

absolute india

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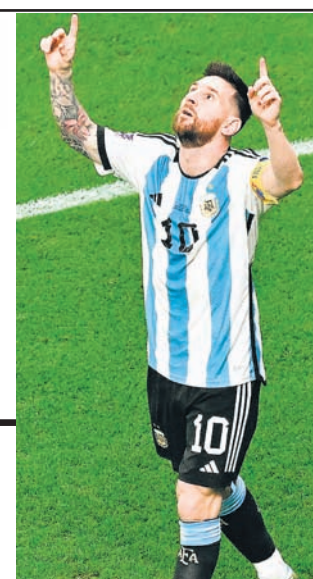
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Keke Palmer is pregnant and expecting her first baby with...



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FIFA World Cup: Argentina registered a fighting 2-1 win...



Cyber attacks triple in last three years, but security funds underutilized

▶ CYBER ATTACK WHICH HAS PUT ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), DELHI'S SERVERS OUT OF ORDER ON NOVEMBER 23 IS YET TO BE RESOLVED COMPLETELY.

▶ ON DECEMBER 1, CYBER ATTACKERS BRIEFLY HACKED THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI'S TWITTER HANDLE, THE SECOND MAJOR CYBER ATTACK ON A GOVERNMENT SITE.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The number of cyber attacks in the country has witnessed three-fold increase over as many years, however, the funds meant for cyber security have been underutilised with only Rs 98.31 crore used of the total Rs 213 crore sanctioned.

According to government data, in 2019, total number of cyber security incidents tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) was 3,94,499. The number spiked to 11,58,208 in the year 2020 and further increased to 14,02,809 in 2021. This year, as many

as 6,74,021 cyber security incidents were reported till June.

Multiple agencies have been looking into the cyber attack at the crucial installation of the country. While a case has been registered, the CERT-IN, Delhi Police and other investigating agencies are probing the incident.

A Parliamentary standing committee in its report this year observed that there is a significant surge in cyber incidents and cyber security breaches and it is imperative that capabilities and resilience of the

country to deal with imminent dangers on cyber space are enhanced proportionately.

"Cyber security has to remain at the forefront of agenda/priority items for the Ministry and no fund crunch should come in the way of ensuring a safe ecosystem as far as the cyber-world is concerned. In fact the Committee feels that the Ministry must dovetail their efforts to achieve a more secured cyberworld especially in the wake of renewed challenges in this space.

"The Committee, therefore, recommend that funds for cyber security may be increased on a year on basis to forestall any failures in this domain for sheer lack of funds," it said. The report also cited lower fund utilisation with respect to CERT-in, National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC) and data governance.

"So, far as the underutilisation of funds under the head is concerned, an amount of Rs 216 crore had been allocated in BE (Budget Estimate) stage during 2021-22, which was reduced to Rs 213 crore at RE (Revised Estimate) stage and actual utilisation till January, 2022 has been 98.31 crore only," said the report.

The Government has issued guidelines for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) regarding their key roles and responsibilities for securing applications / infrastructure and compliance. Besides, all the government websites and applications are audited with respect to cyber security prior to their hosting.

The auditing of the websites and applications is conducted on a regular basis after hosting also. Moreover, the government has empanelled 97 security auditing organisations to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.

MCD POLLS

'No development, no vote', Bawana villagers call for election boycott

New Delhi: When the rest of the city was busy voting for the elections to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Sunday, residents of Katewara village in Bawana, which falls under Ward No. 31 in North West district, gave a call to boycott the polls.

According to sources, there are around 4,400 voters in the ward, who alleged that no development took place in the area in the last eight years and hence they have decided to boycott the polls.

People alleged that even the cemetery in the area is also in a bad condition. Though they urged the local MLA and the councillor to get it repaired many times, no step has been taken so far, they alleged.

Inder Singh, a local resident, said that in the last eight years no road has been built in the area and hence he was boycotting the polls. He alleged that the local MLA has even threatened



them that if they do not vote for his party, no development will take place in the area.

Another villager said that no sports complex has been built in the area and hence they were against the polls. Sanjiv Khatri, a local social worker, said that area representatives are not paying heed to their problems.

"The MP, MLA and councillor -- all are missing. They don't come to our village. No development has taken place in the last eight years, so we are forced to boycott the elections," said Khatri.

Trust my friend Narendra Modi to bring us together: French Prez Macron

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After India took over G20 Presidency, French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday tweeted a photo of himself with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and expressed confidence that the Indian PM will bring the two countries to build peace and a sustainable world.

"One Earth. One Family. One Future. India has taken over the presidency of #G20India! I trust my friend @NarendraModi to bring us together in order to build peace and a more sustainable world," Macron wrote in a tweet. India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on Thursday.

Earlier, French Ambassador Emmanuel Lenain said that France was glad to see India in the driver's seat and offered full support to India's presidency of the G20.

"Today, India takes over the G20 presidency for a year & UNSC chair for December. As we strive to keep the world united in the face of unprecedented challenges, we are glad to see India in the driver's seat. India can count on France's full support," he said on December 1 in a tweet.

Earlier, United States President Joe Biden said that he was looking forward to supporting 'his friend' Prime Minister Narendra Modi



during India's G20 presidency. Biden said that the US and India will join hands while tackling challenges like climate, energy and food crises.

"India is a strong partner of the United States, and I look forward to supporting my friend Prime Minister Modi during India's G20 presidency. Together we will advance sustainable and inclusive growth while tackling shared challenges like the climate, energy, and food crises," US President Joe Biden had said.

Fate of eight ex-Indian Navy personnel in Qatar hangs in the balance

Kolkata | Agencies

While all eyes are on the ongoing football World Cup in Qatar, little is known of the fate of eight ex-Indian Navy personnel imprisoned in that country for over 90 days now.

The Indian Ex Servicemen Movement (IESM) has now written to India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar, seeking his intervention. Copies of the letter have been forwarded to the Prime Minister, Defence Minister and three services chiefs.

According to Major Gen. Satbir Singh (ret'd), chairman, IESM and advisor, United Front of Ex Servicemen, the Ex-Indian Navy personnel were working for Dahra Global Technologies and Consultancy Services in Doha, as per a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Qatar. Their job was to



train Qatar Navy personnel.

"The families of the Ex-Indian Navy personnel lost contact with them on August 30. From their office in Doha, the families came to know that they were picked up around midnight from their homes by the State Security Bureau, Ministry of Interior, Qatar. One wonders how

this could have happened when the eight were working under a policy to train personnel of friendly navies. This has been endorsed by Indian Ambassadors to Qatar," Maj Gen Singh (ret'd) tweeted.

Consular access was granted to the eight only once on October 3, when it came to be known that they

are in solitary confinement. According to a source, they have been wrongly charged with espionage, apparently on the behest of one of India's neighbours.

"This is mischief of the worst kind. The Ex-Indian Navy personnel are Cdr Purnendu Tiwari, Capt Navtej Singh Gill, Cdr Birendra Kumar Verma, Capt Saurabh Vashisht, Cdr Sugnaker Pakala, Cdr Amit Nagpal, Cdr Sanjeev Gupta and Sailor Ragesh," the source added.

In his letter to the External Affairs Minister, Maj Gen Singh has noted how the families of the eight are anxious about their health conditions.

"Their release and repatriation at the earliest are desired," he has stated in the letter. The retired general, in one of his tweets, has also expressed apprehension that unless the Indian government takes immediate action, the eight may face torture to extract false confessions.

FAMILY BOOKS ENTIRE PLANE FOR WEDDING

New Delhi: Destination weddings are increasingly becoming a trend in India. In one such instance, an entire airplane was reserved by a family to travel to the wedding venue since they didn't want to miss seeing family and friends. A video showing this has gone viral on social media platforms.

Shreya Shah, a digital artist, shared a picture of the flight's voyage on Instagram. The video clip featured Shah along with an aerial shot of a flight carrying wedding guests.

In the video, the bride and groom are seen seated next to each other while they are all seen amusingly waving their hands together. Shah also posted other videos with an elaborate 'haldi' ceremony. Multiple videos shared showed an extravagant haldi ceremony held at Jaisalmer in Rajasthan. The video clip has attracted more than 10.1 million views on the Meta-owned social media platform.

According to industry experts, destination weddings are the new buzz these days particularly after Covid pandemic in the country. Businessmen book lavish locations for weddings in their families. Air travel has come out as the safest mode of transportation and many with deep pockets chose private jets for their privacy and comfort.

1,000 illegal factories turn Delhi's Anaj Mandi into a tinderbox ready to ignite

In 2019, the tragic death of 43 people in a fire at Filmistan theatre at Anaj Mandi due to a short circuit is a grim reminder that civic agencies did not learn lessons from past tragedies as they wait for another incident to happen and then the time tested game of "passing the buck" begins. And this is not a one-off incident as many areas where illegal factories are operating in residential areas are ticking time bombs.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Those who are not residents of Delhi are astonished when they walk down the narrow streets of the national capitals congested areas and suddenly encounter a small-scale industry. People usually visualise a factory as a big building but the reality is different in Delhi. The city houses thousands of small factories, which are said to be ticking fire bombs operating under the nose of the civic authorities.

In Anaj Mandi, which houses around 1000 illegal factories, the workers are left with no choice but to work in these factories situated in perilously close buildings which can be quickly engulfed in an accidental fire.

"Whom should we blame, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led Delhi government, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ruled Municipal Corporation, Delhi Police, Delhi Fire Service (DFS) or the corrupt system which runs under their

nose," said residents of Anaj Mandi area.

The locals claimed that they have given numerous complaints regarding illegal units operating in the area to the civic agencies but till date nothing has happened.

"Whenever a tragic incident occurs in Anaj Mandi, the civic and other agencies officials are always quick to put the onus on the owners of the building and claim that commercial activity is going

"A senior MCD official said that from time to time they seal illegal factories and they have shut down and sealed more than 1300 factories after surveying over 4,500 properties. "Notices are also being served and soon all these industries being operated from industrial areas will be sealed," he added.

on "illegally" but why no action," said Ram Prakash, a resident of Anaj Mandi area, who also runs a garment shop there.

The Delhi Fire Services gives Sections 25, 27, & 44 of the DFS Act 2010 a go to such buildings which stipulate a certain height and occupancy level needed for fire safety and fire prevention measures. But no action has been taken by the DFS. As per sources, most of the buildings in the area are violating these norms and the owners of such buildings are not even aware of it.

MPD-2021 mandates MCD to pre-

In 2019, the tragic death of 43 people in a fire at Filmistan theatre at Anaj Mandi due to a short circuit is a grim reminder that civic agencies did not learn lessons from past tragedies as they wait for another incident to happen and then the time tested game of "passing the buck" begins. And this is not a one-off incident as many areas where illegal factories are operating in residential areas are ticking time bombs.

pare the redevelopment plan of the Special Area. As per sources, the redevelopment plan was prepared by North DMC and cleared by the Technical Committee of the DDA. The finalized plan was approved by the Corporation in March 2017. It was sent to the Urban Development Department of the Delhi government for notification in the official Gazette in April 2017. But despite providing all the clarifications sought from time to time it is still pending notification. What are these departments waiting for.



MAHARASHTRA FIRST STATE TO HAVE DIVYANG WELFARE DEPARTMENT



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Maharashtra will have a department for the welfare of differently-abled people and it will be called Divyang Welfare Department.

Kane, president Prahar Kranti Organisation, Mumbai said on Saturday. "Till now, to get justice for Divyang, we had to run to sometimes the Ministry of Urban Development, sometimes the Ministry of Rural Development, and Social Justice, now with Divyang Welfare Department, the issues regarding their employment, rehabilitation etc, will be addressed at one place," Kane said.

taken this very important step," he added. Maharashtra Chief Minister in a tweet informed the decision of setting up an independent department for the welfare of differently-abled persons.

FIRE BREAKS OUT AT MALAD TOWER; ONE INJURED

Mumbai: A woman was injured, when a fire broke out inside her flat on the third floor of a 23-storey building in Jankalyan Nagar in Malad on Saturday.

Followers of Shivaji Maharaj protest against Governor Remark; Atul Save assures action

Maharashtra cabinet minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Atul Save on Sunday assured the followers of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Maratha community members that action will be taken on the persons, who have abused the 'great man,' reported.

Team Absolute | Mumbai

I assure the followers of Shivaji Maharaj that their demand for action against the ones making remarks on Shivaji, will be conveyed to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis," Atul Save said.



ened at the Maharashtra minister's place in Aurangabad. A member of

the Maratha Kranti Morcha (which staged a protest at the minister's place) Vinod

Patil said: "We had organized this Dhol Bajao movement which has been organized in regard to the manner in which great leaders are being insulted in the state.

Patil further said that if their demand is not met, the agitation will get down to the roads.

The protest has been staged in wake of the controversy stoked by Maharashtra governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari on November 19 while addressing a function at Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University in Aurangabad.

BJP MLC Prasad Lad claims Shivaji Maharaj was born in Konkan, Opposition slams him

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bharatiya Janata Party MLC Prasad Lad has stoked a controversy by claiming Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was born in the Konkan region, prompting Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut to ask if the BJP had set up a new council for historical research.



'swarajya' were sown in Konkan, Lad said. "I spoke something else unintentionally and I rectified the mistake immediately," the BJP legislator said.

"politicising" the issue. The NCP had tweeted a video of Lad addressing a press conference on the 'Konkan Mahotsav' where he made the comment on the birth place of the 17th century Maratha warrior king, a revered figure in Maharashtra.

4-YEAR-OLD BOY DIES AS SCHOOL COMPOUND WALL'S MARBLE SLAB FALLS ON HIM

Thane: A 4-year-old boy died in Bhiwandi in Maharashtra's Thane district on Saturday after a marble slab of a school's compound wall fell on him, a police official said.

Nitesh Rane opposes construction of Urdu Bhavan in Agripada

Team Absolute | Mumbai

MLA Nitesh Rane extended his support for opposing the construction of Urdu Bhavan in the Agripada. The Agripada Sangarsh Samiti has been protesting against the construction of the Urdu Bhavan in the area.



Matoshree residence."Here the majority is Hindu so construct Urdu Bhavan somewhere else not here... If you want to build Urdu Bhavan then build near Kala Nagar Matoshree," he further said.

South Korean live-streamer records statement before judge in court

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The 24-year-old South Korean live-streamer recorded her statement before a judge at a Bandra Magistrate Court on Saturday. Two men had sexually assaulted the foreign national at SV Road in Khar West, earlier on Tuesday night, when she was midway a live stream on an online platform.



the woman recorded her statement under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CRPC), 1973, which pertains to recording of confession and statement. She recounted the entire incident of her molestation to the judge and also informed the court that she was followed by the

accused till her hotel," a police officer said. Senior inspector Mohan Mane of Khar police station added, "The accused were also produced in court on Saturday and were remanded to police custody till December 5. The woman also bravely came forward to record her statement."

TWIN SISTERS MARRY SAME MAN IN SOLAPUR

Solapur, Maharashtra: In an unusual arrangement,

twin sisters from Mumbai who are IT professionals married the same man in a ceremony held in Maharashtra's Solapur district, police said on Sunday.



Videos of the wedding that took place in Malshiras tehsil on Friday have gone viral on social media. Based on a complaint, a non-cognisable (NC) offence under section 494 (marrying again during lifetime of husband or wife) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered against the groom at Akulj police station, an official said.

The families of the brides and the groom had agreed to the bizarre marriage. The girls were living with their mother after their father passed away a few days ago.

Former opposition leader at PMC calls for daily measles vaccinations rather than weekly

Team Absolute | Navi Mumbai

Pritam Mhatre, former opposition leader at the Panvel Municipal Corporation (PMC), has proposed that the city administration offer measles vaccinations daily at the health centre rather than just once a week.



time. He also suggested, going by the birth record of children upto five years, the civic health team can visit and inquire about their health. "The health team can

check their vaccination status," said Mhatre, adding that a public awareness campaign should be carried out in rural areas, tribal areas, as well as in slums.

WOMAN GANG-RAPED, TORTURED WITH SHARP WEAPONS: COPS

Mumbai: A 42 year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped by three persons who entered her home, attacked her with a sharp weapon and gave her burn injuries on her private parts with cigarettes, a Mumbai police official said on Sunday.

The incident took place in Kurla in the early hours of Wednesday, the official said, adding the accused and the survivor stay in the same locality.

"The accused raped her one by one and also performed unnatural sex. They singed her private parts with cigarettes and attacked her with a sharp weapon on the chest and both arms. One of the accused videoed the incident and threatened to circulate it if she approached police," he said. The woman narrated her ordeal to neighbours, who got in touch with an NGO and an FIR was registered, the Kurla police station official said.

MUMBAI DOC GIVES UP LUCRATIVE PRACTICE, DEDICATES LIFE TO COWS IN JHARKHAND

Team Absolute | Mumbai/Ranchi

Doctor from Mumbai, Shalini Mishra, left all her comforts behind and dedicated her life to serving cows.

Shalini was earning in lakhs every month as a doctor, when in July 2019 she decided to move to Chakulia in East Singhbhum district of Jharkhand to run a 'Gaushala' (cowshed).

In the last three and half years, her cowshed has grown so significantly that today it comprises nearly 14,500 cattle, and nearly 300 locals are engaged in taking care of these bovines.

Every day, she personally visits each animal in the cowshed and once she gets assured that all cattle are well, a sense of satisfaction can be clearly seen on her face.

She neither takes any day off nor does she take any weekly off for herself. Even her family is contributing for the cause.

Her husband Ved Prakash is a scientist. Out of his salary of around Rs 8 lakh, he sends almost Rs 7.5 lakh every month for the expenses of the cowshed. Her daughter Richa is doing research in neuroscience in Australia. She gets a scholarship of Rs 2 lakh. Saving some amount out of that, she also sends it to the Gaushala. Son



Harsh is a second year MBBS student in Mumbai. Shalini says, in 2014, Yogi Ashwini of Dhyan Foundation had come to attend a programme of the Indian Medical Association in Mumbai. His thoughts deeply influenced her. She joined the Dhyan Foundation and then reached Chakulia, where a Gaushala was being started by the foundation on a 10-acre vacant land

belonging to the Pinjrapole Society of Kolkata, in the area where the aerodrome was built during the Second World War. Actually, a large network of cattle smugglers is active on the Indo-Bangladesh border. BSF (Border Security Force) frees a large number of bovine animals from the possession of these smugglers every month. The

problem before the BSF was how to take care of the confiscated animals. The Dhyan Foundation under Yogi Ashwini took the initiative for these animals. The foundation contacted the BSF and assured them that the organization would take proper care of all cattle. At present, the foundation operates a total of 40 cowsheds across the country. In these, more than 80,000 bovine

animals are taken care of. As of today, Chakulia's 'Govansh Seva Kunj' Gaushala is the largest shelter for bovine animals in eastern India. BSF team often comes to this cowshed. Three months ago, a team led by Commandant N.M. Rai of 112 Battalion of BSF stayed here for three days and returned impressed by the arrangement at the Gaushala. Not only this, all the members of his team also personally donated money for the cowshed. There are also a large number of sick, helpless, old bulls in this cowshed. A large number of abandoned and dying bovine animals are also brought here. There is also a team of veterinarians for their treatment. Shalini herself is engaged in treatment and dressing of such bovines.

The Gaushala is continuously expanding and several donors also cooperate in the cowshed's operation. This year, on the festival of Gopashtami, the number of cattle when counted was found to be 14,200. The bullocks kept safe in the Gaushala are being given free of cost to the local farmers for agricultural work. A few months before becoming the President of India, Draupadi Murmu had also visited this Gaushala and was very impressed with the arrangement here.



EDITOR'S SPECS

MP's small parties become a major headache for BJP, Congress

As assembly elections are scheduled to be held in Madhya Pradesh in less than a year, the possibility of small parties emerging as a big challenge for the BJP and the Congress has increased. All the political parties, including the BJP and the Congress, have already begun preparations for the polls. Both the parties are eyeing the votes which can be grabbed the small parties. The Samajwadi Party, Gondwana Ganatantra Party (GGP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Communist Party have been influential in the state. In the 2003 elections, in the House of 230 MLAs, 18 MLAs had won from small parties. This number has been fluctuating as 13 MLAs from smaller parties won in 2008, four in 2013 and only three in 2018. Learning a lesson from the 2018 assembly elections, both the BJP and the Congress are now dotting every i's and crossing every t's to get absolute majority in the upcoming polls, this is because the Congress had formed the government but it had not got the majority. In 2018, the Congress won 114 seats and the BJP won 109 seats in the 230-member assembly. The BJP returned to power in the state after a year and a quarter due to defection. Political analyst Arvind Mishra believes that the possibility of the upcoming election being full of dilemma cannot be denied, with factionalism increasing in the saffron party and the Congress putting in efforts to get united. However, the smaller parties can majorly affect the electoral math. In the state's recent urban body elections, it became apparent that small parties are now ready to play their role in the elections with Owaisi's AIMIM winning the councillor seats at many places. AAP's candidate won the post of Mayor in Singrauli. It is clear that apart from AAP, AIMIM; BSP, Samajwadi Party (SP) and tribal youth organisation JAIS can play a big role in the upcoming elections.

LAB TESTS BY EXPERTS SCOTCH SAFETY CONCERNS ABOUT TEA PRODUCED IN BENGAL

SUJIT CHAKRABORTY

Tea produced in the northeast region and the Dooars and Darjeeling in West Bengal is safe to drink, a risk assessment study by a 3-member team of scientists from the Tea Research Association (TRA) has confirmed.

The TRA scientists -- Bappadiya Kanrar, Sangeeta Kundu, Pathik Khan -- conducted an in-depth study of the samples collected from eight different areas in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal and analysed them at the TRA's National Accreditation Board for Testing accredited laboratory in Kolkata.

The abstract of the study report, available, said: "Northeast Indian tea would not pose any health hazard."

"A total 321 drier mouth samples were collected during 2020-2021 from eight different regions (Darjeeling, Terai, Dooars, North Bank, Upper Assam, South Bank, Cachar and Tripura). No inorganic mercury as well as uranium was detected in any tested tea samples," the study said.

It said that tea is a perennial crop that requires acidic soil for better plant growth and due to the acidic nature of tea-growing soil; metals can be easily absorbed by tea plants from the growing medium.

Other anthropogenic activities are also the major contributor of elements in the tea. This study provided a comprehensive database of 24 elements which were analyzed by inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS), the study report stated.

The study was published in the Biological Trace Element Research Journal.

The study revealed that human health risk for non-carcinogenic and carcinogenic metals was also assessed for the studied elements.

"Hazard quotients (HQs) and hazard index (HI) values (<1) for non-carcinogenic elements indicated no risk. The incremental lifetime cancer risk (ILCR) values for carcinogenic elements indicated no risk for As, Cd, and Pb and medium level risk for Ni," the study report clarified. Other scientists and experts highly appreciated the TRA scientists' study.

The TRA is an organisation which is funded by the tea industry and the Union Ministry of Commerce through the Tea Board of India.



Senior Scientist at the Tea Research Association (TRA) Dr Tanoy Bandyopadhyay said that most important tea gardens in the northeastern region maintain the harvesting interval after spraying the chemicals in their gardens.

"Most important tea gardens in the northeastern region also on regular basis test their samples either from the NABL accredited laboratories of TRA at Jorhat (Assam) or Kolkata and they properly follow the norms of spraying chemicals and harvesting interval," he said.

Bandyopadhyay, in-charge of the Tripura advisory centre of TRA, said that the tea gardens in the northeastern region do not use the banned chemicals and avoid the restricted chemicals, which are harmful for human consumption.

Big tea marketing companies in India also collect or buys or prefers tea from those tea

estates that follow the scientific norms and guidelines and these are also viable for the tea industry. "Use of chemicals is essential for the tea gardens. But these should be used keeping in mind the health of humans. Scientific studies also helped the tea estate management to cultivate and produce good tea and flourish their business," said Bandyopadhyay.

Assam, which produces roughly 55 per cent of India's tea, has more than 10 lakh tea workers in the organised sector, working in about 850 big estates. Besides, there are lakhs of small tea gardens owned by individuals.

The tea belts of the Brahmaputra and Barak valleys are home to more than 60 lakh people.

After Assam, Tripura is the second largest producer of tea in the northeastern region, producing around 10 million kg of tea annually on an area of 6,885 hectares.

The agro-climatic conditions in Tripura are suitable for the

development of tea plantations. Official documents said that the soil is generally fertile, without any major problems of toxicities or deficiencies.

The average annual rainfall is about 210 cm, with a fairly even distribution over the year. Tripura has a history of tea plantations dating back to 1916.

In fact, Tripura is categorized as a traditional tea-growing state with about 54 tea estates, 21 tea processing factories, and more than 2500 small tea growers, producing about 10 million kg of tea every year making Tripura the 5th largest, among the 16 tea producing states in India.

Experts said that there is considerable scope to increase the productivity and area under tea plantation.

international

Terrorist commander killed in military operation in Pakistan

Islamabad | Agencies

The Pakistani military has killed a terrorist commander during an operation in the country's northwest tribal district of North Waziristan, the military said in a statement.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistani military, said on Saturday evening that a fire exchange took place between terrorists and soldiers on Friday in the Shewa area of North Waziristan, a district in the country's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

"During an intense exchange of fire, a notorious terrorist commander named Muhammad Noor alias Sarakai was killed," said the ISPR, adding that weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorist.



The ISPR added that the terrorist had remained actively involved in high-profile terrorist activities against security forces as well as kidnapping for ransom, Xinhua news agency reported.

The terrorist was also highly wanted by the Counter Terrorism Department of the province's police for his involvement in multiple cases related to terrorism, according to the ISPR.

INDONESIA'S SEMERU VOLCANO ERUPTS, RESIDENTS EVACUATED

Jakarta: Semeru volcano on Indonesia's Java island erupted on Sunday, spewing a 1.5-km high ash column, authorities said.

As of Sunday afternoon, the country's Volcano Disaster Mitigation of the Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation has raised its volcanic alert level for Semeru volcano to level 4, the highest level of a four-tier volcanic alert system. The authorities said they had been evacuating residents of the two nearest villages, Supit Urang village and Sumber Wuluh village, and had warned other locals to stay away at least 13 kilometre from the eruption range, Xinhua news agency reported.

"We've also told all people living surrounding the volcano to not do any activities around Besuk Kobokan riverside as the river has a potential to flow hot clouds and lava," the spokesman of Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), Abdul Muhari, said in a written statement.

On December 4, 2021, the Semeru volcano also erupted, killing at least 51 people and injuring 169 others.

NEW ROUND OF PALESTINIAN RECONCILIATION TALKS SCHEDULED FOR DEC: HAMAS

Gaza | Agencies

A senior official of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has announced that a new round of Palestinian dialogue for inter-factional reconciliation would be held in Algeria at the end of December.

Khalil Al-Hayya, Deputy Chief of the Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip, on Saturday made the remarks during a conference among the Palestinian factions on ending their internal division, which was held simultaneously in Gaza and the West Bank city of Ramallah.

"Algeria will host a new session of the national dialogue for the Palestinian factions at the end of December to resume the Palestinian efforts for achieving reconciliation and end the internal division," he was quoted by a Hamas statement as saying.

Al-Hayya added that Hamas wants to restore national unity, not based on the needs of the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but rather on a programme and vision of resistance that stems from being a liberation movement that wants to end the division, Xinhua news agency reported.

"There is a need for a Palestinian vision capable of achieving the right of return and liberation of the occupied lands and how to



lead this activity," he said, adding that all factions are partners, and the homeland is not preserved by any party."

In mid-October, 14 Palestinian factions, including Hamas and Fatah, signed the Algeria Declaration of National Reconciliation after a two-day dialogue hosted by Algeria, agreeing to hold legislative and presidential elections within a year.

Algeria has been working for months to mediate the reconciliation deal.

BANGLADESH RECORDS HIGHEST MONTHLY EXPORTS OF OVER \$5 BN IN NOV

Dhaka: Bangladesh exported goods worth more than \$5 billion in November, the highest ever in a month, as demand for ready-made garment items continued to soar, according to the latest official data.



The Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) data showed Bangladesh exported goods worth \$5,092.56 million in November, which was 26.01 per cent higher than the same month a year ago, Xinhua news agency reported.

The EPB data showed that Bangladesh's total exports in the first five months of the current 2022-23 fiscal year (July 2022-June 2023) reached nearly \$21.95 billion, up 10.89 per cent year-on-year.

Of the total earnings, the EPB data showed the country's income from ready-made knitwear and woven garment items surged 15.61 per cent to \$18.33 billion during the cited period.

Bangladesh saw exports soar more than 34 per cent to \$52.08 billion in the 2021-22 fiscal year (July 2021-June 2022), official data showed.

Imran accuses Gen Bajwa of playing 'double game' against his govt

Islamabad | Agencies

Former Pakistan Prime Minister and PTI Chairman, Imran Khan, has accused ex-Pakistan Army Chief, General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa, of playing "double game" against his government, admitting that he committed a "big mistake" by extending the tenure of then military chief Bajwa in 2019, according to a media report.

In an interview with a local TV channel, the ex-premier regretted that he put his trust in the then army chief.

"I would believe in everything General Bajwa would tell me because our interests were the same... That we had to save the country," Khan said, Express Tribune reported. Kahn, who was ousted from



power via opposition's no-confidence motion in April this year, said he also received reports from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) on "what games

were being played against his government."

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief claimed that the then military establish-

ment was in contact with PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif to topple his government and the plot against his government became clear following the removal of Lieutenant General (ret'd) Faiz Hameed as ISI chief in October 2021, Express Tribune reported.

When asked about Moonis Elahi's recent claim that General Bajwa asked him to support the PTI, Khan said, "It is possible that he [Moonis] was asked to support Imran Khan while the other one [Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain] had been asked to go with PML-N."

"General Bajwa was playing a double game and I discovered later that even PTI's members were being given different messages," Khan said.

Innovation empowers more inclusive world for persons with disabilities: UN chief

United Nations | Agencies

Innovation and technology can be powerful tools for building an accessible and equitable world for all, including persons with disabilities, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. The world is confronting a cascade of crises that are disproportionately impacting persons with disabilities, Guterres added in a message to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which fell on Saturday.

Transformative solutions are needed to rescue the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, he said, underscoring the importance of the active participation of persons with disabilities in their full diversity, and their full inclusion in all decision-



making processes, Xinhua news agency reported.

Innovation and technology, he continued, can be powerful tools for inclusion, enhancing access to information, education, and lifelong learning, opening new avenues for persons with disabilities to participate in the workforce and society at large on an equal basis.

He also noted that to realise the promise of technology, efforts are required to close the digital divide and safeguard human rights in the digital space.



James McAvoy shared why lobbying process put him off Oscars

Los Angeles | Agencies

James McAvoy has opened up about his refusal to campaign to win an Oscar which led to him not scoring a nod for his work on 'Atonement' (2007), reports quoting from an interview the actor gave to a magazine. McAvoy said that he saw first-hand what it took for Forest Whitaker to land his leading actor Oscar for his work on 'The Last King of Scotland', a film both actors starred in. McAvoy was seemingly not overjoyed with the way actors have to cozy up to members of the Academy to get a nod or a vote to win, according to the source.

"With 'The Last King of Scotland' campaign, it was made clear to me that I was doing it for the benefit of other people. And I was totally down with that," McAvoy said. "But by the time 'Atonement' came along, I was 26 or 27, and I was just like, I can't do it, I'm not doing it, I don't wanna do it."

'Atonement' went on to receive seven nominations at the Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Supporting Actress for Saoirse Ronan. The film directed by Joe Wright took a trophy for Best Original Score, which went to Dario Marianelli.

"I didn't want to play that part. I'll push the film, I'll try and get bums on seats. But the campaign, I felt... I felt cheap," he added. McAvoy has a 27-year-long career and says that he now only looks for "interesting experiences." "I love doing it, but I don't love the daily grind of the film and telly business," he explained.

"Even if it's a good script, I certainly can't rationalise going to work at five or six in the morning and staying out till eight o'clock at night. If my character hasn't got an interesting part in telling that story it's quite soul destroying."

KEKE PALMER IS PREGNANT AND EXPECTING HER FIRST BABY WITH BOYFRIEND

Los Angeles | Agencies

Nope' actress Keke Palmer is saying yes to motherhood. The actress is pregnant and expecting her first baby with boyfriend Darius Jackson, she revealed while hosting Saturday Night Live this weekend for the first time.

"There's some rumours going around, people have been in my comments saying, 'Keke's having a baby, Keke's pregnant,' and I wanna set the record straight - I am!" Palmer exclaimed, ripping open a long grey jacket to reveal her growing baby bump on the Studio 8H stage, reports. "I gotta say, though, it is bad when people on the internet spread rumours about you y'all, but it's even worse when they're correct. I mean, like, I was trying so hard to keep it on the down low, cause I got a lot of stuff going on, you know?" she continued. "But honestly this has been the biggest blessing, and I am so excited. Guys, I'm going to be a

mom," she added. "Even though some people feel a little weird about me having a baby cause I was a child actor, I just wanna say, look, I'm 29, I'm grown, I have sex, I own a home, I stormed the Capitol on January 6, you know? Things adults do," Palmer said, according to the reports. The actress has kept details of her relationship with Jackson under wraps. When appearing on The Tamron Hall Show last November, reports, she opened up about becoming "Instagram official" with Jackson, though the photos with her boyfriend are no longer on her page.

"It became more difficult to hide," Palmer said of choosing to post photos with Jackson at the time. "We spend all this time together, and he really is my closest friend, so it just becomes a thing where I'm not gonna hide something that makes me happy."

She added: "It's not gonna be everything you see, my job is my job, but at the end of the day this is somebody that is important to me so why not."

Rihanna loved the cinematography: Will Smith

Los Angeles | Agencies

Will Smith, who slapped the comedian Chris Rock earlier this year at the 94th Academy Awards, has got a rave review for his latest film 'Emancipation' from none other than Rihanna.



Walking the red carpet for 'Emancipation' earlier this week, the actor, shared the music superstar's reaction to his film after she attended a private screening of it with some of his other star-studded group of friends in October, reports.

"Rihanna loved the cinematography," Smith told. "She could not get over the look of the film and how it felt."

Reports further states that the 'Aladdin' star then added that he also got a pretty good idea of what his friends who attended the screening -- including Dave Chappelle, Tyler Perry, ASAP Rocky and Kenya Barris -- also thought of the movie.

"The thing that's great with Black people is they talk to the screen the whole time, so you don't have to ask people's opinion," he joked to the outlet. "So, I didn't have to ask anybody's opinion from the room."

Smith shared photos of the screening on Instagram in late October, including a group shot of the A-listers after the movie. He captioned the photo, "EPIC night!! Thanx for coming to see #Emancipation. Hope ya'll enjoyed."

'SHANG-CHI' STAR SIMU LIU IS IN A NEW RELATIONSHIP

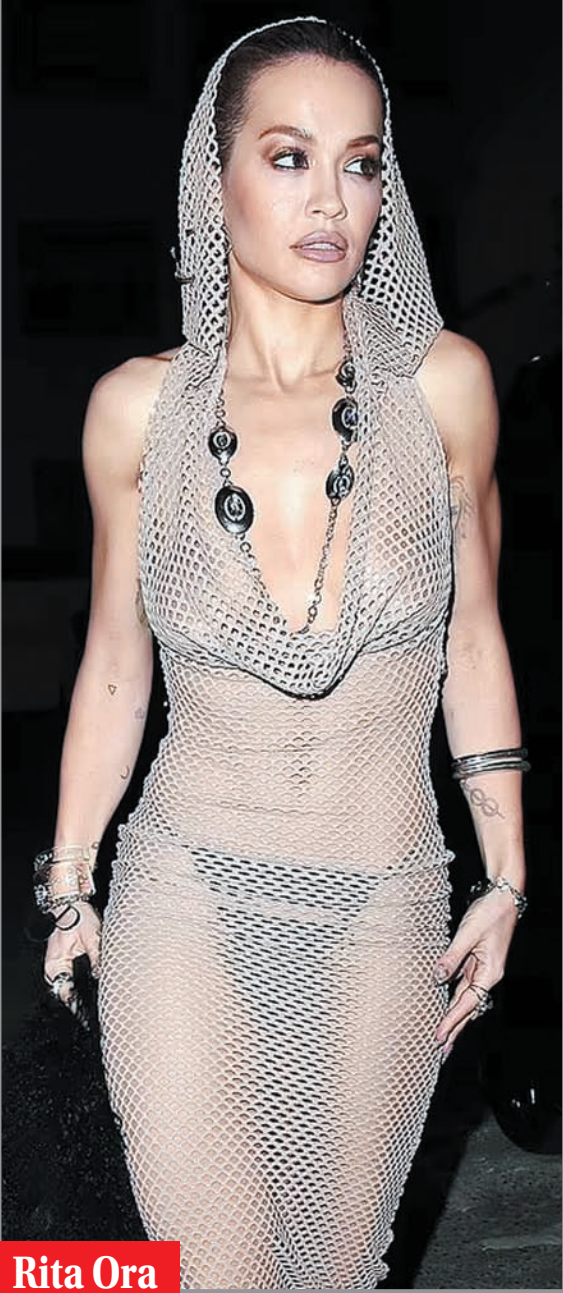
Los Angeles | Agencies

Simu Liu is in a new relationship and he has made it official on Instagram. The 'Shang-Chi' actor posted a picture of himself and girlfriend Allison Hsu posing together at the 'Violent Night' premiere in Los Angeles on social media. In the photo, Liu can be seen smiling with an arm around Hsu, while wearing a bright multicoloured Christmas sweater with martini glass and Yin-Yang motifs, reports. He completed the look with white jeans. Hsu, meanwhile, donned a green holiday sweater with a snowy landscape design, which she paired with a grey skirt and long black boots. The duo was photographed at the end of the large Santa Claus poster for the movie, which prompted Liu to joke in his caption, "pictured: two asians in front of santa's crotch." According to the reports, Hsu had already made her relationship with Liu Instagram official back in late

November, when she posted a cosy photo with him at a Blackpink concert. In the photo, which Hsu captioned with a smiley face, the couple cuddled close together, with Liu slinging an arm around her as they both grinned at the camera. The couple made their debut on the red carpet at the 2022 ESPY awards in July, after having been spotted together going on a dinner date and hanging out behind the scenes of a taping of 'Jimmy Kimmel Live' in June. At the ESPYS, the duo walked the red carpet together and posed for photos arm-in-arm.



ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Rita Ora

Harrison Ford and Helen Mirren reuniting again for a drama series



Los Angeles | Agencies

Harrison Ford and Helen Mirren are reuniting for the soon to release drama series '1923' after first appearing together on screen 36 years ago. '1923' is the prequel to 'Yellowstone' and sees the actors reunite decades after Peter Weir's 1986 film 'The Mosquito Coast'. As Ford, explained at the Hollywood Legion Theater Post 43 series premiere, his respect for Mirren, hasn't wavered since then, reports.

"I admire her work and her person (now), and I have all the same degree of admiration for her as I did then," Ford told.

"She's wonderful, she's just a lovely person, and so it's been both a professional pleasure and a personal pleasure working with her again," he added.

"When we first worked together, he was a huge movie star and I was like nobody," she explained. "I was very intimidated, very intim-

idated." She said: "But also I learned a lot from him because I hadn't done a lot. I'd done a lot of theatre at that point, I hadn't done a lot of movies. So I watched him, and he taught me a great deal about film acting that to this day (that) I'm still using."

Mirren seconded Ford's thoughts, specifically commending series creator Taylor Sheridan on his writing and calling his work "extraordinary".

"To be a part of something that is so exciting within the American sort of entertainment world, but also to be a part of something that is investigating American history in this particular way (is great)," Mirren said.

She added: "You can't do it in two hours, you know, it's great to have that great sprawl, and I just thought earlier on, it's like a big Russian novel. It's like War and Peace, you know, that real sense of an enormous arc of history. And to be a character within that, it's very exciting."



5 actresses shied away from doing 'Chhaiyya Chaiyya' before Malaika

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Over the years, 'Chhaiyya Chhaiyya' has become an iconic song given the heavy-weights involved in it - the three aces Mani Ratnam, Gulzar and cinematographer Santosh Sivan, besides Shah Rukh Khan, Farah Khan and of course Malaika Arora.

And who can forget Malaika grooving to the beats of the A.R. Rahman-composed song from 'Dil Se', which had the rhythm of a moving train? But, interestingly, Malaika wasn't the first choice for the part. Five actresses had refused to perform to the song.

The anecdote was shared by choreographer-director Farah Khan as she said that all the five actresses - Shilpa Shetty, Shilpa Shirodkar and "two or three other people" said no to dance to the song.

During the conversation, talking about the song, Farah says, "You're the 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' girl. But luckily for you some five heroines had refused to climb on the train."

'Chhaiyya Chhaiyya' was shot on top of a moving train. All the actresses had their own reason for not giving their nods to the song. Farah adds, "Malaika was nowhere on the radar. We had approached Shilpa Shetty Kundra, Shilpa Shirodkar and two or three other people. One feared the prospect of climbing on top of the train, one was not available. Then the makeup person said, 'Malaika is a very good dancer'. When she climbed on top of the train, we were completely curious whether she would pull it off or not. The rest as we know is history."



KAJOL SHARED HOW HER DAUGHTER GAVE UP ON HER CAPTIONING SKILLS ON INSTAGRAM

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood actress Kajol has revealed how her daughter Nysa Devgn gave up on her captioning skills on Instagram. "When I made my debut on social media, everything was under the surveillance of my daughter Nysa. She made it a point to decide my pictures and captions. This drill went on for one or two months and after that, she gave up on me saying that she couldn't manage me anymore," the actress said. Kajol is currently busy promoting her upcoming film 'Salaam Venky'. The actress said her daughter had a lot of problems with her captioning skills for which she stopped handling her social media account. "She has a lot of problems with the captions I put, and she would complain saying that only I can understand my captions. Though I told her that if she does not want, I would not put such captions, but she said she doesn't want to do it. So unfortunately, I am only doing the captioning now," Kajol shared.

I DON'T SAY NO TO 'BOLD' SCENES IF SCRIPT DEMANDS IT: EISHA SINGH

Team Absolute | New Delhi

TV actress Eisha Singh, who is known for her roles in shows such as 'Sirf Tum', 'Ishq Ka Rang Safed' and 'Ishq Subhan Allah', shares her views on doing bold content in web shows or films.

She says: "If the script demands it, then I will surely look forward to doing it, but only if I am comfortable doing that particular scene. I also don't have any barriers to saying no to the bold scenes. Rather than thinking about bold scenes in a negative way, I take it up in a positive manner where it's just a part of the script and nothing more." She adds: "I have not noticed any such web show that is trying to grab the audience's attention just on the basis of its bold scenes and not with the content." Eisha says: "I would love to do something that I have not done before because now I want to explore my acting skills and look forward to doing some challenging roles. Most preferably, I would like to do a web show in the thriller genre because I want to do something that will push me out of my comfort zone in terms of acting."



I LIKE DOING SOCIAL FILMS WHICH CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE: AKSHAY

Team Absolute | Jeddah

Akshay Kumar brought more Bollywood star power to the Red Sea International Film Festival and the in-demand actor and producer sat down where he revealed his long-awaited series with Amazon will commence shooting next year. Kumar kept details of the project under wraps but told that the script was finished and the title (formally announced as 'The End') would change, with plans to begin shooting sometime next year.

The project marks Kumar's first foray into the streaming series arena and, he said, "it's more on the science fiction" side of things with "a lot of action in it, I can say that."

Kumar also revealed that he's working on a film about sex education, a topic he feels is important to talk about. "I like doing social films which can make a difference, especially in my country and in anybody's life," he said.

"I just pick up those topics and I make a film, but I make it in a very commercial way where obviously there are songs, there's comedy, there's drama, there's tragedy. So, I take real stories and adapt it and cover it up with all the commercial things," Akshay added.

"It's our fault," he added. "We need to know what they want and stop blaming (the audience) for everything because a lot of people have blamed the (audiences) and are saying they don't want to come out, but I think it's our turn to please them and bring them out."

My journey is beautiful rather than struggling: Manish Gulati

Shachi Chaturvedi | Mumbai

Manish Gulati is all set to make his Bollywood debut with his coming OTT series CAT. To know about his experience, future plans and much more, Absolute India News caught up with the actor for an exclusive interview.

ON HIS JOURNEY

The actor calls his journey a beautiful one rather than struggling. Manish while talking about his journey shared, "There have been a lot of ups and a lot of downs also. There has been a time when I had no money to buy my basics and had no work; still, the journey has been beautiful because of the people I have around me. The people around me have been very supportive of me. The strength my friends & my family has given me is the only reason I am able to achieve what I have. I will call my journey beautiful."

ON THE EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH RANDEEP HOODA

Manish while talking about his experience applaud Randeep for being the man that he is and said, "The entire experience of the shoot was crazy. It was a beautiful ride and I enjoyed it a lot, especially with Randeep Bhai. The way Randeep bhai motivated me was just amazing. He came to me and whispered 'You are Monty

Singh, Punjab da King, go with that attitude and go for it.' He is a great human being and a kick-ass actor."

ON SAYING YES TO THE PART

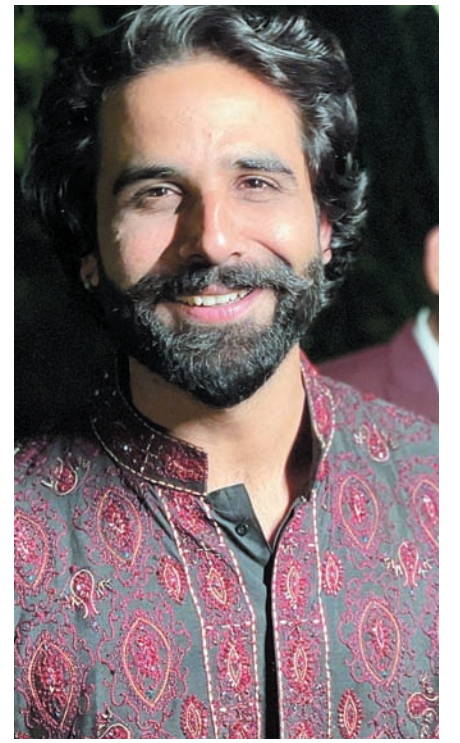
Manish explains why he said yes to this series and decided to make his Bollywood debut with this series, "More than the character, I said yes to the series, the vision of Gimi Singh and Bali. I feel blessed to get my first character as Bunty Singh"

ON BOLLYWOOD'S GRAPH THIS YEAR

Manish shares that according to him this year has been very bad for Bollywood, "I think it was a shit year for Bollywood. It is not Bollywood, we have created some amazing movies in past. Now south is taking over, it is good for Indian cinema as a whole but because we belong to Bollywood I wish we make some good movies" the actor said.

FUTURE PLANS

The actor concluded the discussion by sharing his future plans, "My future plans are to act, act and act. I want to do a lot of work I genuinely need a workcation, where I am travelling to a different place, doing different projects with different people. I have a list of directors I wish to work with starting with Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Rohit Shetty, Vishal Bhardwaj, Rajkumar Hirani, and Anvita Dee."



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



BEING PART OF THE HINDI REMAKE IS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR ME: ADNAN KHAN

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor Adnan Khan will be seen playing the male lead in the upcoming show 'Kathaa Ankahee'. He says the story line and entire plot was so fresh and unique that he didn't take a minute in saying 'yes' to the show.

'Kathaa Ankahee' is a Hindi remake of the Turkish drama 'Binbir Gece' ('1001 Nights' in English) inspired by 'Arabian Nights'. The original series started airing in 2006 and wrapped up in 2009. He says: "When the makers approached me with the story, I was amazed by the storyline and character; and said yes in an instant. While I had heard about '1001 Nights' and how popular it is across the globe, after hearing the script I truly understood why this story was appreciated. Hence, being a part of the Hindi remake is no less than a golden opportunity for me as an artist."



Huma Qureshi