

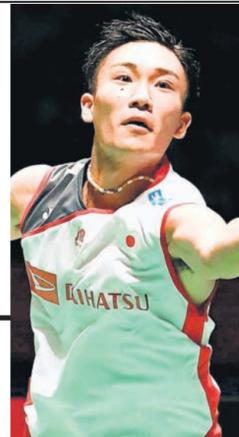
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IAF SACKS THREE OFFICERS FOR MISFIRING OF BRAHMOS MISSILE INTO PAKISTAN



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Indian Air Force on Tuesday sacked three personnel for the firing of a BrahMos missile into Pakistani territory. The IAF in a statement said, "BrahMos missile was accidentally fired on 09 March 2022. A Court of Inquiry (CoI), set up to establish the facts of the case, including fixing responsibility for the incident, found that deviation from the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) by three officers led to the accidental firing of the missile."

held responsible for the incident. Their services have been terminated by the Central Govt with immediate effect. Termination orders have been served upon the officers on 23 Aug 22," the statement added.

The incident was reported on March 9 this year. It was said that during "routine maintenance and inspection," a BrahMos missile was accidentally launched into the territory of Pakistan in the vicinity of Mian Channu town, travelling more than 120 kms west of the India-Pakistan border.

According to Pakistani military officials on March 10, the missile flew for 3 minutes and 46 seconds within Pakistani airspace.

First successful heart transplant operation performed at Delhi's RML Hospital

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The first successful heart transplant operation has been performed at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital in the national capital, giving a new lease of life to a 32-year-old woman.

Laxmi Devi from Bhagalpur in Bihar was diagnosed with terminal heart failure following childbirth after which she was suffering from severe breathlessness.

A team of cardiologists led by Ranjith Nath and Praveen Agarwal had advised a heart transplant following which she was registered with the National Organ and Tissue

Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) for the operation at the earliest availability of a donor heart.

The donor was found in a young girl named Basu, who met with an accident on August 15 and was admitted to PGI Chandigarh with severe head injury. She was declared brain dead on August 20, and was kept on a ventilator to sustain her organs. After consulting with the transplant coordinator at PGI Chandigarh, her father, Ajo Manji, a daily wage labourer, agreed to donate her organs.

On the morning of August 21, NOTTO released an alert about the availability of a

donor heart. A team of cardiac surgeons from the RML Hospital and AIIMS led by Narender Singh Jhajhria reached PGI Chandigarh the same evening and harvested the donor heart, which was flown to Delhi within two hours. On Monday night, a team led by Vijay Grover and comprising Milind Hote, Narender Jhajhria, Palash Aiyer and anaesthetists Ramesh Kashev and Jaswinder performed the heart transplant operation on Laxmi Devi at the RML Hospital.

Basu's kidneys, corneas, liver and pancreas were also donated, giving a new lease of life to five other persons.

Q1FY23 GDP growth expected at 15.7% with possibility of upward bias: SBI Ecowrap

Team Absolute | Mumbai

India's GDP is expected to be much higher in Q1FY23 and growth is expected around 15.7 per cent with a large possibility of an upward bias because several indicators have shown good progress in the Indian economy, SBI Ecowrap report said. "As per our (SBI) 'Nowcasting Model', the forecasted GDP growth for Q1 FY23 would be 15.7 per cent, with an upward bias," the report added. The progress in the economy is seen despite global spillovers, elevated inflation and some slackening of external demand as geopolitical developments take their toll on world trade. Domestically, an intense heatwave in major regions limited economic activity in the earlier months. Despite this, most of the high frequency indicators showed



improvement, especially in the services sector activity. There were also significant improvements in the domestic supply delivery time, back-

logs and decline in truck freights, which was reflected in the fall of index of supply chain pressures for India. GDP Growth as per SBI com-

posite leading indicator (CLI), a basket of 41 leading indicators, which includes parameters from almost all the sectors based on monthly data, shows early signals of turning-points in the economic activity. Out of the 41 high frequency leading indicators, 89 per cent are showing acceleration, compared to 75 per cent acceleration in FY22.

Private final consumption expenditure in real terms that had declined significantly by Rs 4.77 lakh crore in Q1FY21 owing to Covid-19 pandemic recovered by 46 per cent in Q1FY22. It remains to be seen how the remaining 54 per cent pent up demand recovered in Q1FY23. We believe it is likely to be more than 54 per cent, indicating a strong recovery in consumer demand, specifically in services which has helped in the likely strong Q1FY23 numbers.

BIHAR ASSEMBLY SPEAKER REJECTS NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION, REFUSED TO RESIGN

Patna: A constitutional crisis emerged in Bihar on Tuesday after Assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Sinha refused to step down from his post despite the no-confidence motion against him.

The ruling JD-U and RJD brought the no-confidence motion against Sinha after they came to power in Bihar. Sinha rejected the no-confidence motion, saying it was not in accordance with the law and hence, he had decided not to resign from his post.

After the formation of the new government in Bihar, the BJP became an opposition party. Hence, the ruling JD-U and RJD were thinking that Sinha may resign from his post himself. As per the law, advance notice of a no-confidence motion against the Speaker has to be filed in the Assembly and voting on it should take place within 14 days. "After the formation of a new government in Bihar, the ruling alliance parties have to prove the majority in the house. It will happen on Wednesday during a special session. As I have already rejected the no confidence motion against myself, discussion would not take place on it. During the session, I will put my points inside the house," Sinha said.

Deputy Speaker Maheshwar Hajari said: "Sinha is a BJP leader and he does not have majority in the house to remain on the constitutional post. We have already filed an online notice pertaining to no confidence motion on August 9 and physically submitted the notice on August 10. Hence, as he did not call for the voting in the house within 14 days, he would not be the speaker of Bihar Vidhan Sabha from August 24."

"During his tenure as a Speaker, he was an advocate of maintaining morality in the house. When it comes to him, he forgets those morality and assertively sits on the constitutional post," he added.

BILKIS BANO CASE:

SC agrees to examine plea against remission to convicts

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to examine a plea challenging the remission granted to the 11 men convicted for the rape and murder of multiple people in the 2002 Bilkis Bano case. The plea was mentioned by advocate Aparna Bhat and senior advocate Kapil Sibal before a bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana. Counsel submitted that they are challenging the remission order, emphasising that a pregnant woman was raped and people were killed. As the bench queried if the convicts were granted remission by virtue of the top court order, Sibal replied that the apex court merely directed the state to consider the matter, and they were challenging the remission, not the top court order.

The bench said: "We will see." As Bhat urged the court to list the matter for Wednesday, the bench replied: "Let us see the papers." Eleven convicts, sentenced to life imprisonment,



were released from Godhra sub-jail on August 15 after the Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy. The convicts had completed more than 15 years in jail. In January 2008, a special CBI court in Mumbai had sentenced the convicts to life imprisonment for gang-rape and murder of seven members of Bilkis Bano's family. The Bombay High Court upheld their conviction. Bilkis Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gang-raped while fleeing the violence that broke out after the Godhra train burning.

The PIL has been filed by Subhashini Ali, Revathy Laul, and Roop Rekha Rani, assailing the order of the competent authority of the Gujarat government by way of which 11 persons who were accused in a set of heinous offences were allowed to walk free on August 15, pursuant to remission being extended to them. The petitioners contended that grant of remission solely by the competent authority of a state government, without any consultation with the Centre is impermissible in terms of the mandate of Section 435 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

Cattle smuggling case: CBI judge gets threat letter

Kolkata: Justice Rajesh Chakraborty, the judge of the special court of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at Asansol in West Burdwan district of West Bengal, who is dealing with the case related to cattle smuggling has received a threat letter.

In the letter, signed by one Bappa Chattopadhyay, it has been mentioned that unless Chakraborty grants bail to the prime accused Trinamool Congress strongman, Anubrata Mondal in the next hearing, he and his other family mem-

bers will be booked in narcotics case. In fact, threatening people to be booked under narcotics case had been an old habit of Mondal as the Trinamool Congress' Birbhum district president. In the past too, there had been several complaints against him on this count and even a video went viral a few years ago wherein Mondal was seen directing a senior police officer to book one woman BJP supporter in a narcotics case.

It has been learnt that Justice Chakraborty received the threat letter on August 20.

Flight service from Agartala to Bangladesh's Chittagong soon

Agartala | Agencies



Passenger flights would start between Agartala and Bangladesh's Chittagong to further boost trade and economy links between India's northeast region and the neighbouring country, a Tripura minister said on Tuesday. Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said that the exact date of the start of flights between the Tripura capital and the Bangladesh port city would be decided by the Civil Aviation Ministry in consultation with the External Affairs Ministry and the Bangladesh gov-

ernment. He said that the passenger flight would be operated thrice in a week and it would further boost the tourism and trade between the northeastern states of India and Bangladesh. The Tripura council of ministers in a meeting on Tuesday sanctioned Rs 15 crore as viable gap fund to bear the initial loss, if any, to operate the flight in the new inter-

national route. An official of the Airport Authority of India said that the flights would be operated under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik)-RCS (Regional Connectivity) scheme. The Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport in Agartala became ready to operate international flights after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new integrated terminal building on January 4. According to the AAI officials, the MBB airport, located 20 km north of Agartala, is the second busiest airport in the northeast after Guwahati airport in terms of handling of aircraft and passengers.

HYD BJP MLA GETS BAIL HOURS AFTER ARREST FOR DEROGATORY REMARKS

Dehradun | Agencies

A city court on Tuesday granted bail to BJP MLA Raja Singh who was arrested earlier in the day for making derogatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad. Raja Singh, who was arrested on Tuesday morning, was ordered to be released on bail barely a couple of hours after he was remanded to judicial custody.

The 14th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate directed the BJP leader to cooperate with the police in the investigation into the case.

Raja Singh was produced at the Nampally Criminal Court amid tight security and high tension due to protests by his supporters and those opposed to him.

After the court sent the BJP MLA to judicial custody, his counsel moved a bail petition. He argued that the police did not comply with the conditions under Section 41 of Criminal Procedure Code.

After hearing the arguments from both sides, the court rejected the remand order and granted bail to Raja Singh. He was released on a personal bond of Rs 20,000.

Raja Singh's counsel told reporters outside the court

that the Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections under which Raja Singh was arrested provide for punishment of less than seven years. He argued before the court that the police ignored the guidelines passed by the Supreme Court in such cases.

The member of Telangana Assembly was arrested on Tuesday morning after massive protests by Muslims at various places in Hyderabad demanding strong and immediate action against him.

The police registered cases against Raja Singh at various police stations in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana.

Raja Singh on Monday night uploaded a video on Facebook making derogatory comments against the Prophet, triggering massive public outrage. Raja Singh was taken into preventive custody last Saturday for threatening to disrupt stand-up comic Munawar Faruqui's show. The show was held amid tight security.

Raja Singh, who allegedly repeated the derogatory remarks made against the Prophet by now suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma, denied that he insulted sentiments of any community. He said it was a comedy video aimed at Faruqui.

Cong launches website, tagline of 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress on Tuesday officially launched the website and tagline for the pan-India 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' scheduled to begin on September 7 from Kanyakumari.

It said that the aim of the yatra is to unite India; to come together and get the country back on its feet.

Veteran leaders Jairam Ramesh and Digvijaya Singh jointly launched the detailed programme of the event.

After being kick-started on September 7, the yatra will pass through 12 states and culminate in Jammu and Kashmir spanning a distance of nearly 3,500 kilometres in a time period of about 150 days.

Senior leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, will actively participate in



the march. Those who are unable to join physically, will help spread its message by organising events and participating in online campaigns.

People from all walks of life will join it at various points, and march

together. It will be a celebration of India's unity, a festival of hope that will come alive with musical programmes and contests that anyone can participate in.

"This is an open invitation to all

to join and walk with us. India belongs to all of us. 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' is for all," the party said.

Economically, the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, the party said, adding that the common people are distressed by skyrocketing inflation and unemployment. Kisans and Khet mazdoors are being buried under debt. The assets of our country are being sold to crony capitalists at a huge loss.

"Socially, people are being divided on the basis of caste, religion, region, language, food, dress," the party alleged, adding that every day, a new conspiracy is hatched to make one Indian fight another. There is a growing sense of insecurity, especially among women.

It said politically, today the voices of people are being suppressed and our Constitutional rights are being

crushed. Efforts are being made in a systematic manner to subvert our Constitution, dismantle our institutions, hollow out our democracy, and destroy our unity and fraternity.

State governments elected by the people, are being destabilised by money power and misuse of agencies. "The states are not getting the tax money owed to them by the Union government on time. Dalits, adivasis, backward classes are being deprived of their basic rights-jal, jangal and zameen."

The Party said to tackle this is to come together, hold hands, and understand the power of unity.

"We must start a movement to get rid of the politics of division and hate, strengthening social harmony along the principles of 'Unity in Diversity' and 'Sarva Dharma Sambhava'," it said.



WRONG, UNJUST TO FELICITATE ACCUSED IN CRIMINAL CASES: DEVENDRA FADNAVIS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday said that it was "wrong" and "unjustified" to felicitate convicted criminals, as in the 2002 Bilkis Bano case of Gujarat.

Referring to the welcome and garlanding of the accused in the 20-year-old rape case of Bilkis Bano, Fadnavis told the legislature that such acts are wrong and cannot be justifiable.

The reference came during a discussion on the recent gang-rape of a 35-year old woman for over three days in Bhandara district and Fadnavis said there was no need to raise the Bilkis Bano matter in the legislature.

The 11 convicts undergoing life sentences in the two

decades old cases were set free on August 15, after spending 14 years in jail following an apex court order.

They were convicted in the Bilkis Bano gang-rape case and murder of her seven family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Their release from Godhra Jail came as part of the Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled Gujarat government action under the 1992 remission policy allowing premature release of prisoners.

The state government faced flak over the release and more outrage after the convicts were welcomed with garlands following their release from the prison.

In January 2008, a special CBI court in Mumbai had found all the 11 accused guilty of gangrape and murders and sentenced them life in jail.

BSF foils smuggling attempt in Punjab, recovers M3 and AK47 type rifles

Chandigarh | Agencies

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Tuesday said it has foiled a smuggling attempt from Pakistan by recovering M3 and AK47 type rifles.

"Alert troops of @BSF_Punjab thwarted a weapons smuggling attempt by recovering 02 M-3 type rifles with 04 mags (magazines), 03 AK-47 type rifles with 06 mags & 02 Pistols with 04 mags during checking/search along the Indo-Pak Border in Distt Ferozepur, Punjab," the BSF said in a tweet.

Punjab shares a 553-km long international border, with a barbed wire fence, with Pakistan. Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann asked Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF) Pankaj Kumar to enhance vigil at the borders of the state for checking smuggling of drugs and weapons from across the border.



The Director General had called on the Chief Minister here on July 31.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister had said Punjab being a border state faces numerous challenges of smuggling of drugs and weapons from across the border.

He had said that this needs to be checked with a heavy hand as it poses a grave threat to the unity, integrity, security and sovereignty of the country. Mann had said Punjab is fighting the country's war against the drug menace.

BJP suspends Raja Singh for making derogatory remarks against Prophet

The BJP on Tuesday suspended its Telangana MLA T Raja Singh for making derogatory remarks against Prophet Mohammad.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In a letter to Singh, Member Secretary BJP Central Disciplinary Committee Om Pathak said, "You have expressed views contrary to the Party's position on various matters, which is in clear violation of Rule XXV. 10 (a) of constitution of the Bharatiya Janata Party. "I have been directed to

convey to you that pending further inquiry, you are suspended from the party and from your responsibilities / assignments if any, with immediate effect."

Pathak further wrote, "Please also show cause within 10 days from the date of this notice as to why you should not be expelled from the party."

"Your detailed reply must reach the undersigned no later than September 2," Pathak added.

Singh is famous for making provocative speeches and derogatory remarks against other religions. In June, he was booked for making offensive remarks against Sufi saint Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

Goa bar row: Delhi HC seeks response of Smriti Irani on Twitter's plea

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought Union Minister Smriti Irani's response to tech giant Twitter's plea for clarification on removing links of defamatory content against her and her daughter in relation to the recent bar controversy.

Earlier, the high court had directed the microblogging site to do away with those web links which contains allegations of three Congress leaders that Irani and her daughter were running an illegal bar in the BJP-ruled Goa.

Twitter said it is only bound to take down similar content which is found to be defamatory on being provided with URLs by Irani. It also sought clarity on the matter as the case is against Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh, Pawan Khera and Netta D' Souza, who have leveled the allegations.

Issuing notice on the petition, Justice Mini Pushkarna granted two weeks' time to the respondents to



reply in the matter.

As per the earlier court verdict delivered on July 29, the web links containing all the defamatory remarks against Irani and daughter on Google, and social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have to be disabled. Last month, the high court also issued notice on a plea by internet compa-

nies Google (YouTube) and Twitter seeking details of URLs and web links of objectionable comments made against the Union Minister and her daughter.

In the July 29 order, the court had observed that "neither the restaurant nor the land on which the restaurant exists is owned by the plaintiff or her daughter. Even the show-cause notice

issued by the government of Goa is not in the name of the plaintiff or her daughter. All these facts have also been affirmed in the affidavit submitted by the plaintiff."

The same judge had said: "I am of prima facie view that slanderous and libellous allegations have been levelled against the plaintiff without verifying the actual facts. Great injury has been caused to the reputation of the plaintiff and her family in view of the various tweets and re-tweets which followed the press conference held by defendant No. 1, 2 and 3 (Ramesh, Khera, D'Souza)."

"Defendant No. 1 to 3 (Congress leaders) have conspired with each other and other individuals and organisations to launch a tirade of false, scathing and belligerent personal attack on the plaintiff and her daughter with a common motive to malign, defame and injure the reputation, moral character and public image of the plaintiff and her daughter," Justice Pushkarna added.

Provided jobs to 17,313 youth in five months: Punjab CM

Chandigarh | Agencies

Tuesday said in merely five months of assuming charge, the Aam Aadmi Party government has handed over appointment letters of government jobs to 17,313 youth.

Addressing a gathering here while handing over appointment letters to the newly recruited 4,358 constables in Punjab Police, the Chief Minister said the state government has conducted the entire recruitment process in a transparent and fair manner.

He said merit had been the only criteria of selection in this recruitment drive. Mann said recruitment for filling 5,739 more posts of the Police Department would be embarked soon. Exhorting the newly recruited constables to update their expertise for eliminating crime and criminals from the state, the Chief Minister emphasised that it is a matter of pride and satisfaction for them that all the recruits are highly qualified and well equipped with academic and technical knowledge.

He said this qualification can be helpful with dealing with the crime and criminals in today's era of technological advancement. However, Mann said as the criminals are devising new techniques of committing crime



so the cops should also update their expertise for tackling crime and criminals efficaciously.

The Chief Minister said he is elated to learn that the youth with high academic qualifications have been successfully recruited for this challenging job.

He said out of 4,358 candidates, 103 are postgraduates, 2,607 are graduates and 1,648 are senior secondary passouts.

Similarly, Mann said 2,930 constables fall in the age group of 18-25 years, whereas 816 in 26-30 years.

AIADMK tussle: Madras HC adjourns Palaniswami's plea for hearing

CHENNAI | Agencies

The division bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday adjourned the appeal by AIADMK leader Edappadi K. Palaniswami against the order of a single judge bench in favour of the other leader, O Panneerselvam.

The division bench comprising of Justices M. Duraiswamy and Sunder Mohan took the decision to adjourn the case to August 25, after senior Counsel representing Panneerselvam, P.H Aravind Pandian argued that he had serious objections to the grant of interim stay but was willing to advance the arguments directly on the appeals.

The senior counsel and

former Advocate General of Tamil Nadu, Vijay Narayan representing Palaniswami said that he did not have any objections to the court's decision, but wanted to complete the hearing at the earliest. He said that there was a deadlock in the functioning of the AIADMK party due to the single judge's order.

Advocate Vijay Narayan suggested to the court that the final hearing be completed on Thursday and the judges agreed to it. The court asked the senior counsel and third senior counsel Guru Krishnakumar to reduce the arguments as short as possible.

A single bench judge of the Madras High Court represented by Justice G. Jayachandran on August 17

nullified the General Council meeting of the AIADMK held at Vangaram on July 11 on a plea by Panneerselvam and others. The July 11 general council meeting had expelled Panneerselvam and had anointed Palaniswami as the interim general secretary of the party. The single judge bench had ordered the status quo ante as on June 23 while disposing of three petitions by Panneerselvam and general council member P. Vairamuthu against the July 11 general council meeting. The AIADMK is facing an acute crisis between the two factions led by Palaniswami and Panneerselvam, both former Chief Ministers and senior leaders of the party.

'Accusing doctors as if they were killers,' SC on Ramdev ads against allopathy

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday pulled up Baba Ramdev in connection with advertisements attempting to discredit allopathy and its practicing doctors amid the Covid-19 pandemic, and asked the Centre to restrain him.

A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana and comprising Justices Hima Kohli and CT Ravikumar said: "Why is Baba Ramdev accusing allopathy doctors? He popularised Yoga. That is good. But he should not criticise other systems."

When informed about Ramdev's advertisement in the media against allopathy, the Chief Justice said, "what is the guarantee that Ayurveda will cure all diseases."

The Chief Justice did not mince any words in criticising Ramdev for deriding other medicine systems and added that he is accusing doctors, as if they were "killers."

The counsel appearing for the Indian Medical



Association (IMA) pointed at the advertisements, where Ramdev had made disparaging statements against allopathy. He added that representations

were made to the authorities but there was no response, and citing advertisements, the counsel added that "they say that doctors were taking allopathy, but still they died due to Covid." "If this goes on unabated...then it will cause serious prejudice to us," said advocate Prabhas Bajaj, representing the IMA.

The Chief Justice told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, to take instructions on misleading advertisements by Patanjali. He emphasized Ramdev must exercise restraint while abusing modern medicine systems, like allopathy.

The bench asked Mehta, how can Ramdev and Patanjali allege through advertisements in the media that allopathic doctors are killers? The bench said, "What is this?...It is better the Centre restrains him."

After hearing the arguments, the top court sought Centre's response on the plea by IMA alleging a smear campaign against the Covid-19 vaccination drive and modern medicine.

Gujarat Cong MLA invites PM to Somnath with request to travel by road

Veraval (Gujarat) | Agencies

Congress MLA Vimal Chudasama has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to travel from Bhavnagar to Somnath by road in a bid to draw attention to the potholed highway.

Chudasama, MLA from the Somnath constituency, in the letter has stated, "The coastal highway was approved by the Central government seven years ago, the highway is incomplete and construction work is going on at snail's pace, but on rest of the road, at many places there are plenty of potholes, which have caused many fatal accidents. Though I had written to the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, no action has been taken."

He said that he believed that only if the Prime Minister travels by road on this highway and experiences the plight that people are facing, problems can be addressed.

The Prime Minister is on a two-day visit to Gujarat from August 27. And, Chudasama wishes the PM to visit Somnath by road during this visit.

He even said the Prime Minister is the chairman of the Somnath Temple Trust, and lakhs of devotees travel on this highway during the holy month Shrawan. "He should understand the problem faced by devotees," said Chudasama.

Gir Somnath, BJP district committee president Mansinh Parmar said he has no idea about the Congress MLA's letter to the PM, but said, "I will look into the issue."

BJP Chief spokesman Yamal Vyas termed the letter a political stunt to gain publicity and political mileage. He questioned the MLA's intentions. Vyas said if he was seriously interested in solving the problem, he would have taken up the matter with the National Highways Authority of India officers instead of writing a letter to the Prime Minister.

TELANGANA POLICE ASKS BJP TO STOP PADYATRA

Hyderabad | Agencies

The Telangana Police on Tuesday asked the BJP leaders to immediately stop Praja Sangrama Yatra on the ground that there is apprehension of breach of peace.

This came hours after the police arrested BJP state chief Bandi Sanjay, who was leading the padyatra, in Jangaon district.

Warangal Police Commissionerate issued notice, saying there is no permission for the padyatra in the district and warned BJP leaders that if they continue, legal action will be taken.

Assistant Commissioner of Police, Wardhannapet division, served notice to Padyatra convenor G Manohar Reddy, and BJP state General Secretaries G Premender Reddy and D Pradeep Kumar.

Police stated in the notice that in the name of padyatra the BJP leaders were making provocative statements. The police officer also noted that in the name of 'Dharma Deeksha', a large number of party workers were being mobilised from other districts.

"In view of your provocative statements and planned Deeksha with huge gatherings from other districts, there is apprehension of breach of peace in the area resulting in serious law and order problem," reads the notice.



Police made it clear that if they continued padyatra action will be taken as per law for the maintenance of peace and tranquility in the district.

This came hours after Sanjay was arrested in Jangaon while he was preparing to sit on protest against the police action taken against BJP workers in Hyderabad on Monday for staging a protest at the house of TRS MLC K Kavitha over her alleged involvement in Delhi liquor scam. Sanjay, who is also a Member of Parliament from Karimnagar, was shifted to Karimnagar. He, however, has been kept under house arrest. Police said he would remain under house arrest on Wednesday. A police picket has been posted at Sanjay's house. Addressing media persons, Sanjay alleged that the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) government was trying to stop the Praja Sangram Yatra. He declared that the yatra will resume in Jangaon district at the place where it was stopped.

Sanjay appealed to BJP workers from across the state to reach Jangaon to participate in the padyatra and fight against the "undemocratic measures" of the TRS government.

The state BJP chief said the padyatra will continue as scheduled and will conclude in Warangal on August 26 with a public meeting which will be addressed by BJP's national President JP Nadda. Sanjay had launched the third phase of padyatra on August 2 to highlight what he calls the failures of the TRS government. The third phase of yatra was scheduled to cover 325 kms in five districts - Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri, Nalgonda, Jangaon, Hamankonda, and Warangal.

Sanjay completed the second phase of the yatra that had started from Jogulamba Shakti Peetam temple in Alampur, Gadwal on April 14. He started the first phase of the yatra from Sri Bhagya Lakshmi temple at the Charminar in August 2021.

During the two phases, he met thousands of people and listened to their grievances. The BJP leader claimed that they brought people's issues to the notice of the TRS government and took to the streets to get solutions to the issues. During the first phase of padyatra, Sanjay covered 438 kilometres in 36 days and addressed 35 public meetings. In the second phase, he covered 380 kilometres.

BJP may destroy the country but Hindus can't, says Upendra Kushwaha

Patna | Agencies

While BJP leaders are using the Vishnupad temple controversy, where a Muslim Minister entered along with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, to attack the government, JD-U Parliamentary Board President Upendra Kushwaha on Tuesday said that leaders of saffron party are feeling uneasy and hence they are trying to create controversy.

"I firmly believe that the BJP may destroy the country but Hindu religion can't. We have to respect every religion. If any person went to any place, we should avoid doing politics on it," he said.

"We used to go to Gurudwara or mosque during elections by putting handkerchiefs or cloth to cover the heads. Every religion has certain guidelines and we have to respect it. If a Muslim minister entered the Vishnupad temple, the

BJP should avoid doing politics on it," Kushwaha said.

He also said that Nitish Kumar is PM material.

CHANGE OF NAME

I Raja Miyan S/o Riyaz Mohammad, Resident C-Sector 111, Indra Nagar, Bagh Umrao Dulha, Bhopal (MP)

That my name is Raja Miyan, which is mentioned in my Aadhar card, PAN card, all documents, I am changing my name from Raja Miyan to Aftab Khan. In future, I should be known and recognized by my new name Aftab Khan. And I will inscribe this new name in all the records.

CHANGE OF NAME & DOB

I KAUSALYA DEVI m/o Army NoJC-381055A, Rank- SUB, Name SANJAY SINGH Residing at Village Awahi Post Baghari District Chandauli state Uttar Pradesh pin code- 232106 have changed my name from KAUSALYA DEVI & Date of birth 01/07/1955 to KAUSHILYA DEVI & Date of birth 01/01/1948 vide affidavit dated 20/08/2022 at Bhopal Court Madhya Pradesh.



CM holds meeting to review flood situation:

STATE GOVERNMENT STANDS WITH PEOPLE IN THIS HOUR OF CRISIS: CHOUHAN

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan held an emergency meeting with senior officials and the cabinet ministers to review the flood situation in the state, after excessive rainfall in the last 24 hours.

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan held an emergency meeting with senior officials and the cabinet ministers to review the flood situation in Madhya Pradesh, after excessive rainfall in the last 24 hours.

The Chief Minister said that I myself have been continuously monitoring the situation since yesterday. In the last 24 hours, we have rescued more than 400 people surrounded by water from villages. Around 2300 people have been shifted to safer places. Teams of NDRF, SDRF and district administration are constantly engaged in the rescue operation. We have dispatched a helicopter to arrange for airlifting and another helicopter is on its way. Apart from this, a third helicopter has also been called. People living in low-lying places are being brought to safer places.

Chouhan said this in a message to the media this morning after a review meeting held at the residence office on the ongoing rains, flood situation in various districts and relief works. Chouhan informed that he visited the State Situation Room at Mantralaya in the night and took stock of the situation in the state. He sought information about the rain status from the



collectors of the districts and gave necessary instructions regarding rescue and relief work. Chief Minister himself stepped out at night to take stock of the situation in Bhopal city. He observed the action being taken by the employees of the Electricity Board in Civil Lines to solve the power problems caused by excessive rain and appreciated the alertness of the employees and discharge of duty in difficult situations. Chouhan, in a review meeting at his residence this morning, directed to take all necessary steps by virtually connecting with the affected districts.

All major and small rivers have received water more than their capacity. The people living in the catchment areas were getting affected. The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) informed that around 2,300 people have been shifted to safer places and the rescue operations by NDRF, SDRF and the respective district police teams were continuing in several parts of the state. At least 18 shelters have been established in Vidisha district where a flood-like situation emerged due to heavy rain for the last 24 hours and 1,300 people were shifted to safer places. Rescue

teams were carrying operations using boats.

Immediate airlifting of people was needed in at least five places in Vidisha. On the request of the state government, Indian Air Force (IAF) agreed to send two mid helicopters.

Chouhan will also conduct an aerial survey of the rain-affected district on Tuesday, the CMO informed. Though, there was no rain on Tuesday morning in Bhopal, however, little and moderate rainfall reportedly continued in some other parts of the state. In Bhopal, the power supply was restored after more than 24 hours in parts of the city, which had witnessed tree falls and traffic snarls over the last couple of days due to heavy showers and strong winds blowing at up to 40 km per hour, officials said.

After the long power cut in Bhopal, MP central zone power distribution company called in its workers from neighbouring districts to restore supply in the capital city, an official said.

The depression lying over the central parts of MP near Bhopal and Sagar has moved towards Rajasthan and weakened. Moderate to heavy rain with low intensity are likely in Neemuch, Mandsaur and Ratlam, bordering Rajasthan, senior meteorologist at the IMD's Bhopal Office, Ved Prakash Singh told IANS.

RAINFALL RELENTS, BUT LEAVES TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION

Bhopal: Rainfall relented in most parts of the State by Tuesday late afternoon, providing relief to citizens but leaving in its wake a trail of destruction in several districts. Houses and crops over hundreds of acres of land have been destroyed and there have been reports of at least five deaths in Bhopal, Ashok Nagar, Rajgarh and Neemuch districts during the past 24 hours due to the excessive rains. However, no official figures were available. The losses of property and crops will be undertaken later as the rescue and relief works were the priority at the moment, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said following an aerial survey of flood-affected Vidisha, Guna and Rajgarh districts. The Regional Meteorological Centre warned of heavy rainfall, thundershowers and lightning in parts of Western MP till Wednesday evening, following which a respite is likely for two days. Rainfall/thundershowers are likely to resume in eastern MP by August 26, the MeT office said. Capital Bhopal that was badly hit on Monday found relief as heavy rainfall stopped on Tuesday morning. Power that was disrupted for more than 20 hours in 80 per cent parts of the city started getting restored by Monday midnight, but some glitches continued even till Monday evening, affecting supply in some areas. Record, only short of the disastrous rainfall of August 2006, was made in Bhopal as Bhopal airport recorded 372.9mm of rain in 48 hours ending at 8.30am on Tuesday, while the city recorded 312.1mm rain in the duration. During intervening night of August 13 and 14 in the year 2006, Bhopal airport had recorded as much as 292mm of rain in 12 hours, while the city had recorded 321mm, causing flood situation and killing 11 persons.

Saving lives by rescuing people, top priority: CM

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan conducts aerial survey of flood affected areas of Vidisha, Guna and Rajgarh districts



Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that our top priority is to save the lives of people who trapped in floods due to excessive rain. Each and every person will be rescued and taken out. I myself have also been involved in rescuing the people of the flood affected area by boat. Chouhan visited the flood affected areas in Vidisha, Guna and Rajgarh districts

by helicopter and was giving information on his return to State Hangar Bhopal. Earlier, he discussed the flood situation and rescue work with the Air Force officials at the State Hangar itself.

Chouhan said that the water level of Betwa in Vidisha district is still stable. Around 25 villages in Vidisha, Guna and Rajgarh districts have been affected by the floods. Two helicopters of the Air Force have been deployed for the rescue

operation. NDRF, SDRF, district administration and local administration are also engaged in the rescue operations. The assessment of damage to crops and property will be done later. Right now the first priority is to rescue people safely. Every effort is being made to rescue the people trapped in Gadla and Tajla villages of Vidisha again with the boat. Chief Minister Chouhan safely left for Kurwai. He said that he would also visit the flood affected areas of Raisen.

MP HC seeks govt's reply on Mamtani's appointment as rights body member

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh High Court has sought the state's government reply on controversy over appointment of justice (ret'd) Manohar Mamtani as a member of the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC).

The development comes three months after a committee headed by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan along with two other members - Speaker of the state Assembly Girish Gautam and the Leader of House Narottam Mishra and others appointed Mamtani as a member of SHRC in June.

The notice was issued on Monday by a joint bench of the High Court headed by Chief Justice Ravi Malimath and Justice Vishal Mishra after hearing a petition challenging the appointment by the Leader of

Opposition (LoP) in the state Assembly Govind Singh. Terming the appointment "arbitrary and illegal", Singh alleged that LoP is one of the members of the committee which recommends the names. Singh claimed that he was not in the meeting due to some prior engagement out of Bhopal when Mamtani was appointed as a member of Madhya Pradesh Human Right Commission without his consent.

He also alleged that a circular for meeting in this regard was issued a day before meeting took place, whereas, it should have been issued at least one week prior of the meeting date. "By the time meeting schedule was issued, I was out of Bhopal due to some prior engagement and therefore I could not attend the meeting. But, the committee, which is chaired by CM and

speaker and leader of house are the members of the committee appointed Mamtani a member of Madhya Pradesh Human Right Commission," Singh said. He further said that the Leader of Opposition was included in the said committee to ensure transparency in the system. "There is no matter of majority, but the appointment is done with the consent of all its members. Ruling party has three members, including the chief minister, and the only member from the opposition is the leader of opposition. Why they included LOP in the committee if they do not want it's consent. This is the reason I had challenged Mamtani's appointment, otherwise I have no personal issue with him. I went to the court because, the appointment should have been in accordance with the norms," Singh told IANS.

IAF DEPLOYS 2 CHOPPERS TO HELP MP GOVT IN FLOOD RESCUE OPS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

As several areas received heavy rainfall in the last 24 hours and a flood-like situation emerged, the Madhya Pradesh government sought the Indian Air Force's help to rescue people and undertake disaster relief operations.

In response, the Nagpur unit of IAF has deployed two medium lift Helicopters -- MI17 V5 to rescue people and those needing immediate evacuation. "IAF to deploy two Medium Lift Helicopters MI17 V5A at Vidisha, Based on request from MP Govt for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations," sources in the IAF told IANS on Tuesday.

All major rivers and dams in Madhya Pradesh were reportedly overflowing after excessive rain, threatening to flood several areas, which has brought the authorities on their toes for the last 24 hours.

According to the official reports, over 400 people were rescued and shifted to safer places. Many districts, such as Bhopal, Vidisha, Jabalpur, Guna, Raisen, Damoh,



Sagar, Narsinghpur and others have recorded above 100 mm rain in the last 24 hours.

The National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Relief Forces (SDRF) along with the local police have been deployed.

With the heavy rain and speedy wind flow, several trees and electrical poles were uprooted due to which power supply in many areas, including Bhopal city, was cut for more than

15 hours on Monday.

The Meteorological Department has also issued a red alert warning of extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places in the districts of Ujjain, Indore divisions and Rajgarh district till Tuesday. In Anuppur, the road of village Tulra-Sarai-Karpa access road of Pushparajgarh collapsed about 20 meters. The NHAI road connecting Shahdol-Pushparajgarh was closed due to landslides. This route connects with Chhattisgarh.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan reviewed the situation in the rain-affected districts again on Tuesday morning and directed the district administration and the police to speed up their rescue operations in the flooded areas and ensure that people are shifted to safer places.

With a warning of another spell of heavy rain in Bhopal, Vidisha, Jabalpur, Raisen, Narmadapuram and Vidisha, etc., the chief minister said that rivers such as - Chambal, Betwa, Narmada, Parvati and Sindh were flowing high and alert has been issued in the catchment areas.

CM PLANTS BANYAN, MOULSHREE AND KARANJ SAPLINGS



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Banyan, Moulshree and Karanj saplings along with the members of Bhopal Utsav Samiti in the Smart City Garden at Shyamla Hills. Narayan Singh Kushwaha, Sunil Jainwin, Yogendra Mukharaiyah, Ashok Gupta and Ashok Sahu of the committee participated in the plantation. The committee is organising the biggest fair in the city for the last 28 years. So far, eye operation of about 5 thousand people has been conducted and 2 thousand people with disabilities have also been fitted with artificial limbs. The committee is also working for environmental awareness and continuity of school education of children. The banyan planted today has religious and medicinal importance. According to Ayurveda, the treatment of many diseases is possible with the help of Banyan leaves, bark etc. Karanj plant is considered important in Ayurvedic medicine. It is also used in religious works. Moulshree is a medicinal tree, it has been used in Ayurveda for centuries.

Ministers should work diligently for flood management and relief operations: CM

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that at present flood conditions are prevailing at many places in the state, many villages in districts of Vidisha, Rajgarh, Guna etc are surrounded by floods, so it would not be appropriate that we only meet and review the situation, everyone must go to the field. People are in trouble, surrounded by water. Therefore, today the state government has decided to postpone the meeting of the Council of Ministers. I myself am going out to visit the flood affected areas. The ministers in charge of different districts should inquire about the conditions arising out of heavy rains. Go wherever it is necessary to go and make necessary arrangements for the people. Ministers should devote themselves to flood management and relief works.

Chouhan said this in a virtual dialogue with the ministers from the residence office this morning. Due to lack of

connectivity to video conferencing due to excessive rainfall, CM made a video call from mobile and discussed with the ministers. Chouhan told all the in-charge ministers that there is a possibility of heavy rains in half the districts of the state. People living in low-lying places should be shifted to safer places. Alerting the ministers, CM said that water has to be released from most of the dams and it is our duty to pay attention to the situation which is being created due to the fast flow of rivers. A lot of water is being released from Gandhi Sagar Dam, due to which Chambal river will touch the danger mark. Ministers should be in touch with the administration and the general public in the districts and local districts of their respective charge.

Serious efforts should be made for relief, so that people do not face any kind of trouble. Also ensure that the assessment of damage to crops, property after the flood subsides is done appropriately.

MAKE AN ACTION PLAN TO DEAL WITH NATURAL CALAMITIES

Bhopal: Energy Minister Pradyuman Singh Tomar has expressed regret over the inconvenience caused to power consumers in Bhopal due to technical failure following heavy rains a day earlier. He has directed the officers to prepare a well-planned action plan to deal with the problems in the power supply due to natural calamities, so that such difficulties can be dealt with immediately in the future.

Tomar said that the way in which the officers and employees of the power distribution company put their lives at risk in the midst of heavy rains to remove the blockage in electricity supply in Bhopal city is commendable and praiseworthy. He has also appreciated the team work of the employees and cooperation of the electricity consumers.

Tourism Quiz Competition now on September 10: Shukla

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Principal Secretary Tourism and Culture and Managing Director Tourism Board Sheo Shekhar Shukla informed that Tourism Quiz Competition-2022 will now be held on 10th September. This decision has been taken keeping in view the situation of excessive rainfall in the state and the safety of the students. Earlier this competition was scheduled to be held on August 24. Shukla informed that about 7 thousand 831 schools from all 52 districts of the state have registered to participate in the competition. More than 23 thousand students will participate in it.

Training has also been given to selected quiz masters from all the districts to give the competition a festive look and to conduct it in a transparent manner. The training covers the essential aspects of Quiz Written Test and

Multi Media Quiz. Along with this, all the quiz masters have also been given certificates, teacher certificates, medals and coupons to be given to the winners and runners-up teams according to their registration in their districts.

Students studying from class 9th to 12th in government, non-government, CBSE and Kendriya Vidyalayas of the state are taking part in the competition. The winning teams of the competition will be given tour packages of Tourism Corporation hotels along with certificates and medals.

Through the competition, children will be attracted towards different areas of Madhya Pradesh for tourism in future and knowledge related to tourism will increase. Tourism Board is successfully organising this competition every year since 2016. "Tell the correct answers to the questions, come roam the heart of India"

FARMERS WILL BE GIVEN "GARDENER TRAINING"

Bhopal: The Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing is providing training to the farmers on "Certificate Course in Gardening". In the year 2022-23, the training has been organised with the objective of providing employment opportunities by upgrading the skills of the farmers interested in the state funded scheme Farmer Training-cum-Excursion and to get trained and technically qualified candidates for the recruitment of skilled workers, gardeners in the department in the coming year.

The duration of the training has been fixed at 200 hours (25 days). 30 farmers are to be selected for the training programme. Farmers having interest in horticulture, whose minimum educational qualification is Class 8th, can register themselves for training in the horticulture office of the district by August 25 on the website of mpfst portal <https://mpfst.mpgov.in/mpphd/#/>. Farmers will be selected on the basis of fixed target and "first come-first serve."



EDITOR'S SPECS

Respect for women a sham, violence is reality

Gender-based violence exists on a spectrum rooted in the same attitude and view of women: as lesser than males. It is a fallacy to believe this violence is a fault of individuals when it is enmeshed in the DNA of a patriarchal society and reproduced even though the mechanisms of organisations or State entities should consciously counteract misogyny. Yet, in just the past few days, at least two incidents have revealed that too much of what is spoken of women's rights and empowerment is lip service. Respecting women is a mantra that elected leaders recite even as the actions of those around them undermine their words.

Just days ago, 11 men convicted of gangraping Bilkis Bano during the 2002 Gujarat riots were released prematurely. Leaving aside the legal intricacies of how or why these convicts were released, it is how their release was celebrated by the organisation to which they are affiliated that gives the lie to the mantra. Rape in times of conflict has been understood as a weapon to humiliate, dominate and instil fear in a community. The conviction of the accused was a victory for Bano, her community, and the country at large as it established that all could access justice. The glee at their premature release is an instance of social entities undercutting the justice delivered by the State. Worse, it reiterates the message of fear and humiliation to the minority community while asserting women's bodies may be brutalised for political and communal reasons with approbation. An example of how the mechanism that exists to serve justice may dis-serve it is seen in a Kerala court's order giving bail to a man accused of sexual harassment. While bail should be the rule rather than the exception in most cases, the judge not only allowed the defence to produce photographs of the victim in the clothes she wore at the time but went further to say there could be no sexual harassment if the victim was wearing provocative clothes.

LOAN WRITE-OFFS FOR THE RICH ARE FREEBIES, NOT WELFARE SCHEMES: RJD

At a time when a large section of people in this country are struggling to achieve financial empowerment, there are two types of ideologies running parallel in the country. One is to provide help to people who are financially deprived and the other is terming it "Muft Ki Revari" freebies.

Patna: At a time when a large section of people in this country are struggling to achieve financial empowerment, there are two types of ideologies running parallel in the country. One is to provide help to people who are financially deprived and the other is terming it "Muft Ki Revari" freebies. Both the ideologies are directly linked to the Lok Sabha and assembly elections. In a poor state like Bihar, it is extremely important to make a distinction between what are freebies and what are not. Mritunjay Tiwari, national spokesperson of the RJD, told IANS: "When any government makes policies to benefit people of deprived sections, it's called welfare. Nowadays, leaders of a particular party (BJP) are calling it freebies which is absolutely wrong." "The actual meaning of freebies means loan waiver to the industrialists. They are quite capable of managing their finances and leading a good life. I want to ask the leaders of the BJP who are crying about the government's welfare policies related to the common people of the state. During the 2014 Lok Sabha election, BJP prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi promised to give Rs 15 lakh to every person of this country. That was actually "Muft Ki Revari" which later on turned "Jhasa or Jumla". A number of industrial friends of the BJP's top leadership got loan write-offs like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi, Lalit Modi and many others. That was actually freebies to them who later turned fugitives," Tiwari said. The Nitish Kumar government has started a bicycle policy for school going girl students, "Poshak Yojana"

(School dress policy), Rs 25,000 to girls for passing intermediate (Class 12) and Rs 50,000 to girls becoming graduates, and diesel subsidies to farmers for a limited period during droughts. As the government in the state has changed it gives a strong message to the Narendra Modi government at the Centre. The preparations for the crucial Lok Sabha elections in 2024 have started and the BJP is feeling the challenge from the government of the Mahagathbandhan. In the run-up to every election, promises in education, health, limited free power, free water used to be made by different political parties. However, some of them also promise to distribute laptops, television sets, smartphones with internet facility, bicycles, bikes, monthly fuel quota. CM Nitish Kumar is currently providing 10 litres diesel subsidy to farmers in Bihar per month as 35 out of 38 districts are facing a drought-like situation. The government welfare policies or freebies are financed by the money of the taxpayers. Before distinguishing between freebies and the welfare policies for the common people, one needs to understand that certain services like electricity, water, sewerage, transport, health, education cannot be obtained in an individual capacity. They need to be channelized through the government of the state and the Centre. In case the government is giving subsidies to the people for taking services in these sectors, it can be termed as welfare. It's up to the governments of the states to evaluate how robust their economies are and how much they

invest in welfare policies to provide benefits to the people and also avoid bankruptcy. When mid-day meals started in schools in the southern states of the country in the early 1980s, the governments of many states could not digest it. But it was adopted by every state later on. The actual freebies were started by Tamil Nadu chief minister late J Jayalalithaa in the 1990s when she distributed television sets, pressure cookers, sarees, washing machines to woo the voters during the assembly elections. In Bihar George Fernandes who along with Nitish Kumar formed the Samata party in 1994, had promised freebies to people. During the Uttar Pradesh assembly election in 2022, the BJP government had distributed freebies in terms of 5 kg rice or wheat and 1 kg grams to poor families. The actual discussion started on freebies (Muft Ki Revari) during the inauguration of the Bundelkhand Expressway recently by PM Narendra Modi to target the AAP governments of Delhi and Punjab. The AAP is giving 300 units free power to every household in these two states apart from free transportation for females in buses and free water. Since the AAP is spreading wings in poll-bound Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, it could ring alarm bells for the BJP. "Some of the freebies are important to safeguard the livelihood of the common people like what Narendra Modi did during the times of Covid. The irony is that many political parties announce freebies just to lure people for votes like what Kejriwal is doing,"

Nikhil Anand, national general secretary of the OBC wing of the BJP, told IANS. After the formation of a new government in Bihar, Nitish Kumar promised 10 lakh jobs during the flag hoisting ceremony on Independence Day in Patna. If the Nitish Kumar government fulfils the job promise, it would benefit his party JD-U and alliance partners including the RJD in Bihar in the 2024 Lok Sabha and 2025 assembly elections. Neeraj Kumar, MLC and chief spokesperson of the JD-U, told IANS: "During the 2020 assembly election, the JD-U and BJP jointly promised 19 lakh jobs and we have given jobs to many people in sectors like education. It was possible only as such departments were run by ministers from the JD-U. We have filled over 43,000 jobs of teachers under the sixth phase of recruitment. Besides, we have given jobs in other sectors too." "CM Nitish Kumar is a person who never takes a step back from welfare schemes meant for the common people of Bihar. Liquor ban is the prime example of it. The state exchequer is losing a huge amount of revenue but he took the decision to ban it in the state in the interest of common people. He ensures electricity, drinking water, roads reach the villages. These are welfare schemes for the common people. A section of people demanded free power but Nitish Kumar refused as it sends the wrong message to the common people. Bihar is a consumer state of electricity and not a producing state," Kumar said.

international

SCHOLZ, TRUDEAU TO SIGN HYDROGEN DEAL

Toronto | Agencies
German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will attend an economic conference in Toronto on Tuesday, the second day of the German leader's inaugural trip to Canada. The two heads of government will then travel to Newfoundland, where an agreement on stronger cooperation between the two countries in the production and transport of hydrogen is to be signed in the remote town of Stephenville, reports news agency. Scholz will be accompanied on his trip by his deputy, Economy Minister Robert Habeck. Newfoundland is considered a favourable location for the production of renewable hydrogen. The region is very



windy and sparsely populated. The use of hydrogen does not produce greenhouse gases. To produce it, water has to be split into hydrogen and oxygen, an electrolysis that is only climate-friendly if sustainably produced energy is used. In principle, hydrogen can serve as a basis for fuels to replace coal, oil and natural gas in industry and transport. Because its production is very energy-intensive, hydrogen is currently still significantly more expensive than fossil fuels.

ISRAEL LAUNCHES PLAN TO PROMOTE AGRO-TOURISM

Jerusalem: Israel has launched a plan to promote agricultural tourism in the country to boost its economy and employment. The plan launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on Monday includes the setup of visitor centres and support for small businesses in rural areas, for a total amount of 3 million shekels (\$910,000). The plan aims to develop economic growth engines in rural regions, with an emphasis on business entrepreneurship willing to integrate into agriculture, the Ministry said. It added that the purpose of supporting visitor centres is to promote agricultural activities to the general public, while aiding small businesses is for diversifying employment fields available in villages, including tourism and recreation, news agency reported.

SL President directed to ensure Gotabaya Rajapaksa's return

Colombo | Agencies
The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) ruled on Tuesday that former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the country in July amid the unrest triggered by the ongoing economic crisis, should be allowed to return to the country. Writing to President Ranil Wickremesinghe, the HRCSL stated that Rajapaksa is entitled to certain privileges and benefits under law and the government should take necessary steps to ensure his security to return. The Commission headed by a retired Supreme Court judge recommended the government to take all necessary steps to assess the threat situation and provide Rajapaksa and his family access to return whenever he wants. Following the three-month long street violence over the economic crisis that led to the acute shortages of food, fuel,



electricity and cooking gas, Rajapaksa announced his resignation on July 9 and fled the country on July 13. He first went to the Maldives and then to Singapore. On the request of the Sri Lankan government, Rajapaksa and

his wife were allowed to enter Thailand where he currently resides. A former dual citizen of Sri Lanka and the US, Rajapaksa was refused visa by Washington as he had to give up his American citizenship before the 2019 presidential election. Sri Lankan election law prohibits foreign nationals from running for presidency. Last week, the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party formed by Rajapaksa family including Gotabaya's brothers -- former Prime Minister Mahinda and former Finance Minister Basil -- had urged Wickremesinghe to facilitate the former President's return to the country. Gotabaya Rajapaksa's safe return was one of the key deals to support Wickremesinghe in his presidency. Earlier this month, Wickremesinghe had told media that it was not the right time for Gotabaya Rajapaksa to return as his presence could again inflame political tensions in the island nation.

Ukraine and neighbouring EU countries establish new security format

Kiev | Agencies
Ukraine and several EU countries have established the so-called Kiev Initiative to strengthen their regional cooperation, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said. He named neighbours Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary as well as the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as participants and said on Monday that the door was open to other countries to join the format. Zelensky described it as "a very promising line of our work within the Euro-Atlantic alignment" but provided few details, saying only that security issues would be the focus of their collaboration, dpa news agency reported. In his video address, the President also touched on the second annual Crimea Platform, a summit that will



be held online on Tuesday and feature speeches by the leaders of Germany, Japan, Canada and NATO. In total, more than 50 participants from Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa have been announced. The Crimea Platform, launched last year, is used by Kiev to mobilise support for the return of the Crimean Peninsula to Ukraine. The strategically important Black Sea territory was annexed by Russia in 2014 but continues to be part of Ukraine under international law.

US judge rejects DoJ's contention to keep Trump raid affidavit entirely sealed

Washington | Agencies
US Magistrate Judge Bruce Reinhart, who signed the warrant for the August 6 FBI raid at former President Donald Trump's Florida home, indicated on Monday that the Department of Justice (DoJ) may yet convince him that very little information from the affidavit behind the warrant should be released. He ruled that he was "balancing the government's asserted compelling need for sealing against the public's interest in disclosure", the Washington Examiner reported on Monday furnishing a copy of the affidavit. Reinhart said in court that he believes there are portions that can be unsealed and ordered the government to file proposed redactions. "Allowing access to the unredacted affidavit



would not impair court functions," Reinhart said on Monday. "Having carefully reviewed the affidavit before signing the warrant, I was -- and am -- satisfied that the facts sworn by the affiant are reliable. So, releasing the affidavit to the public would not cause false information to be disseminated." The DoJ had announced last week its opposition to the release of the underlying justification for the search, just days after it agreed to unseal the FBI warrant for the search of Trump's Florida resort, Mar-a-Lago. Trump had been asking for unsealing an unredacted version of the FBI warrant as also appointing a third party, which is neutral, to review the unsealed documents. But he filed no motion through his lawyers on this.

Imran moves court to avoid arrest in terror case

Islamabad | Agencies
Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) and sought a pre-arrest bail in a terror case filed against him. The plea was filed through Khan's counsels, Faisal Chaudhry and Babar Awan, in the capital's top court after a late-night drama at Bani Gala, his private residence where police and PTI workers almost came face-to-face following reports that arrest warrants have been issued for the PTI chairman, The News reported. An FIR was registered against the former premier under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) for threatening an additional sessions judge and senior police officers of the Islamabad Police during a rally here on Saturday, The News reported.



Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry has asked written permission from the Prime Minister's Office to arrest Khan following the registration of the case. According to sources, the PTI chairman has left Bani Gala to avoid arrest, but party leaders claimed that Khan was still at his home. His whereabouts remain unclear. Sources said the arrest would be made with the consensus of all parties in the ruling alliance. Meanwhile, PPP leader and former president Asif Ali Zardari has opposed the arrest as he believes that it will cause political damage to the ruling alliance.



SC refers Maharashtra political crisis pleas to 5-judge Constitution bench

The Supreme Court also asked the Election Commission to refrain from deciding on the Eknath Shinde faction's petitions...

and disqualification of MLAs. The court also asked the Election Commission to refrain from deciding on the Shinde faction's petitions...

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said petitions relating to the political dispute in Maharashtra between factions of the Shiv Sena...

GDP growth projected to spike to four-quarter high

Team Absolute | Mumbai

GDP growth is expected to expand in double digits at 13 per cent in Q1FY23 due to low base and robust recovery in the contact-intensive sectors...

shift in demand towards contact-intensive services from discretionary consumer goods for the mid-to-higher income groups. This, in conjunction with the emerging cautiousness in export demand...

BOMB HOAX AT FIVE-STAR HOTEL RATTLES MUMBAI COPS AGAIN IN 5 DAYS

Mumbai: A threat to blow up a five-star hotel near Mumbai airport turned out to be a hoax with a purported motive to extort a large sum of money...



The caller reportedly warned that they had placed at least four bombs inside the hotel and demanded an extortion amount of Rs 5 crore to defuse them.

Govt assures 'smooth ride' on all Konkan roads before Ganeshotsav

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Under severe fire from the Opposition for the bad roads condition, the Maharashtra government on Tuesday assured that repairs are being carried out on 'a war footing'...



tempo, state transport of private buses, etc. for many hours.

Public Works Department Minister Ravindra Chavan has directed all concerned officials to accord priority attention to the region which witnesses lakhs of commuters from Mumbai travelling to their homes in the Konkan region to celebrate Ganeshotsav.

The officials have been directed to ensure complete repairs like smoothening uneven stretches, potholes, cracks, washed out sections and other obstacles by the weekend to ensure speedy movement of traffic as well as avert accidents on the roads and highways from Mumbai to Palghar, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg.

Senior engineers of the PWD shall be deployed to oversee and monitor the road repairs carried out by the local contractors of the various civic bodies, to ensure quality and durability of the work, an official from Ratnagiri explained.

Lakhs of people who live and work in Mumbai hail mostly from the Konkan districts and they travel to their native towns or villages during the Ganesh festival, with massive traffic movement witnessed for 10 days.

It may be recalled that certain stretches of the highway, major and arterial roads in the Konkan region have been ravaged during the monsoon onslaught, with shocking photos and videos going viral on social media, as the temporary 'festival migration' is slated to start from this weekend.

FARMER ATTEMPTS SUICIDE OUTSIDE VIDHAN BHAVAN

A farmer from Osmanabad district in Maharashtra reportedly attempted to commit suicide by setting himself on fire outside the Vidhan Bhavan in Mumbai on Tuesday morning.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The incident reportedly took place after a fight with his brother over a land dispute, Maharashtra Deputy Chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said. The Maharashtra Deputy Chief minister said the incident, which took place near the Inox gate of the Maharashtra legislature building, was unfortunate and the government was keeping a watch on the situation.



directed officials to address the issue if it is at the official level, noting that "prima facie, he faced 15 to 20 per cent burn injuries. The incident is unfortunate and the government is monitoring the situation."

A police official earlier said security personnel on duty in the

area doused the flames and rushed the man to the GT Hospital, while also adding that he is conscious and the Marine Drive police are conducting further probe into the incident.

Meanwhile, the Opposition members on Tuesday staged a walk out in the Maharashtra legislative Assembly to express their dissatisfaction with the financial assistance announced by the state government to rain-affected farmers, even as Chief Minister Eknath Shinde had earlier announced that the state government has doubled the sum of compensation mentioned in the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) norms.

3 months after hip surgery, Raj Thackeray springs back into action

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Almost three months after a hip surgery, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) President Raj Thackeray has bounced back into political action ahead of the upcoming civic elections.

Raj Thackeray confabulated with his senior party leaders on Monday and will meet MNS officer-bearers in the state, with a possibility of a media interaction here on Tuesday.

The estranged cousin of ex-Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is holding a series of consultations to chart out strategy not only for the civic elections but also the 2024 Assembly and par-

liament elections. "There are many issues facing Maharashtra... There's a change of government (the erstwhile Maha Vikas Aghadi) and now a new government (of CM Eknath Shinde and Dy CM Devendra Fadnavis, and the upcoming polls," remarked senior MNS leader Bala Nandgaonkar.



team as the MNS hopes to drive into the political mainstream with support from the BJP. In early June, the MNS chief had undergone a hip replacement procedure after which he was convalescing at home, and only meeting select party leaders or outsiders.

(Governor) tendered an apology. He also hosted certain persons like Fadnavis or even veteran playback singer Asha Bhosale and some other personalities on some occasions at his home with their pix posted on social media. In April-May this year, the MNS had suddenly created a big bang on the political landscape when Raj Thackeray raised the issue of demanding ban on loudspeakers in mosques, the Hanuman Chalisa row, endorsing the Uniform Civil Code, etc, with full backing from BJP, though the two parties have yet to officially announce an alliance for any upcoming elections.

ED summons witness Swapna Patkar in Patra chawl case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday issued summons to Swapna Patkar, a witness in the Rs 1,034 crore Patra Chawl scam case to join the investigation.

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut, who was recently arrested by the central agency, is currently in judicial custody. His wife Varsha Raut was also questioned by the ED.

Earlier, the ED had taken Pune businessman Avinash Bhosale into custody in connection with the DHFL Yes Bank case, and the sources claimed that they wanted to

grill Raut in this matter too. Patra Chawl case also has links with the DHFL case, the sources said.

In April, the probe had attached Raut's property in connection with the land scam.

Property worth Rs 9 crore of Raut's associate Pravin Raut and assets worth Rs 2 crore belonging to Varsha Raut were attached by the ED.

Pravin had eight parcels of land in Alibaug and a flat registered in the name of Varsha Raut which were attached. The ED had arrested Pravin in connection with the matter. "We had filed a

chargesheet in the matter against Pravin, Sarang Wadhawan and Rakesh Wadhawan of HDIL and Guru Ashish Construction and others were named as an accused in the chargesheet," said an ED official.

During the probe, the ED learnt that Pravin allegedly paid Rs 55 lakh to Varsha. This was paid from the bank account of Pravin's wife.

The money was termed as proceeds of crime by the ED. It was also alleged that the travel expenses of Sanjay Raut were borne by Pravin which included his hotel stay and air tickets.

ALL IS NOT WELL IN SHINDE BJP GOVT AS DIFFERENCES GROWING OVER SEVERAL ISSUES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Is Eknath Shinde and the BJP camp torn apart in less than a couple of months? Sources claim that the Shinde camp has differences with the BJP leadership on various issues. As a result of that the political situation in Maharashtra may be in turmoil again. A section within the saffron camp feels that even with Eknath sitting in the Chief Minister's chair, it is the BJP that is actually taking the leading role in running the government from the front. Recently Maharashtra BJP president Chandrasekhar Bawankule claimed that Devendra Fadnavis will be the next Chief Minister of the state. The former Chief Minister of Maharashtra gave Eknath the throne of the Chief Minister after the pact with the BJP on June 30. Eknath praised Fadnavis for this. He also expressed his gratitude to him. Currently, Fadnavis is handling the duties as Shinde's 'Deputy'. A section of the Eknath camp feels that after Chandrasekhar's significant comments about the chief ministership came to light, there has been a kind of uncertainty surrounding the seat of Shinde after 2024.

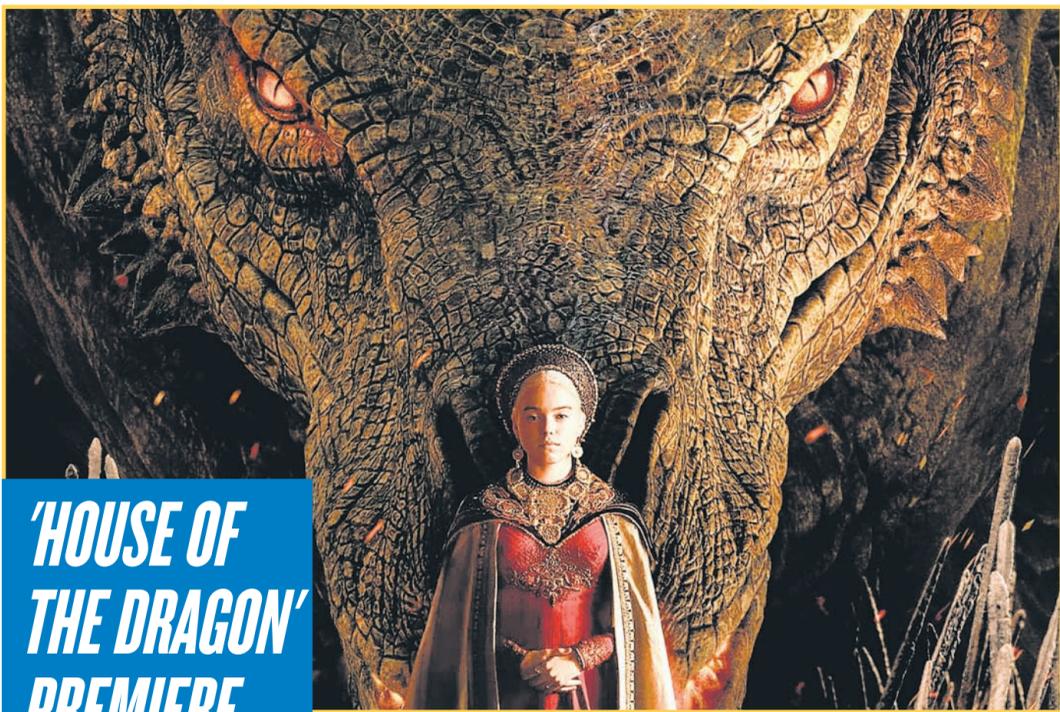
ship over the Buldhana Lok Sabha constituency. At present that center belongs to Shinde camp leader Pratap Yadav. But the BJP leadership has announced that they will field candidates in that center in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. All India general secretary of BJP Bhupendra Yadav will go to that center soon. The Shinde camp is 'displeased' that this decision was announced unilaterally without any discussion with them. A minister from the Shinde camp, who did not want to be named, said, "12 MPs have changed their ideology to retain their seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. But within a few months the decision is being announced unilaterally without talking to them. There are a few other Lok Sabha constituencies, over which the two parties may have a difference of opinion." A section of the Shinde camp believes that



Mumbai is said to be someone from BJP. In the words of an MLA from the Shinde camp, who did not want to be named, "BJP is moving towards the goal of winning 227 seats in the Greater Mumbai Municipality, that means there will be few seats left for us." According to sources, several leaders of the Shinde camp are expressing anger within the party about the role of the BJP leadership. It is also reported that in the recent budget allocation, the CM faction got less share than the BJP. The special thing is that even in the Maha Vikas Aghadi government, Shinde was talking about the allocation of less budget to the Shiv Sena than the NCP.

According to media reports, a supplementary budget of Rs 25 thousand crore was allocated in Maharashtra. During this, 14 thousand 583 crore rupees came in the account of BJP. At the same time, Shinde camp has got Rs 9,740 crore. Figures show that during this period, the departments controlled

by the BJP were given more budget. Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis himself has allocated Rs 1,593 crore for the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Urban Development Department controlled by Shinde has received Rs 1,886 crore. At the same time, 2 thousand 237 crore rupees came in the account of health department. Whereas, the local body development got Rs 840 crore. The PWD, which is controlled by Shinde himself, has received Rs 4,295 crore and the share of the school education department has come to Rs 12 crore. After the budget allocation, the round of political rhetoric has also started. Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray says that even by changing sides, the MLAs who cheated did not get anything. At the same time, Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar says that it "discloses" the claims of the Shinde side. Incidentally, Shinde joined hands with the BJP to form a government in Maharashtra by announcing a rebellion in the Shiv Sena. NCP leader Sharad Pawar predicted that the Eknath-BJP coalition government would not last long. He claimed that this government will fall within six months. In this context, the recent news of differences between the Shinde camp and the BJP on several issues in Maharashtra has added a new dimension to the state's politics.



'HOUSE OF THE DRAGON' PREMIERE REGISTERS CLOSE TO 10 MILLION VIEWS

Los Angeles | Agencies

The series premiere of 'House of the Dragon' attracted unprecedented eyeballs. It drew in 9.99 million viewers across HBO and HBO Max after premiering, according to Warner Bros. Discovery. This viewership tally includes linear airings, as well as HBO Max streams during premiere night, reports website. HBO says 'House of the Dragon' drew the largest audience in the pay TV channel's history, including content that debuted before the streaming era, as well as HBO shows that have since premiered on defunct digital platforms HBO Now and HBO Go, as well as their successor HBO Max. According to website, 'Game of Thrones' has remained HBO's biggest hit of all time since concluding in 2019, and as its prequel series;

'House of the Dragon' is arguably the project to get the most marketing and fanfare from the network since. As a result, series premiere 'Heirs of the Dragons' outperformed the 'Game of Thrones' series premiere, which brought in 4.2 million viewers in 2011. And while it's perhaps unfair to compare 'House of the Dragon' to the heights its predecessor eventually reached, 'Game of Thrones' was watched by a record-breaking 17.9 million people with the premiere of its eighth and final season, there's another, more recent HBO series that's worth including in the conversation. 'House of the Dragon' is based on George R.R. Martin's 2018 novel 'Fire & Blood'. The series is set 200 years before the events of 'Game of Thrones' and tells the story of House Targaryen.

Fast X' filming leaves neighbours angry over stunts

Los Angeles | Agencies

Films have the ability to touch many lives. The 'Fast and Furious' franchise too is doing exactly the same but in a negative way. The residents of Los Angeles' historic Angelino Heights neighbourhood, where the film from the franchise, 'Fast X', is being shot, are heavily annoyed. Ever since it premiered in 2001, 'Fast and the Furious' fans have made a beeline to Angelino Heights to gawk at Bob's Market, the store owned by the family of the film's Dominic Toretto (Vin Diesel) and the character's quaint Victorian house, reports website. Bob's Market and Dominic's house have become a destination for more than just clicking selfies. Nearly every night, car enthusiasts spin out doing donuts at high speeds in front of the store in addition to racing and doing street takeovers throughout the area just west of Downtown. According to website, residents who deal with the constant noise and unsafe conditions are fed up, and are planning a protest for the 'Fast X' shoot on Friday. The protest comes as anger over the effects of street racing and takeovers is at an all-time high in the city. Meanwhile, traffic fatalities and pedestrian deaths have skyrocketed during the Covid pandemic, often caused by reckless driving and speeding. It's become an epidemic across Los Angeles and the entire country -- traffic deaths in the US jumped 21 per cent in the first three months of 2022 compared to 2020. A notice of filming from the governing body for shoot permissions - FilmLA received by community members indicates that 'Fast X' will be shot on Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. in front of the Toretto house on Kensington Road, with "simulated emergency services activity, aerial photography, wetting down of street and atmospheric smoke".



According to a spokesperson for FilmLA, which is in charge of permits for film shooting in Los Angeles, a shooting permit has not been finalised, but the bulletins were provided to the community by the office. "If this film shoot is allowed to go forward in Angelino Heights, or any part of it from F10 Productions (Universal) a we will stage a huge protest and will invite many reporters and news cameras to film us protesting this film shoot all day and night," an email obtained by 'Variety' from a resident to Los Angeles City Council read. "We will hold this protest to honour the 178 people, who have been killed by street racers in Los Angeles, and to shame Universal for their callous disregard for this deadly epidemic of street racing their films started and continue to promote." The protest, which is being organised by an Angelino Heights resident, is supported by Street Racing Kills and Streets Are for Everyone, two advocacy organisations that focus on road safety education.

Katy Perry refused to be in same room Ex-husband doppelganger

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Katy Perry once yelled and fled a studio after she saw a Russell Brand lookalike. The singer was married to comedian Russell, for a year from 2010 to 2011, and she reportedly freaked out when running into a man who looked like then-husband, reports website. It was a prank orchestrated by BBC Radio DJ Scott Mills. Unaware that the couple was having marriage problems, the radio host thought it would be hilarious to surprise Perry with a lookalike of her then-husband during an interview. Speaking to the local newspaper, he said: "I thought it would be funny to hire a Russell lookalike. I found a bloke who, when he turned up, really looked like Russell and could do the voice. So we sent fake Russell into the studio - and Katy absolutely freaked out and ran." "We didn't know they were having relationship troubles so it was a bit misjudged. But I remember hearing her saying, 'I'm not going back out there,' multiple times. I pleaded with her to come back. She's wicked and did, but she said, 'You need to play the radio for the rest of your life on the radio to make up for it.' It was my most awkward moment on Radio 1." Perry and Brand tied the knot in a lavish wedding in India in October 2010 but the comedian filed for divorce just one year later. Brand previously said, "I really tried in that relationship. I have nothing but positive feelings for her." However, Perry revealed that Brand told her via text that he was filing for divorce. She said, "He's a very smart man, and I was in love with him when I married him. Let's just say I haven't heard from him since that text saying he was divorcing me December 31, 2011." Explaining the problems in their marriage, she said, "(He was) hysterical in some ways. Until he started making jokes about me and he didn't know I was in the audience, because I had come to surprise him at one of his shows. So. Hysterical to a point." "I felt a lot of responsibility for it ending, but then I found out the real truth, which I can't necessarily disclose because I keep it locked in my safe for a rainy day. I let go and I was like, 'This isn't because of me; this is beyond me.' So I have moved on from that."



DANIEL KALUUYA IS EXCITED FOR 'WAKANDA FOREVER'

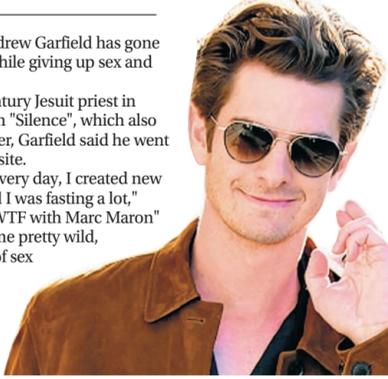
Los Angeles | Agencies

British actor Daniel Kaluuya, who played W'Kabi in the 2018 film 'Black Panther', seems plenty excited to experience the franchise as a fan this time around. The actor offered his reaction to the first trailer for 'Wakanda Forever' during the Los Angeles premiere of 'Honk for Jesus. Save Your Soul' Kaluuya serves as a producer on the comedy, which stars Regina Hall and Sterling K. Brown. "Of course, I've seen it!" Kaluuya told media about the trailer, adding that "it's amazing". Kaluuya then touched on his perspective regarding the series going on without his involvement. In the first 'Black Panther', Kaluuya played W'Kabi, a confidante to the late Chadwick Boseman's King T'Challa and the romantic partner to Danai Gurira's Okoye. According to website, Kaluuya had previously stated that he could not return for 'Wakanda Forever' due to scheduling conflicts with production on Jordan Peele's sci-fi thriller 'Nope'. "It's what's best for the story, what's best for the film," Kaluuya stated. "I'm excited for it. I'm excited to watch it." As for his potential future with Marvel Studios, 'website' states that Kaluuya stayed coy about the possibilities. "You know I can't tell you!" Kaluuya chuckled. "You're supposed to start with that!"

Andrew Garfield starved himself, gave up sex for movie role prep

Los Angeles | Agencies

As part of his method acting, Andrew Garfield has gone through "trippy" experiences while giving up sex and starving himself. To prepare for his role as a 17th century Jesuit priest in Martin Scorsese's 2016 missionary film "Silence", which also featured Liam Neeson and Adam Driver, Garfield said he went celibate and without food, reports website. "I did a bunch of spiritual practices every day, I created new rituals, I was celibate for six months and I was fasting a lot," Garfield told Monday's episode of the "WTF with Marc Maron" podcast. "It was very cool, man. I had some pretty wild, trippy experiences from starving myself of sex and food at that time." Garfield also spent a year studying in preparation for the film under Jesuit writer Father James Martin, who helped the actor research Catholicism. The actor added about the sacrifices, which led to a 2017 best actor Oscar nomination for his portrayal of Sebastiao Rodrigues in "Silence", "There have been a lot of misconceptions about what method acting is, I think." "People are still acting in that way, and it's not about being an a***** to everyone on set. It's actually just about living truthfully under imagined circumstances and being really nice to the crew simultaneously and being a normal human being and being able to drop it when you need to and staying in it when you want to stay in it." Garfield recently hinted the technique may have taken its toll, saying he is taking a step back from Hollywood to be "ordinary for a while." He added, "I'm going to rest for a little bit."



HARRY STYLES OPENS UP ON HIS JOURNEY TO EMBRACE HIS SEXUALITY

Singer Harry Styles has embarked on a journey in an effort to figure out and get comfortable with his sexuality. Dressed in a gender-fluid outfit of feathers and fur, the singer and actor, made the admission in a cover interview with the new issue of Rolling Stone magazine, reports website. "I think everyone, including myself, has your own journey with figuring out sexuality and getting more comfortable with it," ex-One Direction member Styles, who is dating actress Olivia Wilde, said while discussing playing gay policeman Tom Burgess in the new romantic drama 'My Policeman'. "To him (Tom), 'My Policeman' is a very human story. It's not like, 'This is a gay story about these guys being gay.' It's about love and about wasted time to me." The singer added, even though he is hard working, he isn't perfect, saying, "I'd like to think I'm open, and probably quite stubborn, too, and willing to be vulnerable. I can be selfish sometimes, but I'd like to think that I'm a caring person."



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Camila Cabello



AIFF WRITES TO FIFA, SEEKING LIFTING OF SUSPENSION

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Day after the Supreme Court dissolved the Committee of Administrators and handed the daily administration to the erstwhile officials, the acting secretary of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) wrote a letter to FIFA, seeking an end to India's suspension from international football.

The FIFA Bureau had on August 16 suspended the AIFF from international football and also stripped it of the hosting rights for the Women's U17 World Cup in the country, scheduled in October, alleging "third party interference" in governance after the Supreme Court appointed the Committee of Administrators in May over delay in conducting elections by the Praful Patel-led executive committee.

After the SC modified its decisions regarding the CoA and brought forward the election schedule by a week, the Acting General Secretary of AIFF, Sunando Dhar, wrote a letter to FIFA Fatma Samoura, FIFA Secretary General, requesting the organisation to "reconsider their decision of suspending the AIFF".

The AIFF put out information regarding the letter on its official website on Tuesday.

In a letter to the FIFA Secretary General, Dhar, while providing an update on the litigation before the Honourable Supreme Court of



India mentioned that the AIFF now has full charge of the daily affairs.

"It is with immense pleasure that we inform you that the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India (the "SC") took up our matter and vide order dated 22.05.2022 was pleased to pass directions regarding the full repeal of the CoA mandate and consequently the AIFF having full charge of the AIFF's daily affairs," Dhar stated in the letter.

"In view of the above, we request the FIFA and especially the Bureau to reconsider their decision of suspending the AIFF. Since the conditions set out in your Letter for the lifting of the suspension stand satisfied, we request that an order to that effect be passed at the earliest for the AIFF to continue with the smooth running of football in India," the letter further stated. The AIFF is expecting an early resolution to the matter and new dates being announced for the U17 World Cup.

Chess prodigy Praggnanandhaa leading a "chess ascetic's" life

Chennai | Agencies

Five wins, two draws and one loss against the world chess champion, Grandmaster Magnus Carlsen, is the playing record of 17-year-old Indian GM R.

Praggnanandhaa, says father Rameshbabu in a humble and matter-of-fact manner. On Monday, Praggnanandhaa took the chess world by storm, defeating Carlsen in the FTX Crypto Cup, the second major on the Champions Chess Tour to finish runner-up in the strong tournament. It is a sort of an ascetic's life that the young Grandmaster Praggnanandhaa and his elder sister Woman GM (WGM) R. Vaishali lead, "talking and breathing chess while avoiding other diversions."

This month has been memorable for the 12th standard student. For, early this month, his team -- India-2 -- won the bronze medal at the 44th Chess Olympiad in Mamallapuram, and Praggnanandhaa also won the bronze for his individual performance. On August 10, he celebrated his



birthday and followed it up with victories over Carlsen and finishing runner-up in the FTX Crypto Cup.

"He will participate in the Dubai Open now and then return home," Nagalakshmi said. Sporting the sacred ash on his forehead, Praggnanandhaa makes his first move after praying to the Almighty. "He does not have any favourite

Hindu deity. He prays before making the first move," Nagalakshmi said.

Practicing chess for about five-six hours, attending online chess classes, Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali are not interested in films or television shows. "Praggnanandhaa and Vaishali watch television only when they are having meals. They do not have anything like favourite dishes or movie

actors. They like homemade food and do not order pizzas, noodles online as they are very particular about eating healthy food," Nagalakshmi said.

At home, the siblings play chess and also "discuss and dissect" other games. Praggnanandhaa, ranked eighth in the world among juniors with an ELO rating of 2,661 points, also plays table tennis, badminton and watches only nail-biting cricket match highlights.

The chess prodigy's tryst with chess began when Vaishali was enrolled in a chess coaching school. On seeing her play, Praggnanandhaa too got hooked to the 64-square board game. Soon, the two started playing at home and began winning tournaments.

While the siblings decimate opponents, their parents juggle their work schedule to accompany their wards on domestic and international trips. I accompany them a lot. The problem arises when they are playing in different countries at the same time. We have had to skip several social functions," Nagalakshmi remarked.

CORIC DEFEATS TSITSIPAS TO CAP OFF GREAT WEEK WITH CINCINNATI TITLE

New York | Agencies

Borna Coric won his first ever ATP Masters 1000 title when he defeated world number seven Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6 (7-0), 6-2 in the final of the Western and Southern Open.

Coric, who entered the tournament ranked 152nd in the world, put together a week of tennis he will never forget as he beat five consecutive top-20 opponents in Rafael Nadal, Roberto Bautista-Agut, Felix Auger-Aliassime, Cameron Norrie and finally Tsitsipas, reports. Tsitsipas looked likely to enjoy a comfortable first set when he raced to a 4-1 lead after breaking Coric's serve at the first opportunity, but the Croatian roared back to level the scores and force a tie-break after saving three more break points.

The momentum was with Coric from there as he cruised through the tie-break without dropping a point to take the opener and stun the world number seven. Tsitsipas threatened to take the momentum straight back as he quickly took a love-to-40 lead against Coric's opening service game of the second set, but the 25-year-old in the second ATP Masters 1000 final of his career -- and the first since Shanghai in 2018 -- was on a mission, saving another three break points to stay in control.



Coric would save six of the seven total break points he faced in the contest, and he put an exclamation point on the best tournament of his career by breaking the Greek's serve twice to secure the win. The stats indicate this was far from a fluke, as Coric was better both on serve -- winning 69 per

cent of his points compared to 57 per cent from Tsitsipas -- and on return, creating 12 break point opportunities while Tsitsipas created seven.

With the win, and the 1000 ranking points, Coric will rise 123 places when the next rankings are released, up to 29th.

Ministry funds wrestler Bajrang, Deepak Punia's

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Sports Ministry is funding Olympic bronze medallist Bajrang Punia and CWG gold winner Deepak Punia's 19 days travel-and-training plan in Michigan, USA ahead of the World Wrestling Championships in Belgrade, Serbia next month. The international training has been cleared under the Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) with Deepak and Bajrang set to fly out to Michigan on Tuesday. Bajrang and Deepak are accompanied by coach Sujet Mann, and physiotherapist Anand Kumar who will join them in a few days.

The duo will train at US's Michigan University under the University's head coach Sean Bormet who in the past has trained Olympic bronze medallist Myles Amine (86kg), Olympian Stevan Micic (57kg), Olympian Andy Hrovat (84kg) among many top athletes of the country.



The camp is scheduled to last for 19 days with Deepak and Bajrang set to travel to Belgrade, Serbia for the World Championships directly from the US.

Earlier this month, TOPS also sanctioned Olympic silver medallist Ravi Kumar Dhaiya's training session in Vladikavkaz, Russia, where he is currently training for the World Championships.

Two-time champion Momota reaches second round at badminton worlds

Tokyo | Agencies

Second seed Kento Momota, bidding for his third world title, beat Lino Munoz of Mexico to reach the second round at the World Badminton Championships held here on Monday.

Momota took only 37 minutes to see off the 82nd-ranked Munoz 21-16, 21-14. The local favourite will next face India's H.S. Prannoy. Third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark became the biggest name to crash out in the first round as he went down to Japan's Kenta Nishimoto 21-15, 21-



19. All three men's singles players of China advanced to the second round, reports Xinhua. Former silver

medallist Shi Yuqi, playing his first match in 10 months, fought off a tenacious challenge to beat lowly-ranked Ade Resky Dwicahyo of Azerbaijan 22-20, 21-10. Lu Guangzu beat Toby Penty of England 21-9, 13-21, 21-14 while Zhao Junpeng enjoyed a walkover victory over Nigeria's Anuoluwapo Juwon Opeyori, who failed to show up.

Top seed and Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark advanced with a victory over Liew Daren of Malaysia 21-16, 21-12. He will next take on Mark Caljouw of the Netherlands.

World Championships Srikanth, Prannoy, Sen advance on a mixed day for India

Tokyo (Japan) | Agencies

Last edition's runner-up Kidambi Srikanth, bronze medallist Lakshya Sen and Thomas Cup star H.S. Prannoy kept the Indian flag flying but B. Sai Praneeth and Malvika Bansod's campaigns came to an end in the BWF Badminton World Championships here on Monday. Srikanth and Sen, who met in the semifinals of the 2021 edition, and Prannoy won their matches in straight games. Overall, it was a mixed day for India as Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy advanced in women's doubles while M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila made it to the second round in men's doubles. The mixed doubles pair of Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto



too advanced, beating the German pair of Patrick Scheiel and Franziska Volkman 21-12, 21-13 in 29 minutes. Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy, however, lost to the Japanese pair of Hiroki Okamura and Masayuki Onodera 11-21, 21-19, 15-21. However, Sen and Srikanth made a superb start in men's singles, scoring comprehensive wins in their

opening match Sen, the 21-year-old from Uttarakhand, seeded ninth, started with a straight games win over Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus, overcoming the World No. 19 from Denmark 21-12, 21-11 in a match that lasted 35 minutes. He will next face Spaniard Luis Penalver in the round of 32. Srikanth, the former world No. 1, defeated Irishman Nhat Nguyen 22-20, 21-19 in a 51-minute encounter. The Indian shuttler will take on talented Chinese youngster Zhao Jun Peng in the next round.

Prannoy joined his two compatriots in the men's singles round of 32 after beating Luka Wraber of Austria 21-12, 21-11. Home favourite and former two-time world champion Kento Momota will be his next opponent.

Thailand Para Badminton Ramadass, Kaur register impressive wins as India return home with 17 medals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Thailand Para Badminton: Ramadass, Kaur register impressive wins as India return home with 17 medals

Manisha Ramadass and Mandeep Kaur registered impressive wins as the Indian contingent returned home with 17 medals including four gold at the recently-concluded Thailand Para Badminton International 2022 in Pattaya. Manisha Ramadass and Mandeep Kaur registered impressive wins as the Indian contingent returned home with 17 medals including four gold at the recently-concluded Thailand Para Badminton International 2022 in Pattaya. According to information received here, Kaur rallied from a game down to defeat reigning world champion Manasi Joshi 22-20, 21-19, 21-14 in women's singles SL3 finals before Ramadass, the 17-year-old from Chennai, displayed a brilliant



game of badminton to pull off a similar win over Japan's Kaede Kameyama in women's singles

SU5. Another women shuttler who made a mark at the championships was Nithya Sre Sumathy Sivan, who

overcame Rachel Choong of England 21-9, 24-22 for the women's SH6 gold. Joshi settled for two more silver with her partners Shanthiya V. and Ruthick Raghupathi respectively, in the women's doubles SL3-SU5 and mixed doubles SL3 - SU 5 events. Bhagat-Kadam duo win gold in men's events, Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat and Sukant Kadam teamed up for the first time in an international event and shone with the gold medal in the men's doubles SL3-SL4 event.

The Bhagat-Kadam duo upset the Indonesia star pair of Dwiyoiko Dwiyoiko and Fredy Setiawan in straight games 21-18, 21-13. "It's great to start our doubles partnership with a gold medal. It was an important tournament and we have trained together for some time before the Thailand 2022 Championships. And the result has been fruitful," said Kadam who returned from a break with a bang.

Rahul Dravid should be fine; he will be back before India-Pakistan game: Ravi Shastri

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ravi Shastri, the former India coach, felt India shouldn't be much worried about their head coach Rahul Dravid testing Covid-19 positive before their departure to the UAE ahead of Asia Cup, saying that he will be back with the side before the India-Pakistan match on August 28. On Tuesday afternoon, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said that Dravid had tested positive for Covid-19, placing his involvement in the Asia Cup, scheduled to commence in the UAE from August 27, in doubt. The BCCI added that Dravid is under the supervision of the BCCI Medical team and has mild symptoms. It also said that he will join the Indian team once he returns with a negative COVID-19 report.

"I don't think it will make that much of a difference. Today, don't call it Covid-19, it's just flu. In three-four days, it will be fine, and he will be back in the park," said Shastri in a press conference organised by Star Sports, the official broadcaster of Asia Cup 2022. Shastri recalled his own experience of testing positive for Covid-19 during the fourth Test between England and India at The Oval. As a result of him testing positive for Covid-19, bowling coach Bharat Arun, fielding coach R Sridhar, and physiotherapist Nitin Patel were that time kept in isolation as a precautionary measure. "When I had Covid last year, I could have gone into the dressing room in six days. And I



promise you if I had gone to the dressing room in 6-7 days, you would have (India) played that Test match at Old Trafford and won it." "Don't talk about Covid, Covid now. It's just a flu. It's over. He should take couple of paracetamols; he should be fine and back there before India-Pakistan game," concluded the former India all-rounder.

India will open their Asia Cup Group A campaign against Pakistan on August 28 and will play their second match against a Qualifier team on August 31. The Asia Cup, to be held in Dubai and Sharjah, is set to conclude on September 11.



Shehnaaz Gill on hiding emotions post-Sidharth Suhkla's demise;

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shehnaaz Gill has opened up about being trolled after Sidharth Shukla's death and how she did not display her hurt and sadness in public at that time. "Duniya ke aage roge to log bolenge sympathy gain kar rahi hai. People would consider you weak and I never want to come across as one. However, I have never tried to hide my emotions. I dealt with it myself and I am fine with it absolutely," she told an entertainment portal.

"I dealt it with myself and I am absolutely fine with it"

Shehnaaz paid tribute to Sidharth with a music video titled "Tu Yaheen Hai" after his death. While many people appreciated her gesture, others criticised her and accused her of profiting from Sidharth's death. Shehnaaz responds by saying, "People don't know the whole story, so how will they say anything about it? I wanted to restart my work, make a comeback and when you respect someone a lot, if you don't do something for them, then how will you start? So, it was out of respect. And its

okay, the people who don't know anything about it, why should we feel sad about what they say. Whatever knowledge they have, let them have that only."

For the unversed, it was reported that Shehnaaz Gill will be next seen in Salman Khan's Bhaijaan.

SRITI JHA EVICTED FROM SHETTY'S SHOW

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The latest episode of Khatron Ke Khiladi 12 saw one of the most popular and loved contestants on the show get eliminated. Sriti Jha became the latest contestant to exit the show after she failed to complete an elimination stunt, in which she had to compete against Jannat Zubair.

During the 'Mummy Special Week' of the show, contestants Mohit Malik and Sriti Jha were put up against each other in the final elimination



stunt. Bringing an interesting twist to the show, Kanika Mann threw a curve ball by using the special powers she earned after bagging the 'K-Medal' last week. In the final stunt, she replaced Mohit with Jannat Zubair and hence both had to compete against each other to safeguard their place in the show. After a neck and neck competition, Sriti lost to Jannat and so the former had to bid adieu to the show. Acing the most challenging stunts Sriti Jha has won million hearts during her stint in the show.

Sharing her journey with the show, Sriti Jha says, "My journey with the show

was a phase of self-revelation. Given that I get scared very easily, I didn't think I would overcome so many fears. I'm grateful for the viewers and contestants who've rooted for me. I have incredible respect for the way the show is created. A huge shout-out to Rohit sir for boosting my morale every time we used to perform stunts. A bunch of cool people made this show and I'm so glad I got to work with them."

For the unversed, Sriti Jha, after starring in Kulkarni Bhagya as the leading lady, became well-known household name.

"I feel very young. I've got my dad's genes": Sonam Kapoor

SONAM KAPOOR ON BEING A MOM AT 37

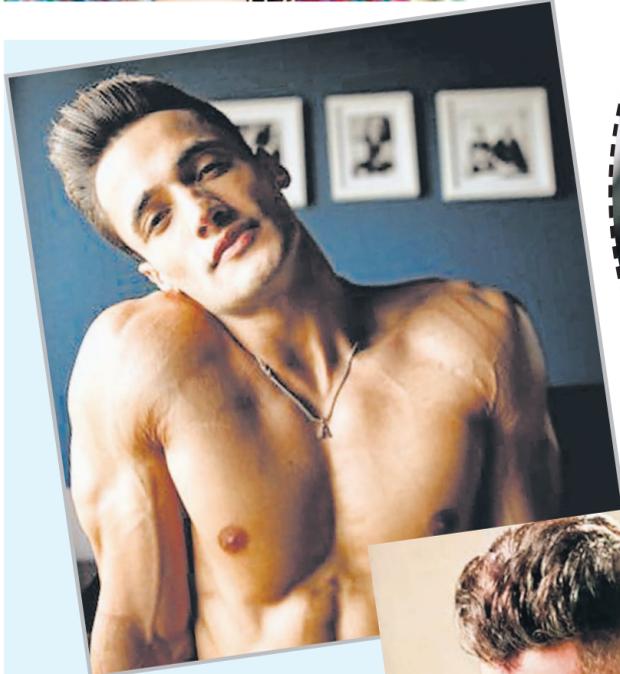
Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress gave birth to a baby boy recently. The famous magazine unveiled its September issue, which features a pregnant Sonam Kapoor, as soon as the family announced the birth of the child. Sonam discussed how people keep telling pregnant women to do this and that at 31 or 32 in an excerpt from an interview with a very well-known journalist. However, she said that she still feels very young as she has got her dad's genes.

"Everyone's so tense about women who get pregnant after 31 or 32. They tell you don't do this, don't do that, don't get gestational diabetes or pre-eclampsia. I was like, "Wait, hang on, I still feel very young. I've got my dad's genes. It'll be fine," she said. The actress also discussed the difficulties of embracing motherhood at an advanced age, as well as how difficult her first trimester was.

Sonam Kapoor and Anand Ahuja welcomed a baby boy on August 20, 2022. As soon as the news broke, friends in the industry and their fans sent their best wishes. Sonam's father, actor Anil Kapoor, shared a note expressing the entire family's joy and delight.

"We are delighted to announce, on the 20th August, the arrival of the newest member of our family, Sonam and Anand have been blessed with a healthy baby boy and we couldn't be more elated. Our hearts are bursting with pride and love for the new parents and their beautiful angel," the note read.



Asim Riaz calls out at 'an influential personality' for fake promises

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Salman Khan Starrer Bhaijaan, which was formerly titled Kabhi Eid Kabhi Diwali is getting into hot water time and again for some or the other reason.

If recent reports are to be believed, last year it was suggested that Bigg Boss 13 runner up Asim Riaz will be joining Salman Khan as his on-screen brother in the flick. However, now that the film has gone on floors, he is not a part of it.

Asim, who carved a niche for himself post his stint in Bigg Boss 13, took to his social media and shared a cryptic note. In the note, he mentioned about an "influential" personality from the industry for making a "fake" movie promise and using his name for publicity.

The note read, "My father was promised a movie project from an influential personality from the industry. More than 1 year they used my name for the hype of the project, all the big media publications spoke about it and confirmed it, all I want to say is all the fake promises won't make me feel down."

He continued, "The pressure and anxiety they have given me will never make me stop doing what I am doing right now so mujhey apney tour se duniya ko jeene de."

That's not all! Asim's girlfriend and Punjabi singer Himanshi Khurana has also shared a cryptic tweet now. It reads: "Listen to the silence. It's telling the truth." After he shared the note, netizens were quick to guess that he is talking about Salman Khan and his upcoming movie Bhaijaan.

On the work front, Asim is keeping his fans entertained through rap music videos, with the latest track being Jeene De.



To me, my fans are like God', says Vikram

Chennai | Agencies

Actor Vikram, lovingly called 'Chiyaan' Vikram by his fans, on Tuesday said that to him, his fans were like God. Replying to a fan, who asked him how he handled fans who irritated him with requests for pictures and autographs, Vikram, who visited Saint Joseph College in Trichy to promote his upcoming film, 'Cobra', said, "There is no question of getting irritated by fans. There is no chance that will happen." The actor said, "Even now, there was chaos outside, and the father of this college asked if I had been unduly troubled. I told him not at all. This is what we long for. I think all this love by fans is a boon from God. This is not something that will happen to everybody. And so when it does, there can be nothing greater than that. It is not that I am saying this only here. I think fans are like God. They are God in fact. There is no bond between us and our fans. They are not going to get anything from us. In some cases, they are not even going to meet us. And yet, they tattoo our faces or names, they donate blood and do several other things for our sake. "Sometimes, I visit my fans' homes. A film of mine is releasing in theatres after three years. The longing and the patient wait will be worth it because 'Cobra' will make you all happy."

MORFYDD CLARK AND ROBERT ARAMAYO IMMERSSED IN INDIAN EXPERIENCE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The cast and crew of the epic drama Lord of the Rings immersed themselves in a truly Indian experience, visiting the Gateway of India, interacting with Mumbai's dabbawalas, and engaging in a fun conversation with the franchise fans, Hrithik Roshan and Tamannaah Bhatia.

Prior to the release of the highly anticipated epic drama series, the OTT hosted a spectacular Asia Pacific premiere of The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power in Mumbai. Following

the series' grand premiere, the cast and showrunner were photographed in front of Mumbai's Gateway of India.

Aside from that, the cast and showrunner were seen having a good time with Mumbai's Dabbawallas. While not only taking pictures with the dabbawalas, the team made every effort to immerse themselves in their culture by wearing Gandhi caps with their names written on them. Furthermore, the dabbawalas were seen wearing their traditional white kurta pyjama and Gandhi cap. Later, the team



dined with the dabbawalas and enjoyed delicious meals. It was a truly authentic experience for The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power team. The cast and crew had the opportunity to meet and interact with real-life fans of the franchise, Hrithik Roshan and Tamannaah Bhatia.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Ketika Sharma