

absolute india

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ISHAN BECOMES SECOND-MOST EXPENSIVE INDIAN BUY EVER AFTER 15.25 CR PAYDAY



IPL MEGA AUCTION

AVESH KHAN: MOST-EXPENSIVE UNCAPPED PLAYER



Uncapped India pacer Avesh Khan joined the ten-crore club in the ongoing IPL auction on Saturday. Khan, who was phenomenal for Delhi in the 2021 season, got bids straightaway from Chennai Super Kings and Lucknow Super Giants. When Chennai backed out, Mumbai Indians entered the fray and was in an intense battle with Lucknow. Though Delhi Capitals and Hyderabad Sunrisers stepped in, Lucknow Super Giants remained rock-solid to buy him for INR 10 crore. The move meant Khan became the most expensive uncapped player in the history of IPL auctions, overtaking Krishnappa Gowtham who was paid INR 9.25 crore by Chennai Super Kings (CSK).

TOP 10 PLAYERS IN IPL AUCTION 2022

PLAYER SQUAD	BASE PRICE	TYPE	COST
1 Ishan Kishan MI	2 Cr	WICKETKEEPER	15.25
2 Deepak Chahar CSK	2 Cr	BOWLER	14
3 Shreyas Iyer KKR	2 Cr	BATTER	12.25
4 Harshal Patel RCB	2Cr	ALL-ROUNDER	10.75
5 Wanindu Hasaranga RCB	1 Cr	ALL-ROUNDER	10.75
6 Nicholas Pooran SRH	1.5 Cr	WICKETKEEPER	10.75
7 Shardul Thakur DC	2Cr	BOWLER	10.75
8 Prasad Krishna RR	1 Cr	BOWLER	10
9 Lockie Ferguson GT	2 Cr	BOWLER	10
10 Avesh Khan LSG	20 Lakh	BOWLER	10

Team Absolute | Bengaluru
Wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan became the second-most expensive Indian player in the history of IPL after being picked by his former team Mumbai Indians for a whopping INR 15.25 crores. Kishan overtook Shreyas Iyer, who was picked for INR 12.25 crores, to become the most expensive buy of the ongoing auction so far. Apart from Kishan, Sri Lanka leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and West Indies batter Nicholas Pooran landed paychecks in excess of INR 10 crores in the third round. Charu Sharma stepped in for the auctioneer duties after Hugh Edmeades had collapsed, with Hasaranga bought by Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) for INR 10.75 crores. The move meant Hasaranga was reunited with the team he represented in IPL 2021. As expected in case of keeper-batters, there was a frenetic bid for Kishan, a keeper who bats left-handed. His former team Mumbai Indians, Punjab Kings and Gujarat Titans were engaged in a tug of war before Sunrisers Hyderabad made a late entry.

Mumbai persisted hard to buy back left-handed Kishan for a gigantic INR 15.25 crores. Chennai and Hyderabad were in a battle to buy Pooran before Kolkata made a surprise entry. But Hyderabad battled hard to buy Pooran, who averaged just 7.72 in 2021 edition, for INR 10.75 crores. Apart from the trio, Washington Sundar and Krunal Pandya earned big. Gujarat, Punjab and Delhi Capitals were locked in a battle to get off-spin all-rounder Sundar. Lucknow Super Giants came into the mix at INR 8 crore. But Hyderabad waded into the bidding war and bought Sundar for INR 8.75 crores. For Pandya, a solid left-arm spin all-rounder for Mumbai in the past despite recent performances not up to the mark, Chennai, Punjab, Hyderabad, and Lucknow were in the bidding battle. Then Gujarat jumped in as well. But it was Lucknow who won with INR 8.75 crores. It also means that Pandya and Deepak Hooda, who were involved in a bitter spat ahead of the 2021 Syed Mushtaq Ali season, are now in the same IPL side.

Hyderabad and Gujarat were the initial bidders for Australia all-rounder Mitchell Marsh but Delhi joined in and eventually got him for INR 6.75 crores. Punjab and Hyderabad were engaged in battle for Jonny Bairstow with Delhi. But Punjab stayed their ground to pick Bairstow for INR 6.75 crores. Ambati Rayudu generated interest from Chennai, Delhi and Hyderabad. But Chennai won the race to buy Rayudu for INR 6.75 crores. Chennai were then engaged in an engrossing battle with Bangalore to pick Dinesh Karthik. Eventually, Bangalore snapped him for INR 5.5 crores, marking their reunion with Karthik after 2015 edition. Afghanistan all-rounder Mohammad Nabi was surprisingly unsold so was Australia keeper-batter Matthew Wade. India keeper Wriddhiman Saha and England keeper-batter Sam Billings also found no takers.



UNCAPPED STARS KHAN, TEWATIA, TRIPATHI EARN BIG PAYCHECKS

In the first round of the uncapped players' category of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2022 Mega Auction, Shahrukh Khan, Rahul Tewatia and Rahul Tripathi earned big paychecks as franchisees shelled out huge amounts of money to fill remaining slots in

their squads. For buying Khan, the big-hitting finisher from Tamil Nadu, there was a three-way battle between Chennai Super Kings, Kolkata Knight Riders and Punjab Kings. It narrowed down to a fierce battle between Chennai and Punjab. But it was Punjab, his former side, who persisted to buy Khan for INR 9 crore. There was a massive jump for Tewatia too as Gujarat Giants picked him for INR 9 crore from a base price of INR 40 lakh, edging competition from Chennai and Royal Challengers Bangalore. Tripathi, who churned out consistent performances in the past few seasons, got attention from his previous side Kolkata and then Chennai. But it was Hyderabad Sunrisers, who bought him for INR 8.50 crore.

Muslim girl in UP wins five medals in Sanskrit

Lucknow | Agencies
A Muslim girl in Lucknow University (LU) has won five medals for being the best student of MA in Sanskrit. Ghazala's name was announced by LU during its convocation ceremony held in November, but due to Covid-19, medals could be given only to a few students during the ceremony. On Thursday, Ghazala was awarded the medals by dean arts Prof Shashi Shukla during a faculty-level medal distribution ceremony. Daughter of a daily wageer, Ghazala is proficient in five languages -- English, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, and Sanskrit. Her father passed away when she was in Class 10 and she struggled to continue her education. "These medals are won not by me but by my brothers -- Shadab and Nayab -- who left school and began working in a garage at the age of 13 and 10 years respectively so that I could continue to study," said Ghazala. Her elder sister Yasmeen, too, began working in a utensil shop while her mother

Nasreen Bano took care of their home. Ghazala lives with her family in a one room house, wakes up at 5 a.m. to offer 'namaaz', does all household chores and studies Sanskrit for almost seven hours a day. She aspires to become a Sanskrit professor. Ghazala is popular on the campus and recites Sanskrit shlokas, Gayatri Mantra, and Saraswati Vandana during the university's cultural programmes. Asked why she chose Sanskrit, Ghazala says, "Of all the languages, God's own language Sanskrit is the mother. It is divine, and most lyrical. In Sanskrit, poetry is more melodious." According to her, her interest in Sanskrit began at the government primary school in Nihatganj where her teacher taught her Sanskrit in Class 5. "My Sanskrit knowledge and interest often surprise people who ask me how being a Muslim I developed love for the language. They ask me what I will do with it, but my family always supported me," said Ghazala. Ghazala now wants to pursue a Ph.D in Vedic literature.

TN FARMER, COP, AND NOW AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Chennai: The journey of 34-year-old Aravind Perumal is unique in many aspects with twists and turns to achieve his goal. He began as a farmhand and then wrote the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission exam and joined the police as a constable. After doing his post-graduation in economics from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, he wanted to pursue higher education but could not do so due to a financial crisis at home. He wrote the Tamil Nadu PSC and joined the police force as a constable. Perumal told reporter, "I am the son of a farmer and we were struggling to make ends meet, and hence all through my academics, I was working in the fields to support my education. During my graduation and post-graduation, I worked in farms to support myself and my family. I wanted to pursue a Ph.D but could not do so at that time due to financial constraints." He said that at the age of 23 he joined the police force and continued there for 11 years. The 34-year-old said that after joining the police force, he wrote the entrance for the Ph.D course at Manonmaniam Sundaranar University (MSU). He completed his Ph.D in 2019 but he was awarded it only in December 2021 due to the pandemic. Perumal who was working with the Suthamalli police station for the past 11 years was relieved from service on Thursday last week and is now joining ST Hindu College, Nagercoil.

Rooster charged Rs 30 for 'travelling' in TSRTC bus

HYDERABAD | Agencies
A rooster was charged Rs 30 for 'travelling' in a bus of state-owned Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC). The bizarre incident occurred in Telangana's Karimnagar district on Tuesday when the TSRTC bus conductor issued a ticket after noticing a passenger carrying the rooster. Bus conductor G. Tirupathi issued the ticket at Sultanabad, halfway through the journey from Peddapalli to Karimnagar when he noticed that a passenger was hiding a rooster wrapped in a cloth. He asked passenger Mohammed Ali to pay Rs 30 saying all living things would be charged in RTC buses. Ali initially resisted but relented as the conductor insisted that he will have to pay the charges to carry the rooster. TSRTC officials took note of the incident after a video of the argument between the conductor and the passenger went viral on social media. TSRTC Godavariakhani depot manager V.



Venkatesham said the conductor should have asked the passenger to get down with the rooster as animals are not allowed to be carried in buses as per TSRTC rules. Venkatesham said the conductor may not have noticed the rooster as the passenger was hiding it under a cloth. The official said an explanation will be sought from the conductor for negligence and also for violating rules by charging the passenger for carrying a rooster.

WOMEN SHARE TIPS AND TRICKS TO NAVIGATE ONLINE DATING

Team Absolute | New Delhi
On Valentine's Day, women on Bumble reveal the tips and tricks they use to navigate online dating. **Be your authentic self** Ishita Chakravarty, who met her partner within a week of downloading Bumble last year, was impressed by his perfect date idea, which was listed on his profile as "homemade mutton curry and wine." "Everyone loves a funny, interesting, and memorable profile," she says of the importance of a complete profile bio. Why not share that you are fun, outgoing, adventurous, love to travel, or enjoy being active? What is your favourite dish to prepare if you enjoy cooking? What show are you currently watching on television?



What does a typical Saturday night look like for you? It aids in persuading a woman to make the first move!
Be clear on dating intentions Believe Anamika when she says, "If something feels right, go for it." Allow people to get to know the real you by being yourself. Being honest with yourself about your dating intentions and true self will allow you to make better decisions and have more open conversations with your match. "This helps in building

the trust that you both need to take it to the next level," Anamika adds.
Interesting conversation starters Having trouble starting a conversation with something more interesting than a simple 'Hi'? Anamika suggests starting with the fundamentals. "Share something funny that happened recently, talk about what you like or dislike, give a cute compliment, or even share something you like or dislike
Respect boundaries Angana Chakraborty, who met her husband on Bumble last year and married him within a year, says that honesty in their relationship helped them decide to spend their

lives together. Angana believes that it is critical to respect one's own boundaries and space. "If you are comfortable, continue chatting with your connection; otherwise, politely decline." If you're not interested, women know how to take hints," she explains.
Patience is a virtue Urmi Bhatt, who met her partner on Bumble during the lockdown in May 2020, explains that it can be difficult for women to find trust in the online space. As a result, it is best to give someone the time and space she needs to connect. "Be direct but not obnoxious." "It's fine to ask questions and keep the conversation going, but don't bombard her with messages if she's taking her time. She'll change her mind!"



22ND IIFA AWARDS NEW DATES ANNOUNCED
Team Absolute | New Delhi
The 22nd edition of the much-anticipated IIFA awards 2022 has been postponed to 20th and 21st of May 2022, with due regard to the changing circumstances in the spread of the COVID-19 virus globally and keeping the health and safety of IIFA's fans and the general community at large. The IIFA awards 2022 Celebrations were originally scheduled for March 2022. IIFA is responsible and committed to ensuring the safety of the citizens and multitudes of fans who travel from across the globe to attend and experience the magic. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused, and hope that all concerned understand the sensitivity of the situation.



WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR PROROGUES ASSEMBLY

KOLKATA | Agencies

In an unprecedented move, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar prorogued the state Legislative Assembly from February 12, implying that the state government will have to take permission from the governor for the next session and it should begin with his speech.

"In exercise of the powers conferred upon me by sub-clause (a) of clause (2) of article 174 of the Constitution, I, Jagdeep Dhankhar, Governor of the State of West Bengal, hereby prorogue the West Bengal Legislative Assembly with effect from 12 February, 2022, the Governor in his order wrote.

Prorogation is discontinuing a session of Parliament or a legislative Assembly without dissolving it. The prorogation order before the important budget session which is likely to commence from the end of February or early March is significant because the ruling party was mulling to bring motion against Governor Dhankhar during the upcoming session, accusing him of interfering in the day-to-day activities of the state government. According to constitutional experts, there is no instance in recent history that a Governor proroguing a session of the Assembly without the con-



sent of the Speaker of Assembly or the Chief Minister of the state.

The move came after on Friday, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray had submitted a Substantive Motion under Rule 170 in the Rajya Sabha, urging President Ram Nath Kovind to remove Jagdeep Dhankhar as West Bengal Governor. "This is an unprecedented move. The Governor has overstepped his constitutional duties because there should be a gap of six months between two sessions of the state Assembly. No Governor of the country has ever done this before. Earlier, he was not giving his consent to several bills and now, he has prorogued the Assembly. This is

completely unjust. The state government should move the court against this," Trinamool Congress MP said. According to political experts, the order of prorogation is a result of the prolonged conflict between Dhankhar and the state government where the governor has repeatedly alleged that his letters are not replied, his queries are not answered and his constitutional authority is continuously undermined by the Speaker and the state government. The governor had also alleged that the bureaucracy, including the chief secretary and the DGP, had failed to present themselves despite several reminders. The rift between the governor and the chief minister reached a flashpoint after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee recently blocked the Governor on Twitter for purportedly tagging her in all of his posts, criticising her administration. The Governor has been targeting the state government over a host of issues and seeking information and reports regarding appointments to various posts.

Defending the decision, Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar said: "He has the power to do this and he has exercised his power. This has been done because of the misrule of the state government and the continuous defiant stance taken by the administration."

Central Government Responsible For Unemployment Emergency: Rahul Gandhi

► CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI ON SATURDAY HELD THE UNION GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "UNEMPLOYMENT EMERGENCY" IN THE COUNTRY AND ALLEGED THAT SUICIDES HAVE RISEN DUE TO IT.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

He cited a media report which claimed that over 25,000 people have committed suicide between 2018 and 2020 due to debt and unemployment.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge also targeted the BJP government alleging that instead of "Amrit Kaal" as claimed by the government,

India was going through "Andh Kaal" (dark age) under a "blind king".

The Congress has been attacking the government over unemployment and has belied the BJP's claims of India going through 'Amrit Kaal', a reference to the best and most auspicious times.

In a tweet in Hindi with the hashtag 'KiskeAccheDin', Gandhi said, "Suicides rose due to unemployment. And what led to the rise in unemployment? The Central government is responsible for this unemployment emer-

gency." Kharge also tweeted, "Twenty-four per cent increase in suicides due to unemployment. Eighty-four per cent of families saw a decline in income. Yet, (PM) Modi and his ministers call these difficult times as 'Amrit Kaal'. This is India's 'Andh Kaal' with an 'Andha Raja' as PM." "For the sake and welfare of 'Double A', 27 crore Indians have been pushed into poverty by 'Hum Do'. This is the reality of 'Amrit Kaal'," the senior Congress leader said.

Voters conduct written test of Sarpanch candidates in Odisha village

BHUBANESWAR | Agencies

In a rare incident, voters of Malupada village under Kutra Gram Panchayat (GP) in tribal-dominated Sundergarh district of Odisha have conducted a written test of eight Sarpanch candidates in fray for the ensuing Panchayat poll in the State.

According to the villagers, they have asked the Sarpanch candidates to attend a test in their village recently. The candidates did not oppose such a move by the villagers and eight out of nine candidates appeared for the test.

The villagers have asked some simple questions to the candidates to introduce themselves, their five goals as



a Sarpanch candidate and their five goals, if elected as Sarpanch. The candidates have been also asked to write about the five welfare activities they have done so far, are they willing to visit door-to-door to solve the issues of the people with the same zeal to seek votes for the Sarpanch post and details about Panchayat.

"One day, we all villagers had sat together and decided to conduct such a test. Accordingly, we have pre-

pared the questions," said Kirti Ekka, a native of Malupada village.

Another villager, Madhuri Minja, said: "We wanted to know whether the candidate can visit door-to-door after being elected as Sarpanch like what they are doing to seek votes." Sarpanch candidates Nua Sadanga and Lalita Barua, who have appeared for the test, have welcomed the decision of the villagers.

"It is the right of the voters to know about the candidates, to whom they are going to vote in the election," Lalita said. However, Rabindra Sethi, the block electoral officer, said such a thing should not have happened because the model code of conduct is in force in the state.

HIJAB ROW NOT CONTROVERSY BUT CONSPIRACY: KERALA GUV

NEW DELHI/THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | Agencies

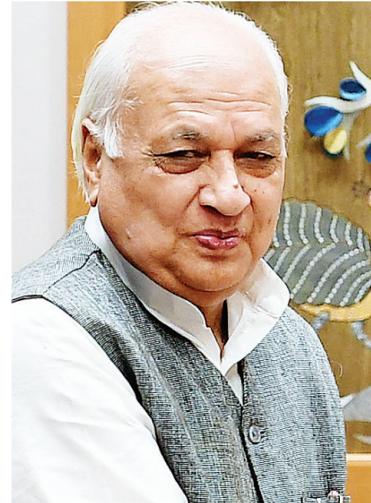
Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan on Saturday termed the ongoing hijab row as a "conspiracy" and said it was not a question of choice but whether a person would follow the regulations, dress code of an institution or not.

Responding to the raging issue in neighbouring Karnataka, he told reporters in New Delhi that "please don't take this as controversy...this is a conspiracy." Noting that Muslim girls are doing "so well" everywhere and so they need encouragement, Khan also said they do not need to be pushed down.

"It (wearing hijab) is not a question of choice...but it is a question of whether if you are joining an institution, are you going to follow the regulations, the discipline and the dress code or not," he said.

The Kerala Governor's reaction came a day after he said there were instances of women refusing to wear the the hijab when one traces the history of Islam.

Though he did not elaborate, Khan on Friday



narrated the story of a young woman, said to be a relative of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), to prove his point.

"I will tell you just one quote... A young girl, who was brought up in the household of the Prophet himself... she was the niece of the wife of the Holy Prophet. She was proverbially beautiful..." he said.

"This is what history says... read it," Khan told reporters. Quoting the story, he said when the woman's husband was the then Governor of Kufa in medieval times, she was chided for not wearing a hijab. What she said was that God had made her beautiful and the almighty had placed his stamp of beauty on her. "She said I want people to see my beauty and see the grace of God in my beauty... And be thankful to God... This is how the women of the first generation (of Islam) behaved. That's all I want to say," Khan said. The controversy erupted towards the end of December when a few women students in hijabs were denied entry into a government pre-university college in Udipi in Karnataka.

To counter this, some Hindu students turned up wearing saffron scarves.

AMID HIJAB ROW, PLEA IN SC SEEKS DIRECTION TO CENTRE, STATES TO IMPLEMENT COMMON DRESS CODE

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Amid the ongoing hijab row, a plea has been moved in the Supreme Court seeking direction to the Centre and states to implement a "common dress code" in registered and state recognised educational institutions in order to secure social equality, assure dignity and promote national integration.

The plea filed by Nikhil Upadhyay, a resident of Ghaziabad, said that the role of universal education for strengthening the social fabric of democracy through provisions of equal opportunity to all has been accepted since the inception of our republic.

"Thus, a common dress code is not only necessary to enhance the values of equality, social justice, democracy and to create a just and humane society but also essential to curtail the biggest menace of casteism communalism classism radicalism separatism and fundamentalism," said the plea filed through advocate Ashwani Kumar Dubey.

The plea argued that in the US, the UK, France,



Singapore and China, all schools and colleges adhere to a common dress code despite frequent challenges to the

constitutionality of dress guidelines. It further added that most court rulings support the common dress code because the use of common dress code has many benefits. "Over 1,000 Schools in Texas were studied to look at the impact of uniforms in the classroom and researchers noted that there were significantly higher positive perceptions about the entire community when compared to those who wear whatever they want."

The plea contended that dress codes have the ability to make students stop fidgeting, stop thinking about why their friend is getting more attention for their looks instead of them, and create a carefree attitude. "A dress code brings discipline and discipline brings order, peace, and a sense of leadership. Dress code brings uniformity which is interlinked to order and peace."

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea seeking urgent hearing on petitions challenging the Karnataka High Court interim order in the hijab matter. The top court asked the petitioners' counsel, which included Muslim girl students, to think whether it is proper to bring the issue at the national level.

2 held in Delhi snatching case, victim woman still critical

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Police have arrested two persons for their involvement in a recent snatching incident in Shahdara district which left a woman grievously injured.

The accused have been identified as Manish alias Rishi, and Mohit Gupta alias Kikky, both residents of Patparganj in Delhi.

Manish has been found to a habitual offender with 106 previous involvements in snatching cases. He also carried a reward of Rs 50,000 in a case registered at the Special Police Station. The incident took place at

around 1 p.m. on February 7, when the complainant along with her sister-in-law was going on an e-rickshaw to attend a marriage function.

While they were about to alight, the accused duo riding a motorcycle tried to snatch her handbag. When the victim resisted and held on to her purse firmly, the pillion rider pulled it forcefully, throwing the woman away from the e-rickshaw. She fell down and sustained serious injuries on her head.

"Unfortunately, the victim woman is still critical," Joint Commissioner of Police, Chhaya Sharma, told reporter.

Retired Armyman held for rape in Delhi

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Police have arrested a retired Armyman for allegedly raping a 19-year-old girl and extorting money from the victim's friend in the national capital.

The accused, who has been identified as Rajesh Kumar (38), a retired Subedar (sports quota), was presently working as a wrestling coach on contractual basis with the Haryana government in Gurugram.

Furnishing details about the case, DCP (Dwarka) Shankar Chowdhary said that on February 4, a complaint was received regarding the sexual assault of a young lady at a park on January 28 by a man, allegedly posing as a policeman.

"He had also thrashed and extorted Rs 5,000 from the victim's male friend," the DCP said.

Based on the complaint, a case under relevant sections of the law was registered and investigation was taken up.

On analysis of several CCTV footages, the alleged person's movement outside the park was captured and further it was revealed that he



fled from the scene of crime in an Ertiga car.

"Since the footage was blurred because it was recorded in the evening, the number plate of the car could not be read clearly. Also, due to delayed reporting of the incident, most of the CCTV footages were overwritten and lost, posing a big challenge to the police," Chowdhary said.

On the basis of the person's appearance and location of the crime, a constable

of Dwarka North police station revealed his suspicion on one person whom he had questioned for roaming around in a park one year back. The constable had also clicked photos of his driving licence and registration details of his Swift Dzire car for verification purpose.

Further, a street vendor informed the police that a suspicious person used to come in a Swift Dzire car and roam around the parks.

Congress spreading vaccine rumours, abused Gen Rawat: PM Modi in Uttarakhand

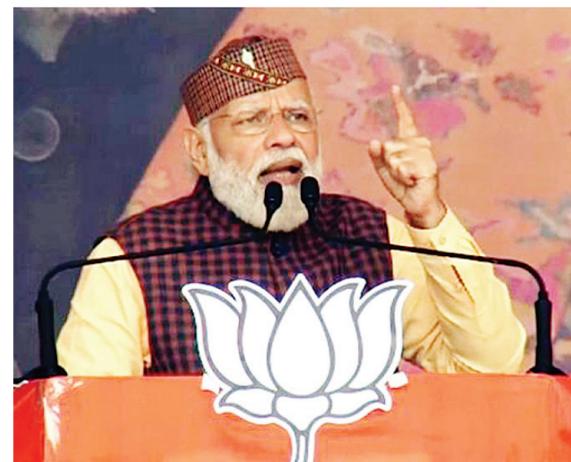
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday accused the Congress of spreading rumours about Covid vaccines, saying the party did it for politics because it thought it will not have anything to speak against the government if things got back on track.

Dehradun | Agencies

He also charged the party with abusing the country's first Chief of Defence Staff late Gen Bipin Rawat and asked people of Uttarakhand to give a befitting reply to it for this "insult" in the February 14 polls.

Addressing a rally at Rudrapur on the last day of campaigning in Uttarakhand, PM Modi said the BJP government carried out development works in the state and served the needy despite being confronted by the worst health crisis in 100 years - the Covid pandemic.

"People have realised that succour to the poor during the crisis like free rations under the PM Garib Kalyan Yojana would not have reached the people as smoothly as it did if any other



party was in power," he said.

"We did not let a single poor person go to sleep on an empty stomach during the pandemic," he said.

The BJP is leaving no stone unturned for the development of Uttarakhand, he said and cited the big road, rail, air and ropeway connectivity underway in the state.

Accusing the Congress of spreading rumours about the anti-Covid vaccines, he said the party did it for politics because it thought if things got back on track it will not have anything to speak against the government.

He also accused it of "abusing" Gen Bipin Rawat and asked people to give a befitting reply to the Congress for this insult in the coming polls.

absolute india

Dictatorship naturally arises out of democracy, and the most aggravated form of tyranny and slavery out of the most extreme liberty.
Plato

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Google paid \$8.7 mn to bug hunters in 2021, Indore-guy topped the list

THE TECHNIQUE WATCHDOGS

Of the \$3.3 million, \$3.1 million was awarded for Chrome Browser security bugs and \$250,500 for Chrome OS bugs, including a \$45,000 top reward amount for an individual Chrome OS security bug report and \$27,000 for an individual Chrome Browser security bug report. Google Play paid out \$550,000 in rewards to over 60 unique security researchers.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Google paid out a record \$8.7 million in vulnerability rewards to researchers in 2021 who reported bugs in its various services to the tech giant. Google especially mentioned Indore-based Aman Pandey, who is the Founder and CEO of Bugsmirror.

Google paid \$296,000 for over 220 unique security reports, specifically shouting out Pandey of the Bugsmirror Team, Yu-Cheng Lin, and researcher gzbqq@gmail.com (who secured the highest \$157,000 award). Pandey, a graduate from NIT Bhopal, officially registered his company in January 2021. The company helps Google, Apple and others in enhancing and fortifying their security systems. The Android Vulnerability Reward Programme (VRP) doubled its 2020 total payouts in 2021 with nearly \$3 million dollars in rewards, and awarded the highest payout in Android VRP history: An exploit chain discovered in Android receiving a reward of \$157,000. "Our industry leading prize of \$1,500,000 for a compromise of our



Titan-M Security chip used in our Pixel device remains unclaimed," said Sarah Jacobus from the Vulnerability Rewards Team. Google also launched the Android Chipset Security Reward Programme (ACSRP), a vulnerability reward programme offered by Google in collaboration with manufacturers of certain popular Android chipsets.

In 2021, the ACSRSP paid out \$296,000 for over 220 valid and unique security reports. This time the Chrome VRP also set some new records -- 115 Chrome VRP researchers were rewarded for

333 unique Chrome security bug reports submitted in 2021, totalling \$3.3 million in VRP rewards.

"Pandey of Bugsmirror Team has skyrocketed to our top researcher last year, submitting 232 vulnerabilities in 2021! Since submitting their first report in 2019, Aman has reported over 280 valid vulnerabilities to the Android VRP and has been a crucial part of making our programme so successful."

Google in its report

EC REDUCES CAMPAIGN BAN PERIOD, ALLOWS PADYATRAS

New Delhi: Considering the substantial reduction in Covid cases nationwide as well as in the five poll-bound states, the Election Commission of India on Saturday announced further relaxation of curbs on campaigning for the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur. The poll panel has allowed political parties and candidates to campaign from 6 am to 10 pm following Covid appropriate behaviour and the protocols put in place by the State Disaster Management Authorities. Earlier, campaigning was banned from 8 pm to 8 am. The political parties or candidates can hold meetings and rallies with up to 50 per cent capacity in the designated open spaces or the limits prescribed by the SDMA, whichever is lesser, said the Election Commission.

However, the political parties or candidates will have to take prior permission from the district administration for padyatras with only the permitted number of persons as per the SDMA limitations.

"Padyatra consisting not more than permitted number of persons as per SDMA limitations and only with prior permission of districts authorities will be allowed," the EC said. All other existing provisions related to electioneering shall continue to be in place, the Commission said. Earlier, the poll panel took a periodic review of the Covid status in the country, especially in the poll-bound states.

Humara Bajaj, the original Make in India champion, passes



PUNE | Agencies

Renowned industrialist Rahul Bajaj -- the doyen of the Bajaj Group, who made his two-wheelers a household name with the catchy slogan 'Humara Bajaj' -- passed away in Pune following a prolonged illness. He was 83.

He was ailing from cancer for a long time and the end came at the Ruby Hospital at around 2.30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, sending waves of grief in corporate and political circles.

Bajaj had taken charge of the Bajaj Group in 1965 and during his captaincy, the group soared to one of the biggest in the sub-continent. As per available

indications, his last rites shall be performed at the Vaikunth Crematorium on Sunday.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday expressed deep anguish over the demise of noted industrialist Rahul Bajaj.

Top business and political leaders including his close family friend and Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar, Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan, Bharatiya Janata Party leaders Nitin Gadkari and Raosaheb Danve-Patil, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis and others condoled Bajaj's passing.

Putin planning to invade Ukraine on Feb 16

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Russia is planning to invade Ukraine on February 16, a credible intelligence report has claimed, as US President Joe Biden urgently arranged a telephone call with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Saturday in a bid to prevent war, the Daily Mail reported.

According to German newspaper Der Spiegel, the US Secret Service, CIA and the Pentagon are said to have received intel of an "exceptionally detailed" invasion plan, scheduled for February 16.

The plans were passed on to Biden's government and discussed in a series of secret briefings with NATO allies, the Daily Mail reported. They are said to contain specific routes that might be taken by individual Russian units and detail what roles they might play in the conflict.

Der Spiegel suggests the US is mulling whether to make the plans public in a bid to undermine them.

The White House confirmed that Biden and Putin would discuss the crisis by phone today -- just hours after thousands of Britons and Americans were warned to get out



of Ukraine while they still can, as tensions reached boiling point.

The warning came amid fears that Putin could launch an "aerial bombardment" of Kiev, risking a high civilian death toll.

Several other countries have now told their citizens to get out of the country, including Belgium, who on Saturday warned there would be "no guarantee of evacuation" following a "sudden deterioration", as "communication links including internet and telephone lines could be seriously affected" and air travel hampered.

Medical body to oppose proposal to replace Hippocratic Oath with Charak Shapath

New Delhi: The medical education apex body National Medical Commission (NMC) may replace the centuries-old code of ethics for medical practitioners, Hippocratic Oath with Charak Shapath.

According to a document on the minutes of the NMC meeting of February 7 which has been widely circulated on social media, Charak Shapath may replace the Hippocratic Oath during the graduation ceremony of doctors.

"No Hippocratic Oath. During white coat ceremony (with parents) the oath will be 'Maharishi Charak Shapath' present in NMC website," says the document. However, no official confirmation has been made yet on replacing the Hippocratic Oath with Charak Shapath from NMC. According to a source, the proposal is under consideration and the final decision is yet to be made on oath-taking. The 'charak shapath' is attributed to Maharishi Charaka, who is seen as a great contributor to Ayurveda and the author of the medical treatise 'Charaka Samhita'.

Meanwhile, the proposal has triggered a debate on the relevance of replacing the centuries-old practice. The classic Hippocratic oath says, "I swear by Apollo Physician and Asclepius and Hygieia and Panacea and all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that I will fulfil according to my ability and judgment this oath and this covenant..."

Mamata dissolves all existing posts in Trinamool Congress

KOLKATA | Agencies

In a significant development, Trinamool Congress Chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday dissolved all the existing posts in the party and formed a 20-member national working committee after holding a meeting with some senior party leaders at her Kalighat residence.

The name of the new office-bearers will later be announced by Banerjee herself.

The significant announcement came at a time when there were rumours that the party's All-India General Secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, is likely to step down from all organisational responsibilities allegedly because of differences with some senior party leaders. "Mamata Banerjee was re-



ected as the Chairperson of the party recently where she announced a small committee to look after party affairs. Today (Saturday), a meeting of that committee was held where she announced our new national working com-

mittee," said senior Trinamool leader Partha Chatterjee.

He added that Banerjee will later appoint the new office-bearers and accordingly it would be sent to the Election Commission of India.

Among the leaders who found a place in the national working committee are Amit Mitra, Partha Chatterjee, Subrata Bakshi, Sudip Bandopadhyay, Abhishek Banerjee, Anubrata Mondal, Aroop Biswas, Firhad Hakim, Yashwant Sinha, Asima Patra, Chandrima Bhattacharjee, Kakoli Ghosh Dasgupta, Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Moly Ghatak, Jyotipriya Mallick, Gautam Deb, Buluchik Baraik and Rajesh Tripathi.

Interestingly, most of the members of the national working committee belong to Mamata camp, indicative enough that the Chief Minister is keen to establish her control over the party. Only two leaders from other states -- Yashwant Sinha and Rajesh Tripathi -- are part of the national working committee of Trinamool.

GOVT SPENT RS 250 CRORE ON VACCINE RESEARCH: HEALTH MINISTER

Gandhinagar : Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Saturday that the Central government has spent Rs 250 crore on research for developing vaccines to counter the Covid-19 virus. Mandaviya was addressing a programme to explain the benefits of the Union Budget 2022-23 at the Gujarat BJP headquarters here. "The Centre spent and shared Rs 250 crore with government and private research institutes working on developing Covid vaccines. We started taking action long back as we knew that vaccination was the key to fight the global pandemic. In order to develop vaccines, research was needed. In April 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called upon the scientists of both government and private institutes and encouraged them to develop vaccines. Irrespective of whether they succeeded, the Centre supported them with funding.

CLASS 12 TOPPER TARGETTED BY TROLLS IN KASHMIR

▶ MOST LOCALS BELIEVE THAT THE GIRL DESERVES BOUQUETS, NOT BRICKBATS.

▶ LOCAL ISLAMIC SCHOLARS HAVE CONDEMNED THESE ONLINE, GROUNDLESS FATWAS.

▶ PEOPLE HAVE DEMANDED PUNISHMENT AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE TROLLING THE POOR GIRL FOR HER SUCCESS.

SRINAGAR | Agencies

When Aroosa Parvaiz topped this year's 10+2 board exams, never in her wildest

dream did she imagine that her hard-earned success would be followed by toxic trolls.

The J&K board of school education declared the results for 10+2 exams on February 8.

Aroosa topped the science stream with 499 marks out of 500. Congratulatory messages started pouring in on social media but her family's happiness did not last long.

"Bitter trolls started appearing on the social media. I could not understand why the same society trolled me on the one hand and felt proud of me on the other", Aroosa said. The moral policemen of Kashmir had seen her picture sans a hijab on the social media. That set

the fireball rolling.

While the majority of these toxic trolls cursed the girl and her family for the absence of hijab, some even went to the extent of seeking her murder. "Begairat... Pardah nai Kia... Eski gardan Katt do (She is shame-



"My religion, my hijab and my Allah are my personal issues. What I should wear or not should not bother people if they believe in the greatness of my religion. These comments do not matter to me, but my parents are undergoing a trauma."

Aroosa told reporters.

less. She has not covered herself, she should be beheaded), said one of the bitter, brutal and toxic trolls.

"She is our daughter and she has done us proud. Her success has pained some selfish and deceitful people. If she had to be educated on hijab, that can be done as a father or brother's advice. Never by trying to stoke violence against her", said Ghulam Rasool, a teacher.

Mufti Azmatullah of Darul Uloom Rahimia in Bandipora district told a local newspaper, "Islam does not permit trolling or issuing fatwas on social media.

"Islam does not allow anyone to give violent lessons".

Local psychologists, sociologists and opinion makers have condemned the violent trolling of Aroosa based on just one of her photographs that appeared in her success story. "I am shocked to see our once tolerant, eclectic, sympathetic society turn so bitter and violence driven. Perhaps this is the cost you pay when you become the easiest tool to force your views on others", said a local sociologist.

"We have a very competent cyber police station in the city. I am sure the trolls must have been traced and booked by now", hoped a neighbour of Aroosa.

NCB, NAVY SEIZE DRUGS OF RS 2K CR ON HIGH SEAS



New Delhi: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Indian Navy, in a joint operation have busted a drug trafficking racket and have seized around 529 kg of very high quality of hashish, 234 kg of finest quality of crystal Methamphetamine and some quantity of Heroin, valued at Rs 2,000 crore.

This is the first such operation on high seas. The present seizure has dealt a blow to drug syndicates based out of our neighbouring country and using maritime route for trafficking drugs in India and other countries.

A senior NCB official said that the seized drugs are valued at Rs 2,000 crore in international market, however the official didn't reveal the names of those behind the racket.

"The input regarding trafficking of drugs on high seas was developed by the NCB and was shared with Naval Intelligence Unit, leading to a joint operation. This was carried out under the supervision of seniors and we recovered huge cache of drugs," said an NCB official.

The official said that special unit of the NCB Headquarters have been continuously working on various such intelligence inputs and it will be our endeavour to carry out more such operations in future in collaboration with the naval forces.



THOSE MAKING ALLEGATIONS SHOULD BE GIVEN MEDICAL TREATMENT: CM THACKERAY SLAMS OPPOSITION

► UDDHAV THACKERAY WAS SPEAKING VIRTUALLY AT THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW BUILDING OF THE PUBLIC TRUST REGISTRATION OFFICE IN JALNA. TOPE ALSO ATTENDED THE EVENT VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCE. REFERRING TO A POEM RECITED DURING THE PROGRAMME BY SOMEONE IN HIS PRAISE, THACKERAY QUOTED A DIALOGUE FROM A HINDI MOVIE - "THAPPAD SE DAR NAHI LAGTA, PYAAR SE LAGTA HAI. (NOT AFRAID OF GETTING SLAPPED, BUT SCARED OF BEING LOVED)."



speaking virtually at the inauguration of a new building of the Public Trust Registration office in Jalna. Tope also attended the event via video-conference.

Referring to a poem recited during the programme by someone in his praise, Thackeray quoted a dialogue from a Hindi movie - "Thappad se dar nahi lagta, pyaar se lagta hai. (Not afraid of getting slapped, but scared of being loved)." "Giving slaps and getting slapped is life of we politicians. Hence, if anybody praises me, I get nervous. But I know that being praised by them (opponents) is different from being praised by the people who are like my family," he added. Lauding Tope for his work during the coronavirus pandemic, Thackeray said, "You kept visiting Covid centres and ensured supply of medicines, but the opposition is levelling allegations... Don't pay attention to them (opponents) as they suffer from stomach ache and uneasiness. Provide free treatment to them at government hospital. It is our responsibility to treat them even if they are in opposition."

He said he wanted to attend the inauguration of the new building in person, but he could not do so as he had undergone a cervical spine surgery a few months back and gradually recovering from it.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Taking a dig at the opposition BJP, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday told his cabinet colleague and Health Minister Rajesh Tope that those levelling allegations against him and the state government should be given free medical treatment. He also said that giving slaps and getting slapped is part of politicians' life and hence he gets nervous whenever anybody praises him. Thackeray was

Original Make in India champion Rahul Bajaj no more; funeral on Sunday

Renowned industrialist Rahul Bajaj the doyen of the Bajaj Group, who made his two-wheelers a household name with the catchy slogan 'Hamara Bajaj' passed away in Pune following a prolonged illness.

Pune | Agencies

Renowned industrialist Rahul Bajaj the doyen of the Bajaj Group, who made his two-wheelers a household name with the catchy slogan 'Hamara Bajaj' passed away in Pune following a prolonged illness.

A former Chairman of the now-defunct domestic carrier, Indian Airlines, he was ailing from cancer for a long time and the end came at the Ruby Hospital at around 2.30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, sending waves of grief in corporate and political circles.

Bajaj was 83 and is survived by two sons, Rajiv and Sanjiv, and a daughter Sunaina Kejriwal, and other family members who were present beside when he breathed his last.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced that Bajaj will be accorded full state honours for his funeral slated on Sunday afternoon in Pune.

"It is with deep sorrow that I inform you about the passing of Shri Rahul Bajaj, husband of the late Rupa Bajaj, and father of Rajiv/Deepa, Sanjiv/Shefali, Sunaina/Manish (Kejriwal). He passed away on the afternoon of 12th February in the presence of his closest family members," said a statement from the Bajaj Group on Saturday evening.

Born on June 10, 1938 in (now) Kolkata, Bajaj graduated in 1958 from St. Stephens College, in Delhi University, with an Honours degree in Economics.

Later, he acquired a Law degree from University of Bombay and an MBA from the Harvard Business



School. Joining the family enterprise founded by his grandfather, the industrialist-philanthropist-freedom fighter Jammalal Bajaj, Rahul Bajaj became the CEO of the flagship Bajaj Auto in 1968 and its Managing Director in 1972.

It was during his captaincy of the Bajaj Group which soared from small family concern to one of the biggest in the sub-continent with immense contribution in nation-building, helping lay the foundations of its economy and creating a global mark with its two-wheelers and three-wheelers among other products over the decades.

A Rajya Sabha Member (2006-2010) and conferred the Padmashri and Padma Bhushan, he

stepped down as the Chairman of Bajaj Auto in April 2021 but was appointed as Chairman Emeritus for another five years.

Bajaj's mortal remains shall be kept for public 'darshan' on Sunday morning at the company's plant premises and the last rites shall be performed at the Vaikunth Crematorium later with full state honours.

Top business and political leaders like Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, his close family friends Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar, Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan, Kishore Tiwari and Raghunath Kuchik, both MoS, Deputy Chairperson of Legislative Council Neelam Gorhe, Supriya Sule, MP, top Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders, Bharatiya Janata Party leader Nitin Gadkari and Raosaheb Danve-Patil, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis and others condoled Bajaj's passing.

"I am deeply shocked to learn about the sad demise of Padma Bhushan Shri Rahul Bajaj, my very close friend.

The grandson of eminent freedom fighter Jammalal Bajaj brought transformation in society, especially in poor and middle-class people with his two-wheel technology - a Bajaj bike," said Sharad Pawar.

Saying India has lost an industrialist, a philanthropist and a lighthouse for young entrepreneurs, the NCP supremo said the affordable vehicle - 'Hamara Bajaj' - increased mobility, eased struggle for getting means of livelihood and became the tool of socio-economic change, for which "we Indians are deeply indebted".

CBI SEARCHES PREMISES OF EX-MAHA HM'S CAS IN PMLA CASE

The premises reportedly belonging to the chartered accountants of former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh were raided by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), in connection with a Prevention of Money Laundering case lodged against the minister.



A source said that CBI officials reached Mumbai on Friday night and the search operation was started earlier on Saturday morning.

"Searches were conducted at 12 locations in Nagpur and Mumbai. We have recorded the statements of CAs," said the source. On April 21, 2021 the CBI had filed an FIR against Deshmukh and had initiated a probe. The raids are in connection with this FIR. The source said that they were scanning the financial transactions of the last three years. The team is also gathering information about the business dealing of Deshmukh. The CBI wants to know about the business associates of Deshmukh. The transactions made between them will be scanned by the team.

On November 1, 2021 Deshmukh was placed under arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with Rs 100 crore PMLA case pertaining to the alleged posting and transfer of officials.

Deshmukh is currently in Judicial Custody.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

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Captains of industry mourn Rahul Bajaj's passing away

■ Captains of Indian Industry on Saturday mourned the passing away of industrialist Rahul Bajaj. The renowned industrialist passed away in Pune following a prolonged illness. He was 83.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Captains of Indian Industry on Saturday mourned the passing away of industrialist Rahul Bajaj. The renowned industrialist passed away in Pune following a prolonged illness. He was 83. On Twitter, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Executive Chairperson of Biocon said:

"Industrialist Rahul Bajaj, Former Chairman Of Bajaj Group, Dies At 83 - I am devastated - he was a dear dear friend and will miss him dearly. The country has lost a great son & a nation builder. Om Shanthi." On his part, Uday Kotak, CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank tweeted: "Rahul Bajaj: bold and fearless. A rare businessman who spoke truth to power. A proud Indian. Built world class enterprise. I am truly honoured to know him. Will miss him." Further, Harsh Goenka, Chairman of RPG Enterprises said: "The 'spine' of Indian business cracks. A close family friend, he was a visionary, straight talking and very respected for his value systems. An era ends! He leaves

behind the two most capable sons in Indian industry, Rajiv and Sanjiv. #RahulBajaj Om shantia"

Bajaj had taken charge of the Bajaj Group in 1965 and during his captaincy, the group soared to one of the biggest in the sub-continent.

Rahul Bajaj is credited with the ubiquitous two wheeler in Bajaj Auto and the cult campaign of 'Hamara Bajaj-Buland Bharat ki Buland Tasveer' which brought slick world class advertising to Indian TV screens and a corporate brand campaign that resonated with the Indian public much before TV ads took off. He was a former Rajya Sabha member and was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2001.

Father-in-law saves life of ailing daughter-in-law by donating kidney

A 25-year-old woman, diagnosed with kidney ailment, from Jalna district in Maharashtra's Aurangabad has received a new lease of life after her father-in-law donated one of his kidneys with the help of doctors at Medcover Hospitals.

Aurangabad has received a new lease of life after her father-in-law donated one of his kidneys with the help of doctors at Medcover Hospitals.

The woman was diagnosed with kidney failure 6 months back. Her urine output had stopped leading to swelling all over the body and repeated episodes of hemoptysis (blood in sputum). "On many counts, kidney transplantation in this patient was indeed challenging," Neha Jain, Center Head, said in a statement. She required dialysis treatment in the intensive care unit (ICU). For her condition, Sachin Soni, a Kidney specialist had advised a kidney transplantation surgery which was getting postponed

due to the unavailability of a donor. In this situation, the father-in-law of the lady decided to become a kidney donor for his daughter-in-law. The challenges were not less as his blood group (B+) was not compatible with that of the patient (O+).

In absence of any other donor, the kidney transplant team at the Hospital took up the challenge of performing ABO incompatible kidney transplant in December 2021.

Another hurdle came in the form of Covid-19 infection of the patient and the surgery was finally performed on February 2, 2022. However, the doctors said that now the donor and the recipient are in healthy condition with normal kidney functions.

'NO LATA MEMORIAL' AT SHIVAJI PARK: CONGRESS BACKS MANGESHKAR FAMILY

In future too, the highway traffic police intend to take this route for collecting pending dues totalling up to Rs 1,125 crore - Rs 413 crore from Mumbai alone - from 2.94 crore motorists.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A day after music director Hridaynath Mangeshkar said that he was against constructing a memorial for his sister, the late Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar at Shivaji Park, the Maharashtra Congress came out in support of the family, here on Saturday.

Simultaneously, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activist has moved the Bombay High Court in a PIL challenging the use of the 28-acre ground - known as the 'Cradle of Indian Cricket' for public funerals or memorials. State Congress General Secretary Sachin Sawant said that the sprawling park was established during the British Rule by the erstwhile Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1925 and named as 'Shivaji Park' ahead of the great Maratha



warrior's 300th birth anniversary. "Taking into consideration the sentiments of the Marathi people, the then British Government had allowed the name and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's equestrian statue was also installed there," Sawant said.

He pointed out that since the park is already a monument dedicated to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, then how can another memorial in the name of Lata Didi be erected there.

"On one hand, the BJP is playing dirty politics in

the name of a memorial for Lata Mangeshkar on the other, their own party activist is filing a PIL in the court demanding there should not be a memorial there. The BJP had resorted to similar dual-politics during the issue of reservations for Marathas and OBCs," Sawant said.

On Friday, Hridaynath Mangeshkar made it clear the family was not supportive of the memorial at Shivaji Park, while Dadar resident Prakash Belwade-Patil moved the court saying the ground is for sports, a memorial for the late Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray was built there and now there is a demand for even for one dedicated to Lata Mangeshkar. Considering their stature, both Balasaheb Thackeray and Lata Mangeshkar were accorded rare public funerals at Shivaji Park on November 18, 2012, and February 6, 2022, respectively, to accommodate the massive crowds of mourners and VIPs attending.

Earlier, BJP MLA Ram Kadam and others like Congress President Nana Patole had demanded a memorial for Lata Mangeshkar at the site, but the ruling ally Shiv Sena urged that the issue should not be politicised but assured a grand memorial for the late melody queen.

Relief to Maharashtra MLAs was judicial victory; presidential reference bid 'invalid,': Shelar

BJP legislator thanks Assembly deputy speaker, legislative council chairman and deputy chairman for accepting the court verdict and announcing the cancellation of the suspension order



Stating that the developments had "badly bruised the Maha Vikas Aghadi government's ego", Shelar said the Opposition "would like to humbly and politely clarify" that the court had ruled the suspension as "irrational, illegal and unconstitutional." The Assembly deputy speaker and the chairman and deputy chairperson of the legislative council told Kovind the Supreme Court had over-

stepped its brief and that the verdict should be sent to a larger bench under Article 143 of the Constitution.

"Today we are humbly defending our stance to ensure there is no misunderstanding."

On the legislature's request for a presidential reference, he said the opportunity had been lost. "The Supreme Court had not only given the MLAs an opportunity but also asked the legislature to put forth its stance. But they failed to make the best of the opportunity. So their claim that the court is interfering in the matters of the legislature does not make sense as the court had given them the opportunity," he said. "And now they have missed the boat and lost their right to make such a demand."

Shelar further explained that the court had first asked the MLAs to approach the legislature to get their suspension withdrawn but no action was initiated during the Assembly session. "Unfortunately, a hearing was held after the conclusion of the session, which was of no use," said the BJP leader.

The 12 BJP MLAs were suspended from the Assembly on July 5, 2021 for misbehaviour. The government had passed a resolution suspending them for one year.

Unwinding of lockdowns, RBI's accommodative stance to boost industrial output

Unwinding of lockdown restrictions as well as RBI's monetary policy stance are expected to boost India's industrial output.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Unwinding of lockdown restrictions as well as RBI's monetary policy stance are expected to boost India's industrial output.

Notably, subdued manufacturing growth as well as unfavourable base eased India's industrial output sequentially as well as on a year-on-year basis in December 2021.

Last Friday, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for December 2021 rose by

only 0.4 per cent from a rise of 1.34 per cent reported for November 2021.

Similarly, the production rate was lower on a year-on-year basis. In December 2020, the IIP had risen by 2.2 per cent. On a YoY basis, the mining excavation output grew by 2.6 per cent (-) 3 per cent in December 2021.

However, manufacturing production slipped by 0.1 per cent from a rise of 2.7 per cent and electricity generation rose at a slower rate of 2.8 per cent from 5.1 per cent.

"While the improvement of industrial output on sequential basis is encouraging, the emergence of the third Covid wave amidst significant proliferation of Omicron cases in Jan-22 may have some impact on the production in Jan-22," Acute Ratings & Research said in a research

note. "Additionally, the rise in input price pressures due to substantial rise in commodity prices may lead to a further pass through to end consumers in the medium-term impacting demand and thereby overall production."

However, the ratings agency believes that good progress in the pace of vaccinations, unwinding of lockdown restrictions by states amidst recent downdraft in Covid infections along with the accommodative monetary policies will support industrial recovery going forward. "Further, thrust on infrastructure segment with the government embarking upon massive capital outlay underscored in the Union Budget FY23 will help in bolstering steel, cement and capital goods output over the next few quarters."



WE DID THE MIRACLE OF DEPOSITING 1.76 LAKH CRORE IN THE ACCOUNTS OF FARMERS IN 22 MONTHS: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that we have performed a miracle of depositing Rs one lakh 76 thousand crore in the accounts of farmers in 22 months. This is a government of the farmers, no stone will be left unturned in the welfare of farmers. By laying a network of irrigation schemes in the state, the state government is working incessantly to make crops flourish in every dry field of the state. Chouhan was addressing the state level crop damage claim distribution programme held at Betul. The Chief Minister transferred an amount of Rs 7618 crore in 49 lakh claims of Kharif 2020 and Rabi 2020-21 to the account of farmers with a single click.

Chouhan inaugurated the programme by performing kanya puja and lighting a lamp. Chouhan also visited the exhibition of Agriculture, Horticulture,



Public Health Engineering, Energy, AYUSH, Women and Child Development and self help groups. The Chief Minister inaugurated the development works worth Rs 381 crore of Betul and also performed bhoomi-pujan. All the districts of the state participated virtually in the programme. The programme was telecast live on DD MP, regional channels, AIR as well

as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Chouhan said that today is a historic day for the state. Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the largest amount of Rs 7618 crore has been distributed in the country with a single click today. Earlier also, Rs 2876 crore were deposited in the accounts of farmers following crop failure. So far, an assistance of Rs 10 thou-

sand 494 crore has been released by the state government to the farmers.

Chouhan said that the earlier government had not given the premium amount to the insurance companies. As a result the farmers could not get the amount of insurance. The previous governments did not even conduct a survey on crop failure, whereas at present, the state government has provided more than Rs 306 crore 78 lakh to one lakh 28 thousand 474 farmers in the pradhan Mantri Bima Yojana in Betul district alone.

Chouhan said that the state government has provided Rs.29 thousand 834 crore to the banks for giving loans at zero percent interest to the farmers. On power connections, a grant of Rs.51 thousand per motor is given by the state government. The state government has provided Rs 30,000 crore to power companies on behalf of 47 thousand farmers.

MP govt to organise 'Forsyth Trail Run' in dense forests of Satpura

In a bid to attract tourists in the state, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism department has decided to organise two events 'Forsyth Trail Run' and 'Dhoopgarh Rock Climbing' in the dense forests of Satpura at hill station Pachmarhi.



Trail Run, will be held on February 12 and it will be the first-of-its-kind marathon in India. The second event will be Dhoopgarh Rock Climbing, which will be held on March 5, a senior official with the state Tourism department told IANS on Friday. The events will be jointly organised by India's leading adventure tourism agency 'Moustache Escapes' and the state Tourism department. The state government has tied

up with Moustache Escapes for the events, the government official said.

"It will be a unique experience for adventure lovers as they will get an opportunity to explore the jungles during the trail," the official added.

The Forsyth Trail Run will be organised on Saturday from Pachmarhi in Hoshangabad district. The run will start from Singnama and end at Bison Lodge Pachmarhi. Tourists from Mumbai, Delhi, Jaipur, Vidisha and Indore will participate in the run, covering a distance of 30 to 40 km in forest area.

"Tourism department is also planning to organise skydiving, cycling, treks and water sports in various parts of the state in coming months. The jungle safari is already a 'must-do' in the state with the presence of many national parks," said a senior official.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

In a bid to attract tourists in the state, the Madhya Pradesh Tourism department has decided to organise two events -- 'Forsyth Trail Run' and 'Dhoopgarh Rock Climbing' in the dense forests of Satpura at hill station Pachmarhi.

The first event, Forsyth

Governor Mangubhai Patel Visited Temples of Maheshwar

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel visited the historical monuments Ahilyabai Holkar's throne, Rajarajeshwar temple and Gupteshwar temple at Mandleshwar during his stay at Maheshwar. He had a look at the sari manufacturing work in Rewa Society and discussed with weavers. He boated in Maa Narmada.

Governor Shri Patel inspected the sari manufacturing work in Rewa Society. During this, by interacting directly with the weavers, information was obtained

regarding the art of making saris, pricing and their marketing. Kailash Chauhan, a weaver running a loom, told the Governor that a sari is ready in about 8 days. 5 to 18 hundred rupees are received as remuneration for a sari. Weaver Manju Bai Verma told that the more designs are there in the sari, the more time it takes to weave it. On this basis the price of the sari is decided. Leela Bai Bhavsar told about the pattern of saris that Maheshwari sari on the Maharashtrian pattern is bought by most of the tourists. Patel visited other products made by the society

on this occasion and got information about them. Patel garlanded the life-size statue of Maa Ahilyabai located in the fort complex. He understood the darshan rituals of Maa Narmada from the place of the throne of Goddess Ahilyabai. Received information regarding the period of her reign and judicial legislation. He visited and had darshan at the ancient temple of Rajarajeshwar temple, Chhappan Dev temple at Mandleshwar, Gupteshwar Mahadev and Mahadev temples. He offered worship with rituals.

ATAL PRAGATI PATH WILL OPEN NEW DOORS OF PROGRESS: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan held discussions with Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and representatives of farmers through video conference regarding Atal Progress-Way from his residence today. Chouhan said that Atal Pragati Path will open new doors of progress in Chambal region. New industries will flourish here. With the development of industrial cluster, the value of land will increase. Chouhan said that the Central Government has given approval for the Atal Progress Way. It is a matter of good fortune for Madhya Pradesh. This is an important step taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the economic progress of Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh. Union Minister Gadkari has linked Atal Progress-Way with Bharat Mala Pariyojana. With the construction of this progress-way, along with providing employment to the youths in large numbers, economic activities will develop in the entire Chambal region. Chief Minister said that after the construction of Atal Progress Way, Madhya Pradesh will be



connected in a better way with Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The farmer class and all other sections will also be benefitted directly and indirectly. It is also a project of shaping the future for the coming generations. Chouhan said that the total length of Atal Pragati Path would be 404 km. Necessary provision is being made in the interest of farmers regarding land acquisition. Farmers who want land

instead of land or want amount, they will be given its benefit. The state government has given 1600 hectares of government land to NHA. For the remaining 1460 hectares of private land, it is proposed by the government to give double the land. Most of the farmers are agreeing with this. Atal Pragati Path will be built by providing cash compensation of twice the market value. All sections will benefit from the project of total Rs 8000 crore. Chouhan urged the farmer brothers to extend necessary cooperation in land acquisition works. Chouhan also expected the concerned collectors to take action to give compensation to the people in a transparent manner by doing survey work within the time-limit.

Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said that with the approval of Atal Pragati Path by the Central Government, a massive change will come in Chambal region. Large area of the state will benefit. Follow-up of the works of the project is also being done by Chief Minister Chouhan from time to time. In the coming time, along with the farmers, other sections will also get the benefit of this project.

VIDHYA AND MAHAKAUSHAL REGION GET GIFT OF NEW TRAINS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Vindhya and Mahakaushal region of Madhya Pradesh has got a big gift from the central government. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav launches train no. 02195 Rani Kamalapati - Rewa, Train No. 02196 Rewa-Rani Kamalapati Weekly Superfast Trains and Train No. 05713 Jabalpur-Nainpur Passenger Train through virtual medium from Rani Kamalapati railway station of Bhopal. Medical Education Minister Shri Vishwas Kailash Sarang flagged off the trains from Rani Kamalapati station.

Vaishnav said that the central government is taking society-oriented decisions keeping in view the problems of every sector. It is very fortunate that with the situation of Corona changing for the better, Indian Railways is also taking society oriented decisions keeping in view

the sentiments of everyone as much as possible and keeping in mind the problems of every sector. It is our endeavour to fulfil the farsighted vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Medical Education Minister Vishwas Kailash Sarang said that today the state has got a big gift under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There was a great need for rail connectivity in the Vindhyas region. The people of Vindhyas residing in my assembly constituency had also demanded another train like Rewanchal. He expressed his gratitude and thanks to Modi and Vaishnav.

Union Minister Prahlad Patel, Union Minister of State Faggan Singh Kulaste, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Girish Gautam, Bhopal MP Sadhvi Pragya participated virtually in the launch programme of the Rewa-Rani Kamalapati

weekly superfast trains and Jabalpur-Nenpur passenger train. Rewa - Rani Kamalapati Weekly Superfast train will cover 9 stations from Kamalapati station to Rewa. With the introduction of services of these new trains, the areas of Satna, Maihar, Katni, Mudhwar, Damoh, Sagar, Bina, Vidisha will be progressively developed and the citizens, students, business and tourism of these areas will be benefited. At the same time, Jabalpur-Nenpur passenger train has been restored for smooth rail travel of passengers. Jabalpur-Nainpur passenger train will cover a total of 19 stations.

Before the launch of weekly superfast and passenger trains in Vindhya and Mahakaushal region, Medical Education Minister Sarang visited Rani Kamalapati station along with Bhopal DRM Shri Saurabh Bandopadhyay. Senior railway officials were present.

2 ENGINEERS DIE AFTER RAILWAY UNDER BRIDGE COLLAPSES

Bhopal: Two railway employees died and three were injured after a section of an under-construction under bridge collapsed in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh. At the time of the incident, several workers and some senior railway employees were carrying out construction works. Sources said railway department was carrying out construction work on an under-bridge of the railway track in Sumari village. Workers and railway engineers were carrying out digging. Around 9:30 p.m. on Friday, a train passed through the track (over under-construction under bridge) due to which, a huge portion of soil collapsed and labourers and railway employees got buried under the debris. After hours of efforts by the local police and the railways, all people buried under the debris were recovered and rushed to a nearby government hospital.

Establishments Selected in "Swachh Pratishthan" Survey Will Be Honoured

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhopendra Singh has informed that the establishments selected in the "Swachh Pratishthan" survey campaign will be honoured in a dignified programme to be organised at the local level on February 14. The programme will be held in the presence of minister, local MP, MLA and public representatives.

Singh has informed that in the Swachh Survekshan-2022, to make all cities garbage free and to fulfill the target of getting 5-star for all municipal corporations and 3-star for other urban bodies

in star rating of garbage free cities, a 15-day "Swachh Pratishthan" survey campaign was launched from January 26. Singh had written a letter to all MPs and MLAs urging them to actively participate in this campaign.

Establishments located in the city include private and government offices, banks, small and big shops, show-rooms, hospitals, clinics, hotels, restaurants, schools etc. In the cleanliness terminology these are called bulk waste generators. There was a cleanliness competition among them. The main objective of the survey was to encourage establishments for cleanliness and waste management.

Ranking was done in different categories in the Swachh Pratishthan Survey. The categories of clean schools, health facilities, hotels and restaurants, offices, hawkers zones and clean markets were included in this.

The establishments located in all urban bodies were informed through social media and other means. The establishments were ranked by 300 points.

The winning establishment will be awarded "Symbol of Cleanliness" by the body. Apart from this, the selected establishments will also be nominated for state level awards after inspection by the state level team.

CM PLANTED MOULSHREE AND ALMOND SAPLINGS IN SMART GARDEN



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Almond and Moulshree saplings in the Smart City Garden today. Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel and deaf and dumb children of Umang Gaurav Deep Welfare Society also participated in plantation. Chouhan received information about the activities of the organisation. The office bearers of the organisation Deepthi Patwa, Ravi Lalwani, Sakshi Dev and Lavanya Singh presented Umang souvenir to the Chief Minister Chouhan.

Almond is a dry fruit. Technically, it is the seed of the fruit of the almond tree. The almond tree bears pink and white fragrant flowers. It flourishes more in mountainous areas. Almonds are rich in fiber and help in digestion. Almonds are useful in the treatment of high blood pressure, constipation and heart diseases. It is rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium and vitamin E Moulshree is also called Kesava in Sanskrit, Molsari or Bakool in Hindi. It is a tree of medicinal importance, which has been used in Ayurveda for centuries.

MP lifts Covid curbs, schools to resume at 100% capacity

To further ease Covid-19 restrictions in the state, the Madhya Pradesh government on Friday announced to lift all restrictions put earlier in the state. With this step, all kinds of public movements that were either banned or capped with certain numbers, will be allowed at full capacity.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

To further ease Covid-19 restrictions in the state, the Madhya Pradesh government on Friday announced to lift all restrictions put earlier in the state. With this step, all kinds of public movements that were either banned or capped with certain numbers, will be allowed at full capacity.

Schools, colleges and coaching centres that have been allowed to run with 50 per cent capacity, will now be permitted to open with their full strength. All political, social, religious, business, sports activities, among others will be allowed to function at full capacity across the state.

Rallies and all kind of fairs will also be allowed to run in the state while cinema, sports, and business gathering will be



allowed to function at its full capacity.

A notification issued by the State Home department on Friday said the order will come into effect from Friday onward, however, the night curfew imposed between 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. will still continue. District Collectors have been directed to ensure that Covid-19 related norms are followed in the areas where fresh cases are being reported.

"District Collectors are advised to monitor the Covid situation in their respective districts and continue with the implementation of micro-containment zone in the areas where new Covid-19 cases are coming," the notification added.

The fresh notification regarding the Covid-19 restriction has come a week after the state government removed the cap on number of guests attending marriage ceremonies earlier on February 5. Earlier, due to a spike in Covid-positive cases, the state government had capped the number of people attending weddings at 250 from January 15.

"Covid cases in Madhya Pradesh are declining and positivity rate has also come down in the last few days. Overall the Covid situation is under control and hence the government has decided to lift all kind of restrictions put earlier in view of the pandemic," said Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO MAHARSHI SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWATI



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Maharshi Swami Dayanand Saraswati Ji by garlanding his picture in the auditorium of his residence. The Chief Minister also remembered the contribution of Swamiji.

Chouhan tweeted that- "It is not wrong to be ignorant, it is wrong to remain ignorant. This has been said by Dayanand Ji who is the founder of Arya Samaj and the great scholar of Vedas. Tremendous respects to Swami Dayanand Saraswati Ji on his anniversary. The lamp that you have lit for the new awakening of the nation and society, it will always guide us Indians.

Maharshi Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a great thinker, social reformer and founder of Arya Samaj, a great patriot and social worker of high order of modern India. He was born on February 12, 1824 in Tankara, Gujarat. His childhood name was 'Moolshankar'. He founded the Arya Samaj to propagate the Vedas and to give freedom to Aryavarta. He always considered the power of the Vedas to be paramount. 'Return to the Vedas' was his main slogan. He passed away on October 30, 1883.



ZENDAYA, JOSH O'CONNOR, MIKE FAIST TO STAR IN TENNIS DRAMA 'CHALLENGERS'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Zendaya, Josh O'Connor and star Mike Faist are set to star in Luca Guadagnino's new romantic drama 'Challengers'. 'Spider-Man: No Way Home' producer Amy Pascal is producing the film via her Pascal Pictures alongside Zendaya and Guadagnino. Playwright Justin Kuritzkes is penning the script, reports variety.com.

The film centers on the competitive world of pro tennis, in which player-turned-coach Tashi (Zendaya) has transformed her husband Art (Faist) into a Grand Slam champion.

After a losing streak, Tashi enters him into a "Challenger" event - the lowest pro tournament level - where he must face off against Patrick (O'Connor), Tashi's former boyfriend and his former best friend. Zendaya's deal for the film is closed, while O'Connor and Faist are still in negotiations. Production on 'Challengers' is planned to begin in the spring on the East Coast.

'Challengers' joins Guadagnino's intriguing upcoming slate, including 'Bones and All' with Timothee Chalamet and his Audrey Hepburn biopic starring Rooney Mara.

Emmy-winning actor Zendaya is currently starring in the second season of wildly popular teenage drama 'Euphoria'. She recently reprised the role of MJ in 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'.

O'Connor, who is also an Emmy winner for his role as young Prince Charles in 'The Crown', is next set to star in romance 'The History of Sound' alongside Paul Mescal.

Following his breakout role as Riff in 'West Side Story', Faist will next be seen in 'Pinball: The Man Who Saved the Game' from Austin and Meredith Bragg.



'BLADE RUNNER 2049' SEQUEL SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT

Los Angeles | Agencies

A live-action 'Blade Runner' sequel series is in development at Amazon. According to variety.com, titled 'Blade Runner 2099', the series will serve as a follow-up to the 'Blade Runner' sequel 'Blade Runner 2049'.

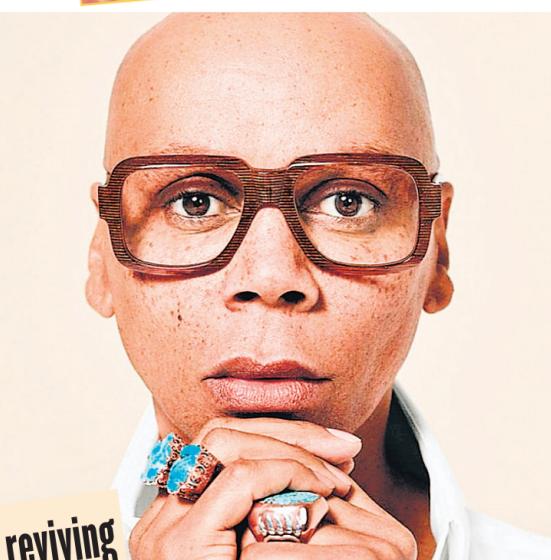
Andrew Kosove and Broderick Johnson of Alcon Entertainment are also executive producing along with David W. Zucker of Scott Free, 'Blade Runner 2049' screenwriter Michael Green, Ben Roberts, Cynthia Yorkin, and Clayton Krueger.

Plot details on the series are being kept under wraps, but the title indicates it will take place fifty years after the events of the most recent film in the franchise, which debuted in theaters in 2017 with Denis Villeneuve directing.

In addition to the two films, Adult Swim recently aired the anime series 'Blade Runner: Black Lotus', which takes place in the year 2032.

Scott had previously teased that a 'Blade Runner' live-action series was in the works, telling the BBC in November 2021 that the pilot had already been written and a series bible had been prepared.

The original 'Blade Runner' film was released in 1982.



Tom Holland 'has a lot in common' with Mark Wahlberg

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood star Tom Holland and filmmaker Mark Wahlberg joined forces to star in the new 'Uncharted' movie, and in spite of their age difference, the actor says they're actually quite similar in a lot of ways.

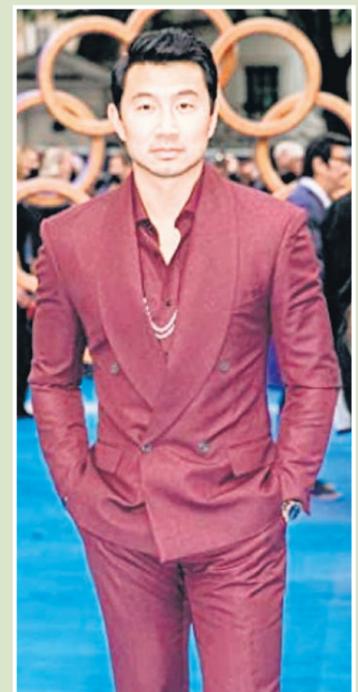
Holland, who plays Nathan Drake in the action-adventure film, told the 'Backstage' podcast: "We had a bunch of laughs and we have a lot in common with family and golf and our love for cinema and things of that nature, so we hit it off right away. But it was challenging too, because I'm the youngest of nine so I'm not used to somebody always trying to taunt me and give me crap and compete with me - I'm usually that guy." So that took some getting used to, but the great thing about the relationship between Sully and Nate and (Tom and Mark) is that it has to be earned - you really do have to earn each other's respect, earn each other's trust, and that's not something that comes easily." Holland also said they were both "going head-to-head in a friendly, combative way" on set, reports femalefirst.co.uk. He said: "I think there was an interesting dynamic between me being the new young guy on the scene, and he was once that young guy on the scene."



'SHANG CHI' ACTOR SIMU LIU TO STAR IN 'BARBIE'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings' star Simu Liu has been cast in 'Barbie', an upcoming Warner Bros movie based on the popular doll. As previously announced, Margot Robbie is playing Barbie and Ryan Gosling is playing her boy toy Ken. It is not clear who Liu or America Ferrera, who also recently joined the ensemble, will portray in the live-action film, reports variety.com. Greta Gerwig is directing the movie from a script she wrote with her long-time partner Noah Baumbach. Plot details have been kept under wraps. 'Barbie', which has been in the works since 2019, is expected to start production in early 2022 at the Warner Bros. Leavesden studio in London. It's slated to hit theaters sometime in 2023.



London | Agencies

RuPaul is bringing back a new adaptation of the word puzzle game show 'Lingo' to premiere sometime later this year.

Emmy winner RuPaul Charles is set to executive produce and host the show, which has already made a comeback in the UK to huge ratings, reports variety.com.

'Lingo' follows teams of two as they face off in fast-paced puzzle rounds to guess letters

RuPaul is reviving the 'Lingo' word-based game show

that reveal seemingly simple words. At the end of each one-hour episode, the winning two teams face off in a final showdown, with one team winning

an additional cash prize.

"We're all ready to have fun again, and 'Lingo' is the answer," Charles said in a brief statement.

Meanwhile, Mitch Graham, senior VP of alternative programming at CBS, alluded to the current Wordle (the online word puzzle recently acquired by the New York Times) phenomenon in his statement:

"The word game craze is sweeping the nation, and aLingo' will deliver a fast-paced, fun and addictive show for the whole family," he said.

"RuPaul's flair and sharp wit, coupled with the ability for viewers to play along at home, make this a timely show with wide appeal that we're excited to join our network lineup."

'DEATH ON THE NILE': STYLISHLY MOUNTED ADAPTATION OF AN OLD-FASHIONED WHODUNNIT



TROY RIBEIRO

Director: Kenneth Branagh

Cast: Kenneth Branagh, Gal Gadot, Annette Bening, Armie Hammer, Letitia Wright, Russell Brand, Ali Fazal, Emma Mackey, Dawn French, Jennifer Saunders, Rose Leslie, Sophie Okonedo and Tom Bateman

Duration: 127 minutes.

Ratings: *** (three stars)

Based on Agatha Christie's 1937 novel of the same name, this film is the third screen adaptation of it and a sequel to 'Murder on the Orient Express' (2017). It could also be considered the remake of the 1978 film of the same name, directed by John Guillermin.

This film, directed by Kenneth Branagh, is a formulaic whodunnit set on the luxurious river steamer Karnak, making its way through the Egyptian River Nile.

The narrative follows the beloved and notoriously gifted Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot, enacted by Branagh. As a guest of the heiress Linnet Ridgeway (Gal Gadot), Poirot finds himself invited on her maiden Nile cruise after a whirlwind romance and marriage to Simon Doyle (Armie Hammer), whom she met when he was engaged to her childhood friend Jacqueline de Bellefort (Emma Mackey).

The others in the entourage are



Linnet's godmother Marie Van Schuyler (Jennifer Saunders) and her companion Mrs Bowers (Dawn French), a family friend, Bouch (Tom Bateman), and his mother Euphemia (Annette Bening), Linnet's cousin Andrew Katchadourian (Ali Fazal), and Dr Bessner (Russell Brand), who had once proposed to Linnet. The jazz singer Salome Otterbourne (Sophie Okonedo) and her niece Rosalie (Letitia Wright).

En route, there is a murder. Ridgeway's relatives, friends, and employees are suspects. Each one of them has a motive. How Poirot solves the mystery forms the crux of this mystery.

The film appears to start off on a pointless note (which also happens to be its prelude), right in the trenches of

World War I. This scene has no connection to the tale that follows, except for explaining that love is too powerful and that the crime committed was linked to love.

Set in the backdrop of an epic landscape, and with over a dozen characters smartly dressed and topped with fine music, the plot moves at a leisurely pace, and thus the telling appears weak.

Visually, the frames are mostly made up of tight close-ups and mid-shots, and accessorised with poor computer-generated images, which make the film appear old-fashioned.

On the performance front, every actor gives an earnest delivery. Kenneth Branagh, Gal Gadot, Emma Mackey and Tom Bateman are all brilliant.





Bengaluru Open

SAKETH, RAMKUMAR WIN DOUBLES CROWN; GOJO, TSENG IN SINGLES FINAL

Bengaluru | Agencies

India's Saketh Myneni and Ramkumar Ramanathan lifted the doubles title of the Bengaluru Open ATP Challenger with a dominating win against French rivals Hugo Grenier and Alexandre Muller in the finals played at the KSLTA Stadium here on Saturday.

Banking on the support of the local crowd, the Indian pair won in straight sets 6-3, 6-2. This was Saketh's ninth doubles title at Challengers while Ramkumar registered a third victory in as many weeks with his victory on Saturday. Last week, Ramkumar had partnered Rohan Bopanna to the doubles title at the Tata Open Maharashtra ATP 250 event in Pune.

Meanwhile, qualifier Borna Gojo of Croatia rallied brilliantly from a set down to beat Frenchman Alexandre Muller in three sets and storm into the final of the singles event. He will next clash with Taipei's Chun-Hsin Tseng for the title. The latter scripted an upset victory over sixth seed Enzo Couacaud,



also of France, with a 7-5, 6-4, after being 2-5 down in the first set to make it to the summit clash.

The combination of the fast serves of Ramkumar and the deft volleys by Saketh proved to be a

deadly combination as the duo raced to a 4-1 lead before annexing the first set at 6-3. A visibly tired Muller, who had played two matches on Friday and Grenier could not contain the onslaught of winners

from the Indian pair and succumbed without much fight.

The Gojo-Muller match proved to be a perfect clash as both players held their serves until the ninth game in which Gojo lost his serve and eventually the set.

The second set also followed a similar pattern until Gojo broke his opponent's serve to go 5-3 up and held his serve to make his way back into the match. The momentum helped him so much that he did not give a semblance of a chance to his rival to make a comeback as he blanked Muller on the back of three breaks.

In the other semi-final, after Enzo had held his serve, they traded serves in the next three games as the Taipei player trailed 2-5. Once he got his rhythm going, Tseng never looked back winning five games in a row to capture the first set 7-5.

In the second set, both the players tested each other before Tseng found the break he was looking for in the fifth game to wrap up the set and match.

Suzie Bates slams ton as New Zealand Women humble India in 1st ODI

Queenstown | Agencies

Suzie Bates slammed a century, while Amy Satterthwaite scored a half century as New Zealand Women defeated the Mithali Raj-led India by 62 runs in the opening One-day International (ODI) at the John Davies Oval to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series here on Saturday.

Put in to bat first, New Zealand openers Bates and Maddy Green put on a solid start, adding 54 runs for the first wicket. Bates (106 off 111 balls) took the initiative from the get-go and did the bulk of the scoring in the Powerplay as the hosts put up an imposing 275 in 48.1 overs. In reply, India were bundled out for 213 in 49.4 overs.

In New Zealand's batting, the introduction of spin finally became the undoing for Green who was caught at slip off Deepti Sharma. While Bates soon got to her fifty, Amelia Kerr took up the role of the aggressor in her 39-ball 33 that included five boundaries. Eventually, Poonam Yadav got the better of her trying an expansive



shot. India got off to a poor start in their chase of 276 and were left to play catchup from the very beginning. In the absence of Smriti Mandhana, Sabbhineni Meghana was handed her ODI debut after impressing in the one-off T20I. However, her form did not carry over

across formats as she was caught at slips in the fifth over.

Four balls later, Devine trapped Shafali Verma in front of the stumps as India lost both their openers in consecutive overs.

Yastika Bhatia and Mithali Raj then came together to rebuild the innings and started to tee off towards the end of the Powerplay. They kept finding the boundaries with regularity but found it difficult to rotate strike as frequently. Mithali Raj got to her fifty, but with the required run rate at 7.5, was caught at point trying to take the aerial route.

Jess Kerr stood out with a four-off, first breaking the back of the Indian innings with the wickets of Mithali and Harmanpreet, before wrapping up the game with two wickets in two balls.

Brief scores

New Zealand 275 in 48.1 overs (Suzie Bates 106, Amelia Kerr 33, Amy Satterthwaite 63; Jhulan Goswami 2/58) beat India 213 in 49.4 overs (Yastika Bhatia 41, Mithali Raj 59, Jess Kerr 4/35) by 62 runs.

PVL: Ashwal Rai's blistering spikes help Kolkata Thunderbolts to win over Chennai Blitz



Hyderabad | Agencies

The Kolkata Thunderbolts recorded their second victory of the season, defeating Chennai Blitz 4-1 in the Prime Volleyball League at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium here on Friday. Kolkata, who won 10-15, 15-11, 15-10, 15-12, 15-13, picked up two points from this match. Kolkata's Rahul K was adjudged the Player of the Match.

In the first set, Bruno Da Silva's Super Serve put the Chennai Blitz ahead at 5-3, but Kolkata Thunderbolts Captain Ashwal Rai kept his team in the contest. Akhin GS pulled off a brilliant spike as the Blitz extended their lead further.

Moments later, Naveen Raja Jacob helped his team win a Super Point

through a fabulous spike. Thereafter, another calm finish by Jacob helped the Blitz take the first set 15-10.

Rahul K pulled off a brilliant spike to help the Thunderbolts take the lead at 7-6 in the second set, but a spike by Akhin levelled the scores yet again. However, Rahul carried out a Super Serve as the Thunderbolts gained momentum at 12-9. Thereafter, Kolkata effected a superb block to wrap up the second set and get on board. Rahul continued to produce brilliant serves in the third set as Kolkata took the lead at 5-2. Mohamed Riyazudeen effected a fantastic spike as Kolkata continued to dominate in the third set. The Thunderbolts rode on the momentum and eventually recorded a 2-1 lead in the match. Chennai and Kolkata played out another close contest and were locked at 9-9 in the fourth set, however, a superb spike by Shameemudeen A helped Kolkata win a Super Point and take the lead at 11-9. The Thunderbolts won another Super Point before sealing the match with a 15-12 win in the fourth set.

PKL 8: BENGALURU BULLS FIGHT FOR TOP 6 SPOT IN A TIGHT RACE



Bengaluru: Haryana Steelers will lock horns with U Mumba while Bengaluru Lions will take on Jaipur Pink Panthers in Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 8 on Sunday with a place in the Top 6 on the line. The third game of the night will see U.P Yoddha battle Gujarat Giants. Haryana suffered a humiliating defeat against Puneri Paltan in their previous outing and will be looking to bounce back against Mumbai. U Mumba have endured a difficult campaign with injuries affecting their form. But with Rahul Sethpal and Ajith Kumar fit, they can pull off a series of wins to ensure a playoff berth. The second match of the night will have Bengaluru Bulls take on Jaipur Pink Panthers, needing a win to maintain their chances. The Bulls have been off-colour in their last few matches despite a strong start to their campaign. They will be looking to beat Pink Panthers to remain in contention for a Top 6 finish.

Hazlewood, Zampa guide Australia to 20-run win in opening T20I vs Sri Lanka

Sydney | Agencies

Australian pace bowler Josh Hazlewood, returning to the side after missing four Ashes Tests due to a side strain, and Adam Zampa grabbed four and three wickets, respectively as the hosts defeated Sri Lanka by 20 runs in a rain-interrupted match to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20I series at Sydney Cricket Ground here.

Having been asked to bat first in a Thursday night match, Australia could manage a below-par 149/9 in 20 overs, with Ben McDermott the only one to score a half-century. Sri Lanka were then restricted to 122/8 in 19 overs.

Australia lost captain Aaron Finch early, who failed to read the wrong 'un from Wanindu Hasaranga and was out bowled. McDermott, who made his comeback into the side after his brilliant performance in the Big Bash League (BBL), continued his good form and scored 53 of 41 deliveries.

After the wicket of Finch, debutant Jos Inglis and McDermott took the



attack to the bowlers and completed their 50-run partnership before the latter was dismissed in the 11th over by Karunaratne. Captain Dasun Shanaka saw the opportunity and immediately brought Hasaranga back into the attack, which turned out to be perfect change as scalped the big wickets of Maxwell and Smith. Chasing 150 for the win, Sri Lanka got off to a poor start as they lost early wickets. The first wicket came when Danushka Gunathilaka tried to attack Hazlewood but ended up

handing a catch straight into the hands of Stoinis at mid-wicket. Avishka Fernando didn't trouble the scorers too much and lost his wicket to Cummins on six.

Brief scores

Australia 149/9 in 20 overs (Ben McDermott 53, Wanindu Hasaranga 3/38) beat Sri Lanka 122/8 in 19 overs (Pathum Nissanka 36, Josh Hazlewood 4/12, Adam Zampa 3/18) by 20 runs (D/L Method).

We are missing Mandhana, says Mithali after 62-run loss in first ODI

Queenstown | Agencies

India ODI captain Mithali Raj admitted that the side was missing opener Smriti Mandhana after losing the first ODI to New Zealand by 62 runs on Saturday.

Smriti, along with pacers Renuka Singh and Meghna Singh, are still in the MIQ (Managed Isolation and Quarantine) facility of the New Zealand government.

"We are missing Smriti Mandhana and having an experienced batter in the side helps to chase a big target but it's an opportunity for the others in the side to sort of show their game," said Mithali in the post-match presentation ceremony.

Chasing 275, India were never in the hunt to get over the line. Barring a partnership of 88 off 116 balls between Mithali (59) and Yastika Bhatia (41), the batting didn't step up to the



occasion. Mithali stated that the batting has to be better.

"We should be able to score 270 because that's the standard now in women's cricket. We need to have a certain run-rate to maintain through the innings so were able to score at least around 250 or 270 whether we bat first or chase."

Asked if India was short of match practice ahead of the series, Mithali remarked, "We definitely had a preparation camp, but there has been a huge gap between coming into New Zealand with extended quarantine in Mumbai and here as well."

She felt playing a series against the hosts before the women's Cricket World Cup will benefit them.

"It is important to get used to the conditions, it's in a way good that we are playing as series before the World Cup."

Hockey India names 65 players for junior men's national camp

Bengaluru | Agencies

Hockey India on Saturday named 65 players for the upcoming Junior Men's National camp, which will be held between February 14 and 25 at the Sports Authority of India centre here.

The players have been selected on the basis of their performance at the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's Junior World Cup Bhubaneswar 2021 and other Hockey India-sanctioned domestic junior events last year. The camp will be held with the aim to select 33 core probables for upcoming tournaments in 2022 for the India junior men's hockey team. Highlighting the impor-



tance of the junior men's national camp, India men's team chief coach Graham Reid said, "The camp will be quite helpful for us in determining the talents who are ready to move up to the next step. We wish to be prepared for the upcoming competi-

tions and our aim is to send our best team for every tournament that we play. It is also a learning opportunity for young players, and for them to get an understanding of the challenges that are in store for them at the highest level," Reid added.

PKL 8: Naveen Kumar helps Dabang Delhi beat Tamil Thalaivas

Bengaluru | Agencies

Naveen Kumar was the star for Dabang Delhi K.C. as they beat Tamil Thalaivas 32-31 in a closely-fought Match 110 of Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 8 here on Saturday. The star raider scored 13 points for Delhi as they overcame a stiff challenge mounted by the Tamil team in the dying minutes. The win will help Delhi increase their chances of a Top-2 finish in the league stages.

Thalaivas miscalculated the last raid and didn't attempt for a bonus which could have helped them clinch two points to level the match. The result means the team from Chennai are out of the current Top 6 and will need a flawless end to the season to keep their playoff hopes alive.

Delhi started the match on the front foot with Naveen Kumar looking ominous. He picked up easy points from the Tamil defence, while at the end, Manjeet did his best to keep



Thalaivas within touching distance. The absence of Ajinkya Pawar hampered Thalaivas' usual double-headed attack.

The pressure finally helped Dabang clinch an all-out in the 13th minute and open an eight-point lead. Despite the gap, Thalaivas were playing well, especially captain Surjeet Singh. Delhi's Neeraj Narwal also contributed to the raids as the first half ended with scores 17-10.

Khadka takes top honours in Pre-Qualifying III, 27 players qualify for the final stage

Ahmedabad | Agencies

Girraj Singh Khadka (73-71) of Jaipur shot a second round of one-under 71 to total even-par 144 and take the top honours at Pre-Qualifying III of the PGTI Qualifying School 2022 at the Kalhaar Blues & Greens Golf Club here.

Pune's Pravin Pathare (70-75) and Gurugram-based amateur Daksh Shokeen (71-74) finished tied second at one-over 145.

From a total field of 96 in Pre Qualifying III, the top 27 players qualified for the Final Qualifying Stage as the cut was declared at 11-over 155.

Twenty-seven-year-old Girraj Singh Khadka, who was overnight tied eighth and three off the lead, sank two long birdie putts on the third and fifth before dropping a double-bogey on the seventh, according to a release by the PGTI on Saturday.

Girraj, a two-time winner on the amateur circuit before he turned pro in 2020, added



three more birdies between the 10th and the 14th thanks to his excellent wedge-play. Khadka conceded bogeys on the 15th and 18th but still managed to finish on top of the pack at the end of the 36-hole event.

The final qualifying stage will now be held from February 15-18.

ISHAN KISHAN HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE THE FUTURE CAPTAIN AS WELL: IRFAN PATHAN

Mumbai: As Ishan Kishan became the second-most expensive Indian player in the history of IPL after being picked by Mumbai Indians for a whopping INR 15.25 crore, former all-rounder Irfan Pathan on Saturday said that the franchise is looking at the wicket-keeper-batter as a long-term prospect. "He has the potential to be the future captain as well, not right now. They still have Keiron Pollard who can lead, Bumrah who is a leader himself, they have Suryakumar Yadav who could be the prospect for leadership as well."

"So, they want to invest for the next 5-7 years, that's why they went after Ishan Kishan so clearly and they knew that no matter what we needed to go back to Ishan Kishan," Pathan said on Star Sports' show 'Cricket Live - IPL Auction Special'. "I haven't seen in the Auction table, Mumbai Indian talking so much and taking a longer break than this in my history of this Auction list," he added. Kishan overtook Shreyas Iyer, who was picked for INR 12.25 crore, to become the most expensive buy of the ongoing auction so far. Apart from Kishan, Sri Lanka leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and West Indies batter Nicholas Pooran landed paychecks above INR 10 crore in the third round.





Plabita Borthakur turns a slam poet in her next release

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Plabita Borthakur is all set to star in the upcoming youth musical drama '#Homecoming'. According to sources, Plabita took a workshop on slam poetry for performing a long verse as a tribute to Kolkata in the film. The actor has been rehearsing extensively for this bit to be shot over a span of two days.

She says, "Being a form of performance poetry that combines the elements of performance, writing, competition, and audience participation, for an artist, slam poetry is like an open canvas with no limits."

"I have been communitarian training and attended a targeted workshop for this one and can't wait for things to materialise the way we have imagined in the film. Additionally, this movie has a special slam-surprise for everyone who is from Kolkata as well, and that's all I am going to say."

#Homecoming also stars Sayani Gupta, Tushar Pandey, Hussain Dalal and Soham Majumdar. Directed by Soumyajit Majumdar, the film is a youth drama based on a group of friends who reunite in their hometown to save their old theatre training academy from being demolished for the commercialisation plans of the state. #Homecoming is scheduled to start streaming on SonyLIV.

MANUSHI CHHILLAR: WORKED HARD ON MYSELF TO PLAY PRINCESS SANYOGITA

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former beauty queen and debutante Manushi Chhillar currently awaits the release of her maiden film 'Prithviraj'. She says she worked harder on herself to play Princess Sanyogita in the movie.

'Prithviraj' is based on the life and valour of the fearless and mighty king Prithviraj Chauhan. Bollywood star Akshay Kumar is essaying the role of the legendary warrior who fought valiantly against merciless invader Muhammad of Ghor. Manushi has been cast opposite Akshay as Prithviraj's love Princess Sanyogita. Manushi says, "I'm ecstatic that we now have a date for Prithviraj's

release on the big screen. It is the ultimate theatrical entertainer that needs to be watched in its full glory. I have been fortunate enough to have gotten this kind of launchpad and I'm hoping that I have done justice to the opportunity that I have got." She adds, "I worked hard to get the part and I know that I worked on myself harder to play the role of Princess Sanyogita. It was a huge responsibility." "I'm thrilled that people are appreciating how I'm looking in the film. I hope that they love how I have performed too because that's going to be my true test on screen." 'Prithviraj' is directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi. It will be released worldwide on June 10 in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu and in IMAX.

Tisca Chopra starts her online food show

Team Absolute | Mumbai

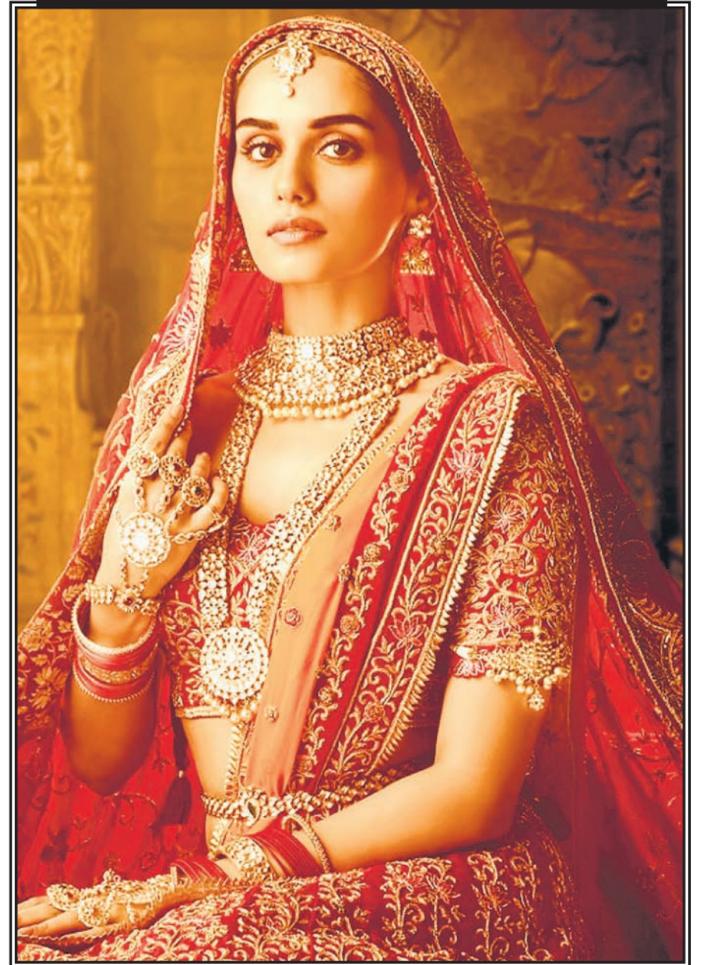
Actress Tisca Chopra starts her new journey on the digital platform as a food show host with 'Tisca's Table', a 12-part series.

Starting from Saturday, the show will see Tisca in conversation with celebrities like Jim Sarbh, Sobhita Dhulipala, Anurag Kashyap, Masaba Gupta, Mary Kom, Saishya Shinde among others.

Produced by Fursat Films, Gautam Thakker Films, Cheese and Crackers, every episode of 'Tisca's Table' takes the audience through Tisca identifying restaurants serving delicious foods in the locales of the city. According to the guest's choice, the meal may be keto-friendly or vegan. Every guest will be seen diving deep into conversation over delectable food.

Talking about the show, Tisca said, "It is an exciting journey for me as I take charge of one of my dearest projects. It has been an interesting journey from Tisca's mind to Tisca's Table finally on YouTube."

The episodes will be out every Saturday on YouTube.



'Badhaai Do': Stretched narrative makes for tedious viewing



FILM REVIEW

BY TROY RIBEIRO

(Running in Theatres)

Direction: Harshavardhan Kulkarni

Cast: Rajkumar Rao, Bhumi Pednekar, Sheeba Chaddha, Seema Pahwa, Loveleen Mishra and Nitesh Pandey.

Duration: 147 minutes.

Ratings: **1/2 (two and half stars)

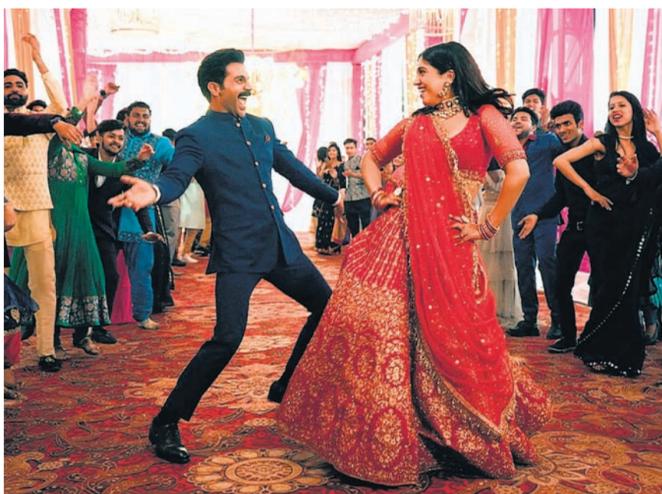
Bold themes reflecting the changing reality of our society are slowly but surely making their way into Hindi films. While the honesty and intention are laudable, Harshavardhan Kulkarni's 'Badhaai Do' is forcefully stretched to make this point palatable to the audience. Also, somewhere down the line, the message loses its impact and earnestness.

Shardul Thakur (Rajkumar Rao) and Sumi Singh (Bhumi Pednekar) come from middle-class families where societal norms are expected to be complied with. The two of them however are 'different'.

They belong to the queer community, and discovering a common goal, enter into a marriage of convenience, wherein each one leads his or her life freely while keeping up pretences of being a happily married couple.

The societal pressure of having a baby, and elders in the family trying to make it happen, make things spiral out of control, and a chance discovery of Sumi with her partner, Rimjhim (Chum Darang), causes the Pandora's Box to be opened. How they explain to their families that they are born to be different and are not suffering from a 'disease' forms the crux of the film.

Rajkumar Rao, as the policeman, fixated upon fitness and body-building, flaunting his six-pack abs and an enviable physique,



every inch looks his part. But somewhere, in his bid to be different and not use stereotypical mannerisms, as he essays this character, he tries too hard and fails to impress. One does not empathise with him and one cannot feel his predicament.

Bhumi Pednekar as Sumi, a Physical Education teacher, scores over Rao in her realistic portrayal and seems to be more comfortable portraying her bold character. Yet, somewhere, neither of them is deeply convincing.

The supporting cast of veteran actors deliver what is expected of them. The scene on the terrace where Shardul's mother (Sheeba Chaddha) embraces her sobbing son in acceptance is poignant.

The plot is linear, with the narrative having a single-minded focus on delivering this message to its audience. The length of the film and the lacklustre chemistry between the lead cast, however, dilute this impact.

The setting of the film -- middle-class small-town families and societal expecta-

tions -- are a tad exaggerated, merely to drive home the point and heighten the contrast.

The LGBTQ+ rally towards the end, to reiterate their liberation and acceptance of who they are, is one of the several uncalled-for instances in the film, which merely adds to its length, not its gravitas.

Also, the sensitivity of the issue and the societal reactions, particularly those of middle-class families, are made to look trite, and with the several forced attempts to highlight the struggles of this community, somewhere along the way, the seriousness of the message is lost.

The music meshes well with the theme of the film. 'Atak Gaya' by Arijit Singh, in particular, encapsulates the essence of the film.

Overall, this film appears to be just another take on LGBTQ+ issues, this time adding the adoption angle to the otherwise commonplace matter of coming out of the closet and making your families understand.

Mounted with moderate production values the film tends to get tedious at times.

SANDEEP KUMAAR: BEING AN ACTOR IS NOT EASY AT ALL

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Sandeep Kumar, who is currently seen as an antagonist in TV shows 'Tera Mera Saath Rahe' and 'Thapki Pyar Ki 2', feels acting as a career needs plenty of good luck.

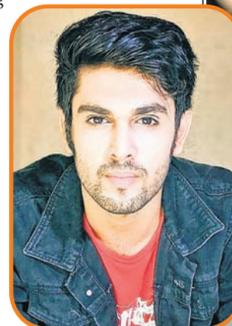
He says: "Since there are so many people who are trying to become successful actors, there is a lot of challenge and competition. In fact, even if you are talented, it requires plenty of luck and hard work to get to a level where you can make a living out of acting."

Consequently, you may want to be an actor as a hobby or part-time, yet being dependent on the money from acting can be a risky place to be in since only some actors will actually make a good living out of their profession."

The actor adds that showbiz is a place mostly for strong individuals.

He adds: "In general, being an actor is not easy at all and since you will have to deal with all the pressure and negativity that comes along with being successful, you need to develop a pretty solid mindset since you will lose yourself otherwise. In fact, many people break under the pressure in the long run and you should really make sure that you are a strong individual before you pursue acting."

Sandeep has earlier also featured in shows like 'Bahu Beguni', 'Manmohini' and movies like 'Racket' and 'Jabariya Jodi'.



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Aahna Kumra