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CAN OMICRON & INFLUENZA CO-INFECTION TURN DEADLY?

Covid and influenza can coexist in some patients. Flu and all viral infections are virulent if not detected on time and can lead to severe problems, including hospitalization. While both are primarily viral infections, with the dual infection patients will be having more cough and nasal symptoms. But if the patients are immunocompromised and their immunity is low, they are more likely to have respiratory issues such as breathlessness. These patients normally end up in ICU with severe complications.

Kuldeep Kumar Grover, head of critical care & pulmonology at C.K. Birla Hospital, Gurugram



turn fatal if not treated on time, health experts said on Friday. Increasing genome surveillance and active follow-up may also help, they noted. A pre-print study, meaning not yet peer-reviewed, reported the case of a 10-year-old girl from Kerala, who was co-infected with SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant and influenza A-H3N2 last year. The school-going girl was taken to the primary health centre with symptoms of low-grade fever associated with cough and cold. There was no associated chest pain or dyspnea, and her vitals were normal with clear chest. She was given symptomatic treatment and all the symptoms subsided after three days. "The patient presented in this study was co-infected with the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant and the influenza A-H3N2 virus, as confirmed through genome sequencing data.

She recovered quickly with symptomatic treatment without developing any complications," said the researchers in the study, including from ICMR-NIE Chennai, CSIR Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, District Medical Office, Kasaragod, Kerala, and Department of Microbiology, Government Medical College Calicut, Kerala. The report highlighted the importance of genomic surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 co-infections with other respiratory illnesses for understanding the prevalence of co-infections and thus their rapid detection and prevention. According to biologist Vinod Scaria, the estimates of co-infection between Covid and influenza "are variable, and possibly not so rare as we believe it could be". "Co-infections have been associated with a higher rate of morbidity and mortality. It is estimated that 16 per cent of paediatric influenza deaths

India logs 11,109 new Covid cases

New Delhi: India recorded as many as 11,109 new Covid-19 cases in the past 24 hours, as per the Ministry of Health and Family Affairs' data on Friday. The country's active caseload stands at 49,622, while the active cases are at 0.11 per cent. With 6,456 patients discharged from the hospital during the same period, the total recoveries have risen to 4,42,16,583. The recovery rate is being pegged at 98.70 per cent. According to the data, the daily positivity rate is 5.01 per cent and the weekly Positivity Rate stand at 4.29 per cent. As many as 2,21,725 tests were conducted in the past 24 hours taking the total number of tests to 92.37 crore.

during 2021-2022 were in patients who were co-infected with SARS-CoV-2," Scaria, a scientist at CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), said in a tweet. He stressed the importance of "active case surveillance, follow-up and molecular confirmation of infection". "With wider availability of molecular tools, including genome sequencing, it is possibly the right time we think of having a diagnosis for all outbreaks. Let us make 'mystery disease' a history," he said.

EXCISE POLICY CASE: KEJRIWAL SUMMONED BY CBI FOR QUESTIONING

Atul Krshan | New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday summoned Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to join the investigation in the alleged excise policy scam case on Sunday. Kejriwal's testimony will be recorded by a team of top officials. CBI sources told reporter that they will question Kejriwal about the call reportedly made between alleged accused Vijay Nair and Sameer Mahendru. As per the probe agency, Nair had arranged meeting of the owner/controller of Indo Spirits Sameer Mahendru, with Kejriwal and when that didn't materialise, arranged a video call through Facetime on his phone for both and in the video call, Kejriwal allegedly told Mahendru that Nair was "his boy" and that Mahendru



"should trust him and carry on with him". It has also been alleged that Mahendru transferred around Rs 1 crore in the account of Radha Industries which is reportedly owned by Dinesh Arora, a close aide of former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who was earlier arrested by both the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the matter, and is

presently in jail. Mahendru, on behalf of Vijay Nair, the former CEO of entertainment and event management firm Only Much Louder, named as an accused in the CBI's FIR, allegedly paid around Rs 2 to 4 crore to Arjun Pandey, another associate of Sisodia. The CBI has already filed a charge sheet in the matter and they are about to file a supplementary charge sheet.

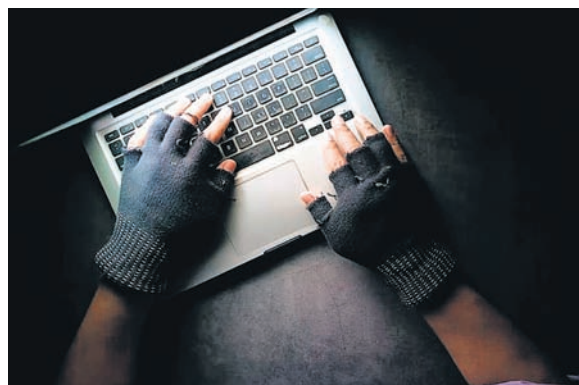
BRANDING EVERYONE 'ANTI-NATIONALS' A DANGEROUS TREND, WARNS KHARGE

New Delhi: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday said that branding everyone as "anti-nationals" is a dangerous trend. "The culture of forcing silence on anyone - be it opposition parties, civil society groups, activists, NGOs, judiciary, media and ordinary citizens and branding them as 'anti-nationals' is a dangerous trend, that will finish our democracy and destroy our Constitution," he said in a statement. The Congress chief also alleged that the Parliament has been converted into an arena of combat rather than debate and not by the opposition, but by the ruling party itself. "It is time for serious introspection whether we would allow the degradation of our democracy and pave the way for dictatorship or try to preserve and protect the finest ideals of our Constitution makers. The choice remains with us and only us," he added.

Hackers target Indian account holders in tax-related smishing campaign: Report

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Researchers have started monitoring a smishing campaign in which malicious SMS texts are being sent out trying to trick users of certain Indian banks, a new report said on Friday. According to cybersecurity company Sophos, the smish campaign consists of a text with a link addressed to customers of the most popular Indian banks. It sends a text falsely claiming that the recipient's bank account will be blocked, and telling the recipient to update their PAN and AADHAR card information on their accounts. The text also includes a link to an Android Package (APK) file. According to the researchers, this campaign is targeting customers looking to file returns in tax season



and to update their year-end financial results. Moreover, the report mentioned that the link downloads an APK and after installation, this APK opens fake (but lookalike) bank login pages - abusing not only recipients but the banks' brands. The APK then tries to acquire the recipient's login, password, debit card number, and ATM pin.

If the recipient enters any personal information, the data gets exfiltrated to a remote server owned by the attackers rather than the bank. Further, the report explained that the APK also has the ability to read the contents of SMS texts when they are received, possibly to extract any OTP codes issued by the bank.

Amarnath Yatra 2023 to commence on July 1, last 62 days

Jammu | Agencies

The 62-day long Amarnath Yatra will commence on July 1 this year and culminate on August 31, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha announced on Friday. The registration through online and offline modes will start from April 17. Announcing the dates for holy pilgrimage and registration, the LG said the administration is committed to ensure a smooth and hassle-free pilgrimage. "Hassle-free pilgrimage is top priority of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. The administration will provide best-in-class healthcare and other essential facilities to all the visiting devotees and service providers. Telecom services will be made operational prior to the commencement of pilgrim-



age. All the stakeholder departments are working in coordination to ensure facilities for lodging, power, water, security and other arrangements for the smooth conduct of Yatra," he

said, as per an official statement. The Yatra would commence simultaneously from both the routes - the Pahalgam track in Anantnag district and Baltal in Ganderbal district.

We will form government at Centre in 2024: KCR

Hyderabad: Bharat Rashttra Samithi (BRS) President and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu on Friday exuded confidence of coming to power at the Centre in the next year's elections. "We will form the government in 2024," he said while addressing a public meeting after unveiling 125-foot statue of Dr B. R. Ambedkar in Hyderabad.



KCR, as Rao is popularly known, claimed that his BRS is receiving tremendous response in Maharashtra. "The response is beyond our expectations. Tomorrow we will get a similar response from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and everywhere," he said. He recalled that when he had left for Delhi in 2014, he had stated that he was leaving Andhra Pradesh and will return to Telangana. "With the same self-confidence, I am saying the next government in the country will be ours," he said. KCR remarked that this may look far-fetched to their rivals but it all needs a spark to bring the change.

18,000 cattle killed in "Horrific" explosion, fire in Texas

Houston, United States: A "horrific" explosion and fire at a dairy farm in the southern US state of Texas killed about 18,000 head of cattle and injured one agricultural worker, authorities said on Thursday. "This was the deadliest barn fire for cattle in Texas history and the investigation and cleanup may take some time," Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller said in a statement. The explosion and fire ripped through the Southfork Dairy Farms near the town of Dimmitt in the Texas Panhandle on Monday night. Firefighters and police rushed to the scene and "determined that one person was trapped inside," the Castro County Sheriff's Office said on Facebook. The person was rescued and flown to a hospital in Lubbock, it said. The cause of the explosion and fire were not immediately clear, said Miller, who described it as a "horrific event."

DRONE MAPPING OF ONE LAKH VILLAGES TO SOLVE LAND DISPUTES: PM MODI

Team Absolute | Guwahati

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that India has taken a huge lead globally in dealing with the issue of property rights, which result in the burdening of the legal system of any country. While attending the Gauhati High Court's platinum jubilee celebrations, the Prime Minister said that even developed nations are dealing with the issue of unclear property rights. "Drone mapping of more than one lakh villages in the country along with property card distribution to lakhs of citizens have already been accomplished. This will result in a decline in property-related cases and ease the lives of citizens," the Prime Minister said.



Modi also said that there is unlimited scope for technology to modernise the justice delivery system in the country. Praising the work of the Supreme Court's e-committee, the Prime Minister told the gathering about Phase 3 of the e-court mission as announced in this year's Budget. Modi also mentioned the judicial efforts to use AI in the judicial system to bring more efficiency.

Just 11.3% women use payment apps on smartphones in India: Report

The research was done using first-party data covering the company's vast base of more than 85 million android smartphones. The report looks at the data from the months of 2022 and 2023 to analyse mobile usage trends and the evolving mindshare of the Indian consumers.

- The report by Artificial Intelligence innovation start-up Bobble AI showed that hardly 6.1 per cent women are active on gaming applications.
- Interestingly, the report also showed a higher proportion of women using food apps (23.5 per cent).
- In addition, women's participation in the usage of communication apps (23.3 per cent) and video apps (21.7 per cent) were also comparatively higher than payment apps and games.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Despite a 50 per cent rise in the Indian users' time spent over smartphones in the last year and the participation of women in the workforce rising consistently, only 11.3 per cent of Indian women are using smartphones to access payment applications, according to a report on Friday. The findings are based on Bobble AI's study to understand the trends around cell phone usage and the subsequent interaction of the users with the market and different platforms. As per the report, the aggregate time spent on smartphones has been increasing consistently from



January 2022 to January 2023. The data reveals that the average phone usage has increased from 30 per cent of the month in 2022 to 46 per cent of the month in 2023. Subsequently, the data also found that, on average, the users spend more than half an hour on their mobile keyboard every day. The overall data also found that the users spent 50 per cent more time on their smartphones in

the early months of 2023 as compared with 2022. The report claims that India spends the majority of their time on communication apps, social media apps and video apps (a total of 76.68 per cent), the rest of the apps get just a little more than 23 per cent of the total time pie that the users spend on their smartphones. Among the other apps, lifestyle apps emerged as the most engaging with users spending more than 9 per cent of their time on this category of apps. Apart from these categories, finance, gaming, music and entertainment apps saw an engagement of more than 1 per cent concerning the time spent, the report said.



K'TAKA: REBELS CREATING STIR IN BJP CAMP AHEAD OF POLLS

Bengaluru | Agencies

With rebels giving a headache to the BJP in Karnataka ahead of the May 10 Assembly election, the party has given the responsibility of assuaging the disaffection to former chief minister B.S. Yediyurappa, state unit BJP president Nalin Kumar Kateel and Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Shobha Karandlaje.

Former Deputy Chief Minister Lakshman Savadi in the Yediyurappa-led Cabinet has recently quit the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and joined the Congress.

Reacting to this, BJP in-charge for Karnataka polls, Arun Singh, on Friday said Savadi will not have any future in the Congress party.

"He has committed a blunder by joining Congress. He will repent," Singh said.



"The doors would be permanently closed for those who deserted the party. It might take 20 years for the party to accept them back. His decision is selfish," Arun Singh has stated. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said he was sad as Savadi saw a political future with the Congress.

Talking to reporters here on Friday, he said "it is common that there will be more aspirants in the ruling party. The party workers are with

them".

"The BJP will win the coming Assembly election with a thumping majority. Some of them have quit the party to become MLAs but the BJP workers are with them," Bommai said.

The chief minister said the second list of candidates has already been released and the third list will be out soon. He will be filing his nomination papers in Shiggaon on Saturday. Meanwhile, Union Minister

for Mine, Coal and Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi has stated that he is confident of former chief minister Jagadish Shettar getting a ticket.

The matter has been discussed with the national president and everything will end well, he said.

"The BJP won't give tickets to fathers and sons like Congress. There were many candidates in the BJP party and this has led to confusion. The winning party will have more demand. In another two days, these confusions will end," Joshi said.

Meanwhile, Karnataka unit Congress president D.K. Shivakumar said that 25 leaders of the BJP and the JD-S will join the Congress in the coming days.

"BJP will only win 60 seats and JD-S will not get more than 24 seats. The Congress is going to win 141 seats," he said.

Congress will make sacrifice to protect Constitution: Hooda

Sonapat | Agencies

Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Friday said "our ancestors gave lives to enable India to get freedom and frame the Constitution and now the Congress will make any sacrifice to protect the Constitution".

Addressing the Samvidhan Bachao Rally as part of the Jai Bharat Satyagrah here, the Leader of Opposition said such a large turnout showed that the people have now decided that they just have to wait for the elections.

The crowds turned up despite the peak season of crop harvesting and mercury crossing 42 degrees Celsius.

Hooda recounted the legacy of the Congress and said "our elders fought for freedom and made sacrifices for making the Constitution of the country. In the present situation, some forces want to weaken the Constitution".

"The BJP government cancelled the membership of party leader Rahul Gandhi to suppress the voice of the Opposition," he said.

He said the Congress would not allow the Constitution to be weakened, nor it



would allow the voice of Rahul Gandhi to be suppressed.

"A strong India needs a strong Constitution. On the birth anniversary of Bhimrao Ambedkar, let us take a pledge that we would not allow anyone to weaken the rights enshrined in the Constitution," he said.

Haryana unit party president Uday

Bhan said on the ideology of Bhimrao Ambedkar, the Congress made laws like the Right to Education, the Right to Information and the Right to Food.

"The Congress brought the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act to empower the weak, backward, exploited and deprived sections of society," he said.

Electricity subsidy to continue in Delhi as LG approves file

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The people of Delhi will continue to get subsidised electricity like before as Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena on Friday approved the file related to power subsidy.

Earlier in the day, Delhi's Energy Minister Atishi said "The file relating to subsidy has been stopped by the Lieutenant Governor. Due to this, 46 lakh consumers of Delhi will not be able to get electricity subsidy."

Shortly after the allegations were made by the Energy Minister, the Lieutenant Governor's office claimed that the Delhi L-G has signed the file on electricity subsidy.

"As the Lieutenant Governor had withheld the file related to power subsidy, Delhiites would not be able to get free electricity from Saturday," Atishi had alleged.

She said that the Arvind Kejriwal government of Delhi gives 200 units free of cost to Delhiites every month and 50 per cent subsidy on 201 to 400 units of electricity.

Atishi also claimed that she had sought an appointment with the Lieutenant Governor on this subject, but even after 24 hours, the L-G did not give her an appointment.



Reacting to Atishi's allegations, the Lieutenant Governor's office said that the Energy Minister should avoid making unnecessary and baseless allegations.

The L-G's office said "The Energy Minister should stop misleading the people with false statements. The Energy Minister and the Chief Minister have been asked why the decision regarding subsidy was kept pending till April 4, when the deadline for electricity subsidy was April 15." Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinay Saxena has slammed the state government for not conducting the audit of Rs 13,549 crore given to the power discoms.

WOMAN ASI ASSAULTED IN POLICE STATION; COP, SHO TRANSFERRED

Gurugram: In a dispute, a male constable allegedly thrashed a woman assistant sub-inspector (ASI) and also threatened to kill her inside the premises of Sector 37 police station, police said.

Following the incident, the woman station house officer (SHO) of Sector 37 police station was transferred with immediate effect by the police commissioner. Sources said that the constable has also been transferred to the police line. According to the police, the incident took place inside the Sector 37 police station on Wednesday night when verbal arguments started between constable Praveesh and ASI Poonam when ASI asked the constable to not interfere in her work.

Soon after a fight broke out between them and the duo started fighting with each other. Later, other cops intervened and set aside both of them. At that time station house officer Sunita was not present at the police station and later she took up the matter when she reached the police station.

Bengal Speaker reminds judiciary its limits without naming Justice Gangopadhyay

Kolkata | Agencies

West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman

Bandopadhyay on Friday reminded the judiciary of its limits.

After attending an event to mark the 132nd birth anniversary of B.R. Ambedkar in the Assembly premises, Bandopadhyay said that if the judiciary considers itself as supreme in every matter, it is not a good signal for democracy.

"Everyone has a specific sphere of operation. The administration should perform administrative duties, and the judiciary should perform its related duties. The judiciary should allow the state government to perform independently," the Speaker said.

His observations came



just a day after Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay gave permission to the CBI and the ED to question Trinamool Congress' national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee over the allegations levelled by expelled youth Trinamool

leader Kuntal Ghosh that the central agencies are putting pressure on him to name Banerjee in the multi-crore teacher recruitment scam in West Bengal.

In fact, Trinamool spokesman Kunal Ghosh had also launched a

scathing attack against Justice Gangopadhyay following the latter's observations in the court on Thursday.

However, unlike Ghosh, Bandopadhyay did not take the name of Justice Gangopadhyay. When specifically asked by mediapersons the reason for his observations about the judiciary, the Speaker said that instances of judicial interference have become quite common in recent days.

"If someone feels he can summon anyone, tomorrow he might feel like summoning the Assembly speaker. But that will not be desirable. He should understand that no such message should go out that the court is getting biased at any point," Bandopadhyay said.

ASAD PLANNED TO ATTACK CONVOY TO HALT ATIQ'S TRANSFER TO UP

Prayagraj (UP) | Agencies

Top UP Police officials said on Friday that Asad and Ghulam, who were killed in an encounter of Thursday, had planned to attack a convoy transporting dreaded gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed from Ahmedabad to Prayagraj.

The two did not plan to attack the convoy and free Atiq Ahmad - as is being claimed by a section of media - but to embarrass the UP government, create a sensation and prevent Atiq's frequent trips to UP.

Asad, sources said, wanted questions to be raised on Atiq's security so that his transfer from Sabarmati jail in Gujarat to UP would be halted.

Atiq's family was apparently worried about his security since he had been brought to Prayagraj twice in a month. The plan to kill Umesh Pal was hatched on February 11, officials said. Eight associates of Asad were also present in the meeting, reportedly arranged in collusion with prison



authorities, with Atiq's brother Ashraf in Bareilly jail. There were no security cameras at the spot. Umesh Pal was murdered 13 days later.

Atiq and Ashraf have confessed to the meeting, police sources said. After Umesh Pal's murder on February 24, Asad hid at a house in

Prayagraj for a day, police sources said. He went to Kanpur on February 26 on a motorcycle, then to Delhi's Anand Vihar on a bus, and stayed at Jamia Nagar and Sangam Vihar areas in the south of the national capital.

Asad left for Ajmer in Rajasthan on March 15 and headed to Mumbai later, after which he travelled to Jhansi through Nashik and Kanpur. He stayed for a few days at all of these places, police sources said.

Asad did not travel by train and kept using buses or other means of road transport for his almost 4,000 km journey.

On March 28, Atiq Ahmed was convicted by an MP-MLA court and sentenced to rigorous life imprisonment in the abduction case of now-dead Umesh Pal. Atiq Ahmed and his family came under the scanner as CCTV footage showed how Pal was murdered by indiscriminate firing and a bomb blast. Asad was seen chasing Umesh Pal with a gun in hand.

NHA enables FASTag based payments at forest entry points

Team Absolute | New Delhi

National Highways Authority of India (NHA) has enabled FASTag based payments at forest entry points to facilitate seamless and efficient process for vehicles entering the forest areas.

Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IHMC), a company incorporated by NHA to carry out electronic tolling, has inked an MoU with the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve spread across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Officials said the initiative aims to provide a FASTag based payment system at forest entry points and will extend the benefit of collection of Ecosystem Management Coordination fee via FASTag at various entrance points of the Tiger reserve. The FASTag system employs 'Radio Frequency Identification' technology to enable automatic toll payments at toll plazas and above vehicles have been mandated across the country. "By enabling FASTag-based payments at forest entry points, visitors can avoid long queues and delays, allowing



them to savour the natural beauty and wildlife of these areas without any hassles," a statement noted. This partnership between IHMC and the Forest Department is a significant step towards promoting sustainable tourism and preserving natural

resources by curbing vehicular emissions at the forest entry points.

CHANGE OF NAME

I MRS AASMA NAAZ (Exciting Name of spouse as per. Change of NOK in Record). Spouse of No. 15422276W Nk Amjad Khan Resident of Vill-Baldana Safipur, PO and PS-Noorpur, Tehsil-Chandpur, Dist- Bijnor, UP, PIN-246734 have changed my name from MRS AASMA NAAZ (Existing Name of spouse as per change of NOK in Record) to AASMA NAZ (proposed New Name) vide Affidavit No. 73/2023 dated 16/02/2023, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

CHANGE OF NAME

I ANITA RAI is legally Wedded spouse of No. JC572750X NB/SUB JAN-MEJAY RAY presently residing at Ujjar, Ujjar Balia Uttar Pradesh Pin-277501 have changed my name from ANITA RAI to ANITA RAI vide affidavit No. 75AA 781744.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MANISHA RAHUL SHENDE is legally Wedded spouse of No. 4581042L NK SHENDE RAHUL RAJPAL presently residing at near dr. ambedkar college, Panchashil nagar wadarpura, Rukhmini Nagar, Amravati, Maharashtra Pin- 444606 have changed my name from MANISHA SHENDE to MANISHA RAHUL SHENDE vide affidavit No. 75AA 781745.

Gurugram police nab three arms suppliers, five receivers

Gurugram | Agencies

Three illegal arms suppliers and five receivers have been arrested and four pistols and 45 live cartridges have been recovered from their possession, the Gurugram police said on Friday.

The arms suppliers have been identified as Shalender (22), Nikhil (20) and Sidhant Kushwaha alias Dalda, while the receivers have been identified as Tinku (25), Manjeet (28), Sonu alias Daddu (30), Jaipal (30) and Joginder (30).

According to the police, they first nabbed Shalender on April 10 from the Bakhtawar Chowk in Gurugram and recovered one pistol and three live cartridges from his possession.

Based on his disclosure, Tinku, Manjeet, Sonu and Jaipal were held on April 11 from Beri in Jhajjar district of Haryana. Nikhil and Sidhant



were arrested from Bhind, Madhya Pradesh, on April 13, while Joginder was arrested from Paschim Vihar in Delhi.

During sustained interrogation, Shalender disclosed that he used to take weapons from Nikhil and Sidhant and supply them to the remaining five.

"Shalender revealed that

he has been supplying illegal arms for the last one year. He used to buy country-made pistols from Bhind for Rs 5,000 and sell them for Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000. He also sold pistols for Rs 28,000 to Rs 30,000. He had earlier supplied around six pistols and 60 cartridges in Beri," said Preet Pal Sangwan, ACP (crime).

HIMACHAL CM GETS ROUSING WELCOME IN SPITI VALLEY

Kaza (Himachal Pradesh) | Agencies

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu on Friday reached the picturesque Spiti Valley on his three-day visit to Lahaul-Spiti district where locals accorded a grand welcome to him with traditional costumes and musical instruments.

The Chief Minister offered prayers at the famous Kungri and Dhankhar Gompa and wished for the happiness and prosperity of the people.

Residents of the valley, largely the Buddhist, welcomed the Chief Minister by presenting the traditional attire to Sukhu and his wife, Kamlesh Thakur.

Starting the speech by saying 'Jule', meaning hello, while addressing a gathering at Kungri Gompa, the Chief Minister said the emphasis would be laid on the maximum use of technology to strengthen the infrastructure in the region with focus on economy. He said 4G mobile phone services would be extending up to the Spiti Valley.

The government was well aware of the difficulties faced by the tribal areas and was working with commitment to make their daily life more comfortable and accessible. He said to solve their



problems, a plan would be prepared and implemented in consultation with local MLA Ravi Thakur.

After assuming office, he has come on a visit to Spiti for the first time and the rich cultural heritage of the valley was invaluable, said Sukhu.

The government is determined for the development of the tribal areas and this year a state-level function is being celebrated at Kaza on Himachal Day, which falls on April 15. "This

would further strengthen the culture of the region and connect with the people here," he added.

The Chief Minister said the government was taking concrete steps to bring back the economy which was in the trough due to the financial mismanagement of the previous government and the positive results would be seen in the next four years. He assured that with the cooperation of all, Himachal would be among the most prosperous states of the country in the next 10 years.

He said with the aim of strengthening the rural economy, special provisions have been made in this state Budget. He added along with providing financial assistance of Rs 1.5 lakh to eligible widows for house construction, a provision has been made for education loan at one per cent interest to poor children for higher education. Linking solar energy with self-employment, the state government has made a provision of 40 per cent subsidy for solar power projects ranging from 250 kW to 2 MW, which would provide means of income to the youth, he said. The Chief Minister announced Rs 50 lakh for the Kungri monastery on the occasion.



THOUSANDS THROG TO VIEW AMBEDKAR'S 55K-SQ FT RANGOLI IN PARBHANI

Team Absolute | Parbhani

The largest ever rangoli of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar - the Chief Architect of Indian Constitution - has been unveiled at a stadium in Maharashtra's Parbhani to mark his 132nd birth anniversary celebrations, a top leader said here on Friday.

The massive rangoli in 55,000 square feet size - billed as the biggest of its kind created in India so far - is the brainchild of Maharashtra Congress SC Department President Siddharth Hattiangire.

The multi-coloured stunning creation was inaugurated by Parbhani Collector Aanchal Sood-Goyal, in the presence of Superintendent of Police Ragasudha R., Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay H. Jadhav, the Dalit spiritual leader Upagupta Mahathero, monks and other dignitaries, at the sprawling Indra Gandhi District Sports Complex in the town.



The students used a staggering 12 tonnes (over 12,000 kgs) of coloured powders to make the vibrant life-like image of Dr Ambedkar on the open stadium ground, and fortunately, escaped the rainy-hailstorm experienced in many parts of the state in the past 3-4 weeks.

The end-result was an astonishing mega-portrait of Dr Ambedkar, sporting a photo-framed image of Dr Ambedkar sporting his trademark formal suit-and-tie, and then started filling up the colours, for seven days and nights, barring 3-4 hours in the afternoons.

Akshay Kumar responds to Nagaland Minister's tweet about punctuality

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Akshay Kumar, who will be soon seen in 'OMG 2', responded to Nagaland's Minister of Tribal Affairs Temjen Imna Along, who said that he was inspired by Akshay Kumar's punctuality.

A few days back, Temjen had gone to attend an event where Akshay reached earlier than everyone else. The Minister shared that he was inspired by Akshay Kumar since the actor is known to be punctual. He tweeted a picture of himself from the event as he wrote: "Dekho! I am not a VIP, I come earlier than the audience. Inspired by @akshaykumar! Akshay replied



to the post and wrote: "Haha! Thank you. And I'm very inspired by your sense of humour @AlongImna." After this, Temjen Imna Along took to his Twitter to share another hilarious tweet in his classic style. Replying to the tweet, he mentioned that he is also a follower of Akshay Kumar's fitness, however, he finds it difficult to exercise.

2 electrocuted, 4 injured after Ambedkar Jayanti procession in Palghar

Palghar: Two men were electrocuted and four more injured when they were returning home after the Ambedkar Jayanti celebrations, officials said here on Friday. The tragedy took place in the Kargil Nagar area of Virar town around 11 p.m. on Thursday, after a colourful procession of Baudhdhjan Panchayat Samiti and other groups to mark the 132nd birth anniversary of B.R. Ambedkar being celebrated all over the country on Friday (April 14).

As they stood atop a slow moving vehicle in the procession, an iron rod apparently hit an electric transformer, resulting in massive electric jolts to the victims. While Sumit Sut, 23, and Roopesh Surve, 30, succumbed instantly, the others were rushed to a nearby hospital in Mumbai, where the condition of two persons is said to be critical.

The Palghar police are probing the incident and further details are awaited as the tragedy cast a pall of gloom in the town.

Congress dares BJP to stop Rahul Gandhi from entering Maharashtra

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Congress on Friday flayed Bharatiya Janata Party Maharashtra President Chandrashekhar Bawankule's warning that party leader Rahul Gandhi will be prevented from entering the state unless he apologises for his comments on Vinayak D. Savarkar. In a sharp reaction, state Congress President Nana Patole challenged Bawankule to stop Gandhi from coming to this state and "doesn't need the BJP's permission" to visit whenever he wants.

"Gandhi's visit to Mumbai is still not finalised but he will come to the state very soon... Nobody can stop him. The Congress activists will give him a rousing welcome. Bawankule has no worth even in his own party, so how will he debar Gandhi," he said. Patole added that the people are "disgusted with the bigoted and communal politics of BJP, the dis-



stress due to inflation, joblessness, farmers crises and other issues which the government is ignoring".

"Instead, the BJP is indulging in expanding itself through politics of oppressions by deploying central agencies like CBI, ED for its own survival. No party can grow by breaking other parties, it needs the peoples' support, confidence and a strong mass organisation," he contended. Pointing to the spate of defections in Karnataka, he advised Deputy

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis - "who keeps making noises daily that people will come to BJP from this or that party" - to see the status in the neighbouring state before making tall claims.

"Even though the BJP is spending crores of rupees to defame Rahul Gandhi, his public support keeps increasing. Those who are saying that Congress is 'finished' need not be taken seriously. The BJP and its leaders simply cannot sleep without attacking Congress or Gandhi, as they are now worried," Patole claimed.

The Congress chief said that Bawankule has no moral authority to threaten Gandhi when many BJP leaders have insulted Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule or Karmveer Bhaurao Patil.

"First, he should ask those who have abused these icons to apologise before talking about Gandhi," Patole said firmly.

Cops turn fruit sellers, auto drivers to catch chain-snatcher in Maharashtra

Palghar | Agencies

A team of policemen in Maharashtra's Palghar district sold fruits and vegetables, drove autorickshaws and posed as homeless persons before arresting an alleged chain-snatcher as they wanted to avoid a confrontation with his community members, an official said on Friday.

Shahuraj Ranaware, senior inspector of Crime Unit III of Mira-Bhayandar, Vasai-Virar police, said the team kept a vigil on accused Abbas Amzad Irani (24) in his neighbourhood at Ambivali wearing different attires for a couple of weeks.

Some of the team members also visited the restaurant that Irani frequented.

The official said the community members of the accused are known for attack-

ing police parties when they try to arrest any of them.

Police wanted to avoid any such clashes and keep the operation incident-free, he said. A few cops wandered in the area like vagabonds, he said.

After cornering Irani in the first week of this month, the policemen bundled him into an auto and drove him to the police station, he said.

With Irani's arrest, the official said, police have detected at least seven cases of chain-snatching in the district. They have also recovered a motorbike and gold jewellery worth nearly Rs.31 lakh, he said.

Irani was earlier booked twice under the anti-organised crime law MCOCA and faces 21 cases in the limits of Thane city police, the official said.

Mumbai airport to handle 14% more weekly flight movements this summer



Mumbai | Agencies

Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) will handle 14 per cent more weekly flight movements

this summer.

CSMIA has announced its summer schedule with 14 per cent more weekly flight movements as compared to the summer schedule of 2022. The summer schedule is effective from March 26

til October 28.

Increased demand for domestic and international travel movement from CSMIA has fuelled the rise in the overall flight operations, which in turn will benefit the travellers from Mumbai and neighbouring cities.

Moreover, the summer schedule will have additional services to 24 destinations.

With travelling gaining momentum in India, CSMIA will see 966 daily movements, as against approximately 820 of the previous summer schedule of 2022. Witnessing over 6,762 movements weekly, thus observing over 14 per cent hike in 2023 weekly flight operations as compared to 2022. Of which IndiGo will cater to weekly 47 per cent movements, Air India with weekly 17 per cent movements and Vistara with weekly 14 per cent movements. The summer schedule will also witness increased connectivity with an additional 44 movements to Goa, 37 movements to Hyderabad, 31 more movements to Kochi, 28 more movements to Rajkot and Vadodara among others.

Maharashtra pays tributes to Dr B.R Ambedkar on 132nd birth anniversary

Team Absolute | Mumbai

People from all walks of life paid rich tributes to Bharat Ratna Dr B. R. Ambedkar - the Chief Architect of the Indian Constitution - marking his 132nd birth anniversary here on Friday.

Leading the people Governor Ramesh Bais, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis and other ministers went to Chaityabhoomi in Dadar to offer floral respects to the eminent jurist, economist, social reformer and freedom-fighter.

Top leaders of various major parties, including Congress state President Nana Patole, Balasaheb Thorat and Ashok Chavan, Nationalist Congress Party President Sharad Pawar, state chief Jayant Patil, Leader of Opposition (Assembly) Ajit Pawar, Supriya Sule, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Aditya Thackeray, Leader of Opposition (Council) Ambadas Danve, Sanjay Raut, Arvind Sawant and others paid tributes to Dr Ambedkar.

Reports of celebrations have come in from all over Maharashtra, major cities, towns, districts and upto block levels with commoners, men, women, school and college students, Dalits and others remembering Dr Ambedkar, revered as the Champion of the Downtrodden Masses.

A series of social-cultural events have been organised throughout the day to commemorate Dr Ambedkar's life, teachings and contributions, by various private, government or semi-government institutions, NGOs and organisations working towards the cause of



the downtrodden.

Significant places directly linked with Dr Ambedkar - Mumbai's famed 'Rajgruha', his residential memorial in Dadar east, the south Mumbai's Elphinstone High School and Elphinstone College where he was educated, and his final resting place of Chaityabhoomi in Dadar west, witnessed massive crowds of his excited followers trooping in here from all over the state.

Other importance sites connected with Dr Ambedkar, like Nagpur's Deekshabhoomi where he embraced Buddhism, Raigad where he carried out the Mahad Satyagraha, and his tiny ancestral village of Ambadawe in Ratnagiri, were specially decorated with flowers, colourful rangolis and lights to mark the occasion, as thousands turned up to pay homage to his memory.

Maharashtra Women's Commission Chief welcomes proposal to refer to widows as...

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Even as the opposition parties in Maharashtra have objected to the state government's proposal to use "Ganga Bhagirathi" word to refer to widows in a bid to offer them respect, the chief of the state women's commission has welcomed the move, saying it would help empower women.

Chairperson of the Maharashtra State Commission for Women (MSCW), Rupali Chakankar, thanked state Women and Child Development Minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha for the proposal.

Chakankar's statement comes even as her Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) colleague and MP Supriya Sule criticised the government's move and asked the minister to withdraw the proposal.

Lodha, in a letter written on Wednesday to his department's principal secretary, has proposed the use of the word "Ganga Bhagirathi" to



refer to widows in a bid to offer them respect.

The proposal, however, drew flak from the Congress and the NCP, following which the minister issued a video statement, in which he said the move was only under consideration and no action has been taken in this direction.

Taking to Twitter, MSCW chairperson Ms Chakankar said, "I thank Women and Child Development Minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha for

this move. The decision taken by progressive Maharashtra will help in empowering women."

She said the state women's commission had asked the government to find a respectable word to refer to women after the death of their husbands.

"The word 'widow' is disrespectful to women. The commission had recommended to the government to use the word 'Purnangi' to refer to widows. The government considered the recommendation sensitively and took a positive decision, for which I congratulate the minister," she said in a series of tweets.

Earlier, the Congress slammed Lodha and sought his apology, while several social activists said the need of the hour was to undertake measures for equal rights and social safety for women rather than such "superficial and unwarranted decisions".

Slamming the idea, the Maharashtra Congress had said it revealed the Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP)'s "Manuvadi" thought process and was the party's attempt to demean widows.

State Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe said minister Lodha was a "kalank" (blot) on progressive Maharashtra and must apologise to women.

Terming the decision as painful, NCP's Supriya Sule said it must be scrapped immediately.

"Meritorious women like Rajmata Jijabai, Ahilyabai Holkar, Savitribai Phule contributed a lot to the society. While deciding on such a sensitive issue, the government should have consulted NGOs, individuals and organisations working for welfare of widows," she said.

Pramod Zinjade, who is spearheading a campaign aimed at ending the customs related to widows, condemned the government's move.

"Calling a widow 'Ganga Bhagirathi' is a regressive step. Instead these women should be referred to as 'Shrimati'," he said.

MAN HELD FOR PERFORMING DANGEROUS STUNT ON MOTORCYCLE

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The Mumbai police on Sunday arrested a 24-year-old man after his video of performing a dangerous stunt on a motorcycle with two girls went viral on social media, an official said.

The accused is a history-sheeter with cases registered against him at Antop Hill and Wadala TT police stations, he said.

"Recently, a video of the accused performing a dangerous stunt on his bike with two girls went viral on social media. The incident had occurred in the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) area of the city. After



the video surfaced, a case was registered against him and a team was formed to nab him," the official said.

The accused was held following a tip-off, he said. According to police, he was arrested under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) including 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide) and sections of the Motor Vehicles Act, and further investigation is underway.



EDITOR'S SPECS

No political Iftar in UP

The Iftar politics, that was once an important part of Uttar Pradesh politics, has gone missing. A large part of the month of Ramzan is over and not a single political party has hosted Iftar yet. For the past three years, it was Covid that prevented such events and now it is apparently the focus on Hindutva that is making political parties shy away from hosting Iftar parties. The Samajwadi Party (SP) was known to host the biggest and best attended Iftar party at its party headquarters. Its founder, late Mulayam Singh Yadav would personally attend to guests and ensure that each one had a full meal. The menu on the table was equally lavish. SP sources now claim that Akhilesh Yadav is wary of hosting an Iftar party since his rivals would brand him as anti-Hindu. However, Akhilesh has been attending Iftar parties that are being hosted by his leaders and MLAs. The Bahujan Samaj Party has been known to host Iftar parties only when it is in power and the guest list is extremely restricted. The Congress had earlier hosted Iftar parties on a regular basis and its leaders from Delhi also made it a point to attend the same. However, in recent years, the party has abandoned the tradition and insiders claim that it is mainly paucity of funds that has made it stop hosting Iftar parties. The only time that the BJP hosted an Iftar party was when Rajnath Singh was the chief minister. Other leaders have avoided playing host on such occasions. Iftar parties were started in Uttar Pradesh in the early seventies by the then Chief Minister Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna. Thereafter, it became an annual tradition.

J&K ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS? NOT SOMETIME SOON

Sheikh Qayoom

Although the final revision of electoral rolls is scheduled to be completed by May 10, most political parties in J&K believe the Assembly elections might get further delayed in the union territory.

All regional mainstream political parties and the Congress called on the election commission recently to press for early Assembly elections in the UT.

During his press conference in which the Karnataka Assembly poll schedule was announced, the Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar said there is a gap in J&K due to the absence of an elected government which must be filled. The last elected government headed by Mehbooba Mufti of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) fell after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdrew from the coalition on June 19, 2018.

Mehbooba Mufti resigned as the chief minister immediately after the BJP withdrew support to her government.

The J&K Assembly was dissolved by the then Governor, Satya Pal Malik on November 21, 2018.

On August 5, 2019, the state was downgraded to a union territory and bifurcated into the UTs of Ladakh and J&K. This followed the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A by Parliament.

Since June 20, 2018 J&K has remained without an elected government.

Leaders of political parties like the regional National Conference (NC), J&K Apni Party, Peoples Conference and Awami National Conference (ANC) and also those of the centrist Congress and the CPI(M) have been blaming the BJP government at the Centre for trying to delay the Assembly elections.

The NC leaders have been in the forefront of the opposition campaign to blame the Centre for delaying these elections which deprive J&K of having its own government.

Post abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, all local political leaders were kept under detention to maintain law and order.

Fortunately, the abrogation of Article 370 did not witness any public unrest.



Authorities said in 2019 that the political leaders were detained to prevent them from organising public protests which would be detrimental to law and order.

Generally speaking, there has been perceptible change on ground after August 2019. Public unrest, stone pelting, separatist called shutdowns, etc., have stopped.

The J&K DGP, Dilbag Singh said recently that militancy has come down although it has not been completely wiped out so far.

Kashmir had a booming tourist season last year. In the first three and half months of 2023, tourism has started on a very encouraging note.

Hotellers, tour and travel operators, Houseboat owners and 'Shikarawallahs' on the Dal and Nigeen lakes are doing brisk business this time.

This year's annual Amarnath Yatra would start in the last week of June and last for two months till August end.

The likely booming summer tourist season and the forthcoming Amarnath Yatra are two big reasons that the Assembly elections cannot be held till autumn, credible sources said.

This leaves just the last quarter of the year during which the Assembly elections could be held.

The municipal and Panchayat elections are also due by the year end in the term of office of the elected urban and rural bodies ends by January 2024.

Given these facts and the realisation

that the Lok Sabha elections are due in April-May 2024 in the country, most political leaders in J&K believe that the Assembly elections in the UT might not be held this year at all.

These could spill over to 2024 and be held together with the Lok Sabha elections next year.

This is notwithstanding the fact that every political party, including the BJP has been asking its cadre not to lower the guard and start ground level activities in anticipation of the Assembly elections. Somebody has to be really naive to take out time and watch 30 minutes of trailers of forthcoming films even for free, let alone Re 1. Does the Re 1 include parking?

Considering there is a short supply of cinema content internationally and at home, where will the new trailers come from?

How do you check if one buys a Re 1 ticket, loiters around the lobby and sneaks into any other auditorium screening a full-length film? The number of ushers at these multi-screen cinemas is very limited.

What about the risk that the trailer you screen fails to inspire or even disappoints, so much so that the viewer decides not to watch the film when released? It may lead to rating the trailers. And what purpose will your generous offer serve when every teaser or trailer is instantly available on YouTube after it is put in the public domain?

Covid patients' blood plasma may predict severity, death

Specific proteins in the blood of Covid-19 patients may help predict who may need to be placed on ventilators to breathe and which ones are most likely to die of the virus, according to a study.

The study led by researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis showed that obtaining the samples early can help identify the proteins linked to worse Covid outcomes, accelerate treatment and prevent the need for ventilators or death from the virus.

"Identifying harmful proteins may be helpful as we confront not only variants of the virus that causes Covid-19, but also as new viruses emerge in the future," said principal investigator Carlos Cruchaga, Director of the NeuroGenomics and Informatics Centre at the School of Medicine.

"We may be able to draw blood from an individual with a Covid infection, check the levels of these key proteins and quickly determine risk for serious outcomes. We then could use that information to determine the best course of treatment," Cruchaga added.

For the study, published in the journal iScience, the team studied plasma samples from 332 Covid-19 patients admitted to Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, and compared them to plasma samples from 150 people who had not been infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19.

To study the proteins in the blood plasma, the researchers used a technique called high-throughput proteomics to identify overexpression and underexpression -- also known as dysregulation -- of the proteins.

The scientists conducted additional testing to distinguish which of the proteins actually caused severe illness from those that became dysregulated as a result of severe illness.

Although the research team identified a large number of proteins that were altered in patients with Covid-19, they determined that the presence of any of 32 proteins that became dysregulated during Covid infection indicated that patients would require breathing assistance from a ventilator.

They identified another five proteins that, when found to be altered in blood plasma as a result of the virus, indicated likelihood of death for the patient.

"Many of the proteins we identified were related to inflammation and to the body's immune response, for example, so it wasn't surprising to find them altered by Covid infection," Cruchaga said. "But a subset of these proteins raised the likelihood that patients would need ventilation or go on to die. Using these proteomics approaches, we now have a methodology that allows us to predict problems, and that can be very important for clinical practice."

To further test their findings, the researchers studied similar proteomics data from 297 Covid-19 patients and 76 controls at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and found that the same proteins indicated the eventual need for ventilators and the likelihood of death in both groups of patients.

international

S.Korea, US stage air drills, involving B-52H bomber, after N.Korea's ICBM launch

Seoul | Agencies

South Korea and the US held joint air drills, involving at least one B-52H strategic bomber, on Friday, Seoul's defence ministry said, a day after North Korea test-fired a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

The North's state media has confirmed the country conducted its first test of a solid-fuel Hwasong-18 ICBM on Thursday, raising tensions already heightened by its earlier weapons tests, including those of underwater nuclear attack drones, Yonhap News Agency said.

The South Korean Air Force mobilised its F-35A radar-evading fighters and F-15K jets for the drills, while the US side deployed F-16 fighters in addition to the bomber, according to the ministry.

It did not specify in which part of the Korean Peninsula the drills took place.

"It is assessed that (the drills)



represented a close-knit, coordinated response demonstrating the powerful 'strength of the alliance' and the US will to provide extended deterrence against the recent series of North Korean provocations," the ministry said in a press release.

The drills reaffirmed the capability to swiftly deploy US strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula as well as the allies' enhanced combined operational capabilities and interoperability, it added.

The ministry also said the allies will demonstrate "through

action" their resolve not to accept any nuclear attack from the North by strengthening the frequency and intensity of the deployments of US strategic assets.

Strategic assets usually refer to high-profile military assets, such as nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, submarines and strategic bombers.

The latest deployment of the B-52H bomber followed its earlier dispatch to the Korean Peninsula for allied drills on Wednesday last week and on March 6.

ICBM TO IMPROVE NUCLEAR COUNTERATTACK POSTURE: N KOREA

Seoul: North Korea said on Friday the missile used in its recent launch was its new solid-fuel Hwasong-18 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), with leader Kim Jong-un saying that the weapon will "radically promote" the country's nuclear counterattack posture.

The North launched the new ICBM on Thursday, guided by its leader Kim, in a test of "the future core pivotal means" of war deterrence, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). It did not reveal details of the missile's specifications, such as flight distance and maximum altitude, Yonhap News Agency reported. South Korea's military said Thursday it detected the North's launch of an intermediate-or longer-range ballistic missile in the vicinity of Pyongyang into the East Sea. The missile, fired at a lofted angle, flew about 1,000 kilometers, it said. The new ICBM will "radically promote the effectiveness of its nuclear counterattack posture and bring about a change in the practicality of its offensive military strategy," Kim was quoted as saying by the KCNA in an English-language dispatch. While expressing "satisfaction" with the launch, the North's leader vowed that Pyongyang will take "fatal and offensive counteractions" so that its enemies suffer from "extreme uneasiness and horror," it added.

21-year-old arrested for leaking classified US documents on Discord

Washington | Agencies

The US law enforcement officials have arrested a 21-year-old Air Force National Guard member who leaked a trove of classified government documents on instant messaging app Discord which is popular among teenagers.

The suspect, Jack Teixeira, was arrested from his home in North Dighton, Massachusetts, late on Thursday.

"The Justice Department arrested Jack Douglas Teixeira in connection with an investigation into alleged unauthorised removal, retention, and transmission of classified national defense information," it said in a statement.

Teixeira is an employee of the United States Air Force National Guard.

Teixeira will have an initial appearance at the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts.

"This investigation is ongoing. We will share more information at the appropriate time," said the Justice Department.



The FBI said that the arrest "exemplifies our continued commitment to identifying, pursuing, and holding accountable those who betray our country's trust and put our national security at risk."

Military records show that Teixeira holds the rank of airman first class and has been in uniform since he entered the Air National Guard in September 2019.

"He has been based at Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod and is assigned as a cyber transport systems journeyman," according to NBC News.

The Pentagon first discovered the sensitive documents posted to Discord, Twitter and Telegram last week, which revealed details about the Russia-Ukraine war along with information about America's efforts to spy on Russia and its allies.

According to a report from The Washington Post, the original leaker was known as "OG" within the private Discord server "Thug Shaker Central," where he also served as the administrator.

Saudi crown prince launches 4 new special economic zones

Riyadh | Agencies

Saudi Arabian Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud have launched four new special economic zones in the kingdom. The zones, located in Riyadh, Jazan, Ras al-Khair and King Abdullah Economic City, are part of the kingdom's commitment to strengthening its position as a global investment destination, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Thursday. The Crown Prince said the new zones would have a substantial impact on how business is done in the kingdom, create tens of thousands of jobs, and contribute billions of riyals to the kingdom's GDP, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Saudi Arabia welcomes investors from all around the world to see first-hand the historic opportunities we have to offer," he added.

Benefits for companies operating in the new zones include competitive corporate tax rates, exemption from customs duties on imports, 100-percent foreign ownership of companies, and favourable policies to attract and hire talents



worldwide, among others. The launch of the new economic zones came on the heels of several other similar projects in the kingdom, including the launch of the integrated logistics special zone at King Salman International Airport in Riyadh in November 2022. Together, they represent the first phase of the kingdom's long-term programme to encourage foreign direct investment, attract the most talented professionals worldwide, and promote entrepreneurship and economic development.

Afghanistan needs regional cooperation, not US-led intervention: Iranian FM

Tehran | Agencies

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has said that Afghanistan is in need of regional cooperation to solve its current challenges rather than the US-led intervention that had pushed the country toward poverty and instability.

Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks during a quadrilateral meeting with Chinese, Russian, and Pakistani representatives on the sidelines of the foreign ministers' meeting among the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, according to the Iranian



Foreign Ministry's website on Thursday.

He said Iran is concerned about the spread of terror-

ism and extremism in Afghanistan and the continuation of the wrong US policies in the country, adding that today, Afghanistan is more in need of regional cooperation and solutions, rather than the intervention by the US and the West that have pushed the Asian country toward poverty and instability. He stressed that the US and its allies should be held to account as the occupiers of Afghanistan that had oppressed the country for two decades, and as UN members to be answerable for the current situation in the country, Xinhua news agency reported.

In the wake of the terror attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, the US launched the so-called war on terror

in Afghanistan under the pretext of pursuing Osama bin Laden, the alleged mastermind of the terror attacks. In late August 2021, the US forces hastily withdrew from Afghanistan with a military defeat, leaving the war-torn country in insecurity and abject poverty. The Iranian Foreign Minister highlighted the necessity of managing the economic situation in Afghanistan and cited the economic pressures in the country as a factor behind the increased migration of Afghan refugees to neighbouring countries, which has resulted in certain types of insecurity in these countries.



MHOW BECOMES POLITICAL HOTSPOT ON AMBEDKAR'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Indore's Mhow - the birthplace of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar - turned out to be a political hotspot on Friday as leaders from different political parties reached to pay tribute to the father of Indian Constitution on his 132th birth anniversary.

The politicians started reaching Mhow in the morning and paid tribute to Dr Ambedkar. Beside politicians, a large number of people associated with different social organisations also thronged the town on the occasion.

Former chief minister and Madhya Pradesh Congress President Kamal Nath was the first who reached Mhow to pay tribute to Dr. Ambedkar. He also attacked Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for his announcement of including five places related to Dr Ambedkar under 'Mukhyamantri Teerthsthal'.

Earlier in the morning, CM Chouhan announced that 'panch teerth' (five places) related with Dr Ambedkar's life - such as his birth place Mhow, the place in London where he stayed while studying in the UK, Deeksha Bhoomi in Nagpur,



where he took education, Mahaparinirvan Sthal in New Delhi and Chaitiya Bhoomi in Mumbai would be included in 'Mukhyamantri Teerthsthal'. A dharamshala with all facilities will be constructed in Mhow, for the convenience of the devotees coming to Mhow, the birthplace of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar.

A notification was also issued by the state government soon after

Chouhan made this announcement, wherein, 'Sant Ravidas' temple of Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) was mentioned in place of London.

Interestingly, the BJP-led MP government had issued a notification regarding the same back in 2017.

"CM Shivraj today made the same announcement that he had promised seven years back, which is why I call him CM for making fake promises,"

Nath said after paying tribute to Dr Ambedkar in Mhow.

Former Uttar Pradesh chief minister and head of the Samajwadi Party (SP) Akhilesh Yadav along with his political partner and RLD chief Jayant Choudhary also reached Mhow. They were joined by co-founder of Bhim Army-Chandrashekhar Azad (Ravan). During his visit to Indore, Yadav hit at BJP and reiterated that "until the BJP in power; our Indian Constitution will be in danger."

Later, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai C. Patel along with some other ministers reached Mhow to pay tribute to Dr Ambedkar.

"I am proud to say that we have had the privilege of building a memorial of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar. A large size of guest house would also be constructed to provide shelter for visitors. For this, the Defence Department has given NOC for 3.5 acres of land," Chouhan said after paying his tribute to Dr Ambedkar. Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar was born on April 14, 1891 in Indore's Mhow town. He was the 14th and the last child of his parents.

Gwalior Central Jail releases 22 prisoners over good conduct on Ambedkar Jayanti



Team Absolute | Gwalior

As many as 22 prisoners were released from Gwalior Central Jail over good conduct on the birth anniversary of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar.

In the video, inmates can be seen full of joy and gratitude as they meet their family. The jail management presented each of them with

gifts and wages for their labour during their incarceration. The state government has implemented a new initiative where prisoners are released four times a year, provided that they exhibit good conduct.

One of the released prisoners, Rajesh Yadav, who was serving a sentence for the crime of 302, expressed that he feels like he has been

given a new life after his release. Another prisoner, Phool Badal, a resident of Sheopur, expressed his happiness at being released from jail and stated that there were no major problems during his time in prison.

The release of these prisoners on such a significant day is a step towards creating a more humane and just criminal justice system.

Drunk JCB driver creates ruckus, rams into vehicles

Dozen passersby injured

Team Absolute | Jabalpur

Over a dozen people including women and children were injured, after a drunken JCB driver went on a rampage near Supatal pond of Jabalpur, on Thursday night. He rammed into the vehicles parked along the roadside and tried to run over passersby.

Eyewitnesses reported that the driver attempted to escape by running over on a crowded road; however locals managed to catch him. The police later took the driver into custody.

The incident resulted in a child's leg being fractured; while more than half a dozen



people were injured. Fortunately, there were no fatalities. The police seized JCB and detained the driver; also an

investigation has been initiated. However, as of late night, no formal complaint had been lodged on behalf of the injured.

MINOR STRIPPED, MADE TO CHANT RELIGIOUS SLOGANS IN INDORE

Team Absolute | Bhopal

A 12-year-old boy was allegedly stripped and forced to chant religious slogans in Madhya Pradesh's Indore, a senior police official said on Friday.

The accused, which are also minors and known to the victim, have been detained, the official said on Friday.

According to police, the incident came into light late on Thursday after a video of the incident surfaced on social media. The victim was playing near Star Square when one of the accused approached him and took him to another location.

The victim told police that upon reaching near a flyover in Mahalaxmi Nagar area, another boy joined them. The duo forced him to chant religious slogans. They also allegedly beat him and made him take off his clothes. He managed to escape and narrated the entire incident to his parents. Following which, the parents took him to a nearby police station



and lodged a complaint on Thursday. "Accused and the victim were known to each other. We have detained the accused and booked them under relevant IPC. We have also requested people not to make the video of the incident viral on

social media, as both accused and victim are minor. We are trying to find out what made the accused do such an act," police said. Further investigation is underway," a senior police official told reporter. Legal process to follow under JJ

Act According to Indore (West) superintendent of police (SP) Suraj Kumar Verma, "A case has been registered against the juvenile offenders under IPC Section 365 (Kidnapping), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 294 (abusive conduct) and 506 (criminal intimidation), besides provisions of the Information and Technology Act. All the three child offenders who also filmed the entire cruel act on their cell-phone and uploaded the video on social media are aged between 12 and 14 years and are well known to the victim boy." Reportedly, the three offenders were sent to Juvenile Justice Home where they will undergo counselling sessions.

Strict action against people spreading the incident's video In a tweet, Indore Commissioner of police warned people against spreading the video of the incident on social media as both the victim and accused involved in the act are juvenile. Strict legal action will be initiated against anyone found sharing the video.

FIRE BREAKS OUT AT A HOTEL IN INDORE'S VIJAY NAGAR

Indore: A fire broke out at a hotel in Vijay Nagar area of the city on Friday morning. Although there were not many people in the hotel, no casualties have been reported. The fire brigade reached immediately after getting the information. The incident was reported at Hotel Orange Lily in Shanti Nagar, where three rooms of third floor caught fire. The fire was brought under control with the help of 8,000 litre water.

Notably, this is the second incident in last fortnight where a fire broke out at a hotel in Indore. Earlier, on March 29, a massive fire broke out at the Papaya Tree Hotel in Indore's Rau area. The blaze reportedly started in the early hours of the morning and in no time spread throughout the hotel, causing panic and chaos among the guests and staff. Around 40 people were trapped inside the hotel. All of them were taken out and have been admitted to the hospital for treatment.

ALONG WITH CM CHOUHAN MEMBERS OF SENIOR JOURNALIST WELFARE ASSOCIATION PLANTED SAPLINGS



Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Moulshri, Peepal, Neem and Jamun along with the members of Senior Journalist Welfare Association in the garden located at Shyamla Hills, Sangh's Atmadeep, Harimohan Modi, Virendra Sinha, Chandras Shukla, Dinesh Joshi, Prem Narayan Premi and Purushottam Sodhani planted saplings.

Chandras Shukla presented the book "Punya Smaran-Patkar" to Chief Minister Chouhan. This book is a compilation of articles on 123 late journalists of Bhopal. CM Chouhan also released "Prerna Vikas Diary-2023" edited by Harimohan Modi. Along with the Chief Minister, Pawan Pandey, child Gautam Gurjar and Shrikant Patil planted saplings with their family members on their birthday.

MASSIVE FIRE BREAKS OUT AT PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK IN JABALPUR

Jabalpur: A massive fire broke out at Punjab National Bank branch at Bada Fabara in Jabalpur on Friday morning. As flames rose, locals rushed to inform bank's general manager about the incident. As per report of Nai Duniya, witnesses stated that concerned citizens attempted to extinguish the fire, while someone informed the fire brigade. When the fire brigade arrived at the scene, they were able to control the fire. Local residents expressed their relief that the fire was brought under control, as there is a market nearby for clothes that could have been affected if the fire had spread.

Samajwadi Party Will Contest In Madhya Pradesh Elections: Akhilesh Yadav

Team Absolute | Indore

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Samajwadi Party Chief Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday said that his party would contest the upcoming assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh.

Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh are slated for the end of this year.

"After Uttar Pradesh, our organisation is bigger in Madhya Pradesh and here we will contest the upcoming assembly elections," Yadav said while speaking to the media in Indore.

When asked about the politics of various parties focused on Dalits and tribal people, he says that the question is not of Dalits and tribal people, the question is whether the Constitution will survive or not. Will the law for voting in a democracy



remain or not?

"A law had made the East India Company the government, today the government is making a law so that everything goes into private hands. If it goes into private hands then what will happen to the recommendations of the Babasaheb (Ambedkar)

and Mandal Commission? The Bharatiya Janata Party is showing false dreams. Shouldn't there be talk on unemployment today?" the former UP CM asked.

He further said, "I don't know about Madhya Pradesh, but ITC and other private companies have

bought wheat from Uttar Pradesh. Now, when people go to buy flour, then these companies will get profit, after the entire farmer is being cheated. When the farmers of UP are being sold in private hands, then I know the farmers of Madhya Pradesh must have also gone into private hands."

Yadav also said that he would visit the birthplace of Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar in Mhow on the occasion of his birth anniversary on April 14. "Today, the country needs that democracy and the Constitution should survive. The BJP is trying to snatch those rights which had been given to the poor and the path shown by Baba Saheb. Today we can remember the messiah of the Mandal Commission, who gave us rights and gave us a place to live with dignity," he added.

Temperatures start soaring, Bhopal records around 40 degree

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Temperatures have started soaring with day temperatures recording over 42 degree celsius, state capital recorded close to 40 degree celsius on Thursday, the uneasiness in the nights is felt due to high temperatures.

Madhya Pradesh has witnessed temperatures higher than Delhi, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra states in the season. The mercury is highest in Rajgarh. For the third consecutive day, the temperature is running between 42-43 degrees.

According to the Meteorological Department, it is the highest in the country. Here, for the first time in Narmadapuram, the night temperature crossed 25 degree celsius. The mercury crossed 21 degree celsius in 15 cities including Ratlam-Satna on Wednesday-Thursday night.



For the first time in Bhopal, the minimum temperature was recorded at 24.8 degrees. Rajgarh's temperature was recorded at 43 degree Celsius on Wednesday. At the same time, in Damoh-Khajuraho, the mercury crossed 41 degree Celsius. The temperature in Narmadapuram, Ratlam, Guna, Dhar, Mandla, Sagar and Satna remained above 40 degree Celsius.

Met said that neither the Western Disturbance is active nor is any trough line passing through due to which sky is clear. The sun's rays are coming directly to the earth. Due to which the effect of heat has increased.

MP government to take senior citizens on free pilgrimage by air under its existing scheme

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Shivraj Singh Chouhan government in Madhya Pradesh will be taking some senior citizens in the state on free pilgrimages by air under its existing scheme and the exercise will start from May 21, months before the Assembly polls in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-ruled state.

This move is part of the Chouhan government's flagship 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Darshan Yojana', which was launched in June 2012, an official said.

Till now, the beneficiaries of the scheme used to be taken to various places of religious worship by trains. But now, air travel will be added to it.

Opposition Congress, however, said the new move was nothing but a political gimmick of the BJP government ahead of the elections.

Elections to the 230-member Assembly in Madhya Pradesh are scheduled by the end of this year.

"As per the new plan under this scheme, eligible beneficiaries from 25 districts (out of the total 52 in the state) will be taken on pilgrimages to various destinations by aeroplanes between May 21 and July 19," Additional Chief



Secretary (Home) Dr Rajesh Rajora said on Friday. Beneficiaries will be able to undertake pilgrimages to different destinations allotted to them. These places are Prayagraj, Shirdi, Mathura-Vrindavan and Gangasagar. They will be taken to these religious sites by regular service flights, he said. A total of 33 seats will be reserved for each

district. While 32 of these seats will be beneficiaries, one will be for an escort officer in each flight, Rajora said, adding that the scheme will be implemented with the help of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

A tour manager designated by the IRCTC will also accompany the beneficiaries of the scheme, he said. Under this flagship scheme of the Chouhan government, the beneficiaries were so far taken on pilgrimages by trains. Now, the option of flights is being included in it, an official said. In order to avail the scheme, the beneficiaries should be aged 65 and above, and should not be an income tax payee, he said.

If the administration receives more applications than the allotted quota for each district, the beneficiaries will be selected through a lottery system, he said.

State Congress's media cell chief K K Mishra targeted the Chouhan government over the move. "This is nothing but a political stunt. The BJP government is offering a lollipop to lure voters in the election year," K K Mishra, chairman of Congress state media cell, said. Flights to these pilgrimage destinations will be operated either from Bhopal or from Indore airport, officials said.



'WE HAVE A LOT TO CATCH UP ON'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer Taylor Swift hit the stage recently in Tampa, Florida for the first time since news broke that she and boyfriend Joe Alwyn have called it quits after six years of dating. The 'Anti-Hero' singer performed at Raymond James Stadium as part of her sold-out Eras Tour, and was in high spirits as she kicked off an expected three-hour-long show, reports People magazine. Between songs, Swift welcomed the crowd at the Raymond James Stadium, saying: "We have a lot to catch up on."

The show marked a return to the spotlight for Swift after her breakup with Alwyn went public, over the weekend. The Grammy winner and the 'Conversations with Friends' actor broke up several weeks ago due to "differences in their personalities."

"They've had rough patches before and always worked things out, so friends thought they would take some time apart but eventually come back together," the source said, quoted by People, noting that "ultimately" Swift and Alwyn "weren't the right fit for one another."

One week before news of the split broke, Swift surprised the audience by swapping out the Folklore love song 'Invisible String', which she'd included on every setlist prior, with 'The 1' which focuses instead on the "what ifs" of a failed romance.

The 'Lavender Haze' singer was first publicly linked to the British actor in May 2017, when it was revealed that the pair had been quietly dating for months. Though it's not clear exactly when they met, fans have speculated that Swift and Alwyn first crossed paths at the 2016 Met Gala.



Taylor Swift returns to stage in Florida after breakup with Joe Alwyn

'TOP GUN: MAVERICK' STAR GLEN POWELL IN TALKS TO STAR IN 'TWISTER' SEQUEL

Los Angeles | Agencies

'Top Gun: Maverick' star Glen Powell is in talks to star opposite Daisy Edgar-Jones in Universal and Amblin Entertainment's 'Twisters', a sequel to 1996's 'Twister'.

'Minari' helmer Lee Isaac Chung is directing the film from a script by 'The Revenant' writer Mark L. Smith. 'Twisters' is set to release on July 19, 2024, reports Variety.

Starring Helen Hunt, Bill Paxton, Carey Elwes and Philip Seymour Hoffman, 1996's 'Twister' made nearly \$500 million at the box office and received Oscar nominations in the visual effects and sound categories. It was directed by Jan De Bont ('Speed') from a screenplay by Michael Crichton, with Steven Spielberg executive producing.

As per Variety, the film is described as a "new chapter" of the 1996 movie. However, plot details for 'Twisters' remain under wraps. The original 'Twister' followed a team of storm-chasers as they hunted down the most powerful tornado in decades.

Warner Bros. Pictures is co-financing 'Twisters', with Frank Marshall and Pat Crowley ('Jurassic World Dominion') producing via the Kennedy/Marshall Company.

Powell is currently on a hot streak after his breakout role in a Top Gun: Maverick. His other future projects include Richard Linklater's action-comedy 'Hitman', which Powell co-wrote and co-produced;

Chris Morgan's sci-fi thriller 'Deputy X', a potential franchise starter; and buddy comedy 'Foreign Relations' opposite Nick Jonas.

He's currently in production on Sony's untitled Will Gluck rom-com alongside 'Euphoria' star Sydney Sweeney.



CARDI B SUFFERS 'WARDROBE MALFUNCTION' WHILE PERFORMING IN THAILAND

Thailand | Agencies

Cardi B dominates the crowd in a sultry gold number as she performs at Thailand's Rolling Loud Festival but suffers a wardrobe malfunction as her outfit RIPS on stage. Cardi B certainly brought her A-game as she took to the stage to headline the Rolling Loud Thailand music festival in Pattaya.

The WAP hitmaker showed off her sensational figure in an eye-catching gold tasseled ensemble - complete with chaps, hotpants and a cross-over bustier.

But during the energetic performance, she suffered a slight wardrobe malfunction as her hotpants ripped during one (of her many) bouts of twerking. In footage obtained exclusively by MailOnline, the New York native had to pause her set as she asked crew for a robe to cover up the malfunction.

"What the f**k you gonna do about it? You got something for me?" questioned Cardi to an on-stage pal behind the DJ deck. Typically energetic Cardi showed off a string of dance moves during the performance, performing her signature twerk multiple times.

But her outfit didn't appear as prepared for the show as the singer was, as the hotpants suffered a rip while she twerked. Attempting to diffuse the situation on stage, Cardi reached out to crew behind the DJ deck for some help covering up.

Speaking through her mic, she said: "What the f**k you gonna do about it?"

"What the f**k you wanna do? You wanna go or you wanna come back here and get that s**t fixed?" he questioned.

Keen to fix the matter and stay on stage, Cardi replied: "You got something for me? You got a robe or something?"

"Come on now, alright f**k it," said Cardi as she carried on despite the malfunction - beginning her next song.



THE FINAL SEASON OF "NEVER HAVE I EVER" WILL PREMIERE THIS JUNE



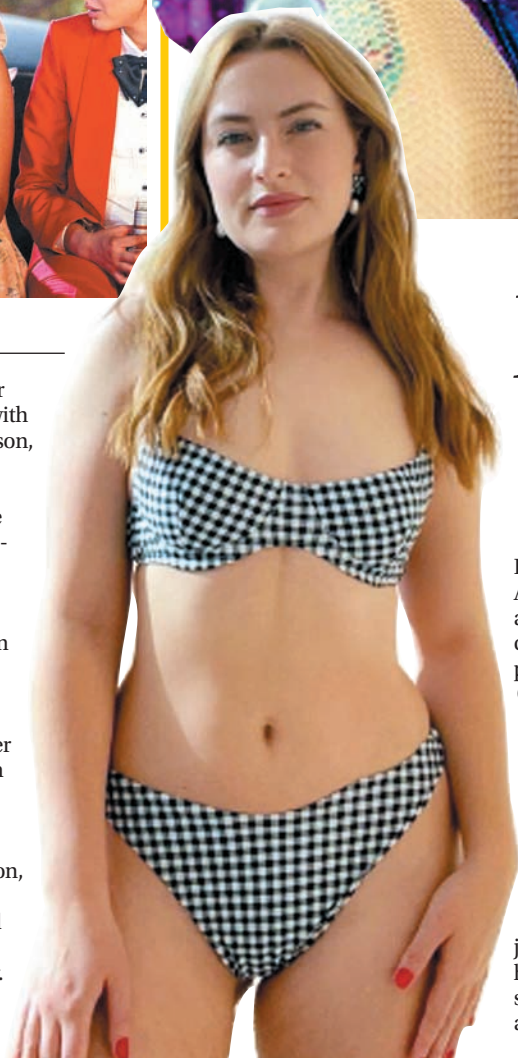
Los Angeles | Agencies

The streaming series 'Never Have I Ever' is returning with its fourth season. The season, which will be the final, is set to premiere on June 8.

The series is a coming-of-age comedy and follows the complicated life of a modern-day first-generation Indian American teenage girl. It stars Maitreyi Ramakrishnan as Devi, she is an overachieving high school student, who has a short fuse that gets her into difficult situations.

Mindy Kaling and Lang Fisher serve as executive producers on the series with Fisher doubling up as the showrunner.

'Never Have I Ever' has been produced by Universal Television, a division of Universal Studio Group, and executive produced by 3 Arts Entertainment's Howard Klein and David Miner. The series will drop on streaming giant Netflix.



Drake leaves flirty comment on Amelia Dimoldenberg's bikini pics

Los Angeles | Agencies

Amelia Dimoldenberg shared new bikini pics to her Instagram on Thursday.

And superstar Drake left a flirty comment on the comedian's sizzling post, which showed the Chicken Shop Date host posing in a check print thong swimwear set.

Amelia looked phenomenal in the bottom-bearing bikini, while soaking up the sunshine in Palm Springs, California. She shared two jaw-dropping photographs of herself posing in the two-piece, showing off her physique from all angles. The YouTuber captioned her social



media upload: 'Felt cute, might delete later,' to which Drake responded: 'Chups.'

Her Chicken Shop Date YouTube series has seen Amelia rise to stratospheric levels of internet fame, with her awkwardly funny interview series reaching more than one million subscribers. But while Amelia, is hot property online, having gained a cult following since her channel's launch in 2014, the sensation's popularity has also skyrocketed offline.

She's launched her own Chicken Shop Date merchandise ranges, landed lucrative brand deals and delved into the world of TV, showbiz and fashion.

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Bella Thorne

Samuel L. Jackson, John David Washington to lead in August Wilson's 'The Piano Lesson'

Los Angeles | Agencies

The all-star cast for Netflix's adaptation of August Wilson's 'The Piano Lesson' has been revealed. Oscar winner Samuel L. Jackson and John David Washington will star in the feature film, reprising their roles from the highly successful Broadway revival of Wilson's play, which recently concluded its run at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre, reports 'Variety'.

Set in 1936 Pittsburgh during the aftermath of the Great Depression, 'The Piano Lesson' follows the lives of the Charles family, a household led by Doaker Charles (Jackson), and an heirloom, the family piano, which is decorated with designs carved by an enslaved ancestor. Washington plays Boy Willie,



Doaker's nephew, a role Jackson originated in the 1987 pro-

duction.

As per 'Variety', the Netflix adaptation, announced in 2021, is directed by Malcolm Washington from a screenplay he adapted with Virgil Williams. The film also stars Ray Fisher, Danielle Deadwyler, Michael Potts and Corey Hawkins.

'The Piano Lesson' is produced by Academy Award winner Denzel Washington and Academy Award nominee Todd Black. Executive producers are Constanza Romero, Jennifer Roth and Katia Washington.

The play is part of Wilson's 10-title 'American Century Cycle', which includes 'Fences' and 'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom', both of which were adapted for the screen by Denzel Washington and Black.



INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2023

SRH BEAT KKR BY 23 RUNS

Kolkata | Agencies

Nitish Rana's fighting captain's knock (75 off 41) and Rinku Singh's unbeaten fifty (58 not out) went in vain as Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) beat Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) by 23 runs in an Indian Premier League (IPL) 2023 match at Eden Gardens, here on Friday.



After losing three early wickets, Rana held the fort for KKR with his vital innings, which had six maximums and five boundaries while runs also flowed from Rinku's bat but it wasn't enough to take KKR over the line.

Chasing a mammoth 228-run target, KKR had a slow start as Bhuvneshwar Kumar struck in the very first over, sending Rahul Manjiv Gurbaz back for a third ball duck and giving away just one run off the over. After 3 runs coming off the next over, Venkatesh Iyer and N Jagadeesan went for a few hits against Bhuvneshwar in his second over.

However, the last match's hero Rinku Singh came to join the skipper Rana. Rana and Rinku tried to release pressure with their hits. After being expensive in his first over, Umran successfully defended 31 runs for his side. Rinku hit a massive six but it was not enough to

save the game for his side as 24 was needed off the final delivery.

Brief scores

Sunrisers Hyderabad 228/4 in 20 overs (Harry Brooks 100 not out off 55, Aiden Markram 50 off 26; Andre Russell 3/22) beat Kolkata Knight Riders 205-7 in 20 overs (Nitish Rana 75 off 41, Rinku Singh 58 off 31; Marco Jansen 2/37, Mayank Markande 2/27) by 23 runs.

I AM RECOVERING WELL & I'M GETTING BETTER, SAYS PANT



Bengaluru| India wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant on Friday said that he is recovering well and getting better with each passing day, after meeting his Delhi Capitals' teammates.

Asked about his recovery, Pant said, "I am recovering very well and I'm getting better with each passing day. I came to visit the National Cricket Academy and the Delhi Capitals happened to be there. So I met the team." "I just saw how the team's practice is carrying on. I really love to be around the boys and I am missing it," he added.

Rishabh also wished the team ahead of their next game against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Saturday. "My heart and soul are always with the Delhi Capitals."

BRAZIL PARA-BADMINTON INTERNATIONAL

Pramod Bhagat, Sukant Kadam enter quarterfinals

Team Absolute | New Delhi

ACE shuttler Pramod Bhagat and World No 4 Sukant Kadam have made their place in the quarterfinals of the Brazil Para-Badminton International 2023 in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



Bhagat has entered the singles, mixed doubles and men's doubles; on the other hand, Kadam reached the quarterfinals of singles and men's doubles.

Bhagat, the Padma Shri Awardee, defeated Brazil's Raysson Ferreira De Abreu Silva, and Dominican Republic's Patricio Andres Echeverria Olave to make it to the singles quarterfinals where he will face Peru's Pedro Pablo De Vinatea, according to information received here.

In the men's doubles event, Bhagat along with Kadam of India defeated India's Nilesh Balu Gaikwad and Manoj Sarkar, Republic's Patricio Andres Echeverria Olave and

Peru's Pablo Cesar Cueto and in the third group match, they defeated Brazil's Breno Johann and Leonardo Zuffo to set up a quarterfinal clash with Peru's Pedro Pablo De Vinatea and Renzo Diquez Bances Morales.

In the mixed doubles, Bhagat and Manisha Ramadass started their campaign with a loss to France's Mathieu Thomas and Maud Lefort, but quickly made a comeback and won their next 2 games against Peru's Renzo Diquez Bances Morales and Jenny Bertha Ventocilla Huaranga, Azerbaijan's

Ibrahim Aliyev and France's Catherine Naudin. They beat the Indian pair of Chirag Baretha and Mandeep Kaur to reach the quarterfinals where they will face Indonesian pair Hikmat Ramdani and Leani Ratri Okilla. On the other hand, Sukant Kadam started the campaign well with a thumping win over Brazil's Diego Armando Honorato Madeira. He maintained his winning record by defeating Korea's Jeon Sunwoo and Brazil's Rogerio Junior Xavier De Oliveira to set up a quarterfinals clash with India's Suhas Lalnakere Yathiraj.

Barcelona Open

Nadal withdraws, still in preparation process for his return

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Rafael Nadal, who has been struggling with an ongoing hip injury, on Friday announced that he will not compete at the upcoming Barcelona Open, saying he is still in the preparation process for his return.



well as the ongoing Monte Carlo Masters due to grade 2 injury in the iliopsoas muscle in his left leg. "Barcelona is a special tournament for me because it's my adopted club and because playing at home is always a unique

feeling," Nadal tweeted. "I'm still not prepared and therefore I'm still in my preparation process for the return to competition," he added. The Barcelona Open, where Nadal is a 12-time champion, starts on Monday and is one of the last big clay-court events before the French Open begins in Paris on May 28.

Earlier, the Spaniard had fallen out of the top 10 in the ATP rankings for the first time since 2005 after missing nearly three months on tour. This year he has played four matches -- two at the United Cup and as many as at the Australian Open and lost three of them. His only win came against Britain's Jack Draper in the first round at Melbourne Park.

Europa League

SEVILLA MOUNT DRAMATIC LATE COMEBACK TO HOLD MANCHESTER UNITED 2-2

Manchester | Agencies

Six-time winners Sevilla fought back from two goals down to secure a draw thanks to a pair of late own goals against Manchester United at Old Trafford in the Europa League quarterfinal first leg.

The hosts started brightly and had the ball in the net in the opening 30 seconds, but Jadon Sancho's effort was ruled out for offside. The speed with which United broke for that attack gave Sevilla a warning of what was to come. With 14 minutes gone a neat passing move culminated in Bruno Fernandes' slide-rule pass picking out Marcel Sabitzer on the edge of the area. The Austrian international controlled it superbly with his right foot, before rifling a left-footed strike that deflected off Marco and looped into the net. Seven minutes later and the midfielder had doubled his and the Red Devils' tally on the



night. Anthony Martial, making his first start in three months, was instrumental in the home side's quick counter, eventually providing the defence-splitting pass for Sabitzer to advance and coolly place his shot out of reach of the advancing Bounou, according to information available on the UEFA Europa League website. The visitors rarely tested David de Gea in the first half, but Tanguy Nianzou's powerful header from an Ivan Rakitic corner just before the break found the goalkeeper in excellent form.

Erik ten Hag's men were unable to replicate their first-half intensity after the break but could have added a third shortly after the hour, Antony's spectacular strike after cutting in from the right cannoning back off the post.

Sevilla burst into life late on and halved their deficit when substitute Jess Navas sent in a low centre that struck Tyrell Malacia and then De Gea on its way into the roof of the net. The introduction of top scorer Youssef En-Nesyri had given the visitors an outlet in the penalty area, the substitute brilliantly denied by the home goalkeeper moments later.

Sevilla kept coming and Lucas Ocampos' high, hanging ball from the right in added time was perfect for En-Nesyri to attack. The Moroccan international's powerful header deflected off the unfortunate Harry Maguire and wrong-footed De Gea, giving the visitors an unlikely draw to take back to Spain.

FLORIAN WIRTZ'S GOAL HELPS LEVERKUSEN HOLD SAINT-GILLOISE

Berlin | Bayern

Leverkusen managed a 1-1 draw with Royale Union Saint-Gilloise at home after Florian Wirtz equalised Victor Boniface's opener in the first leg of the quarterfinals.

The Werkself controlled possession from the start and nearly scored seven minutes in when Wirtz navigated through Saint-Gilloise's area before shooting wide from a promising position. The visitors from Belgium waited for counterattacks and almost caught the hosts off guard at the half-hour mark. Boniface shook off two defenders and tested Lukas Hradecky with a dangerous low shot, reports Xinhua. Leverkusen mounted a series of aggressive attacks before the break, but Moussa Diaby's shot narrowly missed the target, and Piero Hincapié squandered a promising header from close range.



UEFA Conference League

FIorentina SMASH LECH BY 4-1 IN QUARTERFINALS FIRST LEG

Warsaw | Agencies

Italian club Fiorentina secured a commanding 4-1 victory over Polish side Lech Poznan away from home in the first leg of the UEFA Europa Conference League quarterfinals.

The visitors dominated from the outset, and it took just four minutes for them to convert their control into a goal. Nicolas Gonzales' long-range effort from outside the box struck the post, but moments later, Arthur Cabral found the net from close range.

Lech managed to respond in the 20th minute when Mikael Ishak headed the ball down to Kristoffer Velde at the edge of the box, who surprised Pietro Terracciano with a powerful low strike, reports Xinhua.

Fiorentina, coached by Vincenzo



Italiano, stepped up the tempo and regained the lead four minutes before the first half ended. Gonzalez's perfect header at the far post, following a pinpoint cross by Cristiano Biraghi from the left flank, put Fiorentina ahead once more. The second half was a display of Italian dominance. Within five minutes, Fiorentina dashed Lech's hopes for the second leg. In the 58th minute, Giacomo Bonaventura extended the lead to 3-1 with a skilful finish at the far post, while Jonathan Ikone dribbled past two Lech players to cap off a solo effort with a precise shot past Filip Bednarek.

After netting their fourth goal, the visitors focused on defence. Lech tried to narrow the deficit but struggled to create opportunities, as the favourites maintained complete control of the game.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

England's tearaway pacer Issy Wong, who picked 15 wickets for Mumbai Indians to lift the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL), feels that players getting big paychecks and performing in front of large crowds is cool as she began playing for the love of the game and gets to do that all the time.

"It's the way the women's game is moving forward and it's just cool, isn't it? We are talking about it like it's this skull-crushing pressure but in the grand scheme of life; it's not a bad problem to have. I always try to keep that perspective."

"I was bringing my bin back in the other day -- I don't put them out, I bring them in -- and my next-door neighbour was chatting to me as she and her kids had been watching the WPL."

"She said it must be hard with the pressure and so many people watching but I said I



look at it as I get to do the thing that I love for a living, so there is not actually that much pressure at all.

"I started playing because I love it and now I get to do that all the time. How good is that? As long as I keep looking at it like that, then fingers crossed it will be alright," said Issy.

Brendon McCullum in trouble over his role with gambling firm

London | Agencies

England Test team's coach Brendon McCullum has landed in trouble over his involvement with a betting and gambling company and has had talks with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) over his role, British media has reported.



McCullum, the former New Zealand captain, joined 22Bet as an ambassador in January and has appeared in advertisements online. This has raised the ire of authorities like the Problem Gambling Foundation.

"We are exploring the matter and are in discussions with Brendon around his relationship with 22Bet," the ECB told the BBC on Thursday. "We have rules in place around gambling and will always seek to ensure these are followed." The BBC reported that the

The code suggests such an offence would carry a minimum one-year period of "ineligibility".

McCullum is described as an official ambassador for 22Bet India in the gambling company's promotional material. The former Black Caps captain had tweeted to his 500,000-plus followers in January promoting 22Bet, but it has since been deleted.

Super Cup

FC Goa stay in semi-final contention with 1-0 win over Gokulam Kerala

Kozhikode | Agencies

FC Goa edged a nervy encounter against Gokulam Kerala FC at the EMS Corporation Stadium, winning 1-0, here on Friday.

It was FC Goa captain Iker Guarrotxena, who made the difference for his side with a 90th minute strike, a goal that keeps the Gaurs' chances of making it to the semi-finals of the Hero Super Cup afloat in Group C.

The two sides had a fair share of goalscoring opportunities throughout the game. FC Goa came twice close to scoring in the first 15 minutes.

In the 8th minute, Noah Sadaoui's cross from a free-kick in the attacking half was met by a towering header by Fares Arnaout. But the Syrian defender's attempt hit the wrong side of the post and fell back into play and eventually, the Gokulam Kerala defence



cleared it.

Guarrotxena followed it up with another chance in the 13th minute. However, the Spaniard headed the ball wide of the target as the scoreline remained 0-0.

The Malabarians too almost found a breakthrough once in the 17th minute via Farshad Noor. The Afghan midfielder went on to beat the opposition goalkeeper to hit the back of the net, but the referee blew his whis-

tle for an offside.

As the two sides looked ready to settle for a goalless draw, FC Goa's foreign duo Sadaoui and Guarrotxena combined to score the winning goal. At the stroke of the 90th minute, Abdul Haku lost possession of the ball in a dangerous area and Sadaoui led the counter-attacking move.

Gokulam custodian Shibinraj managed to block Sadaoui's effort, but the ball fell into Guarrotxena's feet, as the latter calmly slotted it home to give his side a late 1-0 lead and ensured crucial three points for Carlos Pena's men. The win means FC Goa still stand a chance to make it through to the semi-finals as they face ATK Mohun Bagan in their final game of Group C. On the other hand, Gokulam Kerala will be hoping to bow out of the tournament on a positive note when they face Jamshedpur FC on April 18.

ALIA POSTED PICTURES WITH RANBIR ON HER 1ST ANNIVERSARY, CAPTION IT

"Happy Day"



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Alia Bhatt is celebrating one year of marital bliss with actor Ranbir Kapoor on Friday.

To mark the occasion, the 'Gangubai Kathiawadi' actress took to her Instagram to share a few throwback pictures of her with Ranbir with the caption "Happy Day".

As soon as she shared the pictures, her friends from the industry took to the comments section to wish the actress.

Actor-director Riteish Deshmukh wrote, "Happy 1st." Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar reacted to the pic-

tures with heart emojis, while 'Brahmastra' co-actor Mouni Roy wrote, "Happy first you both".

Actress Bipasha Basu, who recently welcomed a baby girl, said, "Happy anniversary to both you cuties."

Alia and Ranbir tied the nuptial knot on April 13, 2022 at Ranbir's 'Vastu' residence in the Pali Hill area of Mumbai.

The two fell in love on the sets of 'Brahmastra' and materialised their union in an intimate ceremony. In November 2022, Ranbir and Alia became parents to their daughter Raha.

Shahid Kapoor as a killing machine in his upcoming movie

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The teaser of the upcoming film 'Bloody Daddy' was unveiled on Friday. The film stars Shahid Kapoor in a suave avatar with the teaser giving a glimpse of his character of what appears to be a swift assassin, who goes on a killing spree slashing whoever comes in his way.

The film also stars Diana Penty, Sanjay Kapoor, Ronit Bose Roy, Rajeev Khandelwal, Vivan Bhatena, Zeishan Quadri, Ankur Bhatia, Mukesh Bhatt, Sartaj Kakkhar, and has been helmed by Ali Abbas Zafar, who is known for his work in films such as 'Sultan', 'Bharat' and the most recent Diljit Dosanjh-starrer 'Jogi'.

Talking about the film, Shahid said: "I had a great time doing an action film. I really enjoyed working with Ali (Abbas Zafar, the director). He understands this genre very well. It's been a blast. This is a very special film." The film, presented by Jio Studios in association with AAZ Films, Offside Entertainment & The Vermillion World, is an AAZ Films & Offside Entertainment Production. The film is set to release on June 9, 2023.



MC Stan gets gifts worth Rs 1.21 lakh from Sania Mirza

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Popular rapper MC Stan, a contestant on 'Bigg Boss 16,' and former tennis player Sania Mirza have become good friends after they attended Farah Khan's party where they developed a great bond.

Now, Sania has gifted him a few expensive gifts worth Rs 1.21 lakh. He shared a picture of all the gifts given by Sania, including pair of Nike shoes worth Rs 91,000 and sunglasses worth Rs 30,000. Overall she gave him gifts worth Rs 1.21 lakh and the rapper thanked her.

MC Stan took to his Instagram and shared the photos of a brand new pair of black Nike shoes and new Balenciaga sunglasses and wrote in the caption: "Appreciate it Appa, ty mirzasanian" and also mentioned his famous line: "Tera ghar jayega isme!" along with a pink heart." He had also performed at Sania's retirement party.



Team Absolute | Mumbai

The upcoming film '8 A. M. Metro', which stars Gulshan Devaiah and Saiyami Kher, tells an unusual story of two characters who are brought together by destiny.

Legendary lyricist, filmmaker and poet Gulzar, who is known for his works in films such as 'Parichay', 'Aandhi', 'Omkaara', 'Ghulam', 'Guru', 'Dil Se...' and several others, unveiled the poster of writer-director Raj R's at his Bandra home. The veteran artiste has contributed six of his poems for the film.

The film, is an emotional roller-coaster directed by Raj Rachakonda, and is slated to release on May 19.

Speaking about the film and Gulzar's contribution, the director said, "It's a story of two strangers who inadvertently bump into each other in the metro and strike up an unlikely friendship, in the process finding themselves and each other. I can't thank Gulzar Saab enough for

this magnanimous gesture and feel a deep sense of gratitude towards the legend that he is." Saiyami plays a 29-year-old housewife Iravati whose mundane life in Nanded is turned upside down when she has to rush to Hyderabad to tend to her pregnant sister who is confined to the bed. Fighting off recurring panic attacks, she turns to Gulshan's character of Preetam, a banker with more to him than meets the eye, and the duo subsequently go on many journeys. Actor Gulshan Devaiah said, "But there's a catch because my character harbours a secret which can tear them apart and also what they believe in."

The film is being distributed by Shiladitya Bora's Platoon Distribution.

SAIYAMI'S UPCOMING FILM IS ON TWO STRANGERS BROUGHT TOGETHER BY DESTINY'



RAGHAV JUYAL SHOT FOR HIS FILM WHILE HE WAS DOWN WITH 'DENGUE'

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actor-choreographer Raghav Juyal, who is gearing up for his upcoming film, 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan', along with Salman Khan and Pooja Hegde, continued to shoot for the film despite having Dengue fever as he

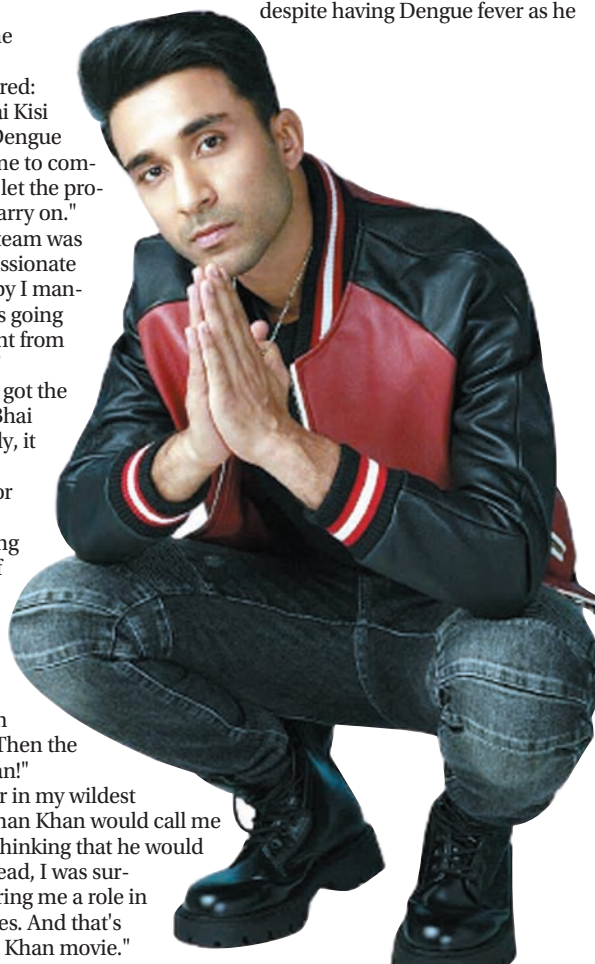
had limited time to complete the shoot. The dancer-turned-actor shared: "While shooting for 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan', I was diagnosed with Dengue fever. Despite having limited time to complete the shoot, I didn't want to let the production suffer, so I decided to carry on."

He further mentioned: "The team was very understanding and compassionate towards my condition. I'm happy I managed to do it because what I was going through was completely different from what my character was feeling."

Raghav also revealed how he got the role in Salman Khan's 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan'. He said that initially, it was not easy for him to believe about being called by Salman for his film.

Raghav shared: "I was shooting for another project when one of my team members came running to me saying that Salman Khan is calling you. I responded in a calm manner saying that I would call back later because I thought it was Salman Yusuf Khan my fellow dancer. Then the guy said no it's The Salman Khan!"

"I was in shock because never in my wildest dream did I ever think that Salman Khan would call me directly. I rushed to the phone thinking that he would ask me to choreograph but instead, I was surprised to know that he was offering me a role in his film. I was silent for 2 minutes. And that's how I got my break in a Salman Khan movie."



INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Srishty Rode