

absolute india

VOL. 10, ISSUE 330, MUMBAI | TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2023 | ₹5 | PAGE 08

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM MUMBAI, BHOPAL AND NEW DELHI

NATION > 02

AAP to contest polls with full strength in MP, Rajasthan...



HOLLYWOOD > 06

Dwayne Johnson's contract clause for action films keeps tight...



SPORTS > 07

Verstappen dominates F1 Qatar GP...



Cong CMs to act on caste census, PM Modi incapable of holding the census: Rahul

THE POWER RUN

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Monday said the Congress Working Committee (CWC) -- the party's highest decision making body -- has unanimously decided in favour of caste-based census and the party-led governments in states will hold the exercise.



Team Absolute | New Delhi

Gehlot) sitting here have also said that they will take the caste census forward in the states. It is worth to be noted that Rajasthan on Saturday night announced to hold the caste based survey. To a question if Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) parties are together and will they support the caste-based census, he said, "The Congress has decided that it will wholeheartedly support the caste census and force the BJP to hold the caste census and if they fail then they should go as the country wants it and we will do it after coming to power."

"Most of the INDIA parties support it. There might be a few who have slightly different opinions. But I am confident that the vast majority will support it. We are not fascist force and will not force them," he said. To a question about Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing the Congress of dividing the country, he said, "The Prime Minister is making unconnected statements. The Prime Minister is incapable of doing caste-based census. Congress has four Chief Ministers, out of that three are OBCs, while BJP has 10 CMs, and they have one OBC which will not be there after elections in

Madhya Pradesh." He said, "The Prime Minister did not utter a single word after what I mentioned in Parliament that out of 90 only three are OBC officers. "The Prime Minister should say that we will release the caste-based census and he should say that the next census will be caste based. But he does not have the guts. He has created a distraction system. PM Modi is the main instrument and they only want to divert the issue," he added.

CWC PASSES RESOLUTION FOR NATIONWIDE CASTE-CENSUS

New Delhi: The Congress Working Committee (CWC), the highest decision making body of the grand old party, on Monday passed a resolution for nationwide caste-based census and also expressed its dismay and anguish on the war that has broken out in the Middle East (Israel and Palestine) where over a thousand people have been killed in the last two days. It also reiterated its long-standing support for the rights of the Palestinian people to land, self-government and to live with dignity and respect. The resolution was passed after the four hour-long meeting at the party headquarters which was chaired by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and attended by CCP chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, KC Venugopal, Sachin Pilot, Shashi Tharoor, chief ministers Bhupesh Baghel, Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, Ashok Gehlot, Siddaramaiah and many others. In its resolution, the CWC welcomed the release of the caste survey conducted by the Bihar government and said that the disparity between representation and share in population revealed by the final figures of the survey highlights the urgent need to take effective steps to ensure social justice.

THOSE OPPOSING CASTE-BASED SURVEY ARE AGAINST HUMANITY: LALU

Patna: While NDA leaders are putting question marks over the caste-based survey report in Bihar, RJD supremo Lalu Prasad said on Monday that treatment of cancer is not possible with medicines of headache. In a post on X, the veteran politician said: "Those who are against the caste-based survey are against humanity, social, financial, political and equal representation. Such people do not have the character of justice. "People who are supporters of inequality have unjust characters. Such people from their birth to death grab the rights of others on the basis of their higher castes," he said.

Congress projected to win Chhattisgarh, MP; BJP to sweep Rajasthan: Poll



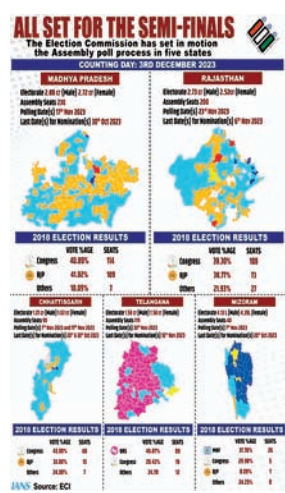
Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Congress is projected to win Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and is leading in Telangana, while the BJP is set to sweep Rajasthan in the upcoming Assembly polls, the dates of which were announced on Monday, as per the ABP-CVoter Opinion Poll. The elections start on November 7 in Chhattisgarh and Mizoram. Chhattisgarh will go to the polls in two phases - on November 7 and 17. Polling in Madhya Pradesh will be held on November 17, while Rajasthan and Telangana will go to polls on November 23 and 30, respectively. Counting for all states will take place on December 3. As per the Opinion Poll, Congress is projected to dethrone BJP in Madhya Pradesh. The grand old party is projected to get 119 seats in the 230-member Assembly, gaining five seats from its previous tally of 114 in 2018. The ruling BJP is set to win 110 seats in the upcoming Assembly elections in the state. Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress is set to retain Chhattisgarh in the ensuing Assembly elections. The Congress is projected to win 48 (45-51) seats in the 90-member Chhattisgarh Assembly. The BJP is sweeping Rajasthan as per the current projections of the ABP-CVoter poll. The saffron party is set to get 132 seats, a massive gain of 59 seats compared to its previous tally of 73. The Congress is projected to get 64 seats, down 36 seats from its 2018 tally. The Congress is leading in Telangana but is still short of a majority, as per the poll. The Congress is emerging as the single largest party in Telangana Assembly which has a strength of 119 seats. The Congress is projected to get 54 seats, a massive gain of 35 from last time, while the ruling BRS is projected to win 49 seats, sharply down from its previous tally of 88. In Mizoram, the projections suggest a hung Assembly. The MNF is down 11 seats from its previous tally of 26 at 15 seats, while the Congress is projected to win 12 seats while the ZPM is projected to get 11 seats in a three-leg race.

ECI announces poll dates for five states, results on Dec 3

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Monday announced the poll schedule for the Assembly elections in five states from November 7 to November 30 and counting to take place on December 3. Election process will be completed on December 5. The states going to polls are -- Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Chhattisgarh. Addressing a press conference here, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said, "For 230-member Madhya Pradesh polling will be held on November 17, for 200-member Rajasthan Assembly polling will take



place on November 23, polling for 119-member Telangana Assembly on November 30, for 40-member Mizoram on November 7."

He said that the polling for the 90-member Chhattisgarh Assembly will take place in two phases. The counting of votes for the five states will take place on December 3. The CEC said that there are 679 Assembly constituencies in the five states which is around one sixth of total LACs in the country and have 16 crore electors, which is almost one sixth of total electors in the country. He said that around 60 lakh first time voters between 18-19 years will participate in elections of five states. He said that 15.39 lakh young voters are eligible to participate in elections due to the amendment on qualifying dates.

Claudia Goldin becomes 3rd woman to win Nobel economics prize

Team Absolute | New Delhi

American economist Claudia Goldin has won the 2023 Nobel economics prize for "having advanced our understanding of women's labour market outcomes," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said on Monday. Goldin is only the third woman to win the Economic Sciences Nobel after Elinor Ostrom in 2009 and Esther Duflo in 2019. Of the 54 Nobel Prizes in Economic Sciences that were awarded from 1969 to 2022 only 25 of the 92 winners have had the honour of getting the award as single recipients. "This year's Laureate in the Economic Sciences, Claudia Goldin, provided the first comprehensive account



women's earnings and labour market participation through the centuries," the official statement read. "Her research reveals the causes of change, as well as the main sources of the remaining gender gap." The coveted award, formally known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, is the last of this year's crop of Nobel prizes and is worth 11 million Swedish crowns (\$999,137).

Tensions running high in West Bank as Israel imposes closure

Jerusalem | Agencies

Tensions are running high in the occupied West Bank -- where some 2.8 million Palestinians live -- as the Israeli army imposes a complete closure, a media report said. Residents say that the entrances to towns and cities have been shut with iron gates, cement blocks and mounds of earth, BBC reported. New military checkpoints have been set up in some places. Through the day there have been long queues at some petrol stations as supplies of fuel have run out, the report said. "This is something we've seen before through long decades of occupation," said a tour guide in Beit Sahour,



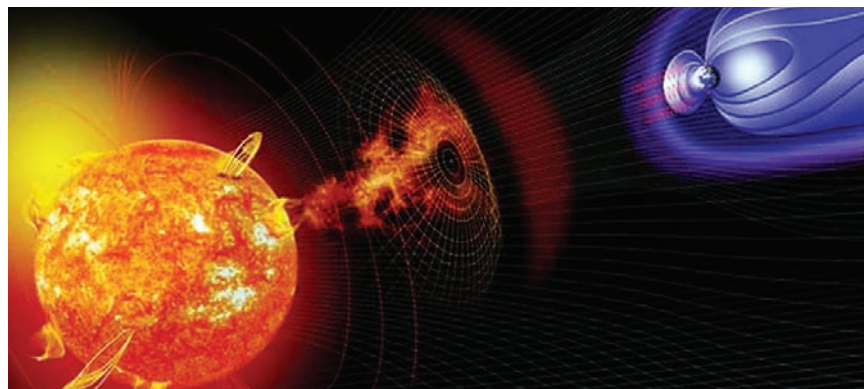
who is now without work. "This is a policy that Israel's been using for decades simply to punish the entire population for the acts of certain groups of people," complained another resident. On Sunday, shops and businesses in the West Bank were shuttered as a general strike was called in response to Israel's military action in the Gaza Strip, which is governed by Hamas. The evening saw angry protests. Four Palestinians were shot dead by Israeli soldiers at Qalandiya checkpoint in Ramallah on Thursday night, BBC reported. In Hebron, a man was killed apparently trying to ram Israeli forces with a bulldozer.

14,300-YR-OLD TREE RINGS REVEAL LARGEST-EVER SOLAR STORM

The largest, directly-observed, solar storm occurred in 1859 and is known as the Carrington Event. It caused massive disruption on Earth -- destroying telegraph machines and creating a night-time aurora so bright that birds began to sing, believing the sun had begun to rise. Nine such extreme solar storms -- known as Miyake Events -- have now been identified as having occurred over the last 15,000 years. The most recent confirmed Miyake Events occurred in 993 AD and 774 AD. This newly-identified 14,300-year-old storm is, however, the largest that has ever been found -- roughly twice the size of these two. However, the Miyake Events (including the newly discovered 14,300-yr-old storm) would have been a staggering entire order-of-magnitude greater in size.

London | Agencies

An international team of scientists has discovered a huge spike in radiocarbon levels 14,300 years ago by analysing ancient tree-rings found in the French Alps. The radiocarbon spike was caused by a massive solar storm, the biggest ever identified. In the study, researchers from the UK, France and Czech Republic measured radiocarbon levels in ancient trees preserved within the eroded banks of the Drouzet River, near Gap, in the Southern French Alps. The tree trunks, which are subfossils -- remains whose fossilisation process is not complete -- were sliced into tiny single tree-rings. Analysis of these individual rings identified an unprecedented spike in radiocarbon levels occurring precisely 14,300 years ago. By comparing this radiocarbon spike with measurements of beryllium, a chemical element found in Greenland ice cores, the team in the paper published in Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A: Mathematical Physical and



Engineering Sciences, proposed that the spike was caused by a massive solar storm that would have ejected huge volumes of energetic particles into Earth's atmosphere. The researchers said that the occurrence of similar massive solar storms today could be catastrophic for modern technological society, potentially wiping out telecommunications, satellite systems and electricity grids -- and costing us billions of pounds. They warn that it is critical to understand the future risks of events like this, to enable us to prepare, build resilience into our communications and energy systems and shield them from potential damage. "Extreme solar storms could have huge impacts on Earth. Such super storms could permanently damage the transformers in our electricity grids, resulting in huge and widespread blackouts lasting months. They could also result in permanent damage to the satellites that we all rely on for navigation and telecommunication, leaving them unusable. They would also create severe radiation risks to astronauts," said Tim Heaton, Professor of Applied Statistics in the School of Mathematics at the University of Leeds in the UK.

Manipur tribal body reiterates separate state demand

Imphal | Agencies

The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), an apex body of tribals in Manipur, on Monday reiterated its demand for a separate administration (equivalent to separate state), saying that it is increasingly apparent that coexistence with the Meiteis is an untenable proposition. Highlighting some recent incidents of violence, senior ITLF leader and spokesman Ginza Vualzong claimed that Meiteis have "driven us out of their valley, subjected us to violence, and attacked our villages... Coexistence with the Meiteis is an untenable proposition." The ITLF denounces the grave injustice inflicted upon the Kuki-Zo people in the strongest terms. The selective application of justice further reinforces our demand for a separate administration," he told the media. Vualzong said that on October 8, a video had surfaced on the internet depicting the horrific burning alive of an unidentified man belonging to the Kuki-Zo community. "In the distressing seven-second video, a man dressed in a black T-shirt and camouflage pants is seen being burnt, while voices in the background converse in Meitei language. Gunshots can also be heard in the video. The video is a harrowing testament to the ethnic cleansing campaign against the Kuki-Zo community by the majority Meiteis," Vualzong said. The ITLF vehemently condemns the shocking and barbaric incident that has recently come to light, he added. Vualzong also said that the complexity of the Manipur government has emboldened the Meiteis to take the law into their own hands.



Sikkim Floods: Army undertakes massive operation to reconnect isolated villages

Team Absolute | New Delhi

In Sikkim, troops of Trishakti Corps of the Indian Army are undertaking operations at a massive scale to reconnect villages cut off post the flash floods on the night of October 3-4.

An Army official said that the focus of the operations are on restoring connectivity to North Sikkim through Chungthang, which was the worst affected during the devastating floods.

Troops of the Army have rescued of 150-200 civilians so far. In the immediate, account has been taken of all tourists and locals in the areas of Chaten, Lachen, Lachung and Thangu in North Sikkim.

A list of 2,000 tourists, including 63 foreign nationals, has been compiled and assistance is being provided in terms of food, medical aid, accommodation and telephone connectivity, the official said.

According to the Army, a helpline



has also been established through which relatives of all the tourists are being informed about the wellbeing of their near and dear ones. This effort will continue till they are evacuated. With the improvement in weather, air evacuation of tourists started on Monday.

Another action being undertaken by the Army is to reconnect the villages that have been cut off. Towards this end, a log bridge over Lachen Chu connecting Chungthang to Pegong has been completed by the Army troops along with the ITBP personnel and locals.

Meanwhile, the Indian Army and the BRO, with assistance from ITBP troops, are launching a foot bridge from the Chungthang side.

Special teams were deployed for opening the route to Chaten via Rabom. The teams have moved over difficult terrains under inclement weather and reached Rabom village on the night of October 8. A foot link-up has thus been established and assistance is being provided to the 150-200 civilians stranded in the area, the Army official added.

The Chief Minister of Sikkim, P.S. Tamang, has assured of all assistance in terms of availability of land, forest clearance etc. for the reconstruction works.

To ensure sustenance of the people at Chungthang, ration has been provided to the local gurdwara. Medical aid is being provided at all locations and so far more than 1,500 patients have been treated by the Trishakti Healers, the official said.

AAP to contest polls with full strength in MP, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh: Kejriwal

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal said on Monday that the party will contest the elections with full strength in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

Speaking to the media here, Kejriwal said, "AAP will fight with full strength in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh." His remarks came after the Election Commission on Monday announced the schedule for Assembly elections in five states -- Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Telangana. While the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly will go to the polls on November 17, elections to the 200-member Rajasthan Assembly will take place on November 23. The 119-member Telangana Assembly will go to the polls on November 30, the 40-member Mizoram Assembly will go to the polls on November 7, while elections to the 90-member Chhattisgarh Assembly will be held on November 7 and 17.

Counting of votes will take place on December 3.



VACATE 'UNSAFE' H TOWER WITHIN 15 DAYS, GURUGRAM ADMIN TELLS CHINTELS RESIDENTS

Team Absolute | Gurugram

The Gurugram administration declared Tower H of the Chintels Paradiso Sector 109 condominium unsafe on Monday and directed the residents to vacate it within 15 days.

The Gurugram administration also threatened to enforce the Disaster Management Act if the residents did not vacate the tower. The Act would empower authorities to forcibly vacate the building. In a recent report, IIT-Delhi declared Towers D, E, F and G of the housing society as unsafe to live in and they were vacated. On February 10 last year, six floors of Tower D collapsed partially, killing two residents. There are nine towers in Chintels; five of these, D, E, F, G and H have been declared unsafe



so far. "These towers are unsafe and any unwanted incident can take place anytime. The builder should pay for the relocation of the residents. We cannot let people risk their lives," said a senior district administration official requesting anonymity. An ultimatum was also issued to the builders to work out compensation with Tower D, E, F, G and H residents at the earliest or the administration would auction all its assets and reimburse the residents, he said. "We are in a lurch as directions have been passed for vacating the flats. We are aware of the risk but if we move out of the towers, the builder will not provide us with any land and we will be homeless," said Chintels RWA president Rakesh Hooda.

Safexpay Technology's payment gateway hacked, Thane Police probe Rs 16,180-cr scam

Team Absolute | Thane

In a shocking development, the Thane Police have said that payment gateway of Safexpay Technology Pvt Ltd (STPL) was allegedly hacked, revealing a massive scam of siphoning off Rs 18,180-crore, including some money transferred abroad, is now being probed, here on Monday.

The Shrinagar Police Station has lodged a FIR and probing the matter along with the Thane Police Cyber Cell, said top officials. As per the investigations, the ongoing fraud came to light after a complaint that some persons had allegedly hacked into the 6-year-old STPL's payment gateway, and the monies were then transferred to hundreds of bank accounts. An amount of Rs 25-crore, which was siphoned off, found its way into the HDFC Bank account of a Thane-based company, Real Enterprises with five branches in the city and Navi Mumbai suburbs, said the investigators. A probe into Real Enterprises revealed at least 260 accounts with various banks that were



used for carrying out the financial frauds, said the officials. A perusal of the bank statements of these 260 accounts pointed to an estimated misappropriation of a massive Rs 16,180-crore, a part of which has been transferred to foreign accounts. Though the scam was reportedly going on since sometime, it came to light after a complaint was lodged in April when an amount of over Rs 25-crore was siphoned off illegally. The probe after the complaint revealed that the Rs 25-crore scam was merely the tip of the iceberg and the total mega-fraud could be over Rs 16,180-crore that is being investigated now. The Naupada Police last Friday lodged an FIR against some

of the known accused Jitendra Pandey, Sanjay Singh, Amol Andhale alias Aman and Sameer Dighe alias Kedar under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and Information Technology Act. The matter is being investigated by teams of the Thane Police and its Cyber Cell, but no arrests have been made so far, though an accused Pandey is believed to be one of kingpins with a banking background of nearly 10 years. Police suspect that there could be many more persons involved in the huge racket involving opening bank accounts with fake documents, floating five partnership firms with bogus papers intended to cheat the government.

7 killed in truck-cruiser collision in Karnataka



Team Absolute | Vijayanagar (Karnataka)

At least seven persons were killed and three others critically injured following the collision of a truck and a passenger vehicle in Karnataka's Vijayanagar district on Monday, police said.

The incident took place in the limits of Mariyammanahalli police station on the outskirts of Hospet town.

According to police, the accident took place as the axle of the lorry was broken.

The deceased are from Hospet and they had gone to visit Goni Basaveshwara temple in Koolahalli near Harapanahalli town. Their identities are yet to be ascertained. The injured are shifted to the government hospital in Hospet. Sources said that the death toll is likely to go up. More details are yet to emerge in the incident.

'NOT A PENNY CAME FROM CHINA', NEWSCLICK FOUNDER-EDITOR TELLS DELHI HC

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Monday reserved its order on pleas by NewsClick founder-editor Prabir Purkayastha and Human Resources head Amit Chakravarty challenging their arrest in a case lodged under the provisions of the UAPA, even as senior advocate for the petitioners Kapil Sibal, argued that "all facts are false and not a penny came from China". The Delhi Police's Special Cell had arrested Purkayastha and Chakravarty on October 3, and the next day, they were sent to seven-day police custody by a Delhi court. The petitioners then moved the high court challenging not just their arrest but seeking quashing of the First Information Report in the matter. The high court on October 6 sought Delhi Police's response on the pleas. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had sought time to file an affidavit, which has now been filed.

Appearing for Purkayastha before the bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, Sibal started off by saying that even till today, no grounds for arrest have been supplied to them, and that only the arrest memo is the document which has been produced.



Sibal made various claims against their arrest saying that the remand order was passed by the trial court in the absence of their lawyers, while the remand order was passed at 6 a.m., Purkayastha's lawyer received it through WhatsApp only at 7 a.m. It was argued that the arrests made were in violation of the Supreme Court's recent judgement, which had made it compulsory for the police to supply "written" grounds of arrest to the accused at the time of being arrested. Appearing virtually for Delhi Police, SG Mehta said that the case involves serious offences. He further argued that one of the email exchanges between the accused individuals and somebody sitting in China shows that they will prepare a map and not show Arunachal Pradesh to be a part of India.

The SG's claim was then denied by Sibal. Sticking to his argument, Mehta said that the arrest was legal as per the textual requirement

of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) since the accused persons were informed about the grounds of arrest. Mehta went on to say that since the police remand is coming to an end, the accused can be sent to judicial custody, post which they can apply for regular bail. After hearing the matter at length, the judge reserved the order. On October 3, in a statement regarding the search, seizure and detentions carried out in connection with the UAPA case registered by the Special Cell, the Delhi Police had said that a total of 37 male suspects were questioned at office premises, while nine female suspects were questioned at their respective places of stay. The police said that digital devices, documents, etc., were seized or collected for examination. The Special Cell had registered an FIR in the case on August 17 under different sections of the UAPA and the Indian Penal Code against NewsClick. In August, a New York Times investigation had accused NewsClick of being an organisation funded by a network linked with US millionaire Neville Roy Singham, to allegedly promote Chinese propaganda.

SC adjourns hearing on pleas against remission granted to convicts in Bilkis Bano case

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday deferred, till Wednesday, hearing on batch of pleas filed against the Gujarat government's decision allowing early release of convicts in the case of the gang rape of Bilkis Bano and murder of her family members committed during the 2002 post-Godhra riots.

"List on October 11, 2023 at 2 p.m.," ordered a bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan after noting that it has received written submissions filed by petitioners, including Bilkis Bano.

Last week, the top court had directed petitioners challenging remission orders to file short written rejoinder arguments in the matter. Earlier, the convicts had argued before the apex court that remission orders granting them early release have an essence of judicial order and cannot be challenged by way of filing a writ petition



under Article 32 of the Constitution. Senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra - who is one of the PIL petitioners, had argued that Bilkis Bano was five months' pregnant when she was gang raped and crime committed against her and her family was a "crime against humanity" perpetrated on the basis of religion. The Centre, Gujarat government, and convicts have opposed the public interest litigations (PILs) filed by CPI-M leader Subhashini Ali, Trinamool's Moitra, National Federation of Indian

Women, Asma Shafique Shaikh and others, saying that once victim herself has approached the court, others may not be allowed to intervene in a criminal matter. Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, appearing on behalf of the Centre, had argued that remission is reduction of sentence and a PIL cannot be entertained on the question of sentence. The 11 men convicted in the case were released on August 15 last year, after the Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy. The convicts had completed 15 years in jail.

Will implement women's reservation bill, extend it to OBC too if voted to power in 2024: Kharge

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge in his opening remarks in the Congress Working Committee (CWC) said the party will implement women's reservation, including extending it to the OBC women when it comes to power in 2024.

Addressing the CWC members here on Monday, Kharge said, "In our first meeting in Hyderabad last month, we pledged to rid the country of divisive politics, strengthen social justice, and provide a responsible and responsible government."

Taking a swipe at the BJP-led government at the Centre, Kharge said, "During the recent special session of Parliament, we saw that the Women's Reservation Bill was passed.

"However, this was without any consultation or deliberation with the opposition parties. This session became yet another example of the government's distraction and diversionary tactics. We wholeheartedly supported the bill, but questions remain about its implementation and exclusion of OBC women," he said.

"We resolve to implement women's reservation, including extending reservation to OBC women when we come to power in 2024," the Congress leader said.

He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on the Manipur issue stands in sharp contrast to his frequent visits to the election-going states.

"His baseless attacks filled with lies and falsehoods on the Congress party will only increase in coming days. It is essential that we counter these falsehoods and create our own counter narrative," he said.

Kharge said, "We have also demanded a nationwide caste-based census, crucial for effective government programmes and welfare schemes."

Emphasizing on the Assembly elections in five states and 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Congress leader said, "as we approach the upcoming Assembly elections and General



Elections, it is important that the party works with "meticulous coordination and complete discipline and unity".

"We must also expedite efforts to highlight government failures and raise concerns affecting the common people," he said.

He said that today the country faces inflation, unemployment, and the government's failure to implement the Old Pension Scheme.

"The ruling party's divisive tactics and misuse of autonomous bodies pose a threat to democratic stability," he said.

He said that in 2024, we must strive to establish a government that addresses these grave challenges and caters to the marginalized, youth, women, farmers, and laborers.

"Simultaneously, we must address pressing issues like inflation and unemployment while remaining attuned to the people's voices," he said.

He also said that we must propagate the exemplary work of Congress-led state governments and past Congress governments at the Centre.



EDITOR'S SPECS

KANSHI RAM'S ANNIVERSARY TO SET INTO A MAJOR EVENT IN UP

With elections round the corner, the death anniversary of Dalit ideologue Kanshi Ram on October 9 is turning into a massive event, as all major political parties are launching programmes to connect with the community on this day. The BJP will send out nearly 40,300 Dalit NaMo Mitras -- 100 in each of the 403 Assembly segments of Uttar Pradesh -- to enlist community support for six mega Dalit meets that the ruling party has planned across the state this month. Since 2014 Lok Sabha polls, Dalit voters had started veering towards the BJP. Barring a minor blip when community backed the Congress-supported SP candidate in the recent Ghosi by poll, the Dalit support has continued for the BJP. The BSP had not contested the by poll. BJP's SC/ST wing chief Ram Chandra Kannaujia confirmed that NaMo Mitras -- influential or intellectuals from among community -- have been tasked with mobilising maximum community support. The Congress proposes to start a 'Dalit Gaurav Samvad' from October 9, while SP chief Akhilesh Yadav after unveiling a statue of Kanshi Ram in Rae Bareilly in April, is now preparing a fresh round of community connect. BSP chief Mayawati will pay tribute to Kanshi Ram in a programme organised at her residence in Lucknow. The BSP has already organised meetings in all the 403 Assembly segments and 75 districts to mobilise workers. Now, with the 2024 Lok Sabha polls nearing, the BJP is looking at these meets as a strategic exercise to showcase how much has been done for Dalits by the double engine BJP governments at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh. Yogi's Dalit ministers -- Baby Rani Maurya and social welfare minister Asim Arun -- are at the forefront of this campaign.

Special on World Mental Health Day-10 October, 2023

Mental health precedes physical care

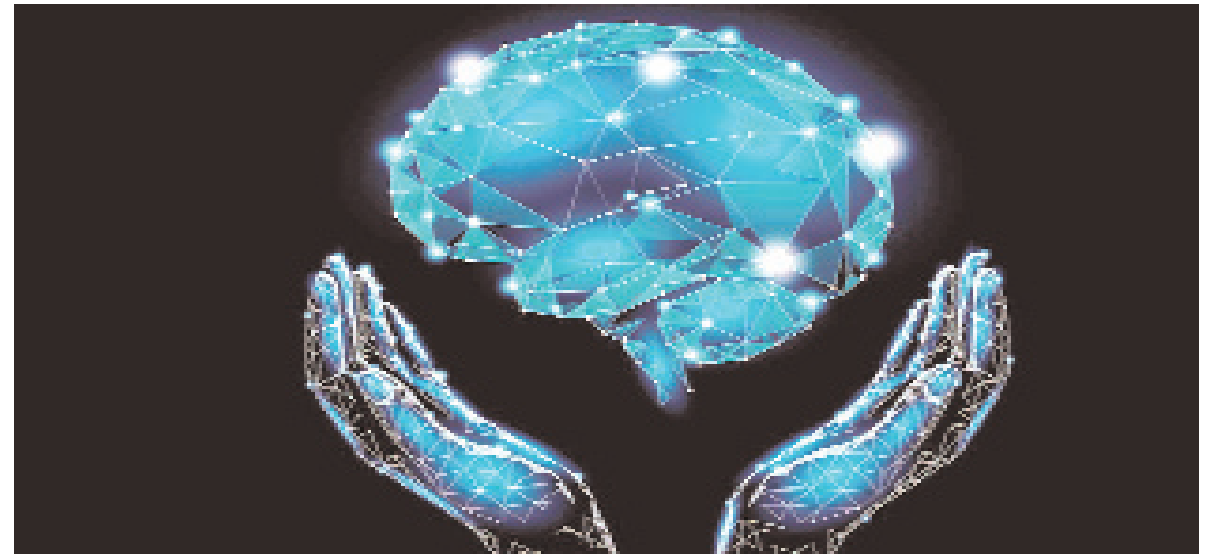
Lalit Garg

World Mental Health Day is celebrated every year on 10 October all over the world. The purpose of celebrating this day is to bring awareness among people about mental health. The aim of this day is to help the human community achieve good health and long life by giving them stress-free life. There has been a huge increase in mental diseases due to scientific progress, industrial revolution, increasing population, rapid urbanization, inflation, unemployment and the stressful environment of modern life. This is a matter of concern for the entire world. Today, every sphere of life is plagued by problems, due to the hectic and stressful life. Anxiety and pressure are being felt everywhere, be it work, relationships and heavy expectations from life. Every person is forced to live a life of doubt, conflict and mental turmoil. In this milieu, maintaining good mental health has become tricky in these increasingly complex circumstances.

This year's theme is 'Mental health is a universal human right.' When mental disorders appear as physical illness, they are known as psychosomatic diseases. Today, it is expected everywhere that a healthy mindset should be created. Man's thoughts and behaviour should be changed. Every person suffers from mental diseases and disorders more than he suffers from physical diseases. It is said in the scriptures - 'Worry is like a funeral pyre.' This proves to be absolutely true considering the serious diseases that arise from daily stress, which eventually can lead to death. The biggest and continuously emerging problem in today's fast-paced lifestyle, where every minute is counted, is the mental stress, which has permanently spread its foot in everyone's life, is badly affecting an individual's mental health. Mental stress starting from personal life has become a serious problem for the whole world, which is capable of giving rise to many other serious problems. This is why, to avoid this and achieve mental peace, people are adopting yoga, meditation, spirituality and many other methods in their lives.

A new analysis from the World Health Organization shows nearly one billion persons worldwide suffer from some, or the other form of mental disorders. According to a study, more than five crore people in India alone are psychopaths. A psychological report reveals that one and a half percent of the population suffers from mental illnesses throughout their life. Ten percent of people are affected by this disease at some point in their life. The summary of the latest discoveries of psychologists is that every second person in the entire world is mentally ill. Some psychologists believe that knowingly or unknowingly every person always suffers from some or the other mental illness. Anxiety, nervousness, lack of sleep, despair, irritability, negative thinking - all these are the gross symptoms of mental illness. This is the beginning of mental paralysis. Due to this the brain becomes frustrated. Intellectual stimulation gets blocked. As soon as the brain machinery gets jammed, the body system also becomes disorganized and inactive. An unbalanced mind itself becomes sick and also makes the body sick.

It is also very well known that stress is not the solution to any problem, but gives birth to many other problems. For example, stress makes a person suffer from excessive



headache, migraine, high or low blood pressure and heart-related problems. Mental stress is the main cause of heart-attacks in the world. This irritates your nature and also steals your happiness and smile. To avoid this, it has become not only necessary, but mandatory to remove unnecessary causes of stress from life. For happiness, peace and satisfaction in life, mental health is as important as a healthy body. At present many branches of medical science have developed, one of them is mental health science. Through this, efforts are made to protect patients from mental diseases, and to create a healthy mindset. A person with a healthy mind always experiences self-satisfaction, perfection and happiness, which leads to balanced development of personality. A person with a balanced mind can also adjust with the obstacles/difficulties that come in life. By mental health we mean peace of mind, happiness. A person who adjusts with the circumstances reaches his goal. A maladjusted person fails at every step. Then he gets attacked by despair and frustration and, as a result, he falls victim to many types of mental diseases.

India has a very large population of youth, averaged about thirty percent. Prevention and management of mental distress among adolescents and adults should begin at an early age by increasing awareness and understanding the early warning signs and symptoms of mental illness. The National Mental Health Policy was announced on 10 October 2014. Considering the seriousness of mental illnesses, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken initiative to launch many multi-dimensional programs. Adolescence and early adulthood are the life-stages, when many changes occur, for example changing schools, leaving home and starting college, university or a new job. These are exciting times for many people and in some cases, it can also be a time of stress, depression, frustration and doubt. The increased use of online technologies with many benefits has also brought additional pressures for people in this age group, with half of all mental illnesses beginning by the age of fourteen, with suicide the second lead-

ing cause of death among fifteen to twenty-nine year old persons. Harmful use of alcohol and drugs is also a major problem among teenagers that can lead to risky behaviour, such as - unsafe sex or dangerous driving.

Generally everyone is concerned about physical health; however, very little attention is paid to mental health. Health depends on the quality of thoughts, not on medicines. There is a deep connection between the brain and body. The structure of the brain is very complex and mysterious. The body is controlled by the brain. Thoughts affect body systems. Professor Gates writes, "Corrupted emotions contaminate the blood. As soon as bad thoughts enter the mind, the secretions of the glands change. Their construction also stops. The poisonous effect of bad thoughts poisons the blood. This makes the body sick. The capabilities of the brain start decreasing and it becomes weak. A person who always lives in a dirty environment and is surrounded by bad thoughts loses physical health and personality influence.

Good thoughts develop mental happiness, excitement increases. This not only makes a difference in the person's behaviour, but also makes his behaviour dignified. Therefore, for personality development, it is expected that mental balance and positive thinking should be developed continuously. Success in this direction can be achieved through targeted practice and experimentation. Since the whole world is becoming aware about the importance of mental health, and is trying to stay away from stress, then you should also take a pledge that you will not take excessive stress in any problem; because it can also give rise to many types of physical problems. Stress makes problems more complicated, rather than solving them, so it is better to solve them tactfully. Why should we forget to smile in times of trouble? Keep laughing, keep smiling and keep worrying habits at a distance.

international

ISRAELI DEFENCE MINISTER ORDERS 'COMPLETE SEIGE' ON GAZA

Jerusalem | Agencies Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant on Monday ordered a "complete siege" on the Gaza Strip as forces claimed to have regained all the communities around the coastal enclave on the third day of the conflict with the Hamas militant group. "No electricity, no food, no fuel," the BBC quoted the Minister as saying in a televised address. "We are fighting barbarians and will respond accordingly," he added. Israel controls the air space over Gaza and its shoreline, and restricts who and what goods are allowed in and out through its border crossings. Similarly, Egypt



controls who passes in and out of its border with Gaza, the BBC reported. Meanwhile, Hamas on Monday said that it fired 120 rockets toward the southern Israeli cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon in response to Israeli airstrikes. As a result of

the incoming rockets, sirens were sounded in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv as well. According to Israel's emergency services, in Ashkelon, just north of Gaza, four people were injured, while in Ashdod, a woman was critically injured. Monday

marked the third day of conflict between Israel and Hamas after the militant group launched an unprecedented attack on southern Israel on October 7, prompting the Jewish nation to declare war and pound the Gaza Strip with airstrikes. So far, the death toll in the Gaza Strip increased to 493 on Monday, with 2,751 people injured, according to Palestinian health authorities. Israel has maintained its death toll at more than 700. At least 123,538 people have been internally displaced in Gaza in the three days since the conflict broke out, according to UN agencies.

Tsunami advisories issued in Japan after 2 quakes

Tokyo | Agencies The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) on Monday issued tsunami advisories for multiple locations after two earthquakes jolted the Izu Islands and Wakayama prefecture.

According to the JMA, the tsunami could reach one meter in height in Izu Islands, Ogasawara Islands, and the Kochi, Chiba, Miyazaki and Kagoshima prefectures, Xinhua news agency reported. The advisories, the lowest level in the country's three-tier tsunami warning system, advised people to stay away from the coast and rivers while staying alert for possible flooding.

At 5.25 a.m., on Monday morning, an earthquake struck near Izu Islands at a very shallow depth, the JMA said without specifying the tremor's magnitude. About two hours later, a 3.5-magni-

tude earthquake hit the country's northern Wakayama prefecture. According to the JMA, the tremor occurred at 8.18 a.m. at a depth of 70 km

at a latitude of 34.1 degrees north and a longitude of 135.5 degrees east, measuring 2 on Japan's seismic intensity scale, which peaks at 7.



Hamis holding over 100 Israeli hostages

Jerusalem/Gaza | Agencies The Palestinian Hamas militant group which launched an unprecedented surprise attack on southern Israel on October 7, has claimed that it was currently holding more than 100 Israeli nationals as hostages, including high-ranking army officers. In an interview with Arabic news outlet al-Ghad TV late Sunday night, Mousa Abu Marzouk, deputy chief of the group's political bureau, said the number of Israeli hostages "hasn't been counted yet but they are over a hundred", CNN reported. When queried if Israeli army officers were among the hostages, Marzouk replied: "There are high-ranking officers." Israeli authorities have said that dozens of Israelis are being held hostage in Gaza but have not confirmed exact numbers. Also on Sunday night, Islamic Jihad, a militant group that operates in Palestinian territories, announced that it has taken 30 Israelis as hostages. In a televised address, Ziad al-Nakhalah, the group's secre-



tary-general, said: "The Islamic Jihad Movement currently has more than 30 prisoners, and they will not return to their homes until our prisoners are liberated." The Islamic Jihad and Hamas are separate organisations, but they both operate in the Gaza Strip and are aligned in their opposition to Israel. The Islamic Jihad has called for Israel to release some of its fighters in exchange for the hostages' release. The total number of hostages taken during Hamas' assault this weekend is not yet clear, but Israeli officials have said there are dozens of captives. Mexico's Foreign Minister Alicia Barcena said on Sunday that two Mexican nationals, a woman and a

man, have "presumably" been taken hostage by Hamas. Meanwhile, at least three Brazilian nationals are also missing, according to Brazilian authorities. The Hamas launched the surprise attack on Israeli towns adjacent to the Gaza Strip, prompting Israel to launch retaliatory strikes on Gaza. During the attack, Hamas militants broke through the security fence that separate the Gaza Strip from Israel and stormed nearby communities, killing and capturing Israelis. On Sunday, Israel declared a war on Gaza, attacking the besieged coastal enclave with airstrikes that were still continuing as of Monday morning. Since the conflict erupted, more than 700 people have been killed in the Jewish state, while over 400 Palestinians were also dead, according to authorities. Meanwhile, hundreds of people are still reported missing. Among the victims are at least 260 people whose bodies were found at the site of a music festival near the Israel-Gaza border.

China's hand in Nijjar's killing, claims NY-based activist-blogger

New York | Agencies A New York-based activist and independent blogger has claimed that agents from China, not India, were involved in the killing of Canadian Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June this year. China-born Jennifer Zeng said in her blog, 'Inconvenient Truths' that the killing was carried out by the agents of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with an intent to "frame" India and "create discord between India and the West". "Today, shocking revelations about the assassination of the #Sikh leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, have emerged from within the CCP. It is alleged that the assassination was carried out by CCP agents," Zeng said in a video, which she shared on X on Monday. She also said that the move was part of CCP's "sinister ignition plan" to disrupt the world in line with Chinese President Xi Jinping's mili-



tary strategy regarding Taiwan. Zeng, who is a member of the International Press Association according to her X bio, attributed her allegations to Canada-based Chinese writer and YouTuber Lao Deng. "Lao stated that in early June this year as part of their disruption initiative 'ignition plan', the CCP Ministry of State Security sent a high-ranking official to Seattle, USA. A secret meeting was held there. The objective was to sabotage relations between India and the West," Zeng was heard saying in the video. "The agents were tasked with assassinating Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the Sikh leader in Canada," she said, adding that following the meeting, the CCP agents

"meticulously executed the assassination plan". She said that when the "deed" (killing) was done on June 18, the agents destroyed the dash camera in Nijjar's car to erase any evidence. "After the crime, the agents fled, they burned their weapons and disguises to destroy all traces. The next day they left Canada in Airplanes," Zeng alleged. In addition, she said that the assassins "purposely learned Indian-accent English", which was part of the scheme by CCP secret agents to frame India.

The bilateral ties between India and Canada went downhill after the latter accused New Delhi of killing Nijjar, and both nations expelled a diplomat each. In a fresh provocation by Canada on Sunday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said he has discussed India "and the importance of upholding -- and respecting -- the rule of law" with the UAE President, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed.

More than 71,000 Sri Lankans affected by heavy rain



Colombo | Agencies More than 71,000 Sri Lankans in 13 districts have been adversely affected by heavy rain and subsequent flooding, the island nation's Disaster Management Centre (DMC) said on Monday. The DMC said three people have died due to floods and landslides, reports Xinhua news agency. Sri Lanka has seen heavy rains in recent weeks due to

the activation of the south-west monsoon season. The National Building Research Organization said on Monday that due to the prevailing rainy weather, landslide warning notices issued for several districts were extended.

The Department of Meteorology said that rains in Western, Sabaragamuwa, and Southern provinces would decrease in the next 48 hours.



Jamie Lee Curtis removes post supporting Israel following backlash

Los Angeles | Agencies

Oscar-winning actress Jamie Lee Curtis has quietly responded to backlash over her post which saw her showing support for Israel following the Hamas attack. The actress has deleted the controversial post as it's no longer on her Instagram page, reports aceshowbiz.com.

In the Saturday post, Jamie shared a picture of several children looking terrified while staring missiles in the sky.

"Terror from the skies," the 'Everything Everywhere All at Once' actress wrote alongside an Israel flag.

The actress also tagged Samar Abu Elouf, the photographer behind the image.

Samar, however, clarified that the picture actually featured Palestinian children in Gaza.

They were running from bombs being counter-launched by Israel.

"Palestinian families seek refuge with their children from the northern Gaza Trip to UNRWA schools inside Gaza City. Children



are afraid of the sound of bombing who hear

it during their presence due to events on the Strip's borders," the photographer wrote on her own Instagram page.

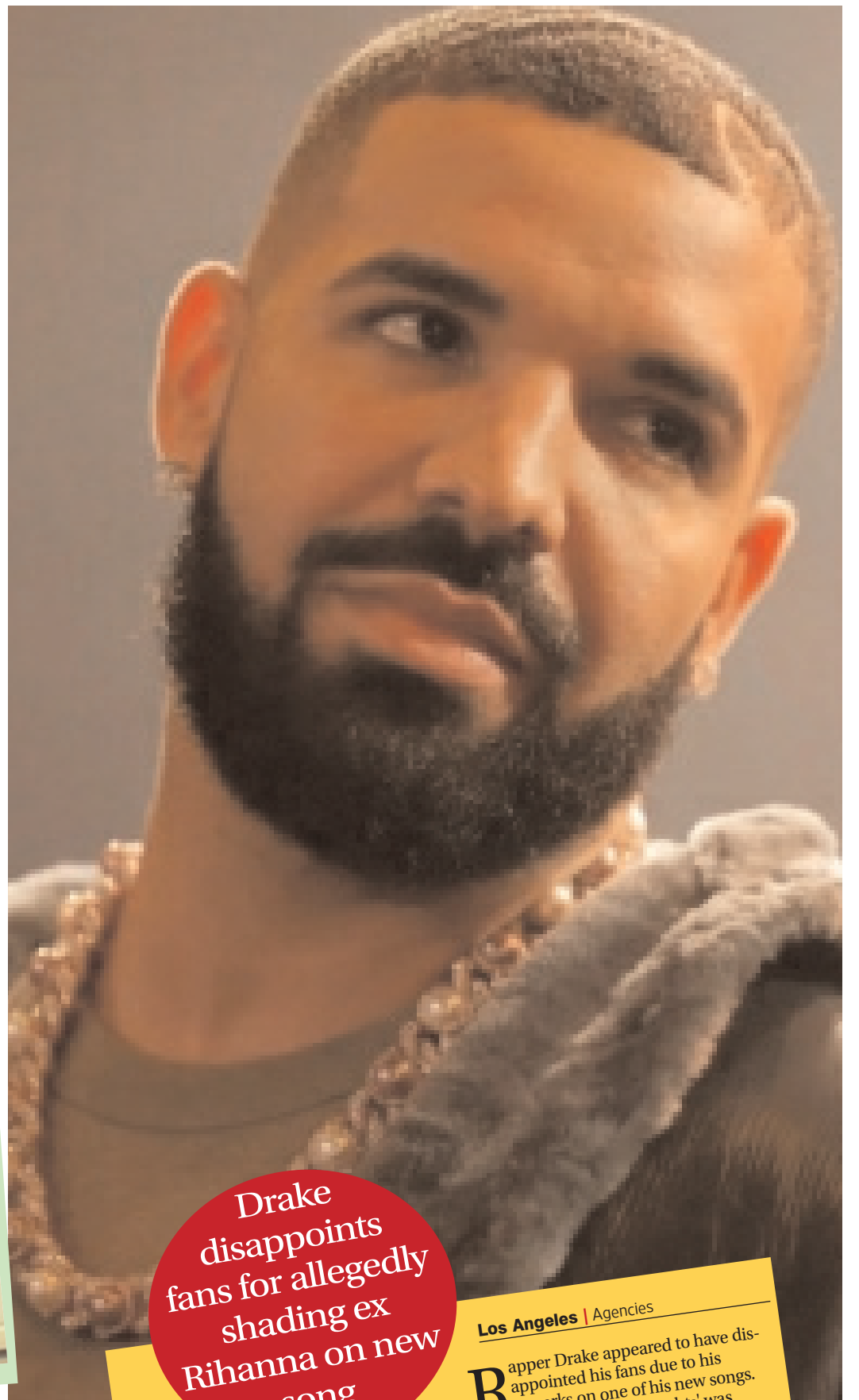
It didn't take long for Internet users to slam Jamie as she used the wrong picture to show solidarity to Israel.

"Just to clarify, this picture is from Gaza. The children looking up at the rockets are Palestinian," an Instagram user wrote in the comments section.

"That's Arabic in the back there, look at the store signs. If that was in Israel, it would be Hebrew," someone else pointed out. "In fact, this is a picture from Gaza! The children are Palestinian children from Gaza and they are under Israeli terror and heavy airstrike!"

"Girl, wtf is the message here? You have a photo of Palestinian children taken by a Gaza-based Muslim photojournalist with an Israeli flag in the incredibly manipulative caption," someone else fumed.

A user on X (formerly Twitter), wrote: "Jamie Lee Curtis posting a pic from Gaza and thinking it's from Israel is kinda funny ngl."



Drake disappoints fans for allegedly shading ex Rihanna on new song

Los Angeles | Agencies

Rapper Drake appeared to have disappointed his fans due to his remarks on one of his new songs. Shortly after his track 'Fear of Heights' was released, the 'Hotline Bling' rapper was alleged to have thrown shades at his former girlfriend and singer Rihanna, reports aceshowbiz.com. The 36-year-old rapper became a hot topic on X, formerly known as Twitter, as his fans voiced their thoughts on the new single. One of them wrote: "Drake rapping about Rihanna, reports aceshowbiz.com. he did in 2013 is as disappointing as it is predictable." Meanwhile, another candidly penned: "Drake dissing rihanna on the album is crazyyyy [a laughing emoji] he's so salty I'm weaaaaaak."

That same day, Rihanna's fans came to her defense on the same social media platform. One of them stated, "Drake dissed Rihanna my baby she is somewhere changing diapers for the 20th time this morning... that lady does not gaf lmfao." Similarly, another bragged about the 'Love on the Brain' singer and her achievements: "Rihanna ended her relationship with Drake years ago. Since then she's started her own makeup line, had a family, and got nominated for an Oscar. I promise you she's not worried about that man."

Drake released the song, which is featured on his eighth studio album 'For All the Dogs' on October 6.

Dwayne Johnson's contract clause for action films keeps tight leash on number of blows he sustains

Los Angeles | Agencies

Hollywood actor Dwayne Johnson is well known for his beefy roles and action hero characters, which see the star escape near impossible disasters and go into combat.

Yet the actor doesn't just land all his action heroes by pure luck, the star reportedly also has a 'no lose' contract added into all his movie roles that means the actor is never beaten, reports Mirror.co.uk.

The actor, who has starred in various films including as Agent Luke Hobbs in the 'Fast and Furious' franchise, reportedly has legal terms and conditions that limit how 'badly' he can be beaten up and ensure that he always comes out on top.

As per Mirror.co.uk, he follows in the footsteps of other action hero actors including Vin Diesel and Jason Statham, who also keep a tight leash on how many punches they sustain and how their fight scenes are played out on screen.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Johnson took heed from Vin Diesel who reportedly developed a system where he assigned a numerical value to each punch he received while on screen and kept track of how many punches he had taken whilst filming.

The Wall Street Journal reported: "According to producers and crew members on the films, Mr. Statham, 51 years old, negotiated an agreement with the studio that limits how badly he can be beaten up on screen. Mr. Johnson, 47, enlists producers, editors and fight coordinators to help make sure he always gives as good as he gets."

Johnson also took the contract to the next level for Fast and Furious, as he allegedly had the script changed to ensure that after one on screen brawl he was left sitting up instead of lying down and seemingly less hurt.



Kit Harrington confesses to being self-obsessed in the past

Los Angeles | Agencies

Kit Harrington, who is known for playing Jon Snow in 'Game of Thrones', feels fortunate to have been surrounded by "truthful" people throughout his career to humble him. Harrington told Candis magazine: "There are times when I've been an idiot. When I've been wrapped up in myself. But I've always had people around me who've been truthful." The actor said he's learned from his past mistakes, reports femalefirst.co.uk. He said: "There's not much I'd change, because the mistakes I've made in the world I've found myself in have made me who I am today. And at the moment, I'm happy with myself." He also appreciates the support he's received from his parents. The actor explained how his mum encouraged him to pursue his ambitions "in a really intelligent and sensitive way." He shared: "Their genius in parenting was not to push us into anything but to look at what we were intrinsically drawn by. So I was never pushed into acting, just as my brother was never pushed into what he did. "For instance, when I was a kid and liked dinosaurs, my mother would buy me everything about dinosaurs. "So when I got older and drama came along, it was her who guided me, 'OK, do you want to go to drama school? Do you want to join the National Youth Theatre, or maybe you want to do this course at RADA?'"

She was always there, delicately puppeteering my young life, but in a really intelligent and sensitive way. She's a fantastic woman."

Katy Perry gets new ink on her finger

Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-songwriter Katy Perry has got a new tattoo. She took to the Story section of her Instagram recently and shared that she has a new finger tattoo to celebrate the final leg of her Las Vegas residency Play.

In the first post, Perry's hand rested under a light as tattoo artist Liz Kim etched the ink onto her finger, reports People magazine. "You guys know what it is? I bet you can't guess what I'm getting right now," the singer said in the video as the light obscured the details of her new body art. "But I am getting my tour tattooed, it's a tradition." "8 more #PLAY shows left so it's tour tattoo time." The 'Firework' songstress

wrote over the clip. In a follow-up image, Perry showed off her new tattoo of a cartoon mushroom - an object featured prominently within her Play residency. As per People, Perry kicked off her Las Vegas residency Play in December 2021, and has made sure it's a visual spectacle. As well as a pink and yellow checkerboard stage, the show features some oversized bathroom items, including a larger-than-life toilet and plunger and a colossal rubber duck. The singer's fans also get to hear an array of tracks from each of her studio albums during the show. Songs featured include 'Never Really Over', 'Teenage Dream', 'Roar', 'E.T.', 'Dark Horse', 'California Gurls', 'Waking Up in Vegas' and 'I Kissed a Girl'.



Christine McGuinness



Beauty queen Manasvi Mamgai confirmed as 'Bigg Boss 17' contestant



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Former beauty queen and actress Manasvi Mamgai will be seen in the 17th edition of the upcoming controversial reality show 'Bigg Boss'.

A source close to IANS confirmed the news that Manasvi will be seen in the show, which has the theme of couples vs singles, hosted by Bollywood superstar Salman Khan.

Manasvi won the title of Femina Miss India World 2010 and represented India at Miss World 2010. She previously won the titles of Miss India Tourism International and Miss Tourism International 2008. In 2016, she became the Indian Ambassador to the Republican Hindu Coalition.

The actress was born in Delhi but grew up in Chandigarh. Her mother Prabha, is from Uttarakhand.

In 2014 she played the antagonist, Marina opposite Ajay Devgn in the Eros International studio movie 'Action Jackson', directed by Prabhu Deva.

Manasvi appeared on the famous Indian comedy show 'Comedy Nights with Kapil' along with her 'Action Jackson' star cast. She was last seen in 'The Trial' starring Kajol.

'SCOOP' BAGS BEST SERIES, BEST LEAD ACTRESS FOR KARISHMA TANNA AT BUSAN FILM FEST

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Actress Karishma Tanna, who received a lot of positive response for her work in the streaming series 'Scoop', has bagged the coveted 'Best Lead Actress' award for her work in 'Scoop' at the prestigious Busan Film Festival 2023.

She was nominated in two categories at the festival. She also picked the trophy for 'Best Series' for 'Scoop' at the Busan Film Festival.

The Busan Film Festival, one of Asia's most celebrated cinematic events. On the red carpet of the film fest, the actress exuded elegance and cultural pride by adorning a Saree, symbolising her Indian roots.

In response to her win, Karishma Tanna shared her gratitude and enthusiasm, stating: "I am truly humbled and elated by this recognition at the Busan Film Festival. It has been an incredible journey bringing Jagruti Pathak to life in 'Scoop.' This award belongs to the entire team who worked tirelessly to make this project a reality. I am immensely grateful to my fans for their unwavering support, and I hope to continue pushing boundaries and delivering powerful performances in the future."

'Scoop', which is available to stream on Netflix, seamlessly weaves the intrigue of Mumbai's crime underbelly with exceptional direction, breathtaking cinematography, and a stellar cast.

The show is based on Jigna Vora's biographical memoir 'Behind Bars in Byculla: My Days in Prison'. It follows the real-life story of Jigna Vora who was accused of the murder of mid-day reporter Jyotirmoy Dey in June 2011.



Vishal Bhardwaj: Adapting a book is about the profound connection you feel with it

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj said that adapting a book is about the profound connection one feels while reading it.

"Escape to Nowhere," the gripping nonfiction narrative at the core of Vishal Bhardwaj's Netflix film 'Khufiya', called for an unwavering commitment to detail and a profound respect for its source material. Talking about the creative process of bringing the book to screen adaptation, Bhardwaj shared: "Adapting a book to the screen isn't about what you initially think; it's about the profound connection you feel when you read it. Committing to this process is physically and emotionally demanding, tougher than even a marriage."

He added: "Khufiya" takes me into uncharted territory, exploring espionage, a new genre for me. It's a thrilling journey of creative discovery, one that has provided me with a fresh and exhilarating perspective on my directorial journey, expanding my creative horizons and



challenging me in ways I hadn't anticipated." Directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, 'Khufiya' starring Tabu, Ali Fazal and Wamiqa Gabbi, released on October 5 on Netflix.

'He just wants to be happy with friends'

Varun Sharma on why Choocha is a common man's reflection

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Actor Varun Sharma, who is currently riding high on the success of his latest release 'Fukrey 3', spoke about what makes his endearing character Choocha a common man's reflection.

Varun told IANS: "I think Choocha is a common man's reflection because he derives happiness from the smallest of things. He just wants to be happy with his friends at that moment."

"I think every individual wants to just do that. Be happy in that present moment that he or she is, and be comfortable and spread love amongst the group that one is in," he added.

The 33-year-old actor made his Bollywood debut in 2013 with 'Fukrey'. He was then seen in 'Dolly Ki Doli', 'Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon', 'Dilwale', 'Raabta', 'Fukrey Returns', 'Khandaani Shafakhana', 'Chhichhore' and 'Roohi'.



I connected deeply with my character because, like him, I speak little but convey a lot: Raj Arjun

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Well-known actor Raj Arjun who plays a pivotal part in Zee Theatre's engrossing drama 'Tadbeer' has fond memories of getting the nuances of his character right. He plays an ex-army officer in this story where a politically supported group is all set to assassinate an activist fighting for equality and freedom of speech.

A conflict then ensues between a young foot soldier, Somu and a seasoned recruit Darshan and Raj Arjun says, "I play someone who leaves the army because he does not want to give in to what the hierarchy demands from him. But even when he takes another path, he realises that caste and religion-based hierarchies exist everywhere. I connected deeply with my character because, like him, I speak little but convey a lot. Raj says he is always looking out for similar roles that are substantial and have something important to convey. For me, the story is the hero and if it is well-written and has a layered part with depth, I will take it on. I try to choose roles that have the potential to satisfy the actor within."

Raj is also thrilled that Zee Theatre is expanding the reach of plays like 'Tadbeer' and says, "This initiative to preserve theatre in a kind of a library is admirable. It allows



people who can't access live plays to enjoy theatre. We have so many great playwrights and theatre stalwarts whose work will now be preserved forever."

Theatre has a very special place in Raj's heart as he too started his creative journey on stage in Bhopal. He recalls, "I did theatre in Bharat Bhawan and later got a chance to work with the

great Habib Tanver and also Feroz Abbas Khan. This teleplay was a wonderful opportunity to relive the discipline and rigour I learnt on stage. Live theatre does not allow retakes and you have to remain in character throughout.

Before a camera, however, things are more fluid and so a teleplay is the perfect blend of both techniques.

Sushmita Sen says season 3 of her series will explore profound power of titular character



Team Absolute | Mumbai

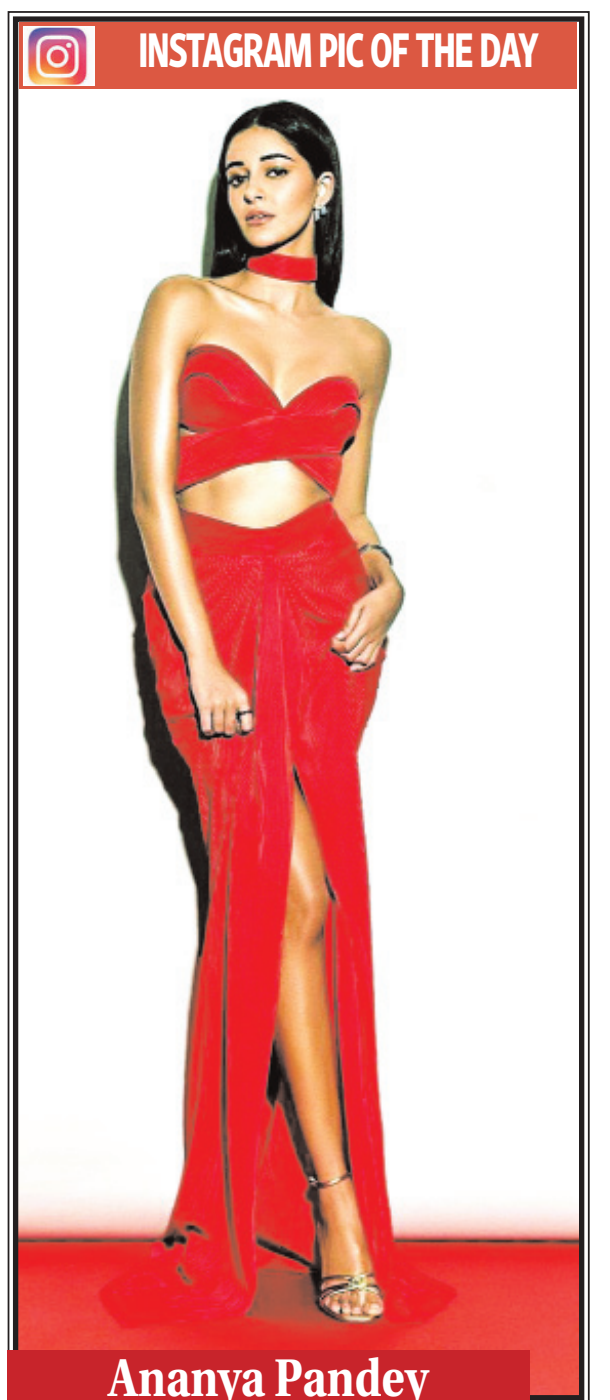
The hit streaming show 'Aarya', which stars actress and former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen in the titular role of Aarya Sareen, is set to return with its third season on November 3.

The International Emmy nominated show will explore the profound power of the titular character as shared by Sushmita.

The story of the show revolves around Aarya Sareen, a caring mother and a loving wife, who is unaware

of the illegal business her husband is a part of. Things go bad for their family after Aarya's husband Tej Sareen, a pharma baron, is mysteriously killed. The drug mafia and illegal syndicates seek the death of his entire family. In response Aarya joins the gangs. The show traces her journey in becoming the mafia queen who seeks revenge against those who killed her husband. Talking about the show, Sushmita said: "Aarya Sareen has now become a very integral part of my life. Her experiences

across seasons have touched my heart. It's an honour to step back into her shoes for 'Aarya' Season 3. This season explores the profound power of Aarya, as she strikes down her enemies and begins to create an empire of her own, while grappling the threats to her loved ones. Aarya's story is a testament to a woman who defies life's constraints and will go to any lengths to protect the ones close to her. 'Aarya' season 3 isn't just a show, it's an emotional journey that fills me with love and pride."



Ananya Pandey