

absolute india



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Brij Bhushan after aide Sanjay Singh gets elected as WFI chief

'DABDABA TO RAHEGA'

In the aftermath of Sanjay Singh's resounding victory in the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections, a seismic shift echoed through the wrestling community. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, ex-WFI President accused of sexual harassment by prominent Indian wrestlers, stood firm in his assertion that "dabdab to rahega".

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Sanjay Singh's triumph with 40 out of 47 votes, defeating Commonwealth Games Gold medalist Anita Sheoran, sparked controversy. Wrestlers, including Sakshi Malik, Bajrang Punia, and Vinesh Phogat, who had fervently protested against Brij Bhushan, rallied behind Sheoran. Despite their efforts, Singh's win signaled a continuation of the existing leadership.

Brij Bhushan, unfazed by the allegations against him, proclaimed the victory as a triumph for the country's wrestlers. He expressed hope that the wrestling activities, halted for 11 months during the protests, would now resume under the new leadership.

"A message has been given. Every akhaada (wrestling academy) in the country is bursting firecrackers.



Dabdabaa tha, dabdabaa rahega! I want to give the credit of victory to the wrestlers of the country and the electors. I want to thank the government as well.

The elections were done on the instructions of the Supreme Court... the Centre went ahead to make sure elections happened and a non-partisan person was chosen as president," Brij Bhushan said.

"This 'grahan' (eclipse) of 11 months on wrestling is over. Within 10 days, the landscape of wrestling will change again and we will perform in the Olympics the way people want us to," he added. In a surprising turn of events, Olympic medalist Sakshi Malik, visibly disheartened by the election outcome, symbolically put her wrestling boots on a table during a press briefing and declared her departure from the sport. Her dramatic exit underscored the disappointment among wrestlers who had envisioned a woman leading the federation. The wrestling community now

grapples not only with the implications of the election but also with the departure of a celebrated athlete, signaling a challenging chapter for the future of Indian wrestling.

DELHI COURT TO START FRESH HEARING AGAINST EX-WFI CHIEF FROM JAN 4

New Delhi: A Delhi court has said that it will start a fresh hearing in the sexual harassment case filed against BJP MP and former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh by six female wrestlers.

The decision stems from the transfer of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjeet Singh Jaspal of Rouse Avenue Court, who had previously presided over the case.

As the predecessor judge had already heard extensive arguments, the court steered the need for a fresh hearing, especially on the framing of charges. The matter was at the stage of clarification before an order could be reserved when the transfer occurred.

The court has now scheduled the fresh hearing to commence from January 4. Last time, the Delhi Police filed written arguments presenting its stand on whether to frame charges against Singh. ACMM Jaspal had handed the copy of the arguments to the accused's and complainants' counsels.

Delhi HC urges swift decision from EC on Rahul Gandhi's 'pickpocket' jibe at PM

Team Absolute | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the Election Commission to promptly decide, preferably within eight weeks, on the notice issued to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, noting that the alleged statements are "not in good taste".

This notice is in relation to Gandhi's alleged "pickpocket" comment directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a speech last month.

The court was hearing a public interest litigation seeking action against Gandhi and the formulation of guidelines to prevent such instances by political leaders.

The petitioner, Bharat Nagar, said that Gandhi's speech on November 22 contained "heinous allegations" against individuals in the highest governmental positions, including the Prime Minister, referring to him as a "pickpocket." The division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Mini Pushkarna noted the Election



Commission's examination of the matter and the notice issued to Gandhi. It stressed the need for expeditious resolution, especially considering the lapse of the deadline for filing a reply without receiving

one. The bench directed the Election Commission to conclude the matter within eight weeks, citing the notice sent on November 23, in which the poll panel assured appropriate action.

WILL REMOVE TWEET REVEALING MINOR VICTIM'S IDENTITY: RAHUL GANDHI

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday told the Delhi High Court that he will delete a tweet containing purportedly sensitive details about a minor girl who was allegedly raped and murdered in 2021.

The court was a plea seeking FIR against Gandhi for revealing the identity of a nine-year-old girl who was allegedly raped and killed. Gandhi's counsel made the statement during a hearing before a division bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Mini Pushkarna, after the court said it did not wish to issue a judicial order. The next hearing is scheduled for January 24, 2024.

Several dead in shooting near Prague varsity, assailant killed

Prague | Agencies

Several people were killed and many others injured in a shooting incident near the Charles University on Jan Palach Square in the Czech capital on Thursday, police said, adding that the assailant has been eliminated.

"The shooter has been eliminated!!! The entire building is currently being evacuated and there are several dead and dozens of injured on

the scene," the Czech police said in a post on X. In an earlier tweet, it had said that it was "currently responding to a reported shooting at a school in Namesti Jan Palach".

"Based on initial information, we can confirm that there are dead and injured people at the scene", the police said, adding that the whole of the square and surrounding area in Prague's Old Town was closed and urged people to stay away from the scene and remain indoors.

3 soldiers killed, 3 injured in encounter in J&K's Poonch

Jammu | Agencies

Three soldiers were killed and 3 others injured in a terrorist attack on their vehicle amid an encounter between terrorists and security forces in J&K's Poonch on Thursday, officials said.

"An operation was being conducted in general area of DKG (Dera ki Gali), Thanamandi, Rajouri since the night of December 20, 2023.

"At approximately 3:45 p.m. today, two army vehicles carrying troops were moving to the operational site, and fired upon by the terrorists.

"The fire was immediately retaliated upon by own troops. In the ongoing operation, own troops sustained 3 fatal and 3 non-fatal casualties," a defence statement said. "Operation is



in progress. Further details are being ascertained," it added.

A defence spokesman had earlier said that following hard intelligence, a joint operation was launched against the ter-

rorists in Dera Ki Gali area of Poonch, contact with the terrorists was established on Thursday evening and an encounter is now going on in the area.

LS SUSPENDS 3 MORE MPS, TOTAL SUSPENSIONS IN WINTER SESSION NOW 146 FROM BOTH HOUSES

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha on Thursday suspended three more opposition MPs for the remainder of the Winter Session, taking the total number of MPs suspended from both houses to 146.

On Thursday, three more MPs, D.K. Suresh, Nakul Nath, and Deepak Baij, all of the Congress, were suspended from the Lok Sabha for repeatedly disrupting the proceedings of the House, bringing placards into the House, continuously raising slogans and throwing them on the staff. Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi proposed to suspend these three MPs in the House and Rama Devi, who was in the Chair, then announced their suspension.

Maratha quotas: Shinde govt seeks more time, Jarange-Patil says 'no'

Jalna | Agencies

A ministerial delegation arrived in Maharashtra's Jalna on Thursday evening to meet Shivba Sanghatana chief Manoj Jarange-Patil and seek more time to implement the proposed Maratha reservation, but he remained adamant on his December 24 deadline.

The delegation rushed to Antarvali-Sarathi village a day after Chief Minister Eknath Shinde made a detailed statement in the Maharashtra Legislature Session in Nagpur that the government would implement the Maratha quota at a special session to be convened in February next year.

The delegation, comprising Ministers Girish Mahajan, Uday Samant and others, pleaded for "some more time" and urged Jarange-Patil to suspend all his planned public rallies and agitation programmes till February 2024. Jarange-Patil also demanded that in the case of those whose Kunbi Caste



certificates have been found, the government should provide the same certificate to their blood relatives on maternal side, to which the delegation said was "not possible as per the laws". Mahajan reiterated the CM's and the government's stance that the Maratha quotas would be given without affecting the existing OBC reservations, but the Maratha leader stuck to his demand for issuing Kunbi Caste certificates to the blood relations on the maternal side.

Continuing in an aggressive vein, a group of Maratha activists waved black flags at state Bharatiya Janata Party President Chandrashekar Bawankule in Nanded on Thursday.

Meanwhile, Jarange-Patil is likely to continue with his planned public rallies in certain districts over the next few days, starting with Beed on Saturday. Later, he would announce his next agitation programme on December 25, to keep up the pressure on the government, said an aide in Mumbai.

Maha school picnic turns tragic, teacher killed, 5 students injured

Solapur | Agencies

A 3-day long school picnic turned tragic on the final day when a state roadways bus in which the students and teachers were returning home to Maharashtra's Solapur from Ratnagiri crashed into a stationery tempo, killing one teacher, officials said on Thursday.

The incident occurred near Vatpali-Phata around dawn when the state transport bus bound for Bawda in Indapur town rammed into a tempo loaded with a consignment of bamboo, parked on a blind curve on the thoroughfare after a tyre puncture on the Malshiras-Indapur road. One of the four teachers aboard the bus was killed



instantly in the crash and another was seriously hurt, along with at least 5 other students. The 3-day excursion-cum-picnic in the coastal Konkan Ratnagiri was organised by the Shri Shivaji Vidyalaya from Tuesday and they were returning home when the accident happened around 6 am. The deceased teacher has been identified as Balkrishna Kale and his injured colleague is Ramakant Shirsat, besides five other students.

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi and party leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury have received invitations for the consecration ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22.

Sources said the Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust sent the invitations to them.

But the senior Congress leaders are unlikely to attend the ceremony, they added.

The invitations were sent individually to Kharge, Gandhi and Chowdhury, the sources said. Former prime ministers Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda have also received invitations for the



function. The invitations, the sources said, were delivered by a delegation of those associated with the Trust.

More invitations are likely to

be sent to other opposition leaders in the coming days.

The Trust has said that invitations have been extended to revered saints from different

traditions, along with all prominent individuals contributing to the honour of the country in every domain.

WHO classifies new Covid strain JN.1 'standalone variant of interest'

TN Ashok | Washington

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the new Covid-19 variant -- JN.1 -- as a "standalone variant of interest".

WHO's decision was prompted by the variant's ability to spread fast among the community. It said the decision was due to the strain's "rapidly increasing spread". The WHO on Tuesday announced that it is classifying a new Covid-19 strain - JN.1 - as a standalone variant of interest "due to its rapidly increasing spread", media reports said adding that the new variant's characteristics and a growth advantage over other strains in circulation prompted the early warning, reports said. Though WHO assessed the global public health risk of JN.1 as low, it warned that countries



approaching winter should be aware that Covid-19 and other pathogens may exacerbate respiratory disease seasons. "Despite this, with the onset of winter in the Northern Hemisphere, JN.1 could increase the burden of respiratory infections in many countries," it said. Though JN.1 is now restricted to its circulation in the US, it is responsible for an estimated 1 in 5 new coronavirus infections, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



CWC: KHARGE TAKES INDIRECT JIBE AT DHANKHAR; ASKS MEMBERS TO DECIDE ON BJJ 2.0

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Party President Mallikarjun Kharge said during the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on Thursday that the biggest challenge now is people holding constitutional positions, who are responsible for providing protection to the opposition MPs, are themselves becoming part of party politics using caste, region and occupation as their shield.

Without taking the name of Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, Kharge also said that he has failed to fulfill his obligations under the Constitution, besides asked the members to decide on Bharat Jodo Yatra 2.0 as is being demanded by the party workers.

In his opening remarks, Kharge said, "The elections for the 18th Lok Sabha are before us. In this regard, the fourth meeting of INDIA bloc was held in Delhi on December 19."

He also said that the Congress has moved forward in many directions.

"We have to win as many seats as possible by coordinating with like-minded colleagues," he said. The CWC chief also said that he has constituted a five-member National Alliance Committee, which will decide the contours of the alliance with the other parties. Kharge further said that in view of the preparations for the Lok Sabha elections, a review meeting has been held with about 24 states.

"We will also appoint coordinators for the Lok Sabha seats soon," the Congress leader said.

He also said that the party will hold a huge rally in Nagpur on December 28, on the 138th foundation day of the Congress.

"A new message will go out from there... The rally will be historic," he said.

Discussing the 'donate for desh' online crowdfunding campaign, Kharge said, "To further strengthen our fight, the party has once



again knocked on the doors of the public to seek their contributions and has started the 'donate for desh' crowdfunding programme. You are all requested to make people aware about this campaign."

"The whole country is seeing how the BJP is strangling democracy by arbitrarily passing important Bills without discussion or debate. A conspiracy is going on to convert the Parliament into a platform for the ruling party. The way 143 MPs of our INDIA bloc have been suspended from both the Houses is unfortunate," he said.

Targeting the Centre, he said, "Modi government is working against the dignity of the Parliament by passing all the important Bills in the absence of the opposition. By trying to take over institutions like the Election Commission, the government has put the Constitution, Parliament and democracy in danger."

He said the opposition had extended gave full

cooperation to the Parliament session.

"But after the (security breach) incident in the Parliament on December 13, the opposition MPs were demanding a statement from the Home Minister (Amit Shah) and a comprehensive discussion on the issue in both the Houses, which the government made a matter of prestige," he said.

In an indirect dig at Dhankhar, Kharge said, "The biggest challenge is that the people holding constitutional positions, who are responsible for providing protection to the opposition MPs, are themselves becoming a part of party politics using caste, region and occupation as their shield. He has failed to fulfill his obligations under the Constitution. The whole country is watching it." He also said that Congress has a history of 138 years of sacrifice and restraint.

"Patriotism is in our blood and DNA. Even during the British rule, our ancestors did not

learn to fear and bow down," he said.

He added that the government has been trying to mislead the public for the last 10 years by defaming the great heroes and distorting history for its own interests.

"We will have to answer them with the help of truth in a moderate and dignified language. We are doing the same work in the House also. Our ideology does not allow us to lie like them," Kharge said.

He also said that the life of ego, sin and lies is very short but truth is immortal.

"Following the path of truth which our heroes have taught us, we have to defeat the undemocratic forces with great patience and restraint. I have full confidence that we will achieve victory with the struggle to provide justice to the people," he said, adding, "We have to always pay attention to those fundamental issues which this government is making every possible effort to keep aside."

He also said that the wealth of the country is being handed over to a few businessmen.

"We should not forget those questions which will affect future politics. Caste census and women's reservation will be important issues. We want that women's reservation should be implemented immediately and OBC women should be brought under the ambit of reservation. Today, we will have to brainstorm on many such questions and make some concrete strategies for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections," he said.

He also said that for the last several months, all the leaders and workers of the party have been continuously putting forward a demand that Rahul Gandhi should be requested to tour India under Bharat Jodo Yatra 2.0.

"I put this before Rahul ji in the working committee, and leave the decision to all of you," he added.

Air quality dips to 'severe' levels at several sites in Delhi



Team Absolute | New Delhi

The air quality in several areas of the national capital continues to remain under the "severe" category as per data from several AQI stations across the city on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department said that the maximum temperature was recorded at 23 degrees Celsius, a notch above the seasonal average and predicted that the minimum temperature is likely to dip to five degree Celsius during the night. On Thursday, the air quality at Anand Vihar entered the 'severe' category with PM 2.5 at 438 and PM 10 at 359, while the NO2 reached 86 or 'satisfactory' and CO was at 118 or 'moderate', as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). The Bawana

station recorded PM 2.5 at 480, while the PM 10 reached 451, in the 'severe' category, while the CO reached 106, or 'moderate' levels.

The AQI monitoring station at Dwarka Sector 8 recorded PM 2.5 at 419 while PM 10 was at 474 or 'severe' while the NO2 was at 72, in 'satisfactory' levels. The AQI at the ITO station was in the 'severe' category with PM 2.5 at 441 and PM 10 at 405, while the NO2 was at 195 and CO was at 141, both in the 'moderate' level. The PM 2.5 at Okhla Phase-II was recorded at 426, and PM 10 at 447, both in the 'severe' category. The NO2 was at 163 and CO was at 143, both in 'moderate'. At IGI airport, AQI monitoring station the PM 2.5 was at 404 while PM 10 was at 406, both in severe quality while the CO was at 120 or 'moderate'.

Special court hands 4-year RI to three in Vyapam scam

Team Absolute | New Delhi | Gwalior

A special CBI court in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior has handed rigorous imprisonment of four years along with a fine of Rs 14,100 to three individuals in connection with the Vyapam scam, an official said on Thursday.

The order was delivered by a Special Judge (Vyapam cases) who sentenced accused Dadhibal Singh (beneficiary candidate), Sunil Kumar (impersonator), and Vijay Tamre a.k.a Bala (middleman) to four years of rigorous imprisonment each along with a fine.

The CBI case originated from a complaint against the accused at a police station in Madhya Pradesh's Morena. The matter pertained to the mismatch of photograph and signature on the admit card of candidate Dadhibal Singh during the Police Constable Recruitment Test-2012 held on September 30, 2012.

Subsequent investigation revealed that an impersonator (Sunil Kumar) had appeared in the examination in place of the actual candidate, against a payment of Rs 3,000.



The CBI had filed a charge sheet in connection with the case on June 30, 2016, against Dadhibal Singh and Sunil Kumar.

During the investigation, another accused, Vijay Tamre, was also identified.

A supplementary charge sheet was then filed on July 12, 2019. The court eventually found all three accused guilty, resulting in their conviction.

WHITE RIVERS MEDIA WINS 25+ BUSINESS ACCOUNTS IN 2023'S Q4

Team Absolute | Mumbai

The last quarter of 2023 saw White Rivers Media do campaigns for Frooti, Dettol, Tata NourishCo, Astral, Crunchyroll India, boAt, Pass Pass Pulse, Chingles, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Zoomcar, Radico Khaitan amongst others.

The agency has seen its business grow on the back of generative AI activations, trend-setting influencer-brand integrations, and evocative digital films, delivering a diverse set of strategic and tactical campaigns for brands across categories.

This year also saw White Rivers Media launch WRM Digital Studios, an agile digital-first production arm. The studio brought to life Astral Foundation's initiative to support Rajasthan's eco-feminist Piplantri village, a drought-proof oasis that celebrates the birth of its daughters by planting saplings.

Another original production, the #DettolProtectsTomorrow digital film,



encouraged the nurturing of childhood curiosity and learning, empowering today's parents to let their children explore without fear of germs, with the protection of Dettol.

Swiggy Dineout captured hearts in the cluttered Indian festive season with the #TogetherWaliDiwali film. Reliance Jewels adorned their new collections with films that rekindled India's love for traditional art. All were conceptualised and produced by WRM. WRM in col-

laboration with the Curativity platform created from scratch the identity of 'Say Never', the brand-new caffeine-based energy drink from Tata NourishCo.

The agency is also entrusted with expanding Frooti's online presence, while tailoring a bespoke short-video content strategy for Zoomcar.

In addition, the agency landed big hits in the AI and CGI arena with compelling content envisioned and engineered for DS Group's Pulse Candy, Zee5 Global, and Universal Pictures India amongst many others.

WRM also carved an all-new niche in the localisation of international internet sensations for India. They brought the multicultural international dance group The Quick Style to the country on multiple occasions, with their most viral piece of content coming from the boAt collaboration.

The agency also collaborated with boAt to bring global YouTube superstar IShovSpeed to India, who thoroughly enjoyed getting caught up in World Cup fever.

"TECHNOVATION-2023" AT POORNIMA COLLEGE JAIPUR

Lalit Sharma | Jaipur

Poornima College of Engineering (PCE), Jaipur and IEEE Student Chapter inaugurated the "Technovation-2023: The International Conference on Recent Advances in Engineering and the 6th Technical Paper and Model Contests" on Thursday. It has been organized in association with ASHRAE Rajasthan Chapter, ACM Student Chapter, ISIE, ISLE, and Poornima Innovation and Incubation Cell. The Inaugural Ceremony was graced by Dr. P. N. Sharma, General Manager, Rajasthan Electronics & Instruments Ltd., Jaipur as the Chief Guest.

The programme started with the felicitation of the chief guest with e-bouque & memento by Dr. Mahesh Bundele (Director, PCE). Thereafter welcome address and overview of the programme was delivered by Dr. Rekha Nair, Convener, Technovation-2023. Technical paper presentation is divided into six parallel tracks. There were about 300 registered papers and models to be presented in two days.

The Chief Guest Dr. P. N. Sharma enchanted the audience with his research ideas and added on the



practical aspects of Rapid Technology in various fields and the challenging areas of the current scenario and

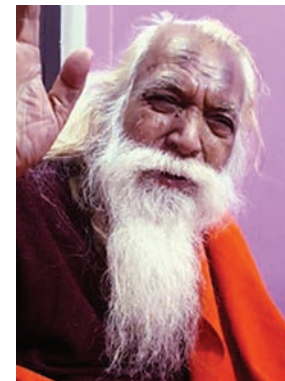
advised the participants to perform best of their abilities and also work hard, smart and focused.

Ram Temple set to create history, once-in-a-lifetime moment for us: Head priest

Ayodhya | Agencies

The country is set to write a new chapter in its history with the consecration ceremony of Ram Temple here next month, which would not have been possible without the blessings of crores of Indians and the efforts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Acharya Satyendra Das, the head priest of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi temple, said on Thursday. Speaking to IANS, Satyendra Das, who's elated to see his dream come true, said this moment is personally very emotional for him, as Ayodhya brims with activities all over for the mega event scheduled on January 22.

"Some people have donated



their lifetime's earnings for the construction of Ram Temple. The power of Ram Lalla is the ultimate truth that binds us all together," he added.

Lalla on January 22 when the deity will be enthroned at the temple's sanctum-sanctorum.

Satyendra Das has been worshipping Lord Ram as a priest from about nine months before the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992.

"I still do not know where I received such an energy which helped me continue for so many years. Now, the Ram Temple is near completion and the entire world is waiting for it to open for the public," he added. "The event of 1992 was a rare event. With Lord Ram's blessings, the tough times got over and now, we are here, celebrating this once-in-a-lifetime moment for several generations," said Satyendra Das.

Prime Minister Modi will preside over the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of Ram

Parliament security breach

Delhi court extends till Jan 5 police custody of four accused

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Delhi court on Thursday extended till January 5 the police custody of four accused persons arrested in connection with the Parliament security breach case.

The accused individuals -- Sagar Sharma, Manoranjan D., Neelam Azad and Amol Shinde -- were produced before the Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Hardeep Kaur of Patiala House Courts.

The court extended their custody on an application moved by police. The four accused were produced before court on expiry of their previously granted seven-day



police custody after they were arrested on December 13.

After a Delhi court sent the alleged mastermind, Lalit Jha, to seven-day police custody on December 15, the sixth accused, Mahesh Kumawat, was also sent to police custody the next day. Delhi Police have registered an FIR under the Unlawful Activities

(Prevention) Act (UAPA) against the accused and are investigating the security lapse issue, too.

The prosecution had labelled the arrested individuals as terrorists, asserting that they orchestrated a well-planned attack on Parliament with the intention of inciting fear.

ILLEGAL AND POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED: KEJRIWAL REPLIES TO ED SUMMONS

Team Absolute | New Delhi

After skipping the Enforcement Directorate (ED)'s second summons in connection with the alleged excise policy case, Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal has dubbed the central agency's move as "illegal and politically-motivated".

Kejriwal, who left for a 10-day Vipassana Meditation Course from December 19 to 30, in his reply to the financial probe agency said that he was ready to accept all legally-valid summons.

In his six-page reply to the ED, Kejriwal said that on the eve of his departure for the Vipassana, which has been widely published and largely circulated all over the media in the country as well as officially announced, to his utter dismay and concern, he received the summons on December 18 for a purported appearance in person on December 21.

"The timing of your summons leaves



much to desire and strengthens my belief that the summons being sent to me are not based upon any objective or rational yardstick but purely as a propaganda as well as to create sensational news in the final few months of the much-awaited parliamentary elections in the country," he said.

The AAP national convener also said, "I still do not know in which capacity am I being summoned as a witness or suspect, or as Chief Minister, Delhi or as Aam Aadmi Party's national convener." He said, "You have chosen not to inform me nor provide me details of the case file corresponding to

file number mentioned in your summons or the reasons for summoning me or any details thereof."

He also said that the summons appears to be a "fishing and roving enquiry" in similar circumstances, where individuals are neither informed about the case details nor the capacity in which they are being summoned by the ED. "As you are aware, I am holding a sensitive constitutional post as an elected leader and incumbent Chief Minister of Delhi. I have lived a life of dignity, honour and with complete transparency," he said.

Kejriwal said that he is a "conscientious law abiding ordinary citizen of the country" and does not shirk away from complying with any summons issued in compliance with law "but your summons is (I am advised) not in consonance with law".

The AAP leader said that he has been advised that a political party is not covered within the purview of the Prevention Money Laundering Act, 2002 at all.



A Swiss woman's decade-long search for biological mother in Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Vidhya Philippon, a Swiss woman, has been searching for her biological mother in Mumbai for the past decade. The only clue she has is the mother's surname and address, which is no longer in existence.

Philippon was born on February 8, 1996 and her mother left her at the Missionaries of Charity. From there, she was adopted in 1997 by a Swiss couple and subsequently taken to Switzerland.

Philippon has now come to India to find her roots in Rawal Pada, Dahisar, and Mumbai. Vidhya Philippon visited Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity located in the Vile Parle area where her mother left her.

She also visited the area of Dahisar, where her mother used to stay but the address is no longer in existence. But Philippon hopes that she will find her biological mother one day.



Advocate Anjali Pawar, Director of Adoptee Rights Council, who is assisting Philippon to find her mother said, "We are here to assist Vidhya Philippon, who came from Switzerland, to find her biological mother. She was born on February 8, 1996, and then her mother left her to the missionary charity." "Missionary charity has helped us with the

search and they gave some information about her mother; the address is from the Dahisar area but it is difficult as it's a fast-moving city and people keep relocating to the area," she added.

Appealing to people to find Philippon's mother, Anjali said, "One contact was given by one social worker, who is also helping us find her mother. I cannot disclose much information about her mother but the family has the surname 'kambli'. I am requesting people who ever stay in the Dahisar area at that time to help us or find out her biological mother."

Vidhya Philippon, while talking to news agency, said, "Anjali is helping me to find my mother. My mother was 20 years old when she gave me birth, and for 10 years I have been searching for her. I came to India with my husband. My family surname is Kambli. I wanted people in Mumbai to help me find my mother and give me information about her."

109 students hospitalised after having lunch at School

Team Absolute | Gadchiroli, Maharashtra

In a case of suspected food poisoning, more than 100 girl students were hospitalised as they fell ill after having lunch at their residential school in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, an official said on Thursday.

The incident occurred on Wednesday at an 'ashram shala' (residential school for tribal children) located in Sode village in Dhanora taluka in the district, he said.

Gadchiroli district's civil surgeon Dr Pramod Khandate said, "On Wednesday, the students were



served lunch at the school around 12.30 pm. Some time after having their meal, they started vomiting and also complained of abdominal pain and headache." "A total of 109 students were admitted to a government hospital. Later, 40 of them were shifted to the general hospital in Gadchiroli, while 69 others are undergoing treatment at the Dhanora rural hospital," he said.

All of them are still hospitalised, Dr Khandate added. More than 350 girl students study in this ashram school, he said, adding that the samples of food and water have been sent to a laboratory for testing.

I see no hurdles in giving order by Jan 10, says Speaker Narwekar

Team Absolute | Nagpur

Maharashtra assembly speaker Rahul Narwekar expressed confidence in delivering a verdict on the cross-petitions from rival factions of Shiv Sena by January 10, 2024. The hearings, encompassing arguments from both sides led by Eknath Shinde and Uddhav Thackeray, have concluded. The Supreme Court extended the deadline for the speaker to decide on these cross-petitions to January 10, 2024, after initially setting it for December 31, 2023, stated a report.

Narwekar, who conducted daily hearings in Mumbai following the Supreme Court's mandate, continued the process during the state legislature's winter session in Nagpur. He assured that the decision would align with legal provisions and constitutional considerations after thoroughly examining all documents. "I do not see any hurdle in giving the order by January 10. The decision will be based



on the law and constitutional provisions," the speaker said in Vidhan Bhavan, as per PTI and added, "I have followed all the legal provisions. The order will be out as mandated by the Supreme Court after we peruse all the documents and study them." The Supreme Court had previously expressed concern about the delay in ruling on the disqualification petitions and urged the speaker to follow a reasonable schedule, stated the PTI report.

The report added that the disqualification petitions were filed against 56 MLAs of both factions, of which, around 40 backed CM Eknath Shinde. The Thackeray faction had moved the Supreme Court to demand a deadline-bound resolution, charging that the speaker was purposefully holding off.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sunil Prabhu filed the plea. He, as the chief whip of undivided Shiv Sena had fled the disqualification petitions against Shinde and other MLAs in 2022. He in his plea to expedite proceedings had alleged that the speaker was deliberately delaying the adjudication despite the Supreme Court order asking him to decide on the cross-faction disqualification pleas within a "reasonable" time. In addition, a different appeal from the Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party faction demanded that the disqualification cases against Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and the MLAs who sided with Pawar Jr be resolved as soon as possible.

Maharashtra ATS arrests two Bangladeshi citizens living illegally in Navi Mumbai

Team Absolute | Mumbai

According to the news agency, the ATS officials raided a residential area in Navi Mumbai's Kamoth township and arrested two Bangladeshi nationals for staying in the country illegally. In the recent past when illegal immigrants from Bangladesh have been arrested in Maharashtra. Earlier this month, acting on a tip-off, a joint team of ATS and Pune police raided the residences of the suspects on Monday and arrested them. The arrests follow a joint operation between the ATS and Pune Rural Police, which arrested eight Bangladeshi nationals from Narayangaon town in Pune district for allegedly staying illegally in India. The Mumbai Crime Branch also arrested nine Bangladeshi citizens who were involved in making fake Aadhaar cards and illegally transferring money from India to Bangladesh.

"A total of nine Bangladesh citizens have been



arrested. Their modus operandi was that they used to transfer money from India to Bangladesh illegally. More people seem to be involved in this. It is a kind of hawala transaction. The money trial is currently under investigation. They used to transfer money through individuals who were crossing borders from India to Bangladesh or vice versa," Crime Branch Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Raj Tilak Roushan said. The money trial is currently under investigation.

The arrests were made in Mumbai, Thane, and Navi Mumbai.

"They made fake Aadhaar cards after coming to India and with the help of fake documents, they opened bank accounts and then they posed as Indian citizens without disclosing their identity," the DCP added.

Speaking about the arrests, the DCP said, "Some people have been arrested from Mumbai, some from Thane and the others from Navi Mumbai."

Meanwhile, in its ongoing crackdown on the Bangladeshi illegal immigration and hawala racket, the Crime Branch Unit VI last week arrested two more accused from Sanpada, Navi Mumbai, taking the arrest count to 11. The duo, arrested on Thursday night have been identified as Mohammed Yunus Abdul Sheikh (32) and Mohammed Riyaz Ul Abdul Mandal (47). They are alleged to have been providing funds for illegal immigration across the India-Bangladesh border.

Government did not give replies, Oppn was not allowed to speak in House: Vijay Wadettiwar

Team Absolute | Nagpur

Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar on Wednesday said the Eknath Shinde-led government did not provide answers to the questions raised during the just-concluded winter session in Nagpur, nor was the Opposition allowed to speak, reported a news agency.

Vijay Wadettiwar, a Congress leader, was speaking at a press conference after the legislative assembly was prorogued along with the legislative council.

The Opposition wanted the duration of the session to be extended, but the government did not accede to the request, he said.

Claiming that the coalition government of the BJP, Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar-led NCP behaved in an arrogant manner following the BJP's victory in assembly elections in three states, he said it refused to reply to the questions raised by the opposition. Important bills were passed in the assembly without proper discussion, Wadettiwar said. The government also did not give any concrete assurance on the Maratha reservation demand, he said.

It did not do justice to the issues of the Vidarbha region as well as the issues of farmers and minority communities, the Congress leader claimed.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sunil Prabhu said though the session took place in Nagpur, the government did not initiate any discussion on the issues pertaining to the Vidarbha region and Nagpur city.

CM Shinde only kept talking about Mumbai, his predecessor Uddhav Thackeray, Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray and "Matoshree" (the Thackeray residence), Prabhu said, adding "he is targeting Thackeray because of the praise received by the (previous) MVA government for its work during



the pandemic." NCP leader Anil Deshmukh said that for the first time in the legislature's history the government did not initiate any discussion on the issues of Vidarbha during a winter session. The issues of soyabean and paddy farmers were not discussed, he said. NCP MLA Jitendra Awhad said the outcome of the session was zero as farmers and people of the Vidarbha region received nothing. "No special project or financial help was announced for Vidarbha," he said. The government tabled supplementary demands of a total of Rs 1.16 lakh crore in the past one and a half years and it was pushing the state into bankruptcy, Awhad claimed. He also asked why contracts of 400 km of roads in Mumbai were allocated to contractors from other states.

No need to panic, state fully prepared: Maharashtra health minister on new Covid sub-strain



Team Absolute | Mumbai

Amid rising Covid cases in the state attributed to the new sub-strain JN.1, Maharashtra Health Minister, Tanaji Sawant has advised people to not panic saying that the healthcare system of the state was fully prepared and geared to deal with any possible situation, reported a news agency.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Tanaji Sawant said, "The state's healthcare system is fully prepared to deal with the new Covid variant JN.1. There's no reason for panic. If people develop any symptoms, they should consult a doctor and take the necessary medications. They must also abide by the Covid protocols in the interest of public safety."

The state Health Department, meanwhile, informed that regular genome sequencing was being conducted after the detection of the new sub-variant in the state.

"Genetic Sequencing (WGS) is being done regularly in the state. So far, only one patient with JN.1 variant has been found in the state. The patient is a 41-year-old man from Sindhudurg. All people should wear masks

where necessary, wash hands frequently and practice Covid-appropriate behaviour," the state health department said.

The department informed further that as per the instructions of the Union government, a mock drill was conducted from December 15 to 17 at all secondary and tertiary-level health institutions in the state to assess their preparedness for a fresh Covid wave.

"All the districts, municipal corporations and government medical colleges of the state participated in this important mock drill. The review was conducted in terms of beds, ICUs, facilities, equipment, oxygen facilities, medicine stocks, manpower, manpower training, and telemedicine facilities available in the hospitals of the state," the Health Department stated in a release.

"Till December 17, 1264 institutions of the state have completed this mock drill and submitted their information. 655 Government Hospitals, 575 private hospitals, 3 Government Medical Colleges, 14 private medical colleges and 5 other hospitals have taken part in this,"

it added. Earlier, on Wednesday, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya chaired a high-level meeting amid the rising Covid cases in some states.

While urging people not to panic, the minister advocated greater surveillance, checking and studious observance of protocols amid the ongoing spike in cases.

The recent upsurge has been blamed on the JN.1 sub-strain, with mild fever and cough being among its most common symptoms. According to officials, the sub-strain is currently said to be prevalent in 36-40 countries has led to 16 deaths over the last couple of weeks.

While most of the deceased had comorbid conditions, almost 92 per cent of the patients reported to have been detected with the new strain were recovering at home, the officials informed. The total number of active Covid cases in the country, as of Wednesday, was 2,311, with the total number of fatalities reported since the arrival of the pandemic in India at 5,33,321, according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Case against 3 of family for beating up 2 Thane Power company employees



Team Absolute | Thane

A couple and their daughter allegedly beat up two women contractual employees of a state-run electricity distribution company when they were returning after disconnecting the family's power supply over non-payment of dues, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place in Kalyan town on Wednesday.

The two contractual employees of the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution

Company Limited (MSEDCL) went to the house of the accused and disconnected the power supply due to their outstanding electricity bills, an official from Kolsewadi police station said. While the duo was returning, the accused allegedly beat them up. When one of the victims tried to videograph the incident, the accused snatched her mobile phone and allegedly molested her, as per the police complaint filed by the two victims.

A case was registered on Wednesday against the three accused under relevant provisions, the police said.

Alcoholic Haryana man in Thane beats wife, 2 kids to death with cricket bat

Team Absolute | Thane

In a gruesome incident that sent shockwaves through Thane, a man from Haryana clubbed his wife and two minor children to death with a cricket bat, while in a state of drunkenness, and is now absconding, police said on Thursday.

According to the Kasarvadavali police station officials, Amit Dharamveer Bagdi, 29, a jobless man from Khararalipur village in Haryana's Hisar, alleged committed the triple murder of his wife Bhavna, 24, son Ankush, 8 and daughter Khushi, 6, and is now untraceable.

The police teams which rushed there following a complaint lodged by the landlord have recovered a cricket with which he pounded the mother-child trio to death and their bodies were found in a pool of blood at home.

Investigation Officer Shashikant Rokade who is



overseeing the probe, said that as per preliminary inquiries, Bagdi was an alcoholic and frustrated as he was jobless and there used to be many brawls at home. Fed up of this, his wife Bhavna, along with her kids, had shifted to the home her brother-in-law Vikas Dharamveer Bagdi at his home in Siddhivinayak Nivas, Shendoba Chowk some time back.

A couple of days ago, Amit Bagdi had gone to his brother's home to meet his wife and children, had lived with them, and things appeared to be normal.

This morning, his brother left for work at 7 am, but when he returned home around noon, he found the bodies of his sister-in-law and the two kids in the house, their bodies covered in blood, and a bloodied cricket bat lying nearby. Based on a complaint by landlord Jaywant N. Singhe, the Kasarvadavali police has launched a manhunt to nab the fugitive, who is suspected to have fled out of the state. Rokade said that the accused had been living with his family at his brother's home for three days peacefully and the exact motives behind the triple murder are not yet clear.



EDITOR'S SPECS

Dressed as Ramayan characters, children invite people to Ayodhya

Children aged between 8 and 15 years, dressed as Lord Ram, goddess Sita, Lord Hanuman and Bharat, Laxman and Shatrughna have begun knocking the doors of citizens to invite them to Ayodhya for offering prayers at the Ram temple. Seers and saints associated with different Akharas have taken up 'Jan Jagran Abhiyan' to invite citizens of Prayagraj to visit Ayodhya, once the Ram temple consecration ceremony is over. The campaign is led by Sri Mahant Yamuna Puri of Panchayati Akhara Mahanirvani in Prayag who, with the help of citizens and groups of children, are inviting people to visit Ayodhya. Mahant said: "Inviting people to Ayodhya to visit the newly constructed lord Ram temple after January 22 will intensify the tradition among families to visit religious places and shrines." After Prayagraj, the seers and saints will take the campaign to other cities of the country. Meanwhile, volunteers of Hindu frontal organisations are appealing to citizens to light at least five earthen diyas in their respective homes and local temples on January 22. The UP Police department is making elaborate plans to ensure smooth traffic movement in the holy city during the consecration ceremony on January 22. To guide tourists and devotees to the temple, police department authorities plan to install signage and direction boards on roads across the holy city. Additional Director General (ADG) Lucknow Zone Piyush Mordia said that directional signs will be placed on roads in Ayodhya to guide devotees to the temples. For the convenience of devotees coming from various parts of the country to Ayodhya, signboards will be installed in different languages, including those spoken on a large-scale, such as Tamil and Telugu in the south, he said.

Learning keeps me going: Ustad Zakir Hussain

Sukant Deepak

Every day, when his father, Ustad Alla Rakha would wake him up at 3 a.m. for lessons, the first thing he would say was, "It is important that you do not try to be a master. Just be a good student, and you will go a very long way."

Tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain still remembers that lesson and stresses that it has been instrumental in shaping him, in ways more than one.

Speaking to IANS, this Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibushan recipient adds, "Why do you think George Harrison came to Ravi Shankar? Despite being one of the greatest musical successes, his yearning to learn more pushed him. He wanted to find another language to speak his story, his music... The same holds true for John Coltrane and Charles Lloyd, who played with several major Indian classical musicians."

The 72-year-old Ustad says that many great musicians came to India to learn as they wanted to have a more panoramic view of music.

"And this is what I want for myself, an all-encompassing field of vision to ensure that I am constantly learning and evolving. I am clear that there is a lot to learn, enough scope of reinvention and rediscovery."

Hussain, who was recently seen in Shakti's 50th anniversary



India tour, and performed at the ongoing Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa where he led an ensemble featuring talents like Ranjit Barot, Rakesh Chaurasia, Zubin Balaporia, Sanjay Divecha and Sheldon D'silva, stresses that he makes it a point to play with young Indian musicians like Niladri Kumar, Kumresh and Ganesh to look at music from their point of view.

"It is such a revelation to see the bravado they have about music... it just makes me want to respond differently. I want to dis-

cover a new way of interacting from what I have been doing for 15 years... To think that I have already mastered everything would be such a folly. And that would mean there is nothing left but to hang my boots," says this percussionist, who won the Grammy (2009) in the Contemporary World Music Album category for his collaborative album 'Global Drum Project' with Mickey Hart, Sikiru Adegboju and Giovanni Hidalgo.

Someone who has collaborated with musicians across genres and continents stresses that it is paramount that he knows instruments other than tabla too. This ascertains that he can smoothly converse and interact with music that does not belong to him.

"Therefore, it is important to learn the vocabulary and grammar. So I need to speak jazz, hip-hop, rap and Jazz."

"Then it becomes easier to explain myself to them in the words they would understand. And also, it is just to let them know that I have taken time to understand where they come from. Thus, it becomes important that I learn diverse musical forms, ideas and patterns."

Adding that when he is with South African or Brazilian musicians, it is a completely different world, the tabla maestro says, "One notices the distinct style in which they talk to each other, pat each other. You learn that way of life, and that Chutzspa. I enjoy listening to all sorts of music because it enhances my ability to be valid in every kind of music conversation."

NASA laser message beams video of a cat from deep space

Washington | Agencies

NASA's Deep Space Optical Communications experiment beamed an ultra-high definition streaming video of a cat from a record-setting 31 million kilometres, or about 80 times the Earth-Moon distance.

The milestone, part of NASA technology demonstration aimed at streaming very high-bandwidth video and other data from deep space -- enabling future human missions beyond Earth orbit -- was achieved on December 11.

The short ultra-high definition video, which was uploaded before launch on NASA's Psyche mission on October 13, features an orange tabby cat named Tater, the pet of a JPL employee, chasing a laser pointer, with overlaid graphics.

The graphics illustrate several features from the tech demo, such as Psyche's orbital path, Palomar's telescope dome, and technical information about the laser and its data bit rate.

Tater's heart rate, colour, and breed are also on display.

"This accomplishment underscores our commitment to advancing optical communications as a key element to meeting our future data transmission needs," said NASA Deputy Administrator Pam Melroy.

"Increasing our bandwidth is essential to achieving our future exploration and science goals, and we look forward to the continued advancement of this technology and the transformation of how we communicate during future interplanetary missions," Melroy added.

The demo transmitted the 15-second test video via a cutting-



edge instrument called a flight laser transceiver.

The video signal took 101 seconds to reach Earth, sent at the system's maximum bit rate of 267 megabits per second (Mbps).

Capable of sending and receiving near-infrared signals, the instrument beamed an encoded near-infrared laser to the Hale

Telescope at Caltech's Palomar Observatory in San Diego County, California, where it was downloaded.

Each frame from the looping video was then sent "live" to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, where the video was played in real time.

This latest milestone comes after "first light" was achieved on November 14. Since then, the system has demonstrated faster data downlink speeds and increased pointing accuracy during its weekly checkouts.

On the night of December 4, the project demonstrated downlink bit rates of 62.5 Mbps, 100 Mbps, and 267 Mbps, which is comparable to broadband internet download speeds. The team was able to download a total of 1.3 terabits of data during that time.

"Despite transmitting from millions of miles away, it was able to send the video faster than most broadband internet connections," said Ryan Rogalin, the project's receiver electronics lead at JPL.

As Psyche travels to the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, the technology demonstration will send high-data-rate signals as far out as the Red Planet's greatest distance from Earth. In doing so, it paves the way for higher-data-rate communications capable of sending complex scientific information, high-definition imagery, and video in support of humanity's next giant leap: sending humans to Mars.

international

All is not lost yet for Trump with Colorado SC ruling: Legal experts

Washington | Agencies

Legal experts across the US opine that all is not lost yet for ex-President Donald Trump found unfit for running for Presidency in 2024 by a Colorado Supreme Court under Article 3A of the 14th amendment on the basis of "insurrection on Capitol Hill on January 6", as the judges in a split verdict 4-3 paused the ruling, allowing Trump to appeal in the US Supreme Court.

Legal experts, however, agree that the decision would not be the final word.

All eyes are now on the US Supreme Court -- which is poised to play a major role in the 2024 election as it sits on a series of major Trump -- related cases, media reports said.

The Colorado Supreme Court made history on Tuesday with an unprecedented, "freeze-in-your-tracks" ruling that former President Donald Trump is constitutionally ineligible to run in 2024 because of the 14th Amendment's ban on insurrectionists holding public office which defined and covered his conduct on January 6, 2021.

His supporters attacked the Congress in an effort to prevent election authorities from certifying and declaring the verdict that chose Joe Biden as President.



Trump faces a swathe of charges in the federal court in Washington DC and the Fulton County Court in Georgia where he is accused of conspiracy to overturn the 2020 election verdict, conspiracy to prevent election authorities from certifying a valid election process to declare duly elected Joe Biden as President and racketeering charges under the RICO act for allegedly intimidating court officials and witnesses on phones and emails through his supporters. But importantly, in their 4-3 decision, the Colorado justices paused their decision so Trump can appeal to the US Supreme Court, which his campaign managers said he will "swiftly" do. The pause means Trump's spot on the Colorado GOP primary ballot in March might be safe, if the nation's highest court does not settle

the matter quickly, legal experts said.

The unprecedented landmark ruling holds Trump accountable for trying to overturn the 2020 election and provides a political punishment for his anti-democratic behaviour.

The ruling is also a massive vindication for the liberal groups and constitutional scholars of all stripes who championed such 14th Amendment lawsuits despite their long odds, legal pundits told CNN when contacted.

Trump has mastered the art of converting legal setbacks into polling bonuses, CNN said, adding that he is already in a stronger position today to beat President Joe Biden than he was one year ago, before he was criminally indicted in four jurisdictions.

The top Colorado court upheld the trial judge's conclusions that the January 6 assault on the US Capitol was an insurrection and that Trump "engaged in" that insurrection. These are key legal hurdles that the challengers needed to clear before Trump could be removed from any ballot, largely because the text of the 14th Amendment does not actually define an "insurrection" or spell out what it means to "engage in" insurrection.

'Serious negotiations' on new ceasefire between Israel, Hamas underway: US

Cairo | Agencies

The US has said that "serious negotiations" are on in Cairo for a new Gaza ceasefire and release of Israeli hostages, the media reported.

However, during talks in Cairo on Wednesday, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh reportedly rejected the idea of a temporary pause, BBC reported.

After initial talks ended without results, negotiations are resuming in which the Hamas leader made it clear that till



permanent ceasefire, no Israeli hostages will be released.

On the other hand, Israel has time and again rejected a permanent ceasefire, saying it will not stop the war until Hamas are wiped out.

Around 120 Israelis are still believed to be in Hamas captivity.

During a six-day ceasefire in November end, of the 240 hostages, 105 hostages were released in exchange for Palestinians in Israeli jails.

Over 8,000 people affected by adverse weather conditions in Sri Lanka

Colombo | Agencies

More than 8,000 people have been affected by adverse weather conditions in the past six days in Sri Lanka, according to the latest statistics released by the Disaster Management Center (DMC). According to the DMC, 8,196 people belonging to 2,394 families have been affected by disasters such as flash floods, high wind, heavy rain and lightning.



On Wednesday, the Department of Meteorology forecasted several spells of showers in Northern, Eastern and Uva provinces and in Polonnaruwa and Matale districts, Xinhua news agency reported. The department urged the public to take adequate precautions to minimise damages caused by temporary localised strong winds and lightning during thunder-showers.

Malaysia issues alert to states on floods preparations, over 3,100 evacuated

Kuala Lumpur | Agencies

Malaysian states warned of possible flooding have been instructed to make preparations to deal with such a situation, the National Disaster Management Agency said.

The instructions followed warnings issued by the Meteorological Department against continuous rains in several areas in the states of Johor, Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu, Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday.

It urged state and district-level departments to ensure every flood relief centre is equipped properly and that all control posts on the scene have sufficient operational assets that are in good condition and ready for deployment.

As of 8 p.m. local time, 3,132 people in the states of Kelantan, Perak and Selangor



and the northern Borneo state of Sabah have been evacuated and taken shelter in flood relief centres, according to the social welfare authorities.

The Meteorological Department has issued warnings of heavy rains due to the northeast monsoon, which typically lasts from October to March, with strong winds and rough seas expected in northern states and the east coast of the Southeast Asian country.

Death toll from Hurricane Otis rises to 52 in Mexico



Mexico City | Agencies

The death toll from the category 5 hurricane Otis has risen to 52 while 32 are still missing in Mexico, sources in the government said. Searches on land and sea continue, Guerrero state Governor Evelyn Salgado was quoted as saying by Mexico News Daily. A total of 31 people were missing at sea, and one person on land, Salgado said.

The official update comes a month after families of missing sailors protested alleging that authorities appeared to have stopped looking for their loved

ones. The hurricane hit Mexico's southern Pacific coast on October 25, inflicting severe damage to hotels and housing infrastructure of Acapulco and Coyuca de Benitez, Xinhua news agency reported. Meanwhile, Salgado on Wednesday said the tourist reactivation of the well-known seaside resort is fundamental after almost two months.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said that he expects the "rebirth" of Acapulco and the full recovery of the population of the neighboring Coyuca de Benitez.

Two Indians in advisory council of charity founded by King Charles

London | Agencies

The British Asian Trust, a charity founded by King Charles III, has announced the appointment of entrepreneurs Nikhil Kamath and Neerja Birla to its India Advisory Council.

Kamath, co-founder of one of India's largest stockbrokers 'Zerodha'; 'True Beacon', a wealth management firm; and venture capital firm 'Gruhas', hopes to address complex social changes in India in his new role with the Council.

"I am committed to partnering with innovative and pioneering social organisations as part of my philanthropic approach. I'm therefore honoured to join the British Asian Trust's India Advisory Council, made up of notable business leaders and philanthropists. Together, we aim to address complex social challenges innovatively and at scale across the country," Kamath said in a statement released by the Trust.



Through Zerodha, he has committed \$100 million to Rainmatter Foundation, which supports solutions for climate change, specifically afforestation, ecological restoration and livelihoods.

He is the youngest Indian to sign Bill Gates and Warren Buffet's 'The Giving Pledge', making a promise to give at least 50 per cent of his wealth to charity.

Additionally, he is a key figure in the 'Young India Philanthropic Pledge', a com-

mitment by India's new age philanthropists to dedicate a minimum of 25 per cent of their wealth to enhance global change, starting with India.

Neerja Birla, Founder and Chairperson of Aditya Birla Education Trust (ABET), said she is thrilled to join the Council and expand her work in mental health across India.

"Significant barriers continue to exist in providing the right support for mental health to millions of citizens in the country. The British Asian Trust is doing commendable work in this space across the world," she added.

Her initiative 'Mpower' seeks to foster a positive change in attitudes towards mental health through awareness and advocacy and provides holistic care so that individuals with mental health concerns may lead meaningful and productive lives with the utmost respect and dignity.



PARENTS' PERMISSION REQUIRED BEFORE MAKING SANTA CLAUS

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The District Education Officer of Shajapur district of Madhya Pradesh has given a strange order. Under this, an order has been issued not to make children Santa Claus without the permission of their parents. Disobeying the order may put even the recognition of the school in jeopardy. Congress has raised questions on the DEO's order.

In fact, Shajapur District Education Officer Vivek Dubey issued an order recently, in which it has been said that if the school management wants to make children a Santa class, then for this they will have to take permission from the family members. This permission is required in writing. Action will be taken against the school which does not follow this order.

Christmas festival is around the corner and in many schools, children are dressed up in Santa Claus costumes and are also painted in the exact colors of Santa Claus. Regarding this, the District Education Officer has issued an order, in which it has been



said that written permission of the family is necessary, only after that the children should be made Santa Claus. This is because it is necessary to keep

in mind the religious sentiments of the people. While discussing with the reporters, Dubey said that on the occasion of the festival, various programs are organized in various non-government organizations and children are dressed as different characters. Later people express their views regarding this and a dispute arises, hence this order has been issued.

On this order, Congress MLA Vikrant Bhuria says that steps are being taken against the traditions and practices that were going on. BJP's objective behind this is to divert people's attention from problems. As far as the order of the District Education Officer of Shajapur is concerned, I want to say that our country is a secular country, unless our religion is being insulted, we should not insult other religions.

Congress MLA Jaivardhan Singh has also urged not to do politics regarding children.

Kuno National Park will be habitat for African Cheetah's again

Team Absolute | Bhopal

Cheetahs have once again arrived in the Kuno National Park of Madhya Pradesh and will become a center of tourist attraction in the coming days.

The land of India had become devoid of cheetahs and Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh was chosen as the most suitable place for the restoration of cheetahs and here the first group of cheetahs arrived from Namibia on 17 September 2022, on the occasion of the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. And after that, leopards came in the second batch also.

These leopards were first kept in an enclosure and then an attempt was made to release them into the open forest. When the cheetahs were released into the Koon forest, many leopards became victims of infection and a series of deaths started, due to which these cheetahs were again imprisoned in enclosures.

These leopards have been imprisoned in the enclosure for the last four months and now they have started to be released into the open forest. In the first phase, two leopards and then one leopard have been released into the forest. Every activity of these three leopards is being monitored. Chief Conservator of Forest Singh Project said that two male cheetahs, Agni and Vayu, were released in the Parond forest area of Kuno National Park. Both the leopards are completely healthy. Parond forest area is under Ahera tourism zone. Due to the presence of leopards in the tourist zone, tourists will now be able to see leopards. In this sequence, on Wednesday, female cheetah Veera was released in Nayagaon forest area of Kuno National Park. The female cheetah Veera is completely healthy. Nayagaon forest area is under Pipalabawdi tourism zone. Due to the presence of leopards in the tourist zone, tourists will now be able to see leopards.



With the release of leopards once again in the forest of Kuno National Park, tourists will be able to see these leopards here and these leopards will be helpful in enhancing the beauty of this national park.

Bajrang Dal will take out Shaurya Sanchalan on Geeta Jayanti in Malwa

Team Absolute | Indore

Shaurya Sanchalan will be taken out by Bajrang Dal on Friday 22nd December on the occasion of Geeta Jayanti in Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh. Vinod Sharma, provincial minister of Vishwa Hindu Parishad Malwa province, said that Shaurya Sanchalan will be taken out by Bajrang Dal in the entire province on December 22.

According to the Hindu calendar, 6th December 1992 was Geeta Jayanti, on this day the structure of stigma collapsed and Hindu bravery was manifested. This date is celebrated every year as Shaurya Diwas by Bajrang Dal.

He said, this year Geeta Jayanti is falling on 22nd December, hence Shaurya



Sanchalan is being organized in the entire province to commemorate the Bravery Day. The construction work of a grand Shri Ram temple is also going on in Ayodhya. Exactly after a month, on 22 January, Shri Ramlala is being installed in the temple. That's why this time's Shaurya Diwas is important.

The State Minister further said that all the workers of Bajrang Dal will be present in the uniform of Bajrang Dal in Shaurya Sanchalan. Before the Shaurya Sanchalan, various speakers will present their views regarding Shaurya Diwas. After that, the workers will take out marches in the cities.

Integrated Video Surveillance System (IVSS), Courtroom Live Audio Visual Streaming System (CLASS), OTT Platform at MP High Court

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The Chief Justice, High Court of Madhya Pradesh Justice Ravi Malimath inaugurated next-gen technologies today. The Integrated Video Surveillance System and Courtroom Live Audio Visual Streaming System -CLASS Projects have become operative at High Court Jabalpur. Judges of the High Court and Officers of the High Court & District Court, Jabalpur were present. This is for the time in India, MP High Court has set up the live streaming of proceedings for all District and Tehsil courts.

In line with the overall objective of moving towards safer court premises, MPHC has initiated the Integrated Video Surveillance System (IVSS) and Courtroom Live Audio Visual Streaming System (CLASS), the project that will enable live streaming of court rooms of 210 court complexes in addition to enhancement of security in the courts.



This is a path-breaking project in its scope and purpose that adheres to the principles of transparency and accountability. The High Court of Madhya Pradesh has demonstrated responsible leadership and has set an example for other courts in the country to follow. This is a pioneering technological project in the history of Indian judicial system that will make the court premises administered by MPHC safer and transparent. This adoption and integration of new technologies will prepare Madhya

Pradesh Judiciary for the digital era. This is possible following the futuristic vision and able leadership of Shri Justice Ravi Malimath.

The journey of justice in the court campus must be safe for all concerned parties - Judges, Lawyers & Advocates, court employees, protection agencies like the police and the public at large. There have been instances of disruptions in court premises some of which have even led to loss of life. It is critical to deploy systems and establish mechanisms to

make court premises safer.

With the implementation of the IVSS & CLASS project, the courtrooms in Madhya Pradesh will not only become safer for the participant stakeholders but also create a legacy of transparency & accountability and usher an era of continuous learning that will spread judicial wisdom and enhance legal competencies.

WHAT IS IVSS & CLASS

1. Integrated Video Management System,
2. Courtroom Audio-visual Recording System,
3. Archiving & Live as well as on-demand Streaming Set-up
4. Setting up of Data Center & Command & Control Center at Jabalpur
5. Disaster Recovery set-up at Indore
6. Facility Management Services and Operation & Maintenance of the

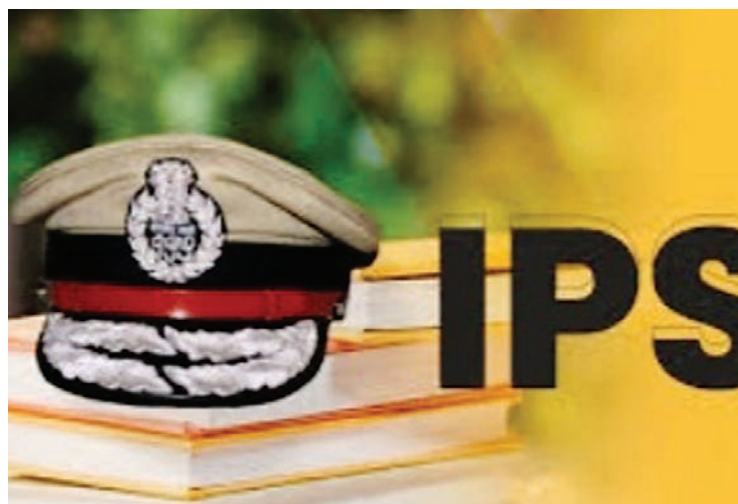
Approval for new posts, 4 officers will be promoted to DGP, 2 ADG, 13 IG and 18 DIG ranks

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The path to promotion of IPS officers has become easier in the state. Four posts of Director General of Police (DGP), two of Additional Director General of Police (ADG), thirteen of Inspector General (IG), 18 of Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), and seven posts in selection grade have been approved for promotion.

According to sources, as the posts become vacant in the year 2024 on the four sanctioned posts of DGP, the officers will be promoted accordingly. Among the officers who will be promoted to the post of DGP, Vijay Kataria will become DG on March 1, Anuradha Shankar Singh on May 1, Varun Kapoor on June 1, and Upendra Jain on July 1.

Among the officers who are to get promotion from January 1, those who



will become ADG include Rakesh Gupta, Deepika Suri of 1999 batch. Those thirteen officers will become

IG. These include Chandrashekar Solanki, Ruchi Vardhan, S Chitra, Anil Kushwaha, R RS Parihar, Rajesh

Hingankar, Anshuman Singh, Manish Kapuria, Arvind Saxena, Vineet Khanna, Himani Khanna, Mithilesh Shukla, Anurag Sharma of the 2006 batch.

The 18 officers who will become DIG include 2009 batch's Saket Prakash Pandey, Amit Sanghi, TK Vidyarthi, Satyendra Shukla, Virendra Kumar Singh, Prashant Khare, Atul Singh, Manish Kumar Aggarwal and 2010 batch's Abid Khan, Ashutosh Prasad Singh, Mohammad Yusuf Qureshi, Nimish Aggarwal, Siddharth Bahuguna, Pankaj Srivastava, Rajesh Kumar Singh, Vineet Kapoor, Dharmendra Singh Bhadauria, Hemant Chauhan are included.

Apart from this, seven officers of 2011 batch will get selection grade. These include Riyaz Iqbal, Aditya Pratap Singh, Rahul Lodha, Simala Prasad, Dr. Asit Yadav, Sushil Ranjan Singh, Sanjay Kumar Singh.

Jitu Patwari hosted a banquet for the MLAs for coordination between party - legislature

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The new President of Madhya Pradesh Congress, Jitu Patwari, today hosted a banquet for the MLAs and took the initiative to coordinate between the organization and the legislative party and together made a strategy to play a solid role in the opposition. Everyone agreed that now was the time to be aggressive.

In fact, in honor of the newly elected MLAs, President of the State Congress Committee, Jitu Patwari, organized a banquet today at Hotel Palash, where the organization and the legislature party discussed how the organization and the leg-



islature party could harmonize each other and protest against the wrong policies of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Positive discussions were held on what should be done and how to win maximum seats in the Lok Sabha.

VIVEK PORWAL ASSUMES CHARGE AS PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMISSIONER

Bhopal : Secretary Public Relations Vivek Porwal assumed the charge of Public Relations Commissioner today. Subsequently, he took a meeting with the senior officers of the department. Public Relations Commissioner Shri Porwal apprised himself about the functioning of department and it's various divisions and gave instructions to work in a better manner. He also Took charge as Managing Director (M.D.) in Madhya Pradesh Madhyam.

Students from 22 states spread rainbow hues with their talent in "Rashtriya Balarang"

Team Absolute | Bhopal

The three-day "National Balrang" Festival 2023 organized by the School Education Department at the premises of the Indira Gandhi National Human Museum concluded with the distribution of awards. In the closing ceremony, 80 students of the government schools of the region performed a global chorus under the direction of music composer Umesh Tarkaswar. Chief guest of the program Padma Shri Dr. Kapil Tiwari and Commissioner of Public Education Anubha Srivastava congratulated the participating students.

Badhava folk dance of Haryana won the first prize

School students from 22 states and Union Territories including Madhya Pradesh participated in the "National Balrang 2023" program organized by the Department of School Education. In "Rashtriya Balrang 2023", for the best performance in the performances given by the participating school students of various states in the traditional folk dance of the states, first prize of Rs.51 thousand to Badhwa Folk Dance of



Haryana, second prize of Rs.31 thousand and Sama Chakawa was awarded the third prize with 21 thousand rupees along with a trophy and certificate of appreciation. The folk dances of Chhattisgarh and Assam were given consolation prizes of Rs.5 thousand along with trophies and certificates of appreciation. Along with this, the participants of Food Zone, Mini India Exhibition, Sahodaya Group, Creative Craft Exhibition and other competitions were also awarded.

Chief Guest Dr. Kapil Tiwari said that despite the different language, dress and lifestyle of different states, our cultural heritage is one. Prosperous Punishment; It is incomplete without inclusion of art, language and culture. He said that children have natural talent. The cultural education of the student period continues throughout life and is the center of cultural education for children.

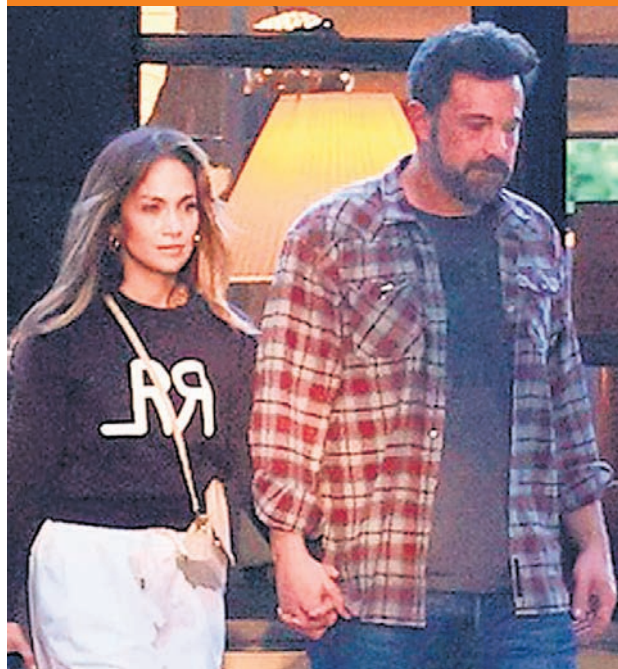
Commissioner Public Education Srivastava said that the participating students and teachers from all states deserve congratulations for spreading the rainbow hues of the "National Children's Color" in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020. He congratulated all the partic-

ipating students and teachers from different states. Srivastava said that this three-day memory of "National Color" will be fresh in the life of the children. He said that if children get a proper platform and proper guidance, they can establish their talent in any field and make their unique identity in the society.

It is noteworthy that in the three-day Balrang Mahotsav on December 19, about 1,000 participating students from 9 divisions of the region in the "State-level Balrang" also displayed the culture, costumes, dance and cuisine of their districts in accordance with the theme of the Balrang Mahotsav - "Self-reliant India". Displayed on various forums. Around 450 students from around 22 states and Union Territories participated in the "National Children's Games" on 20th and 21st December. School children across the country showcased their talent in various literary and cultural competitions. After the program ended, the students of different states bade farewell to each other with tearful eyes. This three-day festival showed a glimpse of the spirit of friendship and friendship established among the students.



JLO SAYS SHE AND BEN AFFLECK HAVE 'PTSD' FROM THEIR FIRST ROMANCE



Los Angeles | Agencies

Singer-actress Jennifer Lopez has admitted that not everyone in her camp initially supported the idea to document her romance with husband Ben Affleck in her upcoming 'This Is Me... Now' album and companion film.

JLo said, "As artistes, we have to follow our heart and this is me following my heart and doing something that maybe everybody didn't think was the best idea, but I had to do it," reports.

She is set to drop 'This Is Me... Now', a new album that marks the 20th anniversary of 'This Is Me... Then', on February 16. The Dave Meyers-directed companion short film will be released at the same time by Amazon MGM Studios.

As per 'Variety', JLo has some wor-

ries about putting her and Affleck's life in the spotlight because "we both have PTSD" caused by the media scrutiny they endured back when they first dated.

"But we're older now. We're wiser. We also know what's important, what's really important in life, and it's not so much what other people think. It's about being true to who you are," she said.

Asked if the film is a scripted feature or documentary, JLo said, "You have to see it and you'll have to experience it to understand it. That's why I call it a 'musical experience'. Because there's music, you can see it, you can hear it and then you'll get to live it."

A recent teaser for the film included a clip of Lopez saying, "When I was a little girl, when someone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, my answer was always... in love."

CHER CONFIRMS SHE'S SET FOR GLASTONBURY'S LEGENDS SLOT

Los Angeles | Agencies

Legendary singer-songwriter Cher has confirmed herself for Glastonbury 2024, during a conversation with Rylan Clark.

The singer, who has already been rumoured for the coveted 'legends' slot on the Sunday afternoon of the four day festival, was speaking to Rylan on Radio 2, reports.

Chatting to the BBC radio presenter on Scott Mills' show, the 77-year-old icon revealed that she would be more than happy to appear at the event.

Rylan said: "There are so many rumours, you haven't done it yet, Glastonbury. Are we ever going to see Cher take on that Legends slot at Glastonbury?" To which Cher replied: "I'd like to!" A shocked Rylan asked: "Really?!" Cher confirmed again, saying: "Yes."

Rylan continued: "Right, Cher shook my hand. I'm going to go down to Worthy Farm myself. I don't care what I've got to crawl through, believe me there's a lot on that farm, I'm going to get you that Legends slot." He asked her if she was "in", to which she said: "Yeah!"

As per Mirror.co.uk, Cher has recently released her twenty-seventh album, Christmas, which is her first featuring original material in ten years. It also marks her first Christmas album. The veteran artist put on a glitzy performance at the Strictly final over the weekend. But some fans were unimpressed to see her miming, with fans branding it "disappointing".

Saturday's final saw 'Corrie' star Ellie Leach dance her way to the top spot, getting to lift the sought-after Glitterball trophy. To mark the occasion, hitmaker Cher sang festive single DJ Play a Christmas Song.

Cher looked incredible with her blonde locks styled in soft curls, she wore a black jumpsuit and blazer. Despite the extravagant show, with dancers and confetti taking over the stage, viewers were "put off" by the performance after accusing her of lip-syncing."



Cameron Diaz shares controversial bedroom advice

Los Angeles | Agencies



Actress Cameron Diaz has given her fans her top bit of advice for a happy relationship. The 'Me, Myself and Irene' star, 51, tied the knot with Benji Madden in 2015 and has continued to gush about her man and their relationship.

The Hollywood star has provided a bit of advice she thinks is key - sleep in separate bedrooms, reports.

Despite the 'Shrek' actress recognising it's a controversial idea, she is adamant it's a genius idea and is urging people to "normalise" the way of thinking.

"We should normalise separate bedrooms," Cameron told the Lipstick on the Rim podcast. "To me, I would literally, I have my house, you have yours. We have the family

Jude Law, Cameron Diaz fell in love for real while filming 'The Holiday'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Cameron Diaz and her 'The Holiday' co-star Jude Law developed feelings for each other in real life during the shoot of the film. 'The Holiday' has made itself a nailed-on Christmas classic since it was released in 2006. The film stars Cameron Diaz as Amanda Woods, and Kate Winslet in the role of Iris Simpkins. The festive rom-com follows the two women after they swap homes for Christmas after having their hearts broken, reports.

Iris falls in love with Miles Dumont (Jack Black) in LA, while Amanda falls for Iris' brother, Graham, played by Jude Law. The film follows both couples and their holiday romance.

At the time, both actors were single - Cameron had recently split with Justin Timberlake, while Jude had divorced Sienna Miller.

It was reported that the year after the film was released, Jude flew to America to spend time with Cameron. A source at the time said: "Cameron and Jude became very close while working together, but now that friendship has turned into romance."

The insider continued, "Jude plans to take her on a series of dinner dates this week and just spend some time hanging out. They had a lot of fun while making The Holiday and this is the key to their relationship." But because of their recent breakups, neither party wanted to commit.

The source added: "They've both been through heartbreak in the past and didn't want to jump into anything too quickly." Their time together didn't end there though. In 2011, more rumours circulated about them re-connecting, with a source telling Star magazine: "When Cameron was in London filming 'Gambit', he and Jude got in touch. Their love did not last long, trust and disappointments left their mark on their relationship."

But they kept things casual, with the source adding: "They have great chemistry, and since they're both free, they started hooking up. He's just showing Cam a good time!"

The following year, they were seen allegedly kissing at a LA hotel - before checking into a bungalow together.

Cameron made her feelings for Jude clear in an interview at the time, when she told the 'Sunday Mirror': "Everyone has a preconceived idea about Jude which does not correspond to reality. The character he plays in 'The Holiday' is very like him."

"He's charismatic, fun, open and charming. It's very easy to fall in love with him," she added.

Madden. Cameron and Benji share their three-year-old daughter Raddix. Away from relationships, Cameron also fumed over rumours she quit her acting career following Jamie Foxx's alleged 'breakdown' on the set of their latest movie 'Back In Action'. She added to the podcast host: "I really hate all of the things that were being said about our set at the time. You just want to scream at the top of your lungs, like, 'What are you talking about?'"

Back in May, an insider suggested the star of 'The Holiday' had gone through a horrible experience with Jamie as she filmed her first movie in eight years.

As per reports, Cameron was introduced to her man by pal Nicole Richie, who is married to his bandmate - and twin brother - Joel

Jennifer Love Hewitt talks about how 'aging in Hollywood is really hard'

Los Angeles | Agencies

Actress Jennifer Love Hewitt, who is known for her work in films such as 'I Know What You Did Last Summer', 'Can't Hardly Wait' and 'The Tuxedo' among others, spoke about how she was sexualised as a teenager and the difficulties of aging in Hollywood. Finding fame at such a young age came with its difficulties, and she opened up about her feelings during that time while speaking on 'Inside of You' podcast, reports.

"I felt watched. I felt like I had to be everything for everybody all the time," Hewitt said.

"I was called sexy before I ever knew what being sexy was. I was 17-years-old on the cover of Maxim, and I had no idea why."

Hewitt also noted that she finds it "weird" when people want her to con-

tinue being the girl that she was back then, adding: "That girl was so insecure and so confused. But this girl - who may not look (that) way - I like who I am. I feel good. I'm fine."

Hewitt also spoke about the complexities of aging in front of cameras and being proud of the age she is now.

The actress made headlines earlier this year when she appeared in a photo with short hair and a filter that some deemed made her look "unrecognizable." "Aging in Hollywood is really hard. It's really hard because you can't do anything right," she said.

Of the infamous photo, she said: "The picture ended up somewhere. And a bunch of people were like, 'Jennifer Love Hewitt is unrecognisable. She's unrecognisable and so she's gone to filters because she doesn't want us to know how bad she actually looks now in her 40s.' And I was like, 'This is crazy. Right?'"

Hewitt then explained she started

sharing photos with filters to counteract all the negativity and jokingly said she didn't have any filters. The star said she received flack for that, too, which made her conclude she was not going to make everyone happy.

"To pretend that we don't (care) is a lie. We're human, and yes, they're known as haters," she said. "But it's human nature to be like, 'What do people think about me?' I've been an actor for 36 years... You don't want to care what people think about you. But you have to care what people think about you. You want to know what's out there."

She continued: "The only reason those people bother me... I am a mother of a girl. And it's dangerous what we put on people. It's dangerous, I think, to say to women, 'You can't look like you're not 22 to me anymore, because I don't know how to take that.' OK, well, that's your problem! 'Cause I'm 44 and this is what I look like."

ABSOLUTE PIC OF THE DAY



Olivia Pierson



INDIA BEAT SOUTH AFRICA BY 78 RUNS, WIN SERIES 2-1

Paarl (South Africa) | Agencies

India defeated South Africa by 78 runs in the third and final ODI of their three-match series, in Paarl on Thursday. The win helped India clinch the series 2-1. Chasing 297, South Africa were bowled out for 218 in 45.5 overs, despite a knock of 81 runs off 87 balls by Tony de Zorzi. Meanwhile, Arshdeep Singh took four wickets for the visitors, Washington Sundar and Avesh Khan scalped two dismissals each.

Initially, a ton from Sanju Samson saw India post 296/8 in 50 overs as the Rajasthan Royals captain hammered 108 off 114 balls, packed with six fours and three sixes. Meanwhile, Tilak Varma got a crucial half-century for India, slamming 52 off 77 deliveries. For South Africa's bowling department, Beuran Hendricks took three wickets and Nandre Burger scalped two dismissals.

In the third ODI and series-decider match between India and South Africa, India set a challenging target of 297 courtesy of Sanju Samson's maiden ODI Hundred and Rinku Singh's spectacular finish to the innings. Opting to bowl first, South African skipper Aiden Markram had hoped for early breakthroughs, and



debutant Rajat Patidar showed promise with an aggressive start. However, his innings was cut short at 22 by Nandre Burger.

B Sai Sudharsan, Patidar's opening partner, fell prey to Beuran Hendricks in the eighth over, leaving India at 49/2 at the end of the first powerplay. The responsibility then fell on the shoulders of skipper Lokesh Rahul and the in-form Sanju Samson to steady the ship. The duo meticulously rebuilt the innings, showcasing a partnership that added 52 runs. Samson, in particular, showcased his class and determination as he notched up his maiden ODI century, a milestone that added a special glow to India's innings. His composed innings of 108 runs off 114 balls laid the foundation for a strong finish. The momentum gained during Samson and Varma's partnership was effectively sustained by the subsequent batsmen. Rinku Singh, in a crucial cameo towards the end, played an exceptional innings of 38 runs, injecting a late burst of energy into the Indian innings. His aggressive stroke play in the death overs contributed significantly to India's surge, ensuring that the team added an impressive 93 runs in the last 10 overs.

Hockey India hails Krishan Pathak, Sushila Chanu, Shivendra Singh, and Vineet Sharma on getting National Awards

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Hockey India on Thursday extended its heartfelt congratulations to Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Shivendra Singh, and Vineet Kumar Sharma for being named for the prestigious National Awards for 2023.

Krishan and Sushila have been awarded the Arjuna Award while Shivendra has been conferred with the Dronacharya Award for his contribution as a coach with the national team. Former India men's team player Vineet Kumar Sharma has been awarded with Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Goalkeeper Krishan has been an integral part of the Indian team for the last few years and has played a major role in India's victorious campaign in the Asian Champions Trophy in Chennai. He was part of the Indian team that won gold at the Hangzhou Asian Games and silver at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022.

Sushila, one of the most experienced players in the team with 200 international caps, played a key role at the Tokyo Olympics, where India made it to the semifinals. She also scored the winning goal against Japan which bagged India the bronze medal at the Hangzhou Asian Games earlier this year.

Meanwhile, Shivendra has seamlessly transitioned from being a formidable player to an influential member of the coaching staff for the Indian men's hockey team. His journey in the sport has been a testament to his unwavering dedication, astute understanding of the game, and deep-rooted passion for hockey. Having been an integral part of the Indian hockey landscape as a player, Shivendra Singh brings invaluable experience and insights to his coaching role.

Vineet, the former India defender, was considered one of the lethal penalty corner hitters in his heydays. The 63-year-old former star



fullback was part of the New Delhi 1982 and 1986 Seoul Asian Games teams besides featuring in the 1982 and 1986 World Cups held in Mumbai and London. He also competed at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, where the Indian team finished fifth.

Hockey India President Padma Shri Dr Dilip Tirkey expressed immense pride in the achievements of these awardees.

"This marks an incredible milestone for hockey as we celebrate the well-deserved recognition bestowed upon two of our esteemed hockey players for their exceptional achievements in the sport - Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Pukhrambam Sushila Chanu.

"Their contributions to the sport have been invaluable, and this recognition is a testament to their hard work and passion. Also, I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes to Shivendra Singh for winning the Dronacharya Award and Vineet Kumar Sharma for bagging the Dhyan Chand Award," said Tirkey.

"All of them have showcased exceptional talent and dedication, embodying the true spirit of hockey. Hockey India takes immense pride in their accomplishments and congratulates them on this well-deserved honour," he added.

Saweety Boora aims to defend her crown as Women's National Boxing Championships kicks off on Thursday

Greater Noida | Agencies

All eyes will be on Saweety Boora, the 2023 World Championship gold medalist and reigning national champion in the 81kg category, as the 7th Elite Women's National Boxing Championships 2023 kick off from December 21 at the GBU Indoor Stadium, Gautam Buddha University in Uttar Pradesh.

The competition, organised by Boxing Federation of India, scheduled to be held from December 21-27, will feature over 300 boxers from 35 units competing across 12 weight categories for top honours.

Hailing from Haryana, Boora, who claimed silver at the 2014 World Championships in the Light Heavyweight category, has also bagged gold (2022), silver (2015), and bronze (2021) at the Asian Championships. She aims to defend her crown in the category. The 7th edition of the



Elite Women's Nationals will see the likes of Pooja Rani, a 2020 Tokyo Olympian in the 75kg category, and Haryana's Manisha Moun, the 2022 World Championship bronze medalist in the 60kg category, facing stiff competition from Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Jaismine of Services Sports Control Board (SSCB) in the same

category. Additionally, two Youth World Champions, Arundhati (SSCB) and Ankushita Boro (Assam), will contend for top honours in the 66kg category.

In the previous edition, the Railway Sports Promotion Board secured 10 medals and is eager to replicate their success in this tournament.

I want to dedicate this award to my team, says Savita after winning the Goalkeeper of the Year Award

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Indian Women's Hockey Team Captain and long-standing custodian Savita has dedicated her FIH Goalkeeper of the Year Award "to the team" which she won at the FIH Hockey Stars Awards 2023 on Tuesday.

This marks her third consecutive win of the FIH Goalkeeper of the Year Award, having emerged victorious in every edition since 2021.

Upon receiving the award, Savita said, "It's difficult for me to share the overwhelming emotions I experienced upon learning that I have been honored with this award once more, for the third consecutive year. My desire to be the best is fueled by the shared objective of achieving victories for the team. I am not alone in this journey; the entire team defends as one. So, I want to dedicate this award to my team."

An Expert Panel, National Associations represented by their respective national teams' Captains and Coaches, fans, and media, voted in these Awards, and Savita was the clear choice by far for the FIH Goalkeeper of the Year Award. She earned 40.9 points in these votes,



while her closest competitor, Germany's Julia Sonntag, earned 22.8 points.

"This acknowledgment serves as

positive encouragement for me, confirming that I am on the right path. While the team has maintained good form this year, as we approach 2024,

my goal is to sustain peak performance and provide the team with the best opportunity to qualify for the Olympics at the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers in Ranchi next month," she added. The dynamic goalkeeper played her first international match in 2011 and has since amassed 266 caps for India. A true stalwart for the Indian Women's Hockey Team, Savita has been a consistent presence, leading India to various significant victories in recent years. She played a pivotal role in the team's title win at the inaugural FIH Hockey Women's Nations Cup 2022 in Spain, securing India's promotion to the FIH Pro League 2023-24.

She then led the team to a Bronze medal win at the Asian Games Hangzhou 2022, followed by the title win at the recently held Jharkhand Women's Asian Champions Trophy Ranchi 2023. Under her captaincy, India also achieved their best-ever world rankings (No. 6 with 2368.83 points).

As the Indian Women's Hockey Team gears up for the important FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers Ranchi 2024, it is encouraging to have the best goalkeeper in the world guarding the goal.

IND W v AUS W: Shafali, Smriti hammer Australia after Pooja, Sneha bowl them out for 219

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Pooja Vastrakar claimed her best Test figures in her third Test, 4/53 and Sneha Rana bagged 3-56 as India Women bundled out Australia Women for 219 and then knocked off 98 runs for the loss of one wicket to take the honours on the opening day of the only Test of the multi-format series, at the Wankhede Stadium here on Thursday.

Australia's first innings, which lasted 77.4 overs and 305 minutes, was boosted by a superb counter-attacking half-century by Tahila McGrath (50 off 56 balls), who hammered the fastest Test half-century by an Australian woman batter off 52 deliveries. Beth Mooney contributed a patient 40 and skipper Alyssa Healy scored 38 but the rest of the batters failed to fire.

In reply, Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma batted freely, hitting some beautiful shots as India raced to 50 in 46 balls. Both capitalised on the wayward bowling by the Australians, hitting 12 boundaries in the first nine overs. They added 90 runs for the opening wicket before Shafali Verma was out for 40, trapped before the wicket as she missed a straight one. Her 40 off 59 was studded with eight boundaries.

The Indian batters, who had blasted 410/7 on the opening day of the previous Test against England, scored at a fast pace once again. Australia skipper Alyssa Healy used five bowlers but none of them could make much impression on the Indian openers.

At stumps, Smriti Mandhana was



batting on 43 off 49 balls (8x4) with Sneha Rana keeping her company at four. India would now look to bat through the second day to take a big lead and put further pressure on the Australian Women, who are playing a Test in India after 40 years.

Earlier, Healy could not have imagined that they would be out cheaply when she won the toss and elected to bat in her debut Test as captain. They got off to a poor start but recovered a bit before losing two wickets late in the first session as the hosts took control of the proceedings on the first day.

Australia were in trouble soon after the start as they lost Phoebe Litchfield (0) and Ellyse Perry with only seven runs on the board.

Litchfield was run out for a dia-

mond duck on the sixth ball of the first over as she got into a huge misunderstanding with Beth Mooney and had to sacrifice her wicket for her senior partner.

Perry (4) started with a four but got out on the next ball as Pooja Vastrakar brought the ball in and it went through the gap between bat and pad to disturb the stumps.

But Mooney and Tahila McGrath rescued Australia with an 80-run partnership for the third wicket. Tahila played a counter-attacking half-century, cutting, slashing and driving deliveries that were bowled wide off the off-stump as she scored the fastest-ever half-century in Tests for Australia off 52 balls.

After lunch, Alyssa Healy (38) and Annabel Sutherland added 40 runs

for the fifth wicket but Pooja Sharma ended their partnership when she bowled the Australian skipper trying to sweep a delivery that stayed low. Kim Garth was the next major contributor to the Australian score as she remained unbeaten on 28, adding 30 runs for the ninth wicket with Jess Jonassen (19).

Vastrakar continued to torment Australia in the post-lunch session as she claimed two more wickets in her third spell, adding the scalps of Sutherland (16, 58b, 2x4) and Ashleigh Gardner (11, 26b, 1x4).

Landing the ball around the good length spot repeatedly, Vastrakar, who claimed her best figures of 3/23 in the second innings of the previous Test against England at the DY Patil Stadium last week, moved the ball both ways and used the early juice in the wicket to trouble the Australian batters.

Bowling in four spells, three of them from the Garware end, Vastrakar claimed one wicket from the Tata End in his first spell and then claimed the all-important wicket of Beth Mooney from the Garware end in her second spell on the stroke of lunch.

Pooja Sharma, the star of India's 347-run triumph against England with a 9/39 haul at the DY Patil Stadium last week, claimed two wickets for 45 runs, including the key wicket of Alyssa Healy.

Though the Indians bowled superbly and used the assistance in the wicket to good effect, they could have restricted Australia to fewer runs if they had not dropped four catches in the field.

La Liga: Barca edge past Almeria, Bilbao grab last minute win

Madrid | Agencies

FC Barcelona returned to winning ways, but once again were not impressive as they clinched a narrow 3-2 win at home to bottom side Almeria.

Almeria traveled to Barcelona without a win and with just five points from their first 17 games of the season, and Barca were expected to win with relative ease.

However, after Raphinha scored from close range following Ronald Araujo's header from a 32nd minute corner, Leo Baptistao needed just eight minutes to equalize after a long VAR check to confirm he was not offside, reports Xinhua.

Almeria keeper Luis Maximiliano made several saves to keep the scores level, but could do little to stop Sergi Roberto making it 2-1 to Barca with a header from a corner. The visitors leveled the scores again in the 72nd minute when Barca keeper Inaki Pena lost a high ball after colliding with Araujo, allowing Edgar to score from close range.

Sergi Roberto's second of the game with eight minutes to play gave Barca the win, as the captain ran onto Robert Lewandowski's pass to beat Maximiliano with a low shot. Pena then redeemed him-



self with a great save from Iddrisu Baba's header and the crossbar denied Roberto a hat-trick in the dying moments.

Athletic Bilbao's Unai Gomez scored a diving header in the last minute of injury time to give the home side a 1-0 win to Las Palmas.

Until the game's final moments, Athletic had been frustrated by Las Palmas keeper Alvaro Valles, who made several impressive saves, including a first-half penalty from Gorka Guruzeta.

The home side increased their control of the game in

the last half hour, but it looked set for a draw until Gomez's effort after Valles had moved to cut out Inaki Williams' cross.

The win leaves Athletic level on points with fourth-placed Atletico Madrid, who drew 3-3 with Getafe on Tuesday.

Celta Vigo's comeback fell short as they lost 3-2 away to Villarreal. The home side led 3-0 through goals from Alfonso Pedraza, Aissa Mandi and Dani Parejo penalty, but Tasos Douvikas and Jorgen Strand Larsen scored early in the second half for the visitors.



Arbaaz Khan set to tie the knot with make-up artiste Shura Khan

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bollywood actor-producer Arbaaz Khan, who was most recently seen in the streaming series 'Tanaav', is set to tie the knot once again. Arbaaz, who has been reportedly dating make-up artiste Shura Khan, is set to take the plunge and take their story forward.

As per a media report, Arbaaz and Shura will take the wedding vows in an intimate ceremony on December 24.

The couple reportedly met on the sets of Arbaaz's upcoming film 'Patna Shukla'. However, both Arbaaz and Shura have remained tight-lipped about their relationship and have not shared any official statement about their wedding.

The actor was earlier married to Malaika Arora before the two officially parted ways in May 2017. Malaika went on to date Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor and continues to go strong.

Despite their separation, Malaika and Arbaaz remain co-parents to their son, Arhaan.

Arbaaz also dated actress Georgia Andriani for several years after his divorce. The two parted ways as was confirmed by Georgia Andriani a few days ago.

Ajay Devgn: the actors of the current generation are "very insecure"

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood superstar Ajay Devgn graced the recent episode of the streaming chat show 'Koffee With Karan' along with his long time collaborator Rohit Shetty. The duo spoke about a lot of things but the one that caught the most attention was Ajay and Rohit's opinion on the actors of the current generation.

The two agreed that the actors of the current generation are "very insecure."

During the course of the episode, show host Karan Johar asked them: "What do you think about the newer generation of actors? Do you think they have that fighting spirit?"

Responding to the same, Rohit said that they are insecure mostly because of

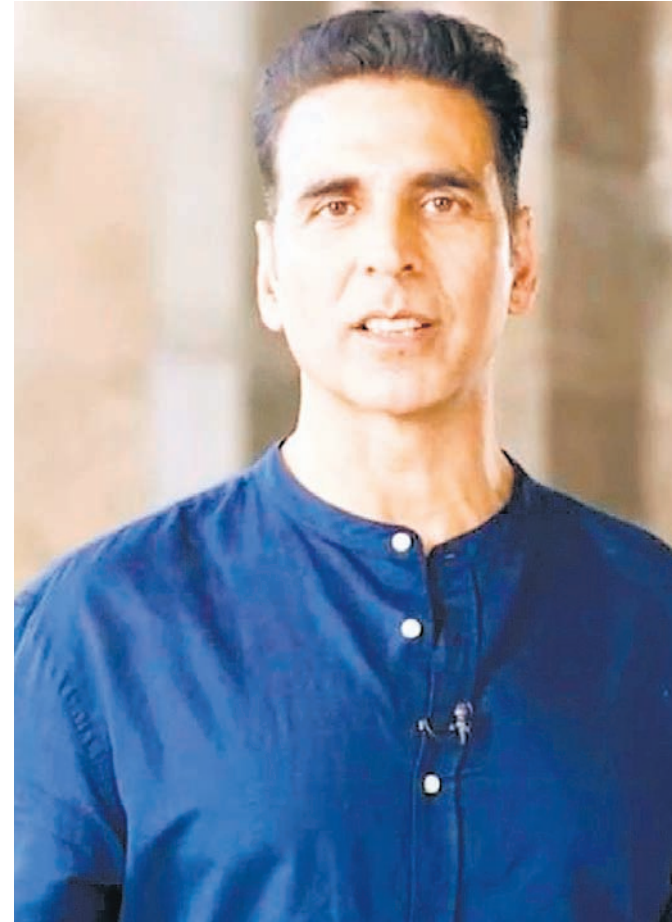


social media. He said: "I think too much insecurity or too much validation they need from social media, from people they don't know. I think they are very insecure, I mean I don't know why, but maybe they have their own thing because they are born in this generation."

Karan then asked the duo if the newer actors overthink, as he said: "How easily

y'all did two-three hero films. I don't see that happening today. I don't think they have the security of doing two-three hero films."

Ajay touched upon the aspect of indecisiveness of the current crop of actors. He said: "I don't think they have the security of doing solos also. They take 3 years to decide if they have to do this or that."



Akshay Kumar celebrates 16 years of 'Welcome'

Team Absolute | New Delhi

Bollywood superstar Akshay Kumar, who was most recently seen in the theatrical film 'Mission Raniganj', is celebrating the 16th anniversary of his superhit film 'Welcome' on Thursday.

The film, directed by Anees Bazmee, followed the story of two gangsters who want to marry off their sister to a good guy. Akshay's character, who is on a lookout for a 'good family' with a clean slate (no history of crimes) somehow gets

involved in this storm that goes on to trouble his family.

On Thursday, the Bollywood superstar took to his Instagram and shared a video from his upcoming movie celebrating 16 years of the release of 'Welcome'. The video had the theme of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' playing in the background as Akshay rode a horse with actor Arshad Warsi behind him on a bike. He also welcomed Sanjay Dutt on the sets of the film that he is currently shooting.

The 'Hera Pheri' actor wrote in the caption: "What a lovely coincidence that we celebrate 16 years of #Welcome today while I am shooting for the franchise's third part #WelcomeToTheJungle. And it's wonderful to welcome Sanju Baba in this one. What do you think?"

His new film 'Welcome To The Jungle' went on floors earlier this month. Announcing the commencement of the film's shoot, Akshay Kumar had shared a glimpse of the "madness" by posting a video from the sets of the film.

"Wow, time really flew, didn't it? Armaan Malik posts on completing 16 years in music industry"

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Singer-songwriter Armaan Malik, who is known for songs such as 'Bol Do Na Zara', 'Naina', 'Besabriyaan' and several others, has completed 16 years in the music industry.

The singer has sung in multiple languages, including in Hindi, Telugu, English, Bangla, Kannada, Marathi, Tamil, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Malayalam.

He first made the audiences fall in love as a child singer in the song 'Bum Bum Bole' from 'Taare Zameen Par'.

On Thursday, Armaan took to his social media to reflect on his journey.

In a heartfelt video message, the singer shared, "Hey everyone, I hope you guys are doing amaz-



ing. Well, today is a very special day as I complete 16 years in the music industry."

He added, "I feel extreme gratitude towards all of you, my fans, all my listeners, and all the amazing people I have collaborated with, be it music composers, lyricists, directors, who have found me and my voice worthy enough of their projects. Thank you to everyone and thank you for embracing my music and my voice with so much warmth and love."

He wrote in the caption, "Wow, time really flew, didn't it? Thank you for being there with me and supporting my music for these incredible 16 years. Feeling blessed and grateful for your love."

'BIGG BOSS 17': MUNAWAR, AYESHA'S CHEMISTRY, CAPTAINCY TASK STEAL THE SHOW

Mumbai: After alleging that Munawar Faruqi broke her heart, wild card entrant Ayesha Khan and he often flirt with each other.

The rest of the housemates notice this and have a lot to say about their unmistakable chemistry. Aishwarya Sharma observes that on the first day, Ayesha insulted Munawar and exposed him, and now she's pally with him.

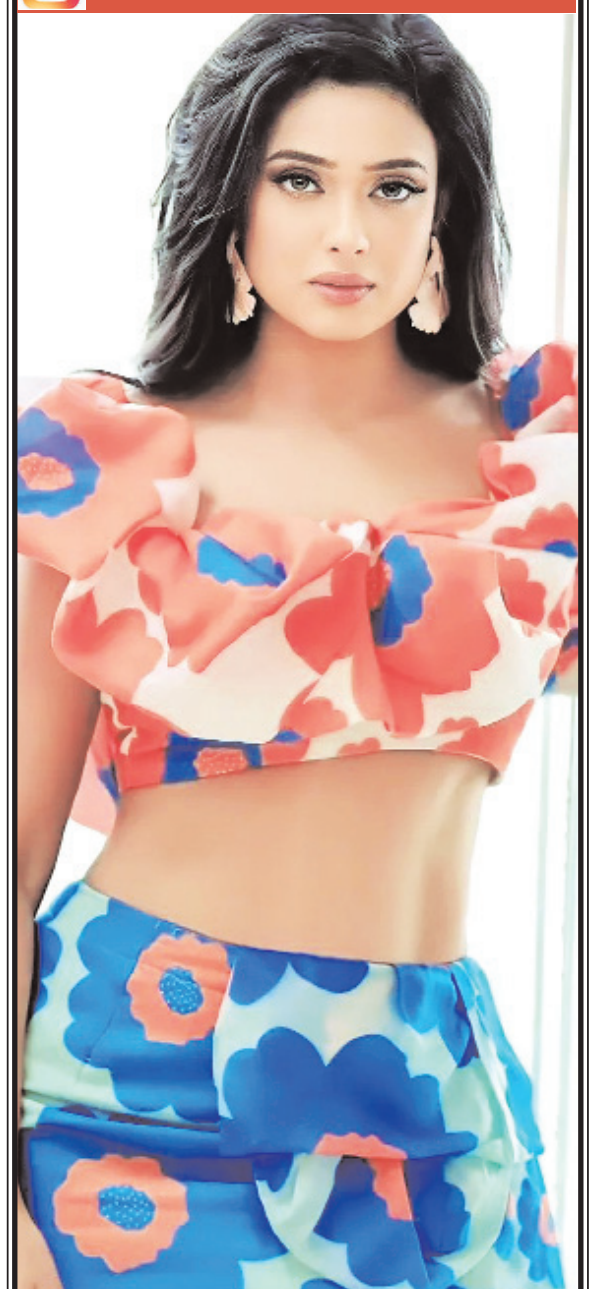
According to her, Ayesha wants to establish a love track with Munawar to get ahead in the game. Moreover, Isha Malviya reveals to Ayesha that in her opinion, Munawar is getting attracted to the wild card entrant. When Aishwarya asks Ayesha about her status with Munawar, she clarifies that she doesn't want him in her life at all.

For the captaincy task, the housemates are divided into two teams with Arun Srikanth, Rinku Dhawan, Aishwarya Sharma, Neil Bhatt, Abhishek Kumar, and Anurag Dobhal in Team A and Mannara Chopra, Vicky Jain, Aora, Samarth Jurel, Isha Malviya and Ayesha Khan in Team B.

Both the teams must pick apples from the makeshift apple orchard created in the garden area and pack them in a box only while the song 'Chikni Chameli' plays.

Owners of the orchard Munawar Faruqi and Ankita Lokhande decide whose box is approved. The captain of the week will be chosen from among the housemates of the winning team with the maximum number of approved apple boxes.

INSTAGRAM PIC OF THE DAY



Shweta Tiwari

Ayushmann Khurrana: the success of Hindi films across genres is a healthy sign

Team Absolute | Mumbai

Bollywood star Ayushmann Khurrana, who is known for films like 'Vicky Donor', 'Bareilly Ki Barfi' and 'Shubh Mangal Saavdhan', feels that the success of Hindi films across genres is a healthy sign of the industry being in a thriving space.

The year 2023 has been good for theatrical films as the year saw cash registering ringing with films like 'Pathaan', 'Gadar 2', 'Jawan', 'Animal', 'Fukrey 3', 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar', 'OMG 2' and 'Dream Girl 2'.

The actor said: "I'm really happy that we have tasted success across many genres this year. It is a healthy sign that our industry is



thriving and is so aspirational. It feels amazing to have the support of the audience for our work because we truly pour our hearts and souls into the cinema that we create."

Thrilled with the response to 'Dream Girl 2', he said: "It has been an incredible year for Hindi cinema. From a narrative that Hindi cinema is boycotted, to it having no takers, our industry has cracked the content game in 2023 to possibly register its biggest theatrical year. We have seen incredible support and response from the audience for our cinema which is why we have already had 3 all time blockbusters in 2023." He further mentioned: "I feel extremely happy that Hindi cinema has defied the negative narrative and due credit

to all the writers, directors and producers for putting their head down and working very hard to prove that Hindi cinema will always find love provided we make the best cinema for audiences to enjoy, experience and engage with. I'm delighted to have contributed in my own way towards the theatrical business with 'Dream Girl 2'." He added: "As an actor, who loves watching films in cinemas for the experience that it provides, I couldn't be happier to have delivered a theatrical experience for the audience with a hit franchise. I still remember how people were happy that a film from the comedy genre had hit over Rs 100 crores in India when action films were ruling the roost."