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Residents of Uttarakhand's Joshimath camp out on cold nights in fear of collapse

SINKING TOWN

The town, over 6,000 feet high, is considered a gateway for several climbing expeditions in the Himalayas. These include the trek to the pilgrimage centres of Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib, and to the Valley of Flowers. Over 500 houses are staring at a collapse in this holy town - entry point for major Hindu and Sikh pilgrimages - which is also one of the major military bases near India's border with China.

- ▶ Cracks have appeared in 561 houses, hotels and shops of the city, which is said to have been established by Shakaracharya centuries ago, due to frequent landslides.
- ▶ The NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugarh hydropower project and the Marwadi-Helang bypass motor road have been shut with immediate effect, till further orders by the administration.
- ▶ Along with this, the Joshimath-Auli ropeway has been closed citing security reasons.
- ▶ A ban has also been imposed on the construction work being carried out in the city areas.



Seventy seven families have left their homes and shifted to safer places. The district administration has issued orders to the NTPC and HCC companies to prepare 2,000 pre-fabricated houses each, in advance, as a precautionary measure to shift the affected families.

Arrangements have been made by the administration for them to stay at municipality, block, BKTC guest house, GIC, Gurudwara, Inter College, ITI Tapovan and other safe places. The buildings which are in danger due to increasing landslides are being identified to prevent loss of life. Nodal officers have been given the responsibility of arranging water, electricity, food, toilets and other basic facilities in the relief camps.

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and the NDRF have been alerted to deal with the landslides.

On Thursday, Joshimath villagers blocked the Badrinath national highway amid a new panic as water began to leak from the "Joshimath rock." The residents were already battling menacing cracks and crevices that started to form in their homes, on the roadways, and in their fields.

On Thursday (5 January), the terrified villagers, who have been pleading with the authorities to halt all construction activities in their "sinking" town, gathered on the streets holding torches. The town is "placed on an old landslide," making it vulnerable, and there is concern that the hillside on which it is built would collapse.

The Uttarakhand government assembled a team of scientists on Thursday to determine the cause of the sinking of the land and the cracks in the buildings in an attempt to reassure the locals. The crew will visit the location and look into the cause.

The devastating landslide in Chamoli, which caused many landslides, made the first mention of the cracks in homes in the national media in 2021. More than 3,000 people are affected, the municipality chief has said. That's over 10 per cent of the population in the Himalayan town. Around 40 families have already moved out as soil subsidence gets worse by the day in a region that's among the most susceptible to earthquakes. Climate change and constant infrastructure development are to blame, say locals. "Tunnels being dug for hydel power plants have led to this," alleged a local hotelier, "And they continue to blast through rocks to widen roads, build bypasses, even very close to our town."

Meanwhile, a team of experts, including officials from the administration and the State Disaster Management Department, conducted a door-to-door survey.

An inspection team in Joshimath that is to give a report to the chief minister.

TEMPLE COLLAPSED

Joshimath: A temple collapsed in Singdhar ward of the Himalayan town of Joshimath on Friday evening, further alarming residents living under constant fear of a major disaster in the offing, officials said. According to local residents, there was no one inside the temple when the incident occurred as it had been abandoned after it developed huge cracks over the past 15 days. Huge cracks have appeared in many houses and nearly 50 families have been moved to safer locations.

CM CALLS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama called a high-level meeting to assess the situation. Singh will be leaving for the city soon. The team included Disaster Management Secretary Ranjit Kumar Sinha and Garhwal Commissioner Sushil Kumar, among others. Kumar has authorised all the technical personnel of the Project Implementation Unit division, Public Works Department, working in the Badrinath Master Plan till further orders, for immediate assessment of the buildings, hotels and other structures in the affected areas. Along with this, in view of the increasing problem, instructions have been given to deploy National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel in the city.

Kanjhawala Shocker

Another CCTV surfaces, shows accused meeting owner of car at 4.07 am

Team Absolute | New Delhi

One more new CCTV footage has emerged in connection with the brutal death of 20-year-old Anjali, showing one of the accused meeting Ashutosh, who is the owner of the car, near his house in the early hours of January 1.

In the CCTV footage accessed by IANS, at around 4.07 a.m., one man, who is one of the accused, can be seen reaching the house of Ashutosh to wake him up.

It may be noted that the first police control room (PCR) call regarding the dead body of Anjali, lying on the road was received at around 4.11 a.m. Around 4.16 a.m., Ashutosh can be seen wearing a white T-shirt and both the men can be seen talking.

As per CCTV footage, after the talks, Ashutosh again goes to the house and then comes again wearing a grey colour jacket at around 4.40 a.m. Both men then can be seen going together. Around 4.52 a.m., Ashutosh parks his car and returns to his home. Police have arrested six

accused, Ashutosh, Deepak Khanna, Amit Khanna, Krishan, Mitthun and Manoj Mittal. Meanwhile, the sources also claimed that Deepak Khanna, one of the accused, was in fact at home all day and was asked by the other accused to take the blame since he was the only person with a driving licence.

Seventh accused surrenders before police

New Delhi: Ankush Khanna, the seventh accused in the death case of Anjali, the 20-year-old woman who met a painful end after being dragged by a car in the Kanjhawala area for about 12 km in the early hours of January 1, surrendered before the police on Friday evening.

On Thursday night, the police had arrested Ashutosh, the sixth accused in the case, who has been sent to police custody. Five other accused persons are already in police custody.

Air India 'pee-gate'

Wells Fargo terminates accused Shankar Mishra

New Delhi: Shankar Mishra, the man accused of urinating on an elderly female co-passenger onboard a New York-New Delhi flight in November last year, has been sacked by his employer Wells Fargo, an American multinational financial services company with corporate headquarters in San Francisco. Mishra worked as the Vice President of the India chapter of the US-based firm. Meanwhile, two teams of Delhi Police are on the lookout for Mishra, who is continuously changing his location to evade arrest. Delhi Police police teams have carried out raids in Mumbai and Bengaluru, where they questioned various persons, including the relatives of the accused.



Money laundering case

Jacqueline Fernandes appears before Delhi's Patiala House Court

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez today arrived at Patiala House Court in New Delhi in connection to the money laundering case.

Jacqueline Fernandez is one of the accused in the Rupees 200 Crore money laundering case involving Suresh Chandrasekhar and others.

Fernandez is being investigated by the ED in Rs 200 crore extortion case involving alleged conman Suresh Chandrasekhar. She had earlier appeared before the probe agency for questioning in a money-laundering investigation against Suresh Chandrasekhar and others. Earlier the same Court allowed the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to take possession of 26 cars recovered from the accused Leena Maria Paul, wife of Conman Suresh, during the investigation of a Rs 200 crore money laundering case.



Additional Sessions Judge Shailendra Malik of Patiala House Court allowed the application of the ED to take into possession the 26 cars attached from accused Leena Maria Paul's farmhouse in Chennai. The ED has alleged in the plea that these cars were purchased with the proceeds of crime in the matter and were then attached during the case investigation.

RAJASTHAN: BIKANER, SIKAR SHIVER AT 0 DEGREE C

Jaipur: Cold wave in Rajasthan continued pushing people indoors on the third day on Friday as cities like Bikaner and Sikar recorded temperatures of 0 degree Celsius. Met department said that the state will get relief from the ongoing cold wave and fog from January 8 onwards.

Apart from this, Churu recorded a minimum temperature of 1.0, Fatehpur was at 0.7, Anta, Bara recorded 1.1 degree Celsius temperature, Nagaur was 1.7, Banasthali was at 1.6 degree Celsius.

Jaipur, Pilani and Kota recorded a minimum temperature of 3.6 degree Celsius, Ganganagar recorded 4.7, Udaipur 5.8, Jodhpur 6.5, Jaisalmer 6.2, Ajmer 4.4 and Barmer witnessed 7.2 degrees Celsius.

People in Churu, however, got some respite from the cold on Friday as mercury went up after three days from minus to plus degree. The minimum temperature recorded here on Friday was 1 degree Celsius.

Delhi Mayor election postponed due to AAP-BJP clash

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Ahead of the mayoral elections on Friday, huge ruckus was created at the Civic Centre as the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members clashed over the L-G nominated councillors.

As the proceedings in the House began, AAP's leader of the House, Mukesh Goyal raised the issue of oath-taking of the nominated corporators. Goyal said that in the last 25 years, it has never happened that nominated councillors were taking oath before the elected members.

The BJP and AAP councillors clashed with each other and raised slogans.

After the proceedings of the



House started, BJP councillor Satya Sharma was administered the oath as the presiding officer. New Delhi District Magistrate Santosh Kumar Rai administered the oath to Sharma. The AAP has fielded former Delhi University teacher Shelly Oberoi as the mayoral candidate

and Aale Mohammad Iqbal as its deputy mayor candidate, while BJP has nominated Rekha Gupta for the mayor's post and Kamal Bagri for the deputy post. The AAP has been crying foul over Lt. Governor V.K. Saxena's decision to nominate 10 BJP members as aldermen.

Woman dragged, beaten in temple in K'taka; video goes viral

Bengaluru | Agencies

A video of a woman being kicked, dragged and beaten with sticks in a temple in Bengaluru has went viral on social media.

The victim Hemavathi had lodged a complaint with Amruthahalli police station stating that the said incident occurred on December 21 and the accused is Munikrishna, 'dharamdarshi' of the Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Amruthahalli locality, police said on Friday.

The video shows the woman being repeatedly slapped, held by hair and dragged outside. The accused can be seen beating her with stick even as she runs for cover. A case under Section 354 of the IPC has been registered against Munikrishna. However, Munikrishna told police that the woman claimed that Lord Venkateshwara was her hus-



band and wanted to sit next to the idol in the sanctum sanctorum. When her demand was rejected, she spit on the priest after which she was asked to leave. As the woman did not listen, she was beaten and dragged out, he told police.

4 minors clobber 18-yr-old boy to death in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

In a shocking incident, four minor boys, all aged 17, have been detained for allegedly clobbering an 18-year-old boy to death at the Mankhurd suburb of Mumbai, officials said here on Friday.

The chilling murder took place sometime on Thursday and the body of the victim, who has been identified as Tayyab Khan, was recovered from an abandoned public toilet in a desolate area.

Swinging into action, the police teams managed to trace the alleged under-age culprits and have detained them for the crime, senior police inspector Mahadev P. Koli told reporter.

He said that the four accused minors are residents of Maharashtra Nagar in



Mankhurd. The victim was also from the same neighbourhood. As per initial probe, the police have found that the five boys were regularly involved in local street-side brawls and fights, which were not very serious.

"This could have been just another such quarrel, but this

time the minor boys were carrying weapons. We have detained the four boys, and further probe is underway," said Koli.

The autopsy report of Khan revealed that he was brutally assaulted by the accused minors, who pounded him at least 14 times with

machetes and sticks.

They left him in an unused public toilet before decamping from the spot.

The victim sustained severe injuries in the head, neck and arms, as per the post-mortem. The exact motive behind the murder is being ascertained.

Rahul slams Centre on Agniveer scheme, says Haryana now champion in unemployment



Panipat | Agencies

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday lashed out at the Central government over the Agniveer Scheme and said Haryana has become a "champion in unemployment with no jobs for youth". Addressing a rally in Haryana's Panipat during his Bharat Jodo Yatra, he said that earlier a soldier used to serve the country for 15 years and proper training was imparted and retirement benefits were given but now

after 5 years he will be unemployed. He said Panipat was once a hub of medium manufacturers, but now the situation has changed. "Due to demonetisation, GST, which were not policies, but weapons to destroy small and medium enterprises," said Gandhi. The Congress leader alleged that the country's wealth was held by 200 to 300 people. The Bharat Jodo Yatra is in Haryana currently and will move to Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and end in Jammu and Kashmir.

EMBARRASSMENT FOR TRINAMOOL AS MLA DESCRIBES PARTY AS 'COMPANY', MAMATA AS 'BRAND'

Kolkata | Agencies

Trinamool Congress MLA from Howrah (North) constituency, Gautam Chowdhury, has left the party embarrassed by described Trinamool as a "company" and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as the "brand" of that company. Chowdhury's remarks virtually echoed what leader of opposition Suwendu Adhikari had said at a public rally on Thursday. "Trinamool Congress is a private limited company, whose owner is the Chief Minister and the Managing Director is her nephew (Abhishek Banerjee)," Adhikari had said on Thursday. On Friday, while speaking to medi-



Banerjee is everything in the party," Chowdhury said. After his remarks, Trinamool lead-



ers immediately jumped in for damage control. "Such comments are confusing

and unwarranted. I do not know what he actually meant. But the choice of words had been improper. Trinamool Congress is an established political party and we all are loyal party workers. It is true that Mamata Banerjee is the face of the party, and the rest follows her," said Trinamool spokesman Kunal Ghosh. The party's Howrah district president, Kalyan Ghosh, claimed Chowdhury has said that he made the comments by mistake and he has been cautioned by the party to be careful with his words in the future. Meanwhile, ridiculing Trinamool in the matter, state BJP President Sukanta Majumdar said that Chowdhury has accepted the fact that Trinamool Congress is a company and its leaders are mere employees. "Time is ripe for all the employees of 'AITC Private Limited' to accept this bitter fact and live with the same. Truth has only one version. Deal with it," Majumdar tweeted.

BJP plans six Ratha Yatras in Bengal ahead of panchayat polls

Kolkata | Agencies

West Bengal BJP is planning to organise six separate 'Rath Yatras' in the state this year keeping in mind the elections for the three-tier panchayat system as well as the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Although, top state BJP leaders are unwilling to divulge the details of the plan, sources from the state committee of the party said that this six different 'Rath Yatras' are aimed at covering the entire state starting from the hills in North Bengal to the mangrove forests of Sunderbans in South Bengal. Sources said that the six yatras will be 'Darjeeling Rath' covering north Bengal districts of Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts, 'Gaurbang Rath' covering parts of Malda, South Dinajpur and North Dinajpur districts, 'Nabadwip Rath' covering parts of Murshidabad, Nadia and North 24 Parganas districts, 'Rarbang Rath' covering Birbhum, Bankura, Purulia, West Midnapore and Hooghly district, 'Sunderbans Rath' covering South 24 Parganas district and finally 'Kolkata Rath' covering the entire state capital.



State BJP sources said already they have received the green signals from the party's state leadership that top leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the party's national president J.P. Nadda will be visiting the states in the next few months. "Attempts are on to bring Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to the state. So we want to convert those occasions into mega events through these Rath Yatras," said a state BJP leader who did not wish to be named.

Bomb scare at NAFL school in B'luru triggers panic

Bengaluru | Agencies

Panic triggered among students and teaching staff of National Academy for Learning (NAFL) school in Basaveshwara Nagar locality of Bengaluru after the educational institution received a bomb threat on Friday. According to police, the bomb threat was sent to official e-mail ID of the school claiming that four gelatin sticks have been kept on the premises, which may explode anytime soon. On noticing the threat mail, the school staff immediately informed police and shifted over 1,000 school children to a safe place. Hundreds of parents rushed to the school and demanded that they should



be allowed to enter the school premises to see their children. Later, the children were sent with them. DCP (West) Lakshman Nimbaragi said: "We have ensured students are taken to

a safe place, bomb disposal and dog squad have reached the spot. A case will be registered and investigation is being done." Search is on to find the said gelatin sticks, the police said.

INDIA TO HOST VOICE OF GLOBAL SOUTH SUMMIT ON JAN 12-13

New Delhi: India will be hosting the 'Voice of Global South Summit' on January 12 and 13, where around 120 countries would participate. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said in a special briefing on Friday that it would be a virtual summit and the theme would be 'Unity of Voice and Unity of purpose'. He further informed that two lead sessions would be hosted by the Prime Minister. The conference, Kwatra said, envisions bringing together nations of the global south and to provide them a platform for sharing their views. The conference is inspired by India's philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', Kwatra said.

Katihar gang war GUJARAT, BIHAR POLICE ARREST 4 ACCUSED FOR MURDERING 5

Surat | Agencies

A day after Gujarat Police and Bihar Police Special Task Force in a joint operation arrested four persons from Surat in Gujarat in connection with the Katihar gang war case, police has taken all four accused to Bihar on transit remand from Surat court. Surat Crime Branch Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) B.P. Rojia on Friday informed the media that on December 8, a gang war had broken out between the Mohana Thakur and Piku Yadav gangs in which the latter and his four associates were killed by the former. The conflict had broken out over the control of fertile land along the Ganga river in Chandpur village that falls under Barari police station in Bihar's Bhagalpur district.

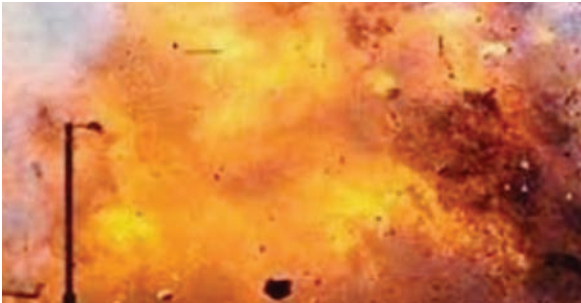


Both gangs exchanged fire for nearly three hours, and after killing Piku Yadav and his four associates, Mohana Takur gang threw their bodies in Ganga, the police offi-

cer said. The ACP added that the Gujarat crime branch and Bihar Police STF teamed up in a joint operation and have arrested Sumarkuvar

Bhumihar, Dhiraj Singh, Aman Tiwari and Abhishek Rai from Godadara area on Thursday. All four accused are natives of Bhagalpur district.

Lucknow: 10 injured as gas pipeline explodes in hotel



Lucknow | Agencies

Ten people have been seriously injured in a gas pipe line explosion at a hotel in Lucknow. The injured have been admitted to a nearby hospital. Sources said that the explosion in Hotel Emperio

Grand in the Krishna Nagar area was so strong that shards of glass were seen strewn on the road. Fire tenders were rushed to douse the flames. Officials said that the cause of fire would be investigated.

Jilted lover molests woman, throws toilet cleaner on her

Agra | Agencies

A jilted lover allegedly assaulted and molested a woman, 24, and threw toilet cleaner on her while she was going to work on her scooter in Agra. The police, on Thursday, registered an FIR against the man who is now absconding. According to the FIR, the accused, Saurabh Sharma, used to talk to the victim over the phone. He came in contact with her when they were appearing for their B.Com final year examination in 2018. Later, the victim stopped talking to the accused follow-



ing his sexual advances. The accused used to stalk the victim and had been threatening to kill her since past few days. Sharma attacked the woman while she was on her

way to work. He pushed the victim off her vehicle and molested her. He, then took out a bottle of toilet cleaner from his scooter and threw it on the victim.

Tension erupts along Assam-Meghalaya border village

Guwahati | Agencies

Tension erupted in Bhalukmari village under the Boko revenue circle over Assam-Meghalaya border demarcation, officials said on Friday. A senior police official informed that a few persons from Meghalaya organised a meeting on Thursday at a private school premises in Bhalukmari village, where a scuffle broke out between people of Assam and Meghalaya. The village headman, Sanjit Rabha, said, "A gathering had been planned by a few Meghalayan leaders at a private school in our village. When we learned about the meeting, a few of us, including the village president, asked them to end it and

issued a warning not to hold any Meghalaya-related meetings in Assam's territory." Locals allege that the people of Meghalaya have tried to establish that the school falls within the boundary of Meghalaya. The village headman further said, "Knowing their motive, we went there and tried to stop them from holding any meeting here on our land, and they launched an attack on us." Following the incident, a team of Assam Police and district administration rushed to the village and tried to pacify both groups. "The situation is under control now. We discussed with both groups, and the area is peaceful," said Boko Revenue Circle Officer Dibash Bordoloi.

COCAINE, HEROIN WORTH OVER RS 32 CR SEIZED AT MUMBAI AIRPORT



New Delhi: Customs authorities at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport have seized cocaine and heroin amounting to more than Rs 32 crore in two separate cases, an official said on Friday. The Customs official said the 4.47 kg heroin worth Rs 31.29 crore in the covers of a document folder, while 1.596 kg of cocaine valued at Rs 15.96 crore was hidden in the buttons of clothes. "We launched a drive against drugs smuggling and busted this racket," said the official. The accused were found violating provisions of Section 8 of the NDPS Act, and had committed an offence punishable under Section 21, Section 23 and Section 29 of NDPS Act. Accordingly, they were placed under arrest, the official said, adding that the narcotic substances were seized along with concealing material under Section 43(a) of the NDPS Act. Further probe is underway.

Cold wave shock 25 die due to heart attack, brain stroke in a day in Kanpur, Delhi shivers

Kanpur | Agencies

The cold wave in Uttar Pradesh is turning deadlier by the day. In Kanpur, on Thursday, 25 persons died due to heart attack and brain stroke. Seventeen of these died even before they could be given any medical aid. According to doctors, the sudden increase in blood pressure in the cold and blood clotting is causing heart attack and brain attack. According to the control room of the Cardiology Institute, 723 heart patients came to the emergency and OPD on Thursday. Of these, 41 patients who were in critical condition, were admitted. Seven heart patients undergoing treatment at the hospital in critical condition died due to cold. Apart from this, 15 patients were brought to emergency in a brought dead condition. Professor Vinay Krishna, director of cardiology, said that patients should be protected from cold in this weather. A faculty member in the King George's Medical University



(KGMU) in Lucknow said, "Heart attacks in this cold weather are not restricted only to the elderly. We have cases when even teenagers have suffered heart attacks. Everyone, irrespective of age, should keep warm and stay indoors as much as possible." Meanwhile, Residents of Delhi woke up to cold morning on Friday with the minimum temperature recorded at 4 degrees Celsius, while the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned that cold wave conditions are likely to remain for another 24 hours in

the national capital as well as in Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh. While the Safdarjung Observatory recorded the minimum temperature of 4 degrees, it was recorded much lower in the other stations, with Ayanagar registering 1.8 degrees, Ridge 3.3 degrees and Lodhi Road 3.8 degrees. A day earlier, Delhi recorded the season's lowest minimum temperature at 2.2 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, the maximum temperature in the national capital on Friday is likely to hover around 17 degrees.

17 J&K leaders desert Azad, rejoin Congress

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After a brief association with Ghulam Nabi Azad's DPA, 17 leaders, including former Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand resigned from the party and returned to the Congress on Friday. After rejoining the Congress, Tara Chand said, "I had an emotional relationship with Ghulam Nabi Azad and decided to quit the party to go with him, and now when emotions are down I decided to come back to our party which has given so much to us." When asked about Azad, Tara Chand said that "only he can tell why he had left the party". Chand along with Peerzada Mohd. Sayeed, former PCC President; Thakur Balwan Singh (former MLA & ex-General Secretary DAP); Mohd. Muzaffar Parry, former MLC and Senior Advocate Supreme Court; Mohinder Bhardwaj (Sr Advocate J&K & Ladakh High Court, three-time President BAR Association Jammu, former member Working Committee, DPA) and other leaders rejoined the Congress. All these leaders had joined the Democratic Azad Party (DPA) of Ghulam Nabi Azad when he had launched it. Announcing the induction K.C. Venugopal said, "The leaders are back because of Bharat Jodo Yatra and now will walk with Rahul Gandhi to fight the divisive forces."



On December 30, the former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad rejected the reports about his rejoining the Congress as "completely baseless" and alleged this was to demoralise his party workers. Expressing "shock" at the reports in a section of media in this regard, Azad, in a tweet, said: "... Unfortunately such stories are being planted by a section of leaders in the congress party right now and are doing this just to demoralise my leaders and supporters. "I don't have any ill will against congress party and its leadership, however I request them to tell these habitual story planters to refrain from doing so."



SHIV SENA (UBT) SHAKES AS 90 ACTIVISTS JOIN CM EKNATH SHINDE'S BSS

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Shiv Sena (UBT) suffered a setback as nearly 90 dozen leaders and workers defected to the Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena (BSS) led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, here on Friday. The activists, ranging from block to district-level leaders, numbered around 60 from Nashik and 30 from Parbhani, comprising local Shiv Sena (UBT), Nationalist Congress Party, Congress and others, who switched loyalties to the BSS. Welcoming them to the party fold this afternoon, Shinde said that in the coming days, many more would join the BSS which is functioning on the ideals of the late Balasaheb Thackeray and Anand Dighe. "The BSS-BJP government has been working very well in the past six months, that's why so many people are attracted to the party and in the coming



days many more will support us as we take everybody together," said Shinde. He said, "We are working very fast and quietly, while some people who do nothing make tall

claims of their contributions and this is the reason why the people of the state are backing the government." Reacting, Shiv Sena (UBT) Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut tried to downplay the developments saying those who are leaving are insignificant and the party remained robust in both Nashik and Parbhani. Sena (UBT) Deputy Chairperson in the Maharashtra Legislative Council Dr. Neelam Gorhe said that if workers and leaders were quitting the party like this, then the party leadership should take serious note of the developments. The unexpected embarrassment came for former CM Uddhav Thackeray barely days ahead of his planned public rally in Nashik, later this month or early next month, for which Raut is currently making the preparations.

Mentally unstable patient attacks 2 doctors in Maha hospital, nabbed



Team Absolute | Yavatmal

Two resident doctors at the Vasantrao Naik Government Medical College and Hospital here were stabbed with a knife by a mentally unstable patient, sparking off an agitation among the medicos, officials said on Friday. The incident happened late Thursday evening when one of the first-year general surgery doctors was on the rounds of the ward, Yavatmal Superintendent of Police Dr. Pawan Bansod told mediapersons. Suddenly, a patient lunged forward and stabbed him in the neck and back with a fruit knife, injuring him seriously. Seeing this, another medico who was checking patients nearby rushed to his help, and the attacking patient stabbed him also, leaving him hurt badly and bleeding on the floor. Both the young medicos are now under treatment while the doctors at the hospital have gone on a strike. Amid an uproar, the local police rushed to the ward and caught

the patient, identified as one Suraj Thakur, and later placed him under arrest. The police said the accused had attempted to commit suicide by stabbing himself with a knife on Tuesday and was admitted to the hospital for treatment. Taking strong note, Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD) President Dr. A. Dahpule, expressed support to the injured surgeons and strongly condemned the incident. He pointed out that this is the second incident of violence against the medical fraternity and called upon all doctors to raise their voice and register their protests, and called upon the Maharashtra government to arrange proper security for medicos vulnerable to such attacks. Late on Thursday, the doctors and staff at the hospital staged a vociferous demonstration outside the hospital and raised slogans against the hospital administration and the government.

CM Shinde appoints 6-member team for organisational work ahead of civic body polls

Mumbai: The Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has appointed a six-member team that will be responsible for organisational work in Mumbai, ahead of the crucial civic body polls. The team comprises MPs Rahul Shewale and Gajanan Kirtikar, Mumbai city guardian minister Deepak Kesarkar, deputy leaders Sheetal Mhatre and

Asha Mamidi and Shewale's wife and former corporator Kamini Shewale. The team was constituted on Wednesday, party secretary Sanjay More said. The Shinde-led faction of the Shiv Sena is yet to strengthen its position, especially in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) which the undivided Sena controlled for two and a half decades. A majority of Shiv Sena 'shakhas' (branches) in the city and the party mouthpiece 'Saamana' are still with

the Uddhav Thackeray camp. Six of the 40 MLAs in the Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena are from Mumbai - Prakash Surve, Mahesh Lande, Dilip Lande, Sada Sarvankar, Yamini Jadhav and Mangesh Kudalkar. Two of the three Sena MPs from Mumbai, Shewale and Kirtikar, are with Shinde. The BMC is likely to go to polls early this year.

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Amruta Fadnavis on Devendra Fadnavis's reaction to her new song: He was a bit scared of trolling

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Indu Sarkar fame Amruta Fadnavis is all set to launch her new track titled Mood Banaleya. Touted to be an electrifying bachelorette anthem, the song released on 6th January 2023. At the press conference post the song launch, Amruta revealed the reaction of her husband and Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis. She said, "He has heard the song and he liked it." Talking about whether he felt like grooving on it, Amruta quipped, "He got a bit scared of trolling. But he overall loved the song including the composition. What happens is, the position at which he is, trolling from half of the population is expected." Talking about auto-tuning system used these days, Meet brothers, who were also present at the event said, comparing two



times is never right. With times the music industry has also evolved. Earlier when dialogues were averred, they were recorded then and there. Then it started taking place in studio due to technical demand." On a sporting note, Amruta Fadnavis was asked about Uorfi Javed's remark on politicians and flak she is receiving. Dodging off the question, Amruta said, "I feel today we should just celebrate the release of our song. I will speak about it later. Let make Uorfi Javed also dance on this song today." The song features popular television personalities like Avinash Mishra and Mehak Ghai, along with Amruta herself. On the personal front, Amruta got married to Devendra Fadnavis, the former chief minister of Maharashtra on November 17, 2005. Besides pursuing her career in singing, the pretty singer is also a banker by profession.

If you find any betrayal, then register an offense: Ajit Pawar On Sambhaji Maharaj remark

Team Absolute | Pune

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar on Friday dared the Maharashtra government to register a case against him if his remarks about the 17th century Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj amounted to "droh" or betrayal. Pawar, the Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly, has been facing criticism after he stated that Sambhaji Maharaj was 'Swarajya-rakshak' or protector of the independent state carved out by his father, Shivaji Maharaj, and not 'Dharmaveer' (religious warrior) as described by some right-wing Hindu groups. On Thursday, Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis had said that to say that Sambhaji Maharaj was not 'Dharmaveer' amounted to betrayal ("droh") of his thoughts and injustice



to him. Asked about Fadnavis's statement, Pawar, a former deputy CM, said the BJP leader can say whatever he wants to say.

"They are in power. If you find any betrayal, then register an offense. See if it makes out a legal case. Betrayal of the thoughts espoused by the Chhatrapatis (Shivaji Maharaj and his descendants) is not possible till there is last breath in our bodies. Our ten generations would not betray their thoughts," Pawar said. The NCP leader also said that he did not insist that everyone agree with his opinions. "What offense have I committed with his opinions. 'What offense have I committed that they are asking for apology?'" Pawar asked. No one is talking about the objectionable remarks made by the Governor (Bhagat Singh Koshiyari), ministers and MLAs from the ruling party (the BJP) about Shivaji Maharaj, he further said. NCP workers, meanwhile, welcomed Pawar after he arrived at Baramati Hostel here. Many of them sported stickers on their motorcycles which referred to Sambhaji Maharaj as 'Swarajya-rakshak'.

YOGI ADITYANATH MET BOLLYWOOD CELEBRITIES

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Presenting Uttar Pradesh as a film-friendly state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday invited prominent members from the entertainment industry to explore his state as a film-making destination. Interacting with members of Bollywood in Mumbai, the Chief Minister said, "We have made two of your film fraternity members as MPs and we know the issues you face and what needs to be done. Cinema plays a crucial role in uniting the society and preserving the unity and sovereignty of the country." Adityanath, who is visiting Mumbai to promote an investor summit to be held in



Lucknow next month, said Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a film-friendly state and this has been recognised at the National Film Awards and the International Film

Festival of India (IFFI). Apart from safe environment, the northern state has good connectivity, he said. The Chief Minister said under his government's film policy, if a web series is filmed in UP, it will be given 50 per cent subsidy. Likewise, 25 per cent subsidy is given for setting up studios and film labs. Producer Boney Kapoor, Gorakhpur Lok Sabha MP and actor Ravi Kishen, Bhojpuri actor Dinesh Lal Nirhua, playback singers Sonu Nigam, Kailash Kher, actor Suniel Shetty, filmmakers Chandraprakash Dwivedi, Madhur Bhandarkar and Rajkumar Santoshi, were among those who were present at the event.

Man accused of stalking teen acquitted as complainant, mother go missing

Thane: A court in Maharashtra's Thane district has acquitted a 30-year-old man accused of stalking a girl as the prosecution could not examine her during the trial. Special judge for cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, VV Virkar, passed the order on January 2. It became available today. As per the prosecution, the girl, who was 16 years old at the time of the incident and worked in a factory in Bhiwandi, knew the accused. In January 2014, the accused allegedly accosted her at a bus stop and proposed marriage to her. He stalked her even after she rejected his proposal, the prosecution said. However, the girl and her mother - to whom she had first narrated the alleged incident never appeared in the court to record their statements. They were not found at their residential address and had become untraceable, the prosecution told the court. The accused could not be convicted in the absence of the complainant's testimony in this case, the court held, acquitting the man.



Court slams police for filing case against man who hit dog with bike

Team Absolute | Mumbai

A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite and Prithviraj Chavan slammed Mumbai Police for registering an FIR mindlessly against a Swiggy food delivery executive accused of hitting a dog while riding motorbike. Quashing the FIR, it also ordered the government to pay him costs. While the judgement was delivered on December 20, the detailed order became available this week. "No doubt, a dog/cat is treated as a child or family member by their owners, but basic biology tells us that they are not human beings. Sections 279 and 337 of the Indian Penal Code pertain to acts endangering human life, or likely to cause hurt or injury to any other person," the bench said. Section 279 deals with rash driving, while



337 deals with 'causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others.' "Thus, legally speaking the said sections will have no application to the facts in hand, this essential ingredient necessary to constitute the offences, being amiss. The said sections do not recognize and make an

offense any injury caused otherwise than to human being," the court added. An FIR had been registered against Manas Godbole, the petitioner, after his motorbike allegedly hit a stray dog in Marine Drive area during lockdown in 2020. The petitioner, who was delivering a food order, himself was injured as the motorbike skidded. The FIR was registered on the complaint of a woman who was feeding stray dogs. "The application of these sections by the Marine Drive police clearly shows non-application of mind. How sections 279, 337, 429 of the Indian Penal Code could have been applied to the case in hand, even from a bare perusal of these sections, defies logic," it said. "Considering that the police had lodged the said prosecution despite no offence having been disclosed, we deem it appropriate to direct the state government to pay costs of ? 20,000 to the petitioner," the court said. The amount shall be recovered from the salary of the police officers responsible for the lodging of the FIR and subsequent filing of the charge sheet, the court said.

Sanjay Raut appears before court in defamation case filed by Medha Somaiya; gets warrant cancelled

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Magistrate's court here on Friday cancelled a non-bailable warrant issued against Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut after he appeared before it in a defamation case filed by Medha Somaiya, BJP leader Kirit Somaiya's wife. Earlier in the day, when the matter came up, Raut's lawyer sought exemption from personal appearance for the Rajya Sabha member. But the Sewri metropolitan magistrate rejected the plea and issued a non-bailable warrant against Raut for not attending the proceedings despite an earlier order. The court on Friday began recording the statement of the complainant in the case. Raut appeared before the court in the post-lunch session. The court then cancelled the warrant. The next hearing would be on January 24. Somaiya has moved the court



claiming that Raut made baseless and defamatory allegations that she and her husband were involved in a Rs 100 crore scam related to the construction and maintenance of public toilets in Mira Bhayander area near Mumbai. She has sought the registration of a case against Raut, who belongs to the Uddhav Thackeray faction of the Shiv Sena, under Indian Penal Code section 499 (criminal defamation).



EDITOR'S SPECS

CONGRESS LAUNCHES BHARAT JODO YATRA IN BIHAR

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday launched the party's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Bihar from Banka district.

On day one, Kharge traveled 7.5 km from the starting point at Mandar mountain in Banka district, accompanied by party's state President Akhilesh Singh, CLP leader Ajit Sharma, former state president Madan Mohan Jha, Congress state incharge Bhakta Charan Das and others.

On the occasion, Kharge said: "BJP is hurting the sentiments of Jain people by declaring Samved Shikhar Ji, Shatrujay mountain of Palitana and Girnar mountain tourist spots. Jain community is inspired by non-violence and Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi. Congress respects every religion. I demand from the Narendra Modi government to maintain the holiness of all Jain pilgrimage places of the country."

The Yatra will be completed by leaders of Congress's Bihar unit and national leaders will join it at different places.

Sources have said that senior leader Rahul Gandhi is expected to join Bharat Jodo Yatra when it reaches Patna, as by that time, his own Yatra will be completed.

The Congress Yatra will traverse 1,200 km across 17 districts in Bihar. Starting from Banka, it will go through Bhagalpur, Khagaria, Begusarai, Samastipur, Darbhanga, Madhubani, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Muzaffarpur, Vaishali, Patna, Bhojpur, Buxar, Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad, and Gaya before terminating in Bodh Gaya.

The local wings of Congress party will also do similar Yatra in 21 districts as well.

IN MAOIST-HIT BASTAR, SOLAR POWER BRINGS INDIVIDUAL TAP CONNECTIONS TO RURAL HOMES

Deepanwita Gita Niyogi

There is a nip in the air. The clucking of hens, the clanging of pots and pans, and the delicious aroma of 'chaur bhaja', a traditional rice and roasted chicken dish, keep the senses alive. Resplendent in a red saree, Dasmí Nag arranges the logs to maximise the heat in her 'chulha' (an earthen stove). Belonging to the Dhurwa indigenous community, Dasmí lives in Gudiya village of Bastar, a district known for its vibrant tribal life and Maoist insurgency, in Chhattisgarh state of Central India. In her mid-40s, Dasmí travels down memory lane to a time when, as a young bride, her in-laws would chastise her if the food was served late. "Can you imagine the rush to prepare 'pej' (a rice and ragi porridge) and lunch for the entire family when everyone is hungry? It all depended on water availability. On most days, I had to go to a nearby stream located a km away for clean drinking water. The hand pump came much later, in 2012-13," she says, remembering how her legs had felt weak and her neck and shoulders had ached due to the weight of the water pots on her head. In the winter, when darkness descends early, the women would band together for courage, carrying 'mashals' (a long pole with a fire burning at one end) through the dense forest teeming with wildlife. Dasmí got tap connection at home sometime back under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) run by the Jal Shakti Ministry. The programme is aimed at connecting every rural household in India with tap water connection by 2024, covering 19.35 crore rural families. At the time of its launch, 3.23 crore families had access to tap water. As on December 12, 2022, the numbers have increased to 10.72 crore. Bastar district has seen 30.24 per cent coverage with 49,554 out of the 1.63 lakh households having tap water connections.

TOUCHING LIVES

In areas where electricity grids are absent, the use of solar power under JJM helped bring tap water to rural households. The Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA) and Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) have been working together to set up these solar water structures. Under the project, one horsepower (HP) solar submersible pump costing Rs 90,000 is installed and a structure, either nine or 12-metre high with a capacity to hold two 5,000-litre water tanks, is built. The whole set-up is powered by four solar panels of 300 watt each. PHED Executive Engineer S.P. Mandavi told 101Reporters that solar energy in water connection arrived in 2010-11. Under the Chhattisgarh government's Nal Jal Yojana, solar was used in some instances and a common stand post was erected for water collection. The JJM added individual tap connections to that. CREDA Executive Engineer Damrudhar Sidar says the use of solar power in JJM has accelerated its penetration and efficiency. "Earlier, structures of four-and-a-half metre to six metre in height were built under the Nal Jal Yojana. With the JJM, the structure's height was increased for better gravity, so that water could reach the tail end to serve 25 to 30 households in a hamlet." Sidar says the CREDA is working only in areas having grid



connectivity issues and those proposed by the PHED, which funds the structure construction. "Many gram panchayats (village councils) often failed to pay electricity bills, ultimately leading to disconnection." Individual connections have reduced the burden of fetching water from long distances. For years, Rukna Yadav from Bamnaras had fetched water from a chua (surface water source in fields). "I had to boil the water to use it. In the monsoon, it got dirty. I do not have to toil much now, as the nearest water stand post located just 50 metre from my house started functioning four months ago." Prior to the JJM, many women in Bamnaras village depended on either the hand pump or a perennial chua. "Most of us had to spend at least 15 to 30 minutes each time bringing water. The manually operated hand pump made the hands ache. So many vessels, big and small, had to be filled two to three times," says Rambati Nag. Jitri Nag (50), who used to spend about an hour daily fetching water from the stream, adds that she finds time to tend to her kitchen garden after getting the tap connection. Standing by and translating, Baliram Nag, nods. A Dhurwa community member and CREDA technician, he intimately knows how the lives of women have changed since improved water connectivity. Besides home connection, there are common stand posts where women can collect water. In a few places, the individual taps are yet to yield water as connections have not been possible. For Bamnaras resident Tara Nag, a mother of four, the common stand post is a stone's throw away and she takes just 10 minutes to fill up her vessels each time. There is no tap in her house, which is at a higher elevation. Though many have benefitted from the JJM, it is a long-drawn process in interior villages. First site surveys are carried out, followed by foundation work, erection of structures and installation of dual water tanks on top.

OVERCOMING PROBLEMS

Noting how Tusail village has aquifers located deeper than in other places, CREDA Sub-engineer Kamlesh Kumar says some areas of Bastar have this issue. In such cases, the solar capacity could be enhanced using high-power pumps. Water can also be lifted from surface sources, but requires purification at a treatment plant. However, the JJM does not provide for that facility. CREDA Superintending Engineer, S.K. Shukla tells 101Reporters that site selection posed problems as workers mostly refused to come to Bastar for work. Against 1080 work orders for solar pump systems under the JJM in Bastar division (encompassing seven districts), work has been completed in 883 of them. In Bastar district alone, there are work

orders to solarise 199 out of the 614 water structures; 164 of which have been completed. In the whole of Chhattisgarh, 4,534 solar pump systems have been installed against the 5,010 work orders. For the financial year 2022-23 (April-March), the total budget allocation for Bastar district till November this year under JJM stands at Rs 28 crore. On the progress made in Bastar so far, District Collector Chandan Kumar tells 101Reporters that people, especially women, were appreciative as the JJM scheme saved both their time and energy. "By December next year, all households will be covered," he predicts. However, issues like improper functioning of taps or yielding water in lesser quantities are cropping up. In Kanakurushpal, all 75 households have tap water connections. Mangla Kashyap, a beneficiary, now gets ample time to spend with her children. "But some women still queue up at the hand pump as taps are not functioning properly or the water flow is lean," she says. In Irpa village of Bastanar, a region dominated by memorial pillars erected in honour of the dead, most residents belong to the indigenous Maria community. Here, a solar system has been set up in Pujaripara hamlet. The residents point out that cloud cover during monsoon slows down the supply. "During monsoon, we have to depend on the chua as the solar system charges only slowly. Nevertheless, solar adoption has made life easier for women. They can now devote more time to fuelwood collection," says Sudru Poyam, a paddy farmer, who says the community has to clean the twin tanks every month. Back at Gudiya, Dasmí's neighbour Deoli Nag insists on proper maintenance. "What if some glitch happens and water does not come? The technical people live far away. In case of a problem, we should not be left without water, for say a fortnight." When Pramila Maurya came to Nayapara hamlet of Raikot village after her marriage in 2007, she had to deal with the absence of power and tap water for years. "As the hand pump yielded iron-contaminated water, all women in my family went to the talab (pond). Individual tap connections started only in June this year." Now, life is more comfortable for Maurya, the wife of a government school teacher. "I spend time watching TV serials and talking to my devranis (sisters-in-law) under the shade of a tamarind tree. We pass time comfortably with no tension over water availability." "Earlier going to the talab entailed putting the children to sleep, but they invariably woke up, sometimes before we even started... When the village got electricity, I insisted on a personal borewell. However, the power bill ran quite high. Now I intend to use it for watering my vegetables in winter." As November is the month of paddy harvest, work has been stalled in some areas. According to contractor SR Markandi, people are not at home all day long. "But we have to consult them on matters like pipe-laying and standpost erection, all of which are getting delayed."

(Deepanwita Gita Niyogi is a Bastar-based freelance journalist and a member of 101Reporters, a pan-India network of grassroots reporters. This story is supported by Internews' Earth Journalism Network.)

international

US HOUSE ADJOURNS WITH NO SPEAKER ELECTED FOR 1ST TIME IN 164 YEARS



Washington | Agencies

The US House of Representatives has again adjourned for a third day without electing a new Speaker even after 11 votes, becoming the longest contest to select a person to take the gavel in 164 years.

The House will not convene on Friday noon, the second anniversary of the 2021 Capitol riot, reports Xinhua news agency.

Kevin McCarthy from California, the House Republican leader since 2019, fell short of the necessary votes to take the gavel in five more rounds of voting Thursday afternoon.

The House has voted 11 times since the 118th Congress convened on Tuesday, making it the longest speaker contest in 164 years.

Not since 1860, when the US' union was fraying over the issue of slavery, has the lower chamber of Congress voted so many times to pick a Speaker. Back then it took 44 rounds of ballots.

A group of 20 hard-line Republican lawmakers are refusing to give the California Congressman the necessary

218 votes.

The 435-seat lower chamber, where Republicans have a slim majority over Democrats, is unable to conduct any legislative business until a speaker is elected.

McCarthy has the support of most House Republicans and former President Donald Trump but the 20 hardliners have pressured him to decentralise the Speaker's power.

All House Democrats have voted for Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, a New York Democrat, to be Speaker in the election.

Though it's unlikely for Jeffries to attain the position, he is set to become the first African-American lawmaker to lead a party in either chamber of Congress.

In the November 8, 2022, midterm elections, Republicans won the House by a slender margin of 222 to 212 in the 435-seat chamber, while Democrats retained control of the Senate.

Earlier on Thursday, McCarthy was defiant in the face of the stiff headwinds, saying that he will continue to face opposition until he reaches a deal with his detractors.

"It's all going to be this way until an agreement comes. It's easier if we're able to all get an agreement together," he told CNN.

Asked the point he would make a realisation that the outcome won't change, McCarthy told the network: "After I win."

But one of the 20 dissidents, Ralph Norman of South Carolina, told the BBC that he simply does not trust McCarthy.

The Congressman said McCarthy's team had threatened political retaliation against them if they did not fall in line, in the weeks leading up this deadlock.

"We were going to be thrown off committees... We're going to lose every privilege we had. And we'd basically told them, 'If we can't ask questions, if we can't vet out the most powerful person that we're getting ready to put in office, then we're out'," he told the BBC.

The Speaker of the House is the second in line to the presidency, after Vice President Kamala Harris.

They set the agenda in the House, and no legislative business can be conducted there without them.

Evacuations ordered in California due to deadly storm

San Francisco | Agencies

Authorities have ordered evacuations in parts of northern California and also warned of threats to life and property, especially around San Francisco and Sacramento, as a deadly storm is pounding the US state bringing with it heavy rain and powerful winds.

California has been under a state of emergency since Wednesday with more than 160,000 home and businesses without electricity, the BBC reported. The powerful storm system known as a 'bomb cyclone' has killed at least two people, including a toddler who died on Wednesday evening



when a redwood tree fell on his home in Sonoma County.

According to weather officials, much of the state has been hit by "atmospheric rivers" -- an airborne

current carrying dense moisture from the ocean -- bringing heavy rain to low-lying areas, powerful winds to San Francisco and snow to the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The National Weather Service (NWS) said California will continue to be impacted by atmospheric river conditions through Thursday, "with heavy to excessive rainfall, flooding with debris flows and landslides near recent burn scar areas, heavy mountain snow and high winds".

Rains and winds are expected to die down on Thursday night, before ramping up again over the weekend and into next week, it added.

MAN FATALLY SHOTS 7 FAMILY MEMBERS BEFORE SUICIDE IN US

Los Angeles | Agencies

A 42-year-old man fatally shot seven other family members, including his wife and their five children, inside their home in the US' Utah state before taking his own life, authorities said.

Eight people were found shot to death inside a home on Wednesday in Iron County's Enoch, a mostly rural and agricultural city, in the southwestern US state, Xinhua news agency reported. Enoch is nearly 400 km south of Salt Lake City, the capital city of Utah.

Police officers were summoned to the home in reference to a welfare check. Concerned family and friends contacted the police after not hearing from the victims, said the Enoch City in a news release.

"While this intense investigation is ongoing, investigators currently believe there are no suspects outstanding," said the news release, noting that the suspect is Michael Haight.

The seven victims were identified as Haight's wife, Tausha Haight, 40, Haight's mother-in-law, Gail Earl, 78, the couple's five children, including a 17-year-old girl, a 12-year-old girl, a 7-year-old girl, a 7-year-old boy and a 4-year-old boy, according to the news release on Thursday.

Iron County School District said in a letter



sent to parents that "eight members of a family residing in Enoch with five students in our schools tragically passed away."

"This loss is sure to raise many emotions, concerns, and questions for our entire school district, especially our students," said the school district.

"Our hearts go out to all those affected by this senseless violence. Please keep the community of Enoch in your prayers," Utah Governor Spencer J. Cox tweeted Wednesday night.

"The President and first lady are mourning with the Enoch City, Utah community in the wake of a tragic shooting that has reportedly claimed the lives of five children and multiple adults in their family home," the White House lamented in a statement Thursday.

UKRAINE REJECTS RUSSIA'S 'TRIVIAL' CEASEFIRE OFFER

Kiev | Agencies

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has rejected Russia's "trivial" Christmas ceasefire offer, saying it was a cover for Moscow to stop Ukrainian advances in the eastern Donbas region and bring in more conscripts and equipment.



On Thursday evening, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his Defence Minister to impose the 36-hour ceasefire on the Ukrainian frontline, beginning at 12 a.m. on Friday to coincide with the Russian Orthodox Christmas, the BBC reported. The Russian Orthodox Church celebrates Christmas Day on January 7, according to the Julian calendar. In a statement, the Kremlin said: "Taking into consideration the appeal by (Kirill, Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church), the President hereby instructs the minister of defence of the Russian Federation to impose a ceasefire regime along the entire line of contact in Ukraine for the 36-hour period." The order called on Ukraine to reciprocate so that the "large numbers of Orthodox believers (who) reside in areas where hostilities are taking place" could celebrate Christmas Eve on Friday and Christmas Day on Saturday. But in his nightly address to the nation, Zelensky said: "Now they want to use Christmas as a cover to stop the advance of our servicemen in the Donbas for a short time and bring equipment, ammunition and conscripts closer to our positions. What does this mean? Just another increase in the volume of losses."

5 DEAD IN ROAD ACCIDENT DUE TO HEAVY RAIN IN INDONESIA

Jakarta: A car crashed into a river due to severe weather conditions in Indonesia's South Sulawesi's Pangkep Regency, killing five people. The car carrying six people was running through heavy rain at 05:15 local time from north to south on Thursday, Pangkep police officer Ida Ayu Suastini said, adding that then the car plunged into a three-meter deep river after hitting a tree on the left side of the road, Xinhua news agency reported.

"One survivor is still receiving care at Pangkep Hospital," told Suastini. All five of the victims, including the driver and a three-year-old child, have been evacuated. Authorities are still investigating the cause of the incident, but they believe it was caused by bad weather. Indonesia has been facing extreme weather of heavy rains and strong winds since December, which led to a series of hydrometeorological disasters like floods and landslides. According to the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), the peak of extreme weather will happen until February.



0.2DEGREE CELSIUS TEMPERATURE RECORDED IN CHHATARPUR'S NOWGONG

schools closed in some districts

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The lowest temperature was recorded at 0.2 degree Celsius in Nowgong town of Chhatarpur district in the morning, said HS Pandey, a senior official at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) office here. Schools were closed in a few districts of Madhya Pradesh on Friday as the intense cold spell continued across the state, officials said. Traffic on the roads was thin in many parts of the state while people were seen huddling around bonfires. Schools up to Class 8 remained closed in some districts including Bhopal, Indore, Vidisha and Ujjain on the orders of the local administration. Dense fog was reported in Guna, Satna, Datia, Jabalpur, Sagar and Chhatarpur districts, while moderate fog covered areas of Gwalior, Rewa districts and Nowgaon town in Chhatarpur district. The minimum temperatures in Bhopal and Indore were recorded at 7.3 and 10.6 degrees Celsius. Minimum temperatures in the state hovering near 7 degrees Celsius for the fifth day in a row, Pandey said. Foggy and chilly weather prevailed in north and north-east MP. Datia, Khajuraho, Guna, Gwalior and Sagar cite saw minimum temperatures of 2.5, 2.6, 3.0, 4.2 and 4.6 degrees Celsius, respectively. Northerly winds following snowfall in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir brought the temperatures down in MP, the IMD official said. The cold spell is expected to continue for three more days, he said.



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Kamal Nath's big promise to backward classes if congress returns in power

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Aiming to consolidate his party's position among the Other Backward Classes ahead of the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, senior Congress leader and former chief minister Kamal Nath said his party would amend the Constitution for the benefit of the OBC community if it returns to power at the Centre. The Madhya Pradesh Congress president accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of cheating the OBCs in the state, where polls are due by the end of 2023. "I promise that whenever our government comes to power at the Centre, it will amend the Constitution to extend the benefit of reservation to the OBC community," Kamal Nath said at an OBC community rally in Satna town. Sources close to Kamal Nath said such a constitutional amendment will ensure removal of the 50 per cent cap on quota in jobs and education, and uniformity in implementation of 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs in all states. "When our government was in power in Madhya Pradesh, it had given 27 per cent reservation to the OBCs in the state (up from 14 per cent earlier), but the BJP cheated them (the community) and dragged the matter to court," he alleged. The Congress leader sought to know what the BJP had given to the people of the state despite being in power for the last 18 years barring the brief period in 2018-20 when his party governed Madhya Pradesh. Kamal Nath slammed Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, saying he has made more than 20,000 announcements and



accused his government of committing a scam in the name of "smart city" project. He said, "It is not a smart city (project), but a smart scam. Chouhan himself has said he is a machine of making announcements." Kamal Nath said the Constitution framed by Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar is known the world over and many countries adopted similar statute book and warned India's culture was in danger today. "It was a challenge for him (Dr Ambedkar) to make a Constitution for such a diverse country but he drafted a great Constitution for the nation based on which leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel took the nation forward," said the former Union minister. "But today India's culture is in danger and you have to decide whether you want to tread the path of Modi (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) or the path shown by the country's culture," he said. Asked about the row over claims of alleged obscene videos of BJP leaders, Kamal Nath said, "When our government was in power, such types of videos and CDs had surfaced but I had directed officials to probe them in a proper manner as I didn't want the state's image to get sullied."

Indian ideology has Solution of many problems: Chouhan

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that solutions to many problems exist in Indian ideology. The nations of the world acknowledge the ancient spiritual wealth of India. Ramayana is a wonderful epic. Even today it is sung and recited in every village. Along with important teachings, Indian religious texts are helpful in giving the message of world peace. CM Chouhan was virtually addressing the third International Ramayana Conference today. Chief Minister Chouhan said that the scholars who came to present the research papers in this event giving the mes-



sage of love, peace, happiness, unity and brotherhood are welcome in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Chouhan extended best wishes for the success of the conference. In the conference being held in Jabalpur, MP Rakesh Singh, Chairman of the organizing committee,



former minister Ajay Vishnoi, Dr. Gumasta, G.D. Bakshi, Govind Singh etc. were present. Representatives of many countries are attending the conference. Important research papers have been presented on 'Ramayana ki saumya shakti' in the conference.

BODY OF YOUTH WITH STAB WOUNDS FOUND IN JABALPUR'S BARELA

Jabalpur: Body of an 18-year-old youth was found in the Bachelor of Translation and Interpreting (BTI) School in Barela on Friday morning. People who were out for their morning walk, spotted the deceased lying on the ground of BTI and alerted the police.



As information received by the police, Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) officers with police team reached the spot. The deceased is identified as OM Jhariya aged 18. Police also observed stab wounds on the body which they suspect could be because of a physical fight. At the time of filing the report, the culprits were missing. Based on the statement of people who spotted the body, police filed a case against unknown people and are questioning residents living in the locality.

CM will distribute materials to tendu patta collectors

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan will distribute Charan Paduka, clothes and other materials to the people associated with tendu patta collection in various tribal-dominated areas of the state. Recently, CM Chouhan had recently made an announcement in this regard at the inauguration of the International Van Mela. These programmes will be organised in Vindhya and Mahakaushal regions of the state along with other places. Chief Minister Chouhan held a meeting with Forest Minister Dr. Kunwar Vijay Shah, Additional Chief Secretary Forest JN Kansotiya and senior officers of the Forest Department and deliberated with them in this regard.



Along with the material distribution, the outline of the programme of participation in folk-dance, other competitions by women self-help groups and the proposed Van Mahotsav in the coming month of April were also discussed. Chief Minister Chouhan said that along with the conservation of wild animals in

the state, the balance in the existence of humans and animals is always being kept in mind. There should be a complete curb on the criminal elements who hunt wild animals. The staff of the Forest Department should always be alert in this regard. Strictest action should be taken against the culprits who hunt wild animals.

Pilot Dies After Training Aircraft Crashes Into Temple In Rewa

Team Absolute | Rewa

The pilot of a trainer aircraft was killed after it crashed in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district, 400 km from state capital Bhopal, police said on Friday. A trainee pilot who was on board was injured in the incident that took place around 11.30 pm on Thursday, said an official. The aircraft crashed three km away from Chorhatta airstrip after hitting the dome of a temple and a tree while



on a training sortie, said Chorhatta police station-in-charge J P Patel. Captain Vishal Yadav (30) was killed in the crash while trainee pilot Anshul Yadav suffered injuries and admitted to the government-run Sanjay Gandhi Medical College Hospital, the official said. Rewa collector Manoj Pushp and Superintendent of Police Nanvneet Bhasin were at the spot and further details about the crash were awaited, district officials said.

GOVT ORDERS PROBE

Bhopal: An inquiry has been ordered into a plane crash incident in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district in which one pilot was killed and another injured, Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra said here on Friday. The accident took place late on Thursday when the trainee plane crashed into a temple in Dumri Village of Rewa district, police said. The order for an inquiry came hours after the incident was reported. State Home Minister Narottam Mishra said an inquiry has been ordered to investigate the matter. The minister also said that a technical team has left from Mumbai and the accident site has been covered. "It is a matter of serious concern and truth needs to come out and therefore, an inquiry has been ordered. Officials have been asked to find out the reasons for the plane crash," the Home Minister added. The deceased pilot was identified as Vimal Kumar, a resident of Patna (Bihar). The injured trainee, Sonu Yadav hails from Jaipur and was being treated for injuries. The trainee aircraft of a private company was taxiing from Chorhatta Airstrip when it crashed after colliding with the dome of a temple. Prima facie, bad weather, and foggy conditions prevailing in the area were being attributed as the reason for the crash.

Doctor arrested for performing abortion of minor rape survivor

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A doctor was arrested for performing an abortion of a rape survivor and minor girl in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal on Thursday, an official said. The accused doctor has been identified as Dr Mayanak Shrivastava (BHMS) and he runs a clinic in the city. According to the police, the rape accused Faisal Abbas has already been arrested and an FIR was registered in the matter on December 13, 2022 at Ajak police station in the city. The rape accused Abbas had befriended the minor by posing as a Shaan Pandit and had raped her several times. The minor had become pregnant after which she was aborted.

Additional Commissioner of Police (ACP) Nidhi Saxena said, "An FIR was registered on December 13 in which during investigation it came to fore that the 16-year-old girl was aborted. On further investigation, it has been found that a clinic was running in the name of BSC MD." The police sealed the clinic and arrested the accused. A case has been registered for legal traits and illegal practices under section 313 (Causing miscarriage without woman's consent) of the IPC MTP Act. He will be produced before the court today," she added. "Earlier, a case against the rape accused was registered under section 376 (rape), 377 (Unnatural offences) of the IPC and under religious freedom act," ACP Saxena added.

State all set to host fourth edition of Mandu Festival from today

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh is hosting the Mandu Festival and Skydiving Festival in January, and the Chanderi Mahotsav in February. The Skydiving Festival in Ujjain has already started and is scheduled till January 15, 2023, whereas the Mandu Festival will be held from today. This will be the fourth edition of Mandu's mega festival, which aims to showcase the destination's historic heritage blended with the modern vibrancy. The said festival is an annual affair, which offers a great mix of cultural activities, adventure activities, performing arts, workshops, art installations, poetry reading, nature trails, and much more.



Meanwhile, Mandu has also been shortlisted in the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites apart from Orchha. While sharing this infor-

mation, Sheo Shekhar Shukla, Principal Secretary of Tourism and Culture and Managing Director, MP Tourism Board added that more than 2000 visitors are expected to attend the Mandu Festival, and that it will be a great opportunity to show the entire world what Madhya Pradesh is all about. If reports are to go by, this edition will also see celebrated artists who will showcase their music, whereas local tribes and artisans will also take part in the fest. Other important activities that will be held during the festival would include hot air balloon ride, cultural exhibitions, cycling tour, adventure sports & activities, rural tourism, performance of traditional folk dance by local artistes, and more.

Blind murder case solved, 1 held in Alot

Team Absolute | Alot

Alot police arrested a person and claimed to have solved murder case of 29-year-old man within four days. As per details, Tal police station received information about a murder in Karwakhedi village on December 12, 2022. Acting promptly, police rushed to the spot and found body of Jujhar Malviya of Karwakhedi village. The body was sent for autopsy and a case under sections 302 and 201 of the IPC was registered against unidentified person. A team was constituted to probe the incident. The SP later announced a reward of Rs 10,000 to the investigating team. During

investigation, the police detained Jagdish Malviya, 30, of Nageshwar town in Jhalawar district (Rajasthan). Initially, there was no information about the accused. A team headed by additional SP Sunil Kumar Patidar, SDOP Jaora Ravindra Bilwal and SDOP A lot Shabera Ansari questioned several people after which the accused was caught. During interrogation, it was allegedly confirmed that Jagdish committed the crime over some financial/property disputes. He added that the accused was produced in the court. SHO Tal Nagesh Yadav, Kharwakala outpost SHO Kaniya Avasya and entire team worked hard to crack the case.



Shannon Singh and Ben can't drive long distances without stopping for sex

'I need it'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Shannon Singh has revealed she and her boyfriend Ben will often stop at service stations on long drives in order to have sex. The Love Island star described herself as 'very sexual' and said she is 'not shy' about asking for what she wants. Shannon said: 'I'm very sexual. I'm not shy when it comes to my sex life because I require it. 'My connection with my partner is getting into bed, getting in the feels and having a great time. 'People get so shy talking about sex and I'm not like that at all. 'Me and Ben will have a long drive from London to Scotland and we will stop at the service stations and spark it up.' Shannon insisted that she 'needs' sex but added that it's not the only form of intimacy she and her boyfriend enjoy. She said: 'I literally need to keep it alive and I love it because he's the same. 'It's not to the point that it's the only intimacy we have, but I know I have a really high sex drive so I need it.' Appearing on the Who's Your Daddy podcast, she said: 'I am very sexually active, I have sex like eight times a day. 'Not every day but I have a lot of sex. I am very sexually active. I had sex in the morning yesterday, then in a toilet, then in the afternoon. 'I quite like a bit of rough and tough. I kind of like it rough and I love a bit of morning sex. I love it. 'I lost my virginity quite young; I have always been mature for my age. I regret losing it so young. But I was sexually active from a young age.' Shannon took part on the 2021 series of Love Island but was the first contestant sent home, leaving the villa after just one day.

CHRISTINE QUINN ENJOYS A FIVE-STAR TROPICAL GETAWAY IN ST BARTS

St Barts | Agencies

Christine Quinn flaunted her incredible bikini body when she was seen lounging on the beach in St Barts with her husband Christian Richard. The Selling Sunset star who danced under a beach shower earlier this week - soaked up the Caribbean sun at the five-star Eden Rock hotel, where an average room can range anywhere from \$2K-\$3K per night. Christine basked in the shade of a cabana with her tech entrepreneur husband before the pair took a stroll on the pristine beach, spending some quality time together. Christine rocked a red Balenciaga ball cap with a matching bikini top from Versace. She finished off her look with aqua bikini bottoms for a clashing effect. Oversized designer shades shielded her eyes from the sun and long manicured claws graced her fingers. Christine's husband of three years donned canary swim trunks emblazoned with a school of vibrant tropical fish. The pair took turns sipping from a red cup as they laid next to one another before walking along the beach.



Nicole Kidman cast in Taylor Sheridan's CIA drama series 'Lioness'



Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Nicole Kidman has joined the cast of Taylor Sheridan's upcoming Paramount+ series 'Lioness'. The move brings Kidman in front of the camera on the show, as she has been attached as an executive producer since 'Lioness' was originally announced, reports Variety. 'Lioness' is based on a real-life CIA programme. As per the official series description, it follows that "Cruz Manuelos, a rough-around-the-edges but passionate young Marine recruited to join the CIA's Lioness Engagement Team to help bring down a terrorist organisation from within." Kidman will play Kaitlyn Meade, described as "the CIA's Senior Supervisor who has had a long career of playing the politics game. She must juggle the trappings of being a

woman in the high-ranking intelligence community, a wife that longs for the attention she herself can't even give and a mentor to someone veering suspiciously close to the same rocky road she's found herself on." While Kidman is primarily known for her critically-acclaimed film roles, she has become increasingly active and in-demand in the television space in recent years. Most famously, she starred in and executive produced the hit drama 'Big Little Lies', for which she won both the Emmy and Golden Globe for best actress in a limited series. She has since starred in shows like 'The Undoing' at HBO and 'Nine Perfect Strangers' at Hulu. She also received an Emmy nod in 2012 for her role in the HBO film 'Hemingway & Gellhorn'. In film, Kidman won the Oscar, BAFTA, and Golden Globe for her work in 'The Hours'. She has been nominated for Oscars for films like 'Moulin Rouge', 'Rabbit Hole', 'Lion', and 'Being the Ricardos'.

'STRANGER THINGS' STAR NOAH SCHNAPP COMES OUT AS GAY

Los Angeles | Agencies



Actor Noah Schnapp, who plays the closeted gay teenager Will Byers on Netflix's 'Stranger Things', has come out as gay. In a video posted to his TikTok account on Thursday, the actor wrote: "When I finally told my friends and family I was gay after being scared in the closet for 18 years and all they said was 'we know'". Over Schnapp lip-syncing to an audio clip from a different TikTok of someone saying, "You know what it never was? That serious. It was never that serious. Quite frankly, will never be that serious," reports Variety. In the caption to his TikTok video, Schnapp wrote: "I guess I'm more similar to Will than I thought." Schnapp confirmed to Variety for the first time that Will Byers is gay and in love with his best friend Mike. "It was always kind of there, but you never really knew, is it just him growing up slower than his friends?" Schnapp said. "Now that he's gotten older, they made it a very real, obvious thing. Now it's 100 per cent clear that he is gay and he does love Mike." When Variety asked Schnapp about how he navigated the attention on Will's sexuality while he was also still figuring himself out, the actor pointed to all the tribulations the character has faced over the course of the series. "I think it's all just part of the challenge of acting," he said. "This isn't just a single layer thing of he's struggling with coming out. It's this multifaceted trauma that goes years back, because he was taken by the Demogorgon and then his friends, they never



'HAVING THE GUTS TO FAIL'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actor Dwayne Johnson, in a reflective post, spoke about "having the guts to fail" after the 'Black Adam' box office bomb. On early Thursday, the wrestler-turned-actor posted on his Instagram page a video of him retreating to the woods while sharing an empowering message about embracing failure. "Tapping in with you with a quick thought that's anchored my success (and failures) over the years that may anchor and help you too on your journey. Having the guts to fail is far more powerful than having the desire to succeed. Having the desire to succeed is very attractive. It's sexy," he wrote in the caption.

Dwayne Johnson embraces the failure of 'Black Adam'

"While having the guts to fail is extremely uncomfortable. And sometimes it's scary," he admitted, reports aceshowbiz.com. "But guts over desire has served me all throughout my career - and when we put ourselves in positions to be uncomfortable - to have the guts to fail - we actually set ourselves up in a much more powerful way to WIN. It's 2023. It's our year. Guts over desire." In the video, Johnson further elaborated on the advice that he got from his "good friend" named Inky Johnson. "He's always got great perspective, grounding perspective. He keeps it raw. He keeps it real. He said something that was really profound that I feel ties into this whole thing: he talked about having the guts to fail," he gushed. "And the reason why I bring that back around to you guys is having the guts to fail compared to having the desire to be famous, having the desire to succeed." "But I have found in life, that the desire to become famous, the desire to succeed will never be as powerful as having the guts to fail. And I love that, because I look back at my own life, and around every corner, and still today," he explained.



Una Healy



SAMANTHA DISMISSES RUMOURS THAT SHE'S ON A SABBATICAL

Team Absolute | Hyderabad

Laying to rest rumours that she is taking a long sabbatical from work, Samantha Ruth Prabhu has started recording for her upcoming film. The actress, who was recently diagnosed with Myositis, took to social media to declare that she is back at work. She shared a picture of her recording for upcoming movie Shaakuntalam. On her Instagram page, Samantha quoted author Nikki Rowe to drive home the point that it is in the work she find the solace. "Art is my cure to all this madness, sadness and loss of belonging in the world & through it I'll walk myself home. - Nikki Rowe," she wrote with the hashtag 'Shaakuntalam', which is the name of her upcoming film.

There have been rumours that the actress is taking a long sabbatical from work, leading to her withdrawing from 'Family Man' helmers Raj and DK's next project, 'Citadel'. However, she has dismissed all these rumours. Samantha, who impressed everyone with her performance in 'Yashoda', has an interesting slate of projects including 'Shaakuntalam' and 'Kushi' with Vijay Deverakonda, besides 'Citadel'. Last year, she made a dazzling presence in the 'Oo Antava' song from 'Pushpa: The Rise'. In October, she was diagnosed with a rare condition called Myositis, which weakens muscles. Since then there have been rumours surrounding her. The actress is determined to overcome the odds. She began the new year on a positive note. "Control what we can!! Guess it's time for newer and easier resolutions... ones that are kinder and gentler on ourselves.



'Uorfi is very bold and brave'



Honey Singh says would not mind collaborating with Uorfi for a music video

AR RAHMAN ANNOUNCES HIS DIGITAL MUSIC PLATFORM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Oscar-winning music director, singer, and songwriter AR Rahman is celebrating his 56th birthday on Friday and he took to Twitter to make an announcement about the launch of his digital platform 'Katraar'. Born on January 6, 1967, the ace musician is opening up new avenues for emerging artists and his digital music platform is where musical artists can directly upload their creations and earn from them.

Rahman will also be releasing some of his exclusive creations through the Katraar platform.

He shared a video and wrote: "I'm excited to announce today-KATRAAR, the metaverse platform currently in development, is one step closer to launching. And I look forward to sharing this journey with you all."

Rahman is known for giving music in a number of films and also for international collaborations. He was noticed by director Mani Ratnam and Rahman started scoring for his Tamil film 'Roja'. Later, he worked for 'Bombay' as well. He won two Oscar awards. He is also a winner of six national film awards and was conferred the Padma Bhushan.

He added in the video that the platform is for new technologies and bringing direct revenue to the artists. It is all about bringing new talent and giving them a platform to focus on innovation and bridging the gap between old and new. Many international creations will be on this platform soon. The platform is being developed in partnership with the HBAR foundation and will be deployed on the Hedera Network.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh praised Uorfi Javed and said that other girls in the country can take inspiration from her. The 'Bigg Boss OTT' fame Uorfi keeps making headlines for her bold fashion statement. Recently she was targeted by politician Chitra Wagh and she filed a complaint against her for publicly 'indulging in nudity'.

Honey said in an interview given to the media: "I really liked that kid (Uorfi). She is very bold and brave. Jo apni zindagi apne tareeke se jeena chahti hai (She wants to live her life her way). I think all the girls of our country should learn something from her."

The rapper is known for his hit tracks like 'Begaani Naar', 'Achko Machko', 'High Heels', 'Break Up Party', among others and also

released his music albums and has sung in films like 'Cocktail' and 'Mastan', and many more.

He added: "Do whatever comes in your heart without any hesitation, without being scared of anyone irrespective of where you come from and which religion, caste or home you belong to."

He also spoke about collaborating with Uorfi in a music video and added: "Yes definitely if there is a good song in which I think she can play very well then why not? I'm wishing her all the luck and support."

Uorfi has been part of several TV shows such as 'Meri Durga', 'Bepannaah', 'Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai' and she was also seen on reality shows like 'Bigg Boss OTT' and currently on 'Splitsvilla X4'.

'I WAS NEVER A BIRTHDAY PERSON'

Rocking Star Yash penned a heartfelt note for his fans

Team Absolute | Bengaluru

Ahead of his 37th birthday on January 8, star Yash has penned a heartfelt note for his fans and said that he is working towards clinching something that he believes in but needs more time.

As it was decided that Yash will announce his next Yash19 on his birthday, the superstar came to his fans with a note and asked them to be patient regarding the announcement of his next project.

In the note, he urged his fans to be patient about the announcement of his next as it is unlikely to be announced by January 8.

He wrote: "To, My fans - my strength, the effort you all put in to showcase your love and affection all year round and especially on my birthday, fills my heart with gratitude. I have never been a birthday person, but over the years, witnessing the enthusiasm with which you celebrate and being able to meet you in person to mark the day, has made it special."

"I am working towards clinching something that I believe in and am passionate about. You are the ones who empower me to think bigger and better. When I meet you next, I want to share that news and all the details with you. To be able to do that, I need some more time, which seems unlikely by 8th of Jan. So, this year, I ask you all for a specific gift - the gift of your patience and understanding."

"This year on my birthday, I won't be in town and will not be able to meet you all. However, every wish, every gesture means a lot to me. And I promise you, I will make it worth the wait. With love, Yash."

He captioned the note: "To my fans, With love Yash"



Things turn bitter between Shalin and Tina yet again

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Its new week and new tasks and tragedies taking place in Salman Khan hosted reality show Bigg Boss 15. In a fun task, "Bigg Boss" orders the housemates to splash foam on the faces of contestants whose personalities haven't emerged after nearly 10 weeks in the prized residence. It will be interesting to find out who has kept their true selves hidden inside in order to play the game.

Soon after, housemates begin readying themselves for the 'vaar' and that's when Shalin interrupts a conversation between Sreejita De and Priyanka Chahar Choudhary, who sternly asks him to shut up.

Shalin questions her rude behavior and she taunts him by pointing out that she doesn't throw things around like him in anger and that she's not scared of him. An annoyed Shalin badmouths Priyanka in front

of his close friend Tina Datta, who reprimands him for his anger issues that affect his friendships.

Following this drama and tension, Salman Khan exposes the truth of the much-talked-about equation between Shalin and Tina. Even after 10 weeks, it's not clear if Shalin and Tina have a soft corner for each other or if it's all an act for the cameras. Known to not mince his words, Salman asks Tina what game she is playing and with whom.

Upon Tina making it clear that she has maintained that there can be no relationship between her and Shalin, Salman raises questions about her dancing closely with Shalin right after a huge fight on New Year's night. He observes that when Tina is weak, she goes to Shalin and when she's strong she snaps out of the fake equation with him. He guarantees that their relationship of convenience will not last and challenges Tina to own the game that she's playing.



Kate Sharma