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'COULD NOT STOP MY TEARS': AMITABH BACHCHAN ON AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN, AARADHYA BEING DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITAL



AMITABH BACHCHAN REACTS TO AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN, AARADHYA TESTING NEGATIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS. AMITABH BACHCHAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN VOCAL ABOUT HIS FEELINGS ON HIS SOCIAL MEDIA, AND TODAY, AS AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN AND AARADHYA BACHCHAN GOT DISCHARGED FROM NANAVATI HOSPITAL, THE VETERAN ACTOR TOOK TO HIS TWITTER ACCOUNT AND EXPRESSED HIS HAPPINESS AT AISHWARYA AND AARADHYA TESTING NEGATIVE FOR THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS. FOR THE UNINFORMED, ON MONDAY, BOTH AISHWARYA AND AARADHYA WERE DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL AFTER TESTING NEGATIVE FOR COVID-19. IT HAPPENED THE SAME DAY THAT THE BACHCHAN BUNGALOW JALSA WAS NO LONGER IN CONTAINMENT ZONE. ABHISHEK CONFIRMED THE HAPPY NEWS FOR THE WELL-WISHERS ON TWITTER.

SALMAN KHAN'S ADORABLE PHOTO WITH SIBLINGS AHIL SHARMA, AYAT AND NIRVAN KHAN IS UNMISSABLE



Salman Khan has been living at Panvel farmhouse from the past few months. He is not alone and is joined by a few of his family members and friends. The superstar is living it up there and enjoying his time in painting, farming and more. He has also helped nearby villagers by providing them with grocery and essential items. Salman has become very much active on his social media pages and treats fans with his photos and videos too. A couple of days back, Khan had taken to his Instagram page and shared a candid click with his nephews and niece. Yes, the Dabangg star is seen holding Aayush Sharma and Arpita Khan Sharma's kids Ahil Sharma and Ayat Sharma in his arms and is joined by Sohail Khan's son Nirvan Khan. Ahil is seen giving a kiss to his little sister while Salman and Nirvan look at them cutely. Meanwhile, on the work front, Salman is yet to resume the shoot of his upcoming film, Radhe: Your Most Wanted Bhai which was eyeing for Eid release this year. The film directed by Prabhu Deva also stars Randeep Hooda, Jackie Shroff and Disha Patani in the lead roles. Apart from Radhe, Khan also has Kabhi Eid Kabhi Diwali in which he is paired opposite Pooja Hegde. The film is being helmed by Farhad Samji.

ANURAG KASHYAP APOLOGIZES TO AYESHA SHROFF AFTER INCLUDING TIGER SHROFF IN NEPOTISM DEBATE

Anurag Kashyap recently spoke about nepotism covered by media. He, however, ended up apologizing to Ayesha Shroff, who happens to be Tiger Shroff's mother. She was upset because Anurag had shared an article which spoke about Tiger. Sharing an article about Tiger Shroff and Taimur Ali Khan being spotted in the city, Anurag Kashyap wrote, "This is nepotism by media ..? Why?? Because this is what you the audience wants to see .. So isn't it nepotism by you the audience too??"



"Yo! Don't involve my kid in this!! he's here on his own hard work entirely," replied Ayesha Shroff on the post. Soon, Anurag wrote back to her with, "I am sorry Ayesha .. I meant it for how media chases 'Taimur'. Sorry to have hurt you . Just read this." Kangana Ranaut's team attacked Anurag soon after. "Will @anuragkashyap72 apologise to Kangana's or Sushant's parents ? No, but he will apologise to Tiger's parents. Double standards!," a tweet by Team Kangana Ranaut read.

'MET SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT ONLY TWICE,' SAYS MAHESH BHATT DURING INTERROGATION IN ACTOR'S DEATH CASE



MAHESH BHATT SAID THAT HE MET SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT ONLY TWICE, ONCE THROUGH RHEA CHAKRABORTY

PRIYANKA CHOPRA AND NICK JONAS DONATE TOWARDS ASSAM FLOOD RELIEF, URGE PEOPLE TO EXTEND HELP



PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS AND SINGER HUSBAND NICK JONAS HAVE DONATED TOWARDS ASSAM FLOOD RELIEF

SHEKHAR KAPUR TELLS AR RAHMAN 'OSCAR IS KISS OF DEATH IN BOLLYWOOD', HIS REPLY WILL WIN YOU OVER



SHEKHAR KAPUR TOLD AR RAHMAN THAT 'OSCAR IS KISS OF DEATH IN BOLLYWOOD', AND RAHMAN'S MATURE REPLY IS SURE TO WIN PEOPLE OVER

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IPL 2020 schedule to be finalised on August 2 at Governing Council meeting



FOLLOWING THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE T20 WORLD CUP BY THE INTERNATIONAL CRICKET COUNCIL (ICC) ON MONDAY, IPL IS NOW SET TO BE HELD DURING THE WINDOW OF SEPTEMBER 19 TO NOVEMBER 10.

WHY IRFAN PATHAN BACKS FLAMBOYANT HARDIK PANDYA TO BECOME INDIA'S BEN STOKES

Former Team India cricketer Irfan Pathan has backed Hardik Pandya to become a match-winner like Ben Stokes - who has been the Three Lions' Mr Reliable during their three-match Test series against West India - for India but needs to produce consistently to be in line for comparison with the England star all-rounder. Pathan, while Speaking on the show 'Cricket Connected', claimed that even though the Men In Blue have numerous allrounders but none of them has the ability to influence the game as Stokes does. "It's not like we don't have any potential. We have Hardik Pandya, we tried Vijay Shankar for some time." "We have guys who bowl spin and are all-rounders like Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, but the kind of match-winning impact you want to have from a fast-bowling all-rounder, you need to make sure that these guys, the names I took, should come up, go out there and win matches for your country to be in the same league as Ben Stokes," he added. The former Indian allrounder then went on to express his thoughts on how Hardik can make a similar impact like Stokes, however, in order to do so he needs to bat further up the order for India as he does for Mumbai Indians in IPL.



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Shekhar Kapur tells AR Rahman 'Oscar is kiss of death in Bollywood', his reply will win you over



AR Rahman has been in news after the 'Dil Bechara' music composer spoke up about facing gangism in Bollywood in a recent interview. He now had a Twitter exchange with Shekhar Kapur on the same topic. Kapur told Rahman 'Oscar is kiss of death in Bollywood'. Shekhar Kapur shared the interview and wrote to Rahman, "You know what your problem is @arrhman? You went and got #Oscars . An Oscar is the kiss of death in Bollywood. It proves you have more talent than Bollywood can handle .."

Rahman had a mature reply, which also cleared that he was hurt about losing out on work, but it doesn't matter anymore. With a smiley emoji, Rahman tweeted his reply as, "Lost Money comes back, fame comes back, but the wasted prime time of our lives will never come back. Peace! Lets move on. We have greater things to do."

In the same interview, AR Rahman had stated that even director Mukesh Chhabra was asked not to approach him. Meanwhile, actor Kangana Ranaut has been claiming that gangism could have led to Sushant Singh Rajput's demise on June 14, 2020. 'Dil Bechara' was the last movie the actor ever shot for.

Sanjana Sanghi responds to Kangana Ranaut's 'late reaction' remark on #MeToo allegations on Sushant Singh Rajput

After Kangana Ranaut's statement on Sanjana Sanghi taking her 'sweet time' to clarify '#MeToo' allegations against Sushant Singh Rajput, the Dil Bechara debutante has responded to it. For the uninitiated, the Team Kangana Ranaut actor had tweeted, "Many blinds claimed that Sushant raped Sanjana, such news about her harassment were common in those days. Why Sanjana took her own sweet time to clarify? Why she never spoke so passionately abt her friendship with him when he was alive? @mumbaipolice can investigate." Now as per reports in BollywoodLife, Sanjana has responded to this during an interaction with a portal. She stated, "I have said more than enough about what happened. Also, I've given a clarification which should have been enough. At that time, it wasn't late, nobody is in authority to decide what's late and what's not. You don't fuel rumours. It is not the responsibility or job to clarify rumours." Sanjana had released a statement a few days after the report and Sushant had also shared screenshots of his conversation with her.

'Bad Boys For Life' director duo wants Shah Rukh Khan to headline 'Desi' version of Will Smith-Martin Lawrence's film

Moroccan-Belgian directors Adil el Arbi and Bilall Fallah love the world of Bollywood. They would tell you they have an eye on Hindi filmmaking.

The director duo feels an Indian version of their recent Hollywood hit, Bad Boys For Life, would be a good idea. They even have a star in mind, for someone who could lead the 'desi' version of the franchise, Shah Rukh Khan.



At the time of the release of Bad Boys For Life earlier this year, Indian filmmaker Rohit Shetty had expressed his desire to remake the popular Hollywood franchise in Bollywood.

Asked how they envision the 'desi' version, Adil told IANS: "Well, you know, it would be an honour, to begin with. Because Bollywood is like the biggest movie industry in the world, and we come from Morocco. They're big Bollywood fans, and the biggest star in the world is still Shah Rukh Khan. So we hope that he (the Indian director) would have Shah Rukh Khan in the movie."

Adil continued: "You've got to have him. In Bad Boys, there are a lot of bright colours that match with Bollywood cinema, where you have bright colours. It's exotic. So, you have a lot of similarities, and the costumes (are bright, too). But I think you're gonna have to use more music. It has to be a little bit more epic action with musical elements."

Bilal agreed: "I would be super excited to see a Bollywood version of Bad Boys. I'm behind it."

At the time of the release of Bad Boys For Life earlier this year, Rohit Shetty told IANS: "It will be (remade) for sure. The moment I say that who should be the Bad Boys in Bollywood, it will go viral that 'I am making a film with them' and I will be in a mess. So, I know who the Bad Boys are but I don't want to disclose it right now." Hollywood stars Will Smith and Martin Lawrence lead the Bad Boys franchise. The buddy cop movie series was started in 1995 by Michael Bay. The second part was released in 2003. The third part released this year.

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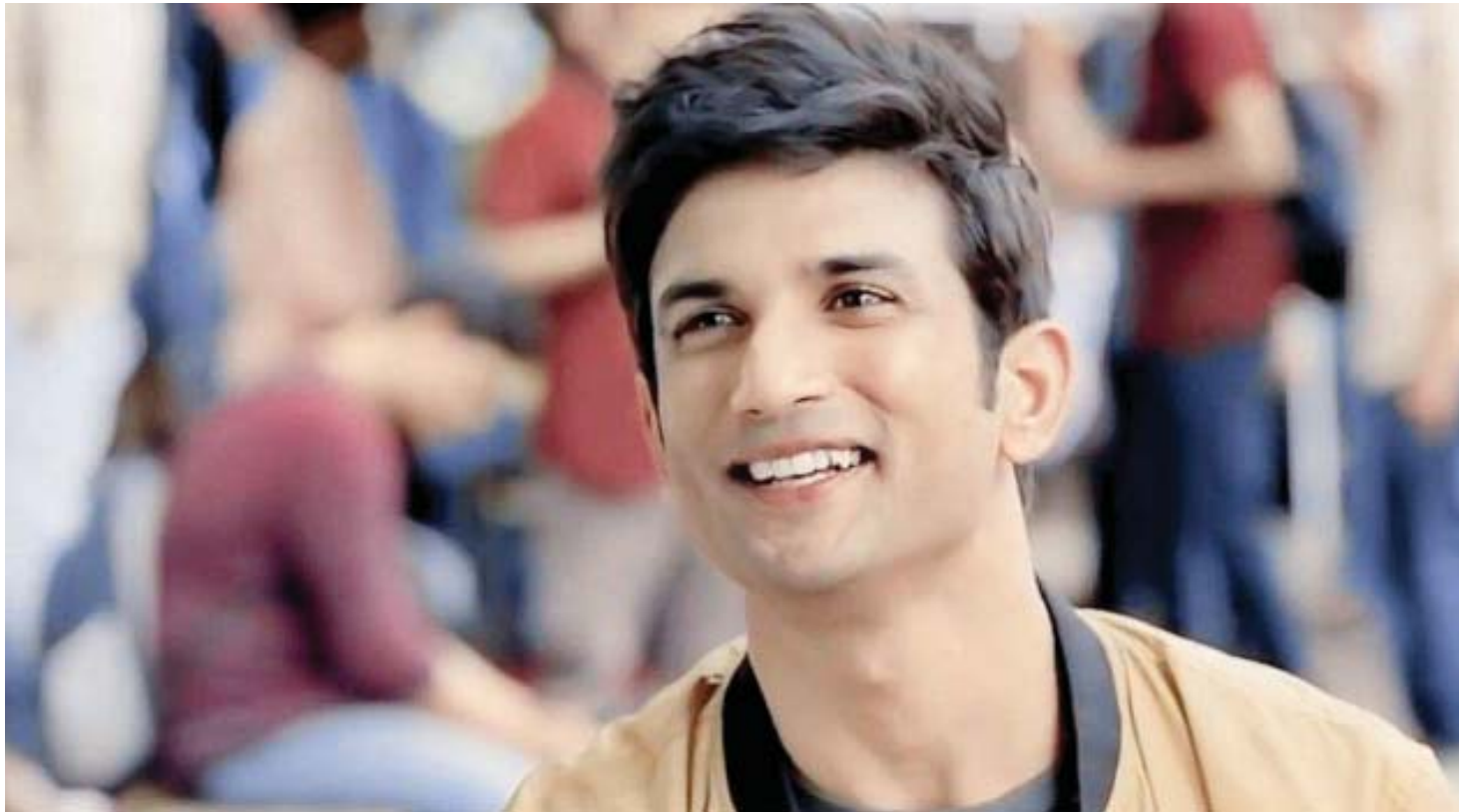
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'SUSHANT IS FINE': SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT'S ASSURANCE TO FAN ON MANSOOR'S DEATH IN 'KEDARNATH' WILL BREAK YOUR HEART



Sushant Singh Rajput's death sure left a void in the country, especially in the heart of his fans who are still coming to terms with losing their favourite star. Many have also been sharing screenshots of the messages Sushant sent for them over the years.

On such incidence was when one of his fans wrote a message to him saying, "3 days back watched Kedarnath, all I want to say is Mansoor is incredibly amazing, have these random outbursts of grief that can't be described in words thinking how Mansoor deserved a happy life, which he never got, anyways thank you for blessing our screens with this perfection every time. More power to you 'My Precious'." To this Sushant had replied saying, "Don't be sad, Sushant is fine. Thankyou My Precious for your kind words."

Sushant died of suicide on June 14 and was found in his Bandra residence. He did not leave a suicide note but the investigation into the case is still ongoing. On July 24, Sushant's swansong Dil Bechara released on OTT platform and was loved by all his fans who watched the film to keep his legacy alive. Dil Bechara received a whopping 9.8 rating on IMDb as well.

Dil Bechara was the directorial venture of casting director turned filmmaker Mukesh Chhabra who always wanted to cast Sushant in his first film. The film also marked the debut of Sanjana Sanghi who is being widely appreciated for playing the role of Kizie Basu so eloquently. Sushant has been garnering praises for his last film from his fans as well as his colleagues from the film industry.

'Met Sushant Singh Rajput only twice,' says Mahesh Bhatt during interrogation in actor's death case



Mahesh Bhatt, who had visited Santacruz Police Station in Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, said that he met the actor only twice in his life. Mahesh Bhatt also added that he had not promised any movie to the actor. It was reported that Sushant was going to be part of 'Sadak 2'. "I have given always given a chance to new talents and never promoted nepotism," Mahesh Bhatt said, adding, "I met Sushant first in August 2018 and then in January 2020. We never had any conversation on signing him for my film."

Back in 2018, Sushant had tweeted about Mahesh Bhatt's new book. The actor wanted to meet the filmmaker at that time.

Bhatt also said that he knew Sushant through Rhea, and the actor wanted to work with him. Mahesh said that the other time he met Sushant was after he cast Rhea in 'Jalebi'. Mahesh Bhatt said that

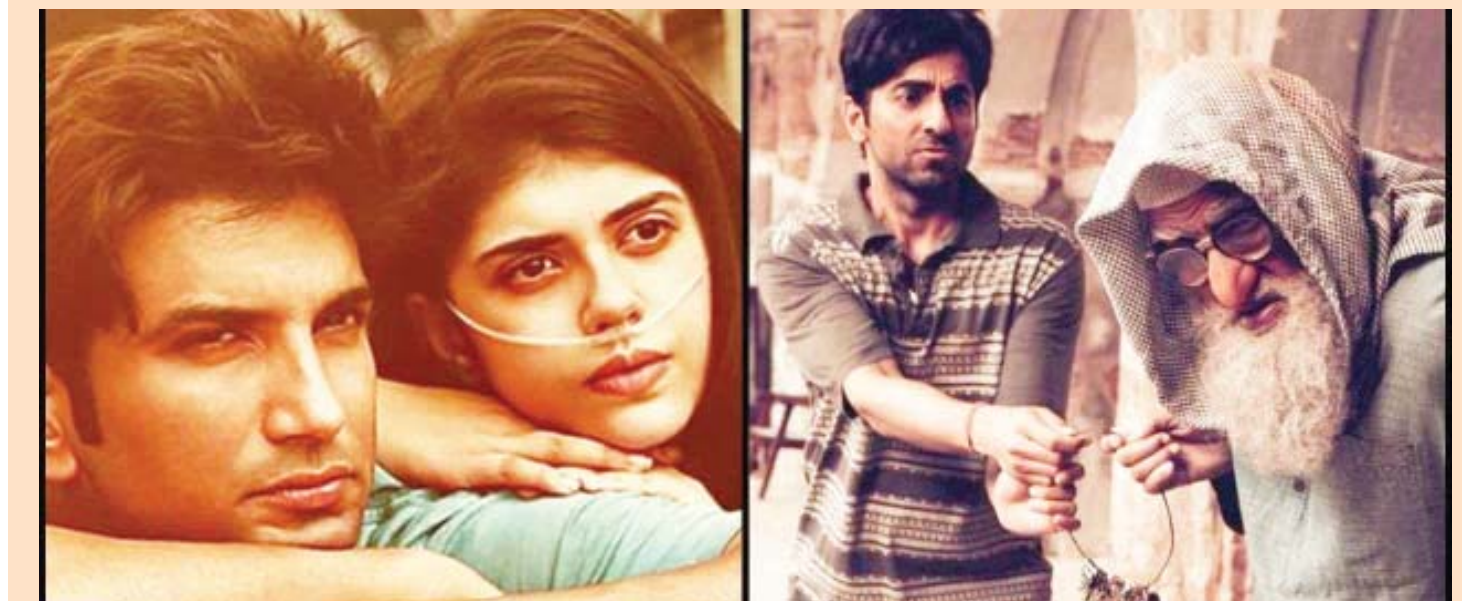
Rhea considered him guru after the movie.

Mahesh Bhatt went on to add that even though he never approached Sushant, the actor was keen to work with him irrespective of the role. If sources are to be believed, Mahesh Bhatt also said that Sushant was never approached for 'Sadak 2' because the filmmaker wanted to make a sequel to 'Sadak', and thus, he always had Sanjay Dutt in mind for the character. He cleared that neither Sushant nor Rhea were approached for the movie.

The cops did not interrogate Bhatt on his close associate Suhrita Das' now-deleted Facebook post.

38 people have been interrogated in Sushant's death case so far. Karan Johar's business partner Apoorva will be interrogated in the case on Tuesday.

'Dil Bechara' beats 'Gulabo Sitabo's digital response



'Dil Bechara', which released on July 24, 2020, received a huge response from the audiences once it released on the OTT platform Disney+Hotstar at 7 pm. The movie has also given the platform its highest Indian content views till date.

'Dil Bechara', which was Sushant Singh Rajput's last movie ever, was available to all audiences for free. The OTT platform had taken the initiative seeing the initial response the film received. According to a report on Box Office India, the movie has even managed to beat Shoojit Sircar's 'Gulabo Sitabo', which premiered on Amazon Prime on June 12, 2020.

While there have been a few criticisms around 'Dil Bechara', the movie has mainly been lived as an experience, and as a tribute to late actor Sushant Singh Rajput. 'Dil Bechara' launched Mukesh Chhabra as a director, and Sanjana Sanghi as an actor in Bollywood. She had appeared in cameo roles in 'Rockstar', 'Hindi Medium' and 'Fukrey Returns' before bagging a lead role opposite Sushant. Amitabh Bachchan-Ayushmann Khurrana starring 'Gulabo Sitabo' could not release in theatres due to COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the same, Bollywood movies are now giving competition to Indian web shows which have been loved and absorbed by the audiences before coronavirus situation.

BOLLYWOOD ACTION DIRECTOR PARVEZ KHAN DIES OF HEART ATTACK AT 55



In another loss to the film industry, Bollywood action director Parvez Khan who has worked in films such as Andhadhun, Johnny Gaddaar, and Bullett Raja, passed away on Monday after suffering a massive heart attack. He was 55. According to his assistant, Nishad, who was like a brother to Parvez said that the action director died around 11:30 am. He said, "Since last night there was a complaint of chest pain, after which he was being taken to the hospital this morning and died. He said that Parvez has been associated with the industry since 1986 and has worked in several action films over the years. He has also been awarded the award for the film Johnny Gaddaar and had a very good relationship with Shah Rukh Khan and Akshay Kumar." Filmmaker Hansal Mehta, who collaborated with Parvez on his 2013 National Award-winning film Shahid, remembered him as a skillful and energetic artist and tweeted, "Just heard that action director Parvez Khan is no more. We had worked together in Shahid where he executed the riots sequence in a single take. Very skillful, energetic, and a good man. RIP Parvez. Your voice still rings in my ears!"

Reports state that Parvez Khan will be cremated on Monday evening at Hanuman Nagar cemetery in Kandivali. He is survived by wife, son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter. According to his website, Parvez, whose father Fazal Khan was a stunt director in Hindi films, learned the craft from his brother Usman Khan. He has also worked on films like Shah Rukh Khan's Baazigar and Akshay Kumar-led "Khiladi" movies.

Here's when Akshay Kumar, Dhanush, Sara Ali Khan will resume shoot for Aanand L Rai's 'Atrangi Re'



Just a few days before the coronavirus lockdown was announced, Sara Ali Khan had kickstarted the shoot of her forthcoming film, Atrangi Re. The film directed by Aanand L Rai and stars Akshay Kumar and Dhanush as the male leads. As per reports quoted by BollywoodLife, the shoot for Atrangi Re is all set to be resumed in the next few months. During an interaction with a tabloid, Aanand confirmed the same. He shared his excitement stating, "Yes, I'm really excited to start the next schedule planned for October in Madurai. I have the full support of the cast and crew. We are hoping that things will improve by the time we are ready to shoot." Rai further said, "Rather, during the lockdown, I got a lot of time to prep for the upcoming schedule. We will be filming outdoors, but it's going to be a very organised shoot... We will try to wrap up in the minimum time possible." Earlier there were reports making the rounds that Akshay only has a special cameo in Atrangi Re. To which Aanand had said, "It's not a cameo, but a very special character that is important to the narrative."

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'IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR US?'

KANGANA RANAUT SUPPORTS RESUL POOKUTTY AFTER HE SPEAKS OF BEING SHUNNED BY BOLLYWOOD



Resul Pookutty recently opened up about being shunned by the industry after he won as Oscar following working with AR Rahman as a sound designer, editor, and music mixer for Slumdog Millionaire. Now, Kangana Ranaut, who has been vocal about nepotism in Bollywood showed her support for Resul. In a series of tweets, she wrote, "During the release week of Manikarnika when whole industry ganged up on Kangana, @resulp called her in a long conversation for about more than an hour, not only he appreciated the film but spoke about the major emotional & professional crisis he is facing because of Bullying." In another tweet, Kangana said, "...post his Oscar, Kangana has always known the seriousness of Bullying in Bully-wood but no action was taken back then and now that we have lost a life still we are going in circles, is there any hope for us @PMOIndia? "

For the uninformed, Resul, replying to Shekhar Kapur, had tweeted

saying, "Dear @shekharkapur ask me about it, I had gone through near breakdown as nobody was giving me work in Hindi films and regional cinema held me tight after I won the Oscar... There were production houses told me at my face "we don't need you" but still I love my industry, for it..." He continued in his next tweet talking about "Oscar curse" and said, "@shekharkapur ...and much later when I discussed this with my @TheAcademy members friends they told me about #OscarCurse! It's faced by everybody! I enjoyed going through that phase, when you are on top of the world & when you know people reject you, it's the biggest reality check!" Recently, AR Rahman had also opened up on not getting a lot of Hindi films despite being internationally recognised talent. He said there is a gang of people working against him due to which there are misunderstandings and a lot of rumours.

After giving Taapsee Pannu tips on 'how to become A-lister', Team Kangana Ranaut calls her 'B grade human being'

While Kangana Ranaut had gone on record to call Taapsee Pannu B-grade actress, her team on Twitter has now even announced Taapsee 'B grade human being'. The same happens after the team gave the actor tips on 'how to become A-lister' over a 2017 interview, where Taapsee had said that she doesn't consider herself A-lister.

The tweet read, "Ms Pannu has hit new low by posting fake videos, today she has officially become not just a B grade actor but also a B grade human being, shame on you @taapsee for posting half edited videos to please your masters..."

"Good acting, strong personality, above everything a solo hit preferably a blockbuster like Queen, Tanu weds Manu Returns, Manikarnika if not even a normal solo hit will do, your time starts now ... GO ?@taapsee," the team had tweeted previously while sharing the article.

"What is rather questionable is the award @taapsee got for the per-

formance which was hugely criticised, it was a tie between Bhumi (Sonchiriya) and Kangana (JHK) but Kangana too agrees solo Bhumi deserved it but chaploosi takes you places and @taapsee is a living example of that, When papa Jo Kalank can get awards why not @taapsee," read another tweet from them.

"Taapsee ji said she can't do drama for TRP's it's a shame for a non-existent career of hers she is trying to sabotage justice that whole nation wants for Sushant. For TRPs one needs valid points, brains, cohesive narrative and articulation simply trying to humiliate struggle of a great woman like Kangana who not only put her glorious career at stake but even her own life in danger, shame on such greedy people." Along with Taapsee, Kangana Raanaut had also called Swara Bhaskar B-grade actress, stating they are the same even when they are close to Karan Johar. Soon, Taapsee hit back at Kangana, calling her hypocrite by posting videos and content on her Twitter handle.

POONAM PANDEY'S FIANCE SAM BOMBAY ANNOUNCES THEIR ENGAGEMENT



Nasha actor Poonam Pandey is engaged to her longtime beau Sam Bombay. Her fiancé took to his Instagram page and shared a photo where both are flaunting their engagement rings. He captioned the post stating, "We finally did it!". Poonam and Sam got engaged on July 23, 2020, as he shared the photo on the same date. Sam is often seen sharing Poonam's photos and also their romantic moments.

On Poonam's birthday celebrated on March 11, 2020. Sam had shared a cute selfie posing with her and captioned it as "Happy birthday to the love of my life, my bestie and an extraordinary girl. #ipoonampandey #fam #forever".

He shared another photo and wrote, "A kiss is greater than a rose."

Poonam is a controversial queen and earlier she was in the news for releasing her sex tape with her boyfriend. However, she deleted the post from her Instagram page.

Earlier during an interaction with ANI, when Poonam was asked about being caught up in controversies, she had said, "Luck was in my favour as controversies either put you up or put you down. Controversies worked enough for me and I am happy."

On being in the news for wrong reasons, she had explained, "I used to get inspired by Madhuri Dixit but I had no idea how to get into the industry. No one from my family is connected to Bollywood. When I came here, I saw people need to have either a Godfather or some other contact. It made me feel that getting here is impossible. So I thought of having my strategy, which will be unique and different. That is why I came up and did controversies, which worked for me."

AMITABH BACHCHAN'S BUNGALOW JALSA NO LONGER IN CONTAINMENT ZONE



Amitabh Bachchan is currently receiving treatment for COVID-19 in Nanavati hospital. Meanwhile, his bungalow Jalsa is out of the containment zone. For the uninitiated, Jalsa is the same bungalow where the actor meets his fans every Sunday.

Jalsa was sanitized after Amitabh Bachchan and his son Abhishek Bachchan were declared COVID-19 positive. Both got themselves hospitalized soon after. Later, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Aaradhya Bachchan were also admitted to the hospital after showing symptoms like fever.

The BMC workers, this time came to remove posters declaring the bungalow as containment zone. "BMC removes poster which they had put outside 'Jalsa', residence of Amitabh Bachchan, declaring it as containment zone. Amitabh Bachchan, Abhishek Bachchan-Aishwarya Rai Bachchan & their daughter Aaradhya are admitted at Nanavati Hospital after testing positive for COVID," tweeted ANI.

It was reported that Amitabh Bachchan, who is receiving treatment for coronavirus since July 12, would be discharged by July 22. However, the actor shunned the news and called it 'irresponsible, fake'. He is in the isolation ward of the hospital, while Abhishek is receiving treatment in the general ward.

Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas donate towards Assam flood relief, urge people to extend help



Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas and singer husband Nick Jonas have donated towards Assam flood relief and have asked people to do so too to help efforts to help those in the State, which has been ravaged by floods and has left close to 100 people dead and at least 129 animal casualties.

Taking to social media the actor-singer couple shared the names of a few organisations, who that are involved in relief and rescue operations in the state to which people could send in their donations.

While we are all still dealing with the effects of the global pandemic, the Indian state of Assam has been grappling with another major crisis. It has been devastated by floods triggered by heavy monsoon showers affecting the lives of millions," wrote Priyanka in a Tweet.

"The impact to life and land/property is unimaginable. The rapidly rising water level has also flooded the Kaziranga National Park, one of the finest wildlife sanctuaries in the world," the actor wrote.

'May you burn in your own stew': Amitabh Bachchan slams anonymous trolls who said 'hope you die with COVID'



Amitabh Bachchan is quarantining and undergoing treatment at the hospital after being tested positive for coronavirus. The legendary actor has been sharing daily updates about his and his family's health along with thanking well-wishers for their prayers. Now, Big B took to his blog page and wrote an open letter to haters for writing ill about his health and well-being. He started by writing, "They write to tell me... 'I hope you die with this COVID'".

Bachchan further wrote, "Hey Mr Anonymous... you do not even write your Father's name, because you do not know who Fathered you... there are only two things that can happen... either I shall die or either I shall live... if I die you won't get to write your diatribe anymore, by weathering your remark on a celebrity name... pity... for, the reason of your writing to be noticed was because you took a swipe at Amitabh Bachchan.. that shall no longer exist...!!!"



MURALI VIJAY ROASTED AFTER ELLYSE PERRY ANNOUNCES DIVORCE | P19



FAWAD ALAM NAMED IN 20-MAN PAKISTAN TEST SQUAD, COMEBACK CHANCES BRIGHT | P19

ENG VS IRE: JOE DENLY IN ENGLAND'S 14-MAN SQUAD, TEAM TO MISS JOE ROOT, BEN STOKES AND JOS BUTTLER | P18



MidWeek Sports



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'Virat Kohli is one of the top athletes but our boys are not behind': Pakistan's Waqar Younis on fitness of cricketers



When one talks about the fitness in cricket, Indian skipper Virat Kohli is one that is always spoken off. The captain follows a strict diet and is very consistent with his workout.

Even amid the coronavirus enforced lockdown, the batsman is seen doing his workouts religiously as he shares videos of the same with his fans. former Pakistan pacer Waqar Younis himself acknowledged the same in an interview last month and had said Kohli has set the fitness bar for the players worldwide. "Virat Kohli has evolved the game and all the formats of the modern-day cricket including T20 Cricket, one day suits him a lot and he is brilliant at test matches. But the biggest difference he brought to cricket that is followed and watched worldwide is his fitness," Younis had said while interacting with fans on the Twitter platform @GloFansOfficial.

"He has set a bar of fitness worldwide, for players, I think it is hard to beat. I think for that reason also, you like everything about Virat Kohli.

He is fit, he is always in your face, he wants to prove you that he is the best, he is a fighter, so that is why we all like him," the former pacer had added. However, when it comes to the fitness of Pakistan cricketers, Younis said they can match up to Kohli's levels of fitness. The Pakistan bowling coach said: "There is no doubt that there are too many cricketers who are fit. There are three formats when you play all three formats you have to maintain fitness standards. He (Virat) is one of the top athletes in the country. Our boys are not behind."

"You take Babar Azam, he is very fit. He is also delivering goods. Shaheen Shah Afridi is super fit. We will set our own bar, we not copy someone else. We will set the bar that suits Pakistan cricket and will take the team forward," Waqar added.

"But right now in the training camp they are getting better and we are working hard on ensuring their fitness levels meet those standards required in world cricket," he further said.

PUBG ban: Throwback to when Sakshi Dhoni revealed MS Dhoni sleep talking about PUBG



Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG) is easily one of the most played mobile games India but recent reports suggest that the popular mobile game might be banned in India. India has now banned 47 Chinese apps which were clones of the 59 Chinese apps that were banned in June. These include Tik Tok Lite and Cam Scanner Advance. The order was issued on Friday.

This news might come as a piece of a very sad update for a number of Team India cricketers like MS Dhoni, Yuvendra Chahal, Manish Pandey, KL Rahul, etc who are avid players of the game. Earlier in the year, former Team India skipper MS Dhoni wife, Sakshi Dhoni, had revealed how the veteran wicketkeeper-batsman is addicted to the uber-popular game and even mumbles about it during his sleep.

"He has got a thinking brain, it does not rest. When he plays video games, it helps him divert his mind, which is a good thing. Nowadays PUBG has encroached my bed. Mahi is sleep talking about PUBG these days," Sakshi had revealed. The development comes amid an apprehensive political climate between the two countries, as India tightens rules for Chinese companies to invest in India.

Last week, India had amended the General Financial Rules, 2017, making it difficult for Chinese companies to be a part of the Indian public procurement.

The order said, "Any bidder from countries sharing a land border with India will be eligible to bid in any procurement whether of goods, services (including consultancy services and non-consultancy services) or works (including turnkey projects) only if the bidder is registered with the Competent Authority." Since India's semi-final exit from the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019 against New Zealand in August last year, MSD hasn't featured for the Men In Blue.

With the IPL 2020 now set for a mid-September start, fans can finally hope to see the 39-year-old back in action with his Chennai Super Kings side.

Sports Ministry gives go-ahead to BCCI for IPL 2020 in UAE: Report



The Sports Ministry of India have reported provided the seal of approval to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to shift this year's Indian Premier League (IPL) to the UAE. Following the postponement of the T20 World Cup by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday, IPL is now set to be held during the window of September 19 to November 10. As per the latest reports in The New Indian Express, the Sports Ministry sent the mandatory clearance to BCCI on Monday. Now, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Union Home Ministry (MHA) have to give their clearances for following which the 13th edition of IPL is all set to be held out of India amid the coronavirus pandemic scare. Meanwhile, IPL's Governing Council Chairman Brijesh Patel had already confirmed that BCCI has sent the acceptance letter to the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB).

IPL IN UAE: WHY BRAVO, RUSSELL, POLLARD, ETC MIGHT MISS KEY OPENING IPL 2020 MATCHES



Following the postponement of the T20 World Cup by the International Cricket Council (ICC) last week, the Indian Premier League (IPL) is now set to be held during the window of September 19 to November 10. While IPL's Governing Council Chairman Brijesh Patel had already confirmed that BCCI has sent the acceptance letter to the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB), franchises may be missing some of their key players during the first few matches.

IPL sides are expected to be in UAE in August, with all their foreign players also set to join them for a pre-season workout.

However, teams like Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Super Kings, Mumbai Indians, etc will be missing their main Windies catalysts like Dwayne Bravo, Andre Russell, Kieron Pollard, Sunil Narine due to the Caribbean Premier League 2020 (CPL 2020) and at the West Indies vs England series.

Earlier this week, CPL announced the fixtures for the 2020 season

with the first match to be played between last year's runners-up Guyana Warriors and Trinbago Knight Riders on August 18.

The CPL is all set to become the first major cricket league to start amid the coronavirus pandemic from August 18 while the final of the tournament will be played on September 10.

This means star players like Russell, Pollard, Hetmyer, etc will be busy showing off their abilities over there.

Indian Premier League (IPL) Governing Council is set to meet on August 2 to finalize the schedule and other key topics for the tournament. As per the news outlet's reports, ECB had sent the proposal to the BCCI in April to host the 2020 season of the IPL, which was originally set to take place on March 29 in India.

Further details about when the teams will depart, dates and timings of the matches, SOPs, etc are expected to be announced after Governing Council's meeting next week.

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ENG VS IRE: JOE DENLY IN ENGLAND'S 14-MAN SQUAD, TEAM TO MISS JOE ROOT, BEN STOKES AND JOS BUTTLER

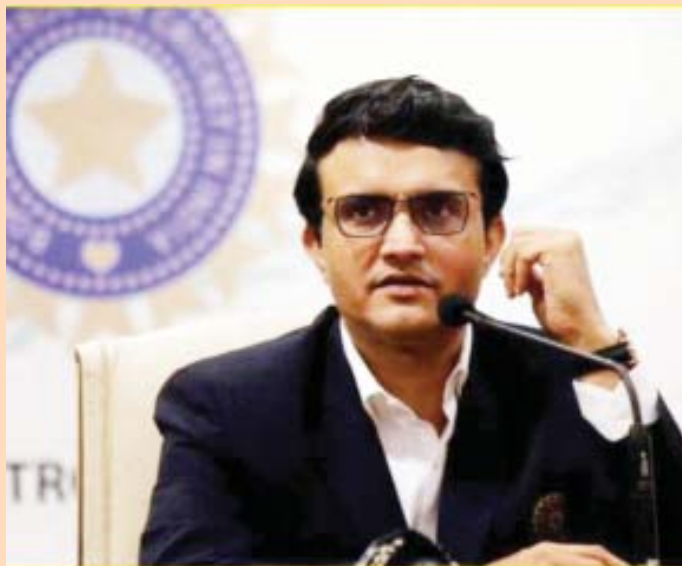


England on Monday named batsman Joe Denly in their 14-man squad for the three-match one-day international series against Ireland starting on Thursday. The English squad, however, will be without test skipper Joe Root, all-rounder Ben Stokes and batsman Jos Buttler due to their involvement in the West Indies tests. As for Kent batsman Denly, he was dropped for England's second test against West Indies and did not return for the ongoing third match of the series in Manchester. All-rounder Moeen Ali returns as Eoin Morgan's vice-captain for the three games, which will take place behind closed doors in a bio-secure bubble at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton. The England-Ireland ODI series kicks off the inaugural Super League, which will determine who qualifies for the 50-over World Cup in India in 2023, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said earlier on Monday.

"... There are a number of players who'll feel unlucky not to have made the final squad and that says a lot about how many players we currently have pushing hard for selection at the highest level," England selector James Taylor said in a statement. "These ODIs against Ireland are an opportunity to continue the exciting evolution of the ODI side, while also looking towards the Twenty20 World Cup in 2021. England also named three reserve players in Richard Gleeson, Lewis Gregory and Liam Livingstone. The squad: Eoin Morgan (captain), Moeen Ali, Jonny Bairstow, Tom Banton, Sam Billings, Tom Curran, Liam Dawson, Joe Denly, Saqib Mahmood, Adil Rashid, Jason Roy, Reece Topley, James Vince, David Willey. Reserves: Richard Gleeson, Lewis Gregory, Liam Livingstone

SOURAV GANGULY'S COVID-19 RESULTS ARE IN AFTER BROTHER SNEHASISH TESTED POSITIVE

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president Sourav Ganguly has tested negative for the novel coronavirus after he handed in his samples as part of a precautionary measure. The former Team India skipper has been in home isolation for over a week after his elder brother, Snehasish Ganguly, was tested positive with the highly contagious virus. "He (Ganguly) is living with his ailing mother and family, so as a precautionary measure he took the test voluntarily and the report came negative on Friday evening," a source close to the BCCI president was quoted as saying multiple outlets.



Snehasish, who is the secretary of Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB), is currently recovering well and is expected to be discharged from the hospital in the next couple of days. "He is doing fine and also handling his office work from the hospital through virtual meetings. We expect him to be released in a couple of days," the source further added. Earlier on June 20, Snehasish's wife, mother-in-law, father-in-law along with their domestic help were also tested positive with the novel Covid-19 various at their Mominpur residence. India has witnessed a huge single-day spike of COVID-19 cases with 48,916 cases reported in the last 24 hours, according to data from the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. With these fresh cases, India's coronavirus cases tally has gone up to 13,36,861, out of which there are 4,56,071 active cases and 8,49,431 patients have been cured/discharged/migrated. The death toll has gone up to 31,358 with 757 fatalities reported in the last 24 hours. Maharashtra remains the worst affected state with 3,57,117 cases reported until Friday.

WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP: FATE OF TOURNAMENT DEPENDS ON COUNTRIES ABLE TO RESCHEDULE SERIES, SAYS ICC



The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday said that the fate of the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) will depend on the ability of countries to reschedule the series that have been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With several bilateral series being wiped out, doubts remain over whether the WTC final between the top two sides could be held as scheduled in June next year at Lord's. "We are currently in discussion with members in what their plans are around rescheduling their queue," Geoff Allardice, ICC general manager - cricket operations, said on a video call. "Obviously there are teams which have rescheduled them as quickly as possible and depending on how many of them could be rescheduled within the available time window, that will give us a better view on the most appropriate timing for the final. "But at this stage, the final is scheduled for June 2021. But we are working with the members on that, to understand their rescheduling of the series that are postponed already."

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R Ashwin gives unique suggestion to 'restore balance' for bowlers



India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Tuesday came up with a unique suggestion to 'restore balance' for bowlers in cricket. Ashwin garnered lot of media attention last year after he 'Mankaded' Jos Buttler during an IPL game between Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals. The debate over whether dismissing a batsman in this fashion is in the spirit of the game or not became a discourse over the next couple of months, but Ashwin has always been resolute towards his point that he did nothing that is against the rules. On Tuesday, in a series of tweets, Ashwin came up with the idea to develop a technology which can spot if a batsman is backing up before the bowler bowls a ball. "Just hope that technology will see if a batsman is backing up before the bowler bowls a ball and disallow the runs of that ball every time the batter does so!! Thus, parity will be restored as far as the front line is concerned," Ashwin said. Ashwin's suggestion came a day after ICC announced that TV umpires will be calling front-foot no balls in all the ODI games that will be played under ODI World Cup Super League. The bowler went on to further explain his point. "Many of you will not be able to see the

grave disparity here, so let me take some time out to clarify to the best of my abilities. If the non striker backs up 2 feet and manages to come back for a 2, he will put the same batsmen on strike for the next ball. "Putting the same batsmen on strike might cost me a 4 or a 6 from the next ball and eventually cost me 7 more runs instead of may be a 1 and a dot ball possibility at a different batsmen. The same will mean massively for a batter wanting to get off strike even in a test match," Ashwin wrote. "It is time to restore the balance in what is an increasingly tough environment for the bowlers," the bowler further added. Meanwhile, in an interview with Hindustan Times, Ashwin spoke of the lows and the highs—opening up on the past and also his plans for the future once Indian cricket resumes. "One feels dejected and disappointed when dropped. But that is how sport is. This happens. Take the recent example of Stuart Broad. He was dropped from the first Test against the West Indies and ended up making a great comeback in the next game. I too have swung between those extremes. Either I take five-wicket hauls or I get dropped. I just don't let the negativity get to me," the bowler said.

'I can't please you': KKR skipper Dinesh Karthik on how he settled dispute with Andre Russell

When Kolkata Knight Riders decided to move and not retain Gautam Gambhir in their squad in 2018, all eyes were on who they would give the top job of captaincy too. The eventual choice of Dinesh Karthik surprised many, but the wicket-keeper batsman stamped his class on the team by guiding them to the play-offs in his first season as captain. A lot was expected from the team in 2019 but the season ended in a heartbreak for KKR as they missed out on a play-off spot on net run-rate in what was one of the most closely fought group phases ever. KKR's overdependence on the all-round abilities of West Indies Andre Russell was one of the major reasons for the team's lacklustre showing along with a depleted pace attack. Following the unsuccessful season Russell spoke about not being happy with certain decisions of the team. He spoke openly about bad decisions being the reason behind the team's defeat and that gave birth to talks about a possible rift with Karthik. Speaking about the issue and how he later spoke to Russell about his problems, Karthik said that he had a man-to-man chat with the West Indian. "To be fair, he's one of those guys who wears his heart on his sleeve. I am sure he meant whatever he said. But again, West Indies players are in your face kind of people. But whatever they say, they say it honestly and it's up to how you take it. If you want to take it offensively, then the mistake is on your part. If you want to take it constructively which is how I looked at it. We had a conversation over it man to man. "He wasn't not happy with me, he wasn't happy that the team wasn't winning, that is the bottomline. Whatever he said, I completely respected it.

Murali Vijay roasted after Ellyse Perry announces divorce



A day after it was announced that Australia all-rounder Ellyse Perry ended her marriage with rugby union player Matt Toomua, India batsman Murali Vijay has become the butt of all jokes. Perry and Toomua got married in 2015 and after four years of being together, decided to go their separate ways. "It's with the greatest of respect for one another that we decided to separate earlier this year," the pair said in a joint statement as per Sydney Morning Herald on Saturday. "We felt this was the right course of action and is in the best interests of each other and our current lives. This is something that has evolved and is a mutual decision. Throughout our relationship we have remained private and we ask that our space and privacy continue to be respected during this difficult time for both of us." This triggered users on Twitter and Instagram to have their share of fun at the expense of Vijay, who earlier this year had expressed his desire to have dinner with Perry. In April, Vijay had taken names of Perry and Shikhar Dhawan when asked about the ones he would want to have dinner with. "Ellyse Perry. She is very beautiful. I want to have dinner with her," he said. In reply, Perry, in an Instagram chat with anchor Ridhima Pathan had said: "I hope he's paying. That's very kind of him. I'm flattered." It was enough for the Twitter and Instagram community to generate a flood of memes related to Vijay. The Tamil Nadu batsman is married to Nikita Vijay – the ex-wife of India wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik – and has three children with her.

FAWAD ALAM NAMED IN 20-MAN PAKISTAN TEST SQUAD, COMEBACK CHANCES BRIGHT

Batsman Fawad Alam could make a comeback to Pakistan's Test team after 11 years after been named in the 20-member squad along with two specialist spinners, for the upcoming Test series against England. The tour selection committee headed by head coach and chief selector, Misbah-ul-Haq left out batsmen Iftikhar Ahmed, Khushdil Shah, Fakhar Zaman and uncapped Haider Ali, handing Fawad with a good chance to make a comeback. The left-hander played the last of his three Tests way back in 2009 in New Zealand. The selectors also included two specialist spinners, Kashif Bhatti and the experienced Yasir Shah apart from two all-rounders in Faheem Ashraf and Shadab Khan. The squad has been finalised from a list of 29 players who were sent to England in different batches due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The selectors short-listed the 20 players after the two four-day intra squad matches in Derbyshire. The selectors have also retained former captain and wicketkeeper-batsman, Sarfaraz Ahmed in the Test squad, giving an indication that a comeback might be awaiting him. The Test series will begin in Manchester from August 5.

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