage memorabilia, lobby cards, song booklets from Dev Anand films to be auctioned online

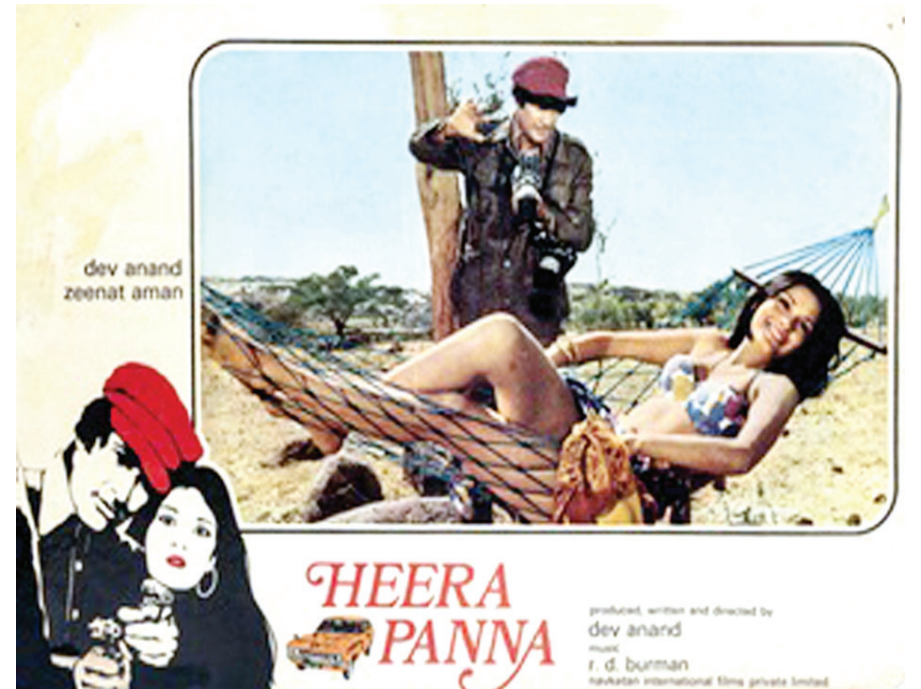
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rare and vintage memorabilia from the films of legendary actor late Dev Anand are set to be auctioned online.

The memorabilia includes film publicity art from the classics such as 'Baazi', 'Kala Bazaar', 'C.I.D.', 'Kala Pani', 'Guide', 'Tere Ghar Ke Samne', 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna', 'Johnny Mera Naam' and 'Heera Panna'.

It also includes rare and vintage photographic stills, posters, showcards, lobby cards, song booklets from his lesser known films such as 'Aaram', 'Milap', 'Maya', 'Manzil', 'Kahin Aur Chal', 'Baarish', 'Baat Ek Raat Ki', 'Sarhad' and 'Kinare Kinare'.

The highlights include a rare set of sixteen 'Kala Bazaar' and 'Johnny Mera Naam' lobby cards, 8 first release publicity black and white photographic stills from 'Guide', 15 coloured photographic stills from 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna', rare and beautifully designed posters of 'Munimji', 'Milap',



'Sarhad', 'Maya', 'Manzil', 'Kinare Kinare', 'Guide', 'Gambler', 'Darling Darling', and the unique Indian collaged handmade showcards from 'Kala Pani' and 'Amir Gharib'.

Senior Spokesperson for deRivaz & Ives Film Department - SMM Ausaja, said: "The small famous black and white silver gelatin photograph from 'Baazi', the 'Guide' photographic publici-

ty stills created for the international launch, the publicity and song booklets for Sarhad, the full set of 'Kala Bazaar' Lobby Cards are some of the standout rare items of memorabilia in this auction."

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Inayat Sharma