

Rakul Preet Singh and Jackky Bhagnani look back on the year that changed their relationship status

Akash Bhatnagar

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his year marked many firsts for actor Rakul Preet Singh and producer Jackky Bhagnani as a couple. They got married in February and now, as 2024 draws to a close, they reflect on how they've impacted each other's lives. Bhagnani says, "She has helped me understand the value of respecting time. Being punctual is inbuilt in her, as she hails from an Army background. It's a good change she's brought in me. She also helps me see the good in people and how to compartmentalise work and personal life."

As for Singh, her husband is her source of happiness: "He can handle the toughest situation in the lightest way. When you know your partner can make you laugh even in a weak moment, it gives a sense of assurance. Sometimes, it's not about being overly expressive, but just asking how you're doing and feeling, emotionally and mentally, and I am glad that I get that from Jackky.'

The two dated for a while before getting married 10 months ago. And they continue to make time for date nights. Singh shares, "In the dating phase, you put in a lot of effort [in dressing up]. But once you are married, you're like 'Aise hi milega' (laughs). Now, the whole idea is to spend time together and not trying to impress the other with your looks. If it's a home date, then it's pajamas, and if it's a dinner outing, then you dress smart. More than the partner, you fear the paps catching you." Talking about dressing up for a date night, Bhagnani adds, "For a casual night, I prefer wearing a relaxed pair of jeans with a T-shirt or a pullover, and pair it with a hat."

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laundering probe against a betting website, owned by Pakistani nationals, which also "illegally" broadcast the Men's T20 World Cup matches. The federal agency had undertaken fresh searches in this case last week in Delhi, Mumbai and Pune as part of the

Magicwin. Sources said that the agency had asked Sherawat to respond to some

probe against a portal called

Ahmedabad office last week by sending her replies through an authorised representative and email.

TV actor Pooja Banerjii is also being investigated in the same matter. She deposed before the investigation officer and got her statement recorded under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.



PHOTOS: INSTAGRAM/

DEVOLEENA

Bhattacharjee and her

husband, gym trainer

Shahnawaz Sheikh, have

become parents to a baby

boy. The couple took to social

media to announce that

their first child was born

on December 18.

Allu Arjun's dad visits stampede victim, says hospital authorities advised the actor to 'stay put'

ctor Allu Arjun's father, producer Allu Aravind, visited the KIMS Cuddles Hospital in Secunderabad to meet the victim of the stampede that took place at the premiere of Pushpa 2: The Rule at Sandhya Theatre. "I just visited Sri Tej in the ICU. The boy has been recovering slowly in the last 10 days, but it might take longer," he told the media. Explaining why Arjun hasn't paid a visit to the nine-year-old or the

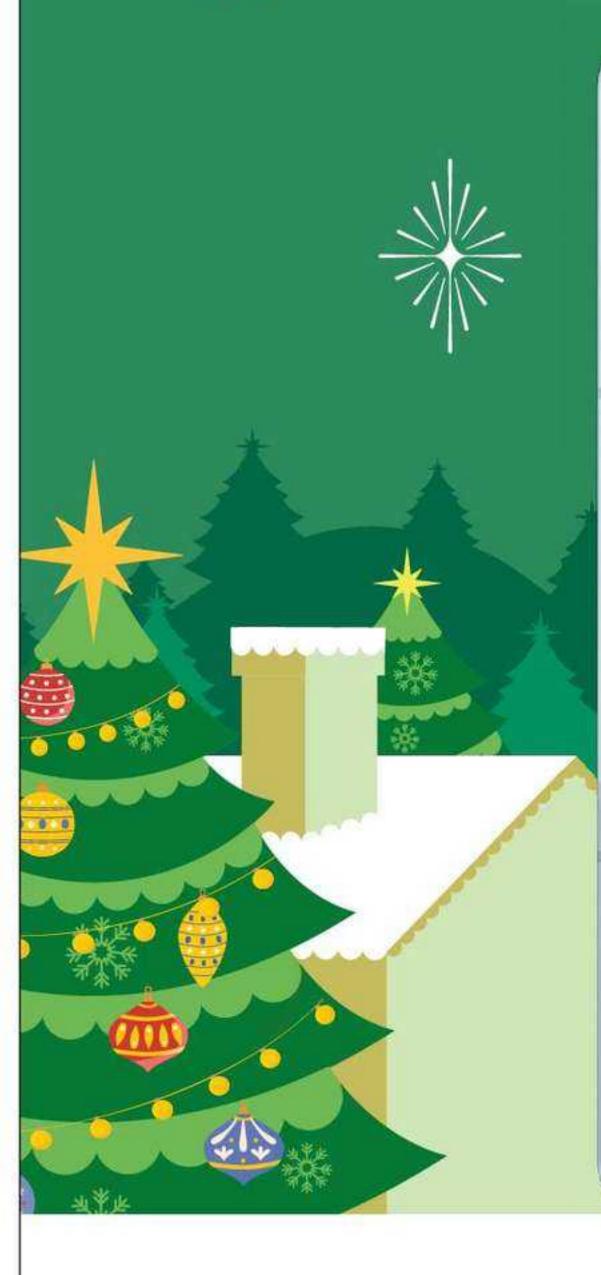
family yet, he added, "He wanted to visit them, but the hospital authorities asked them to stay put for safety reasons. It's the same day a case was filed against him. Our legal team also advised him to not go to the hospital."

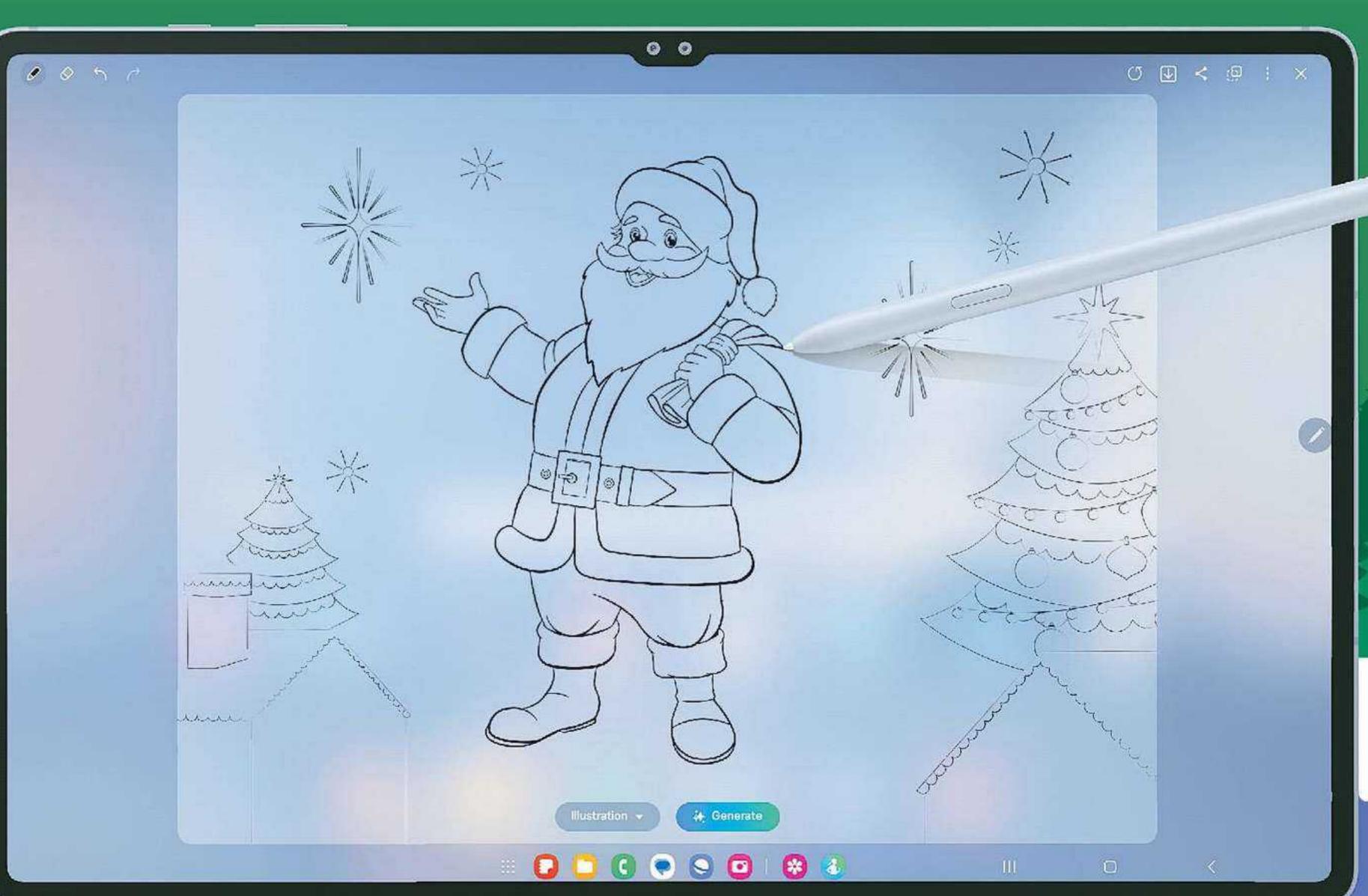
The tragedy left a 39-year-old woman, Mogudampalli Revathi, dead, and her son critically injured. A case was filed against Arjun for allegedly not informing the police of his visit.



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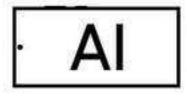




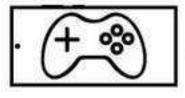
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ceremony in Italy on August

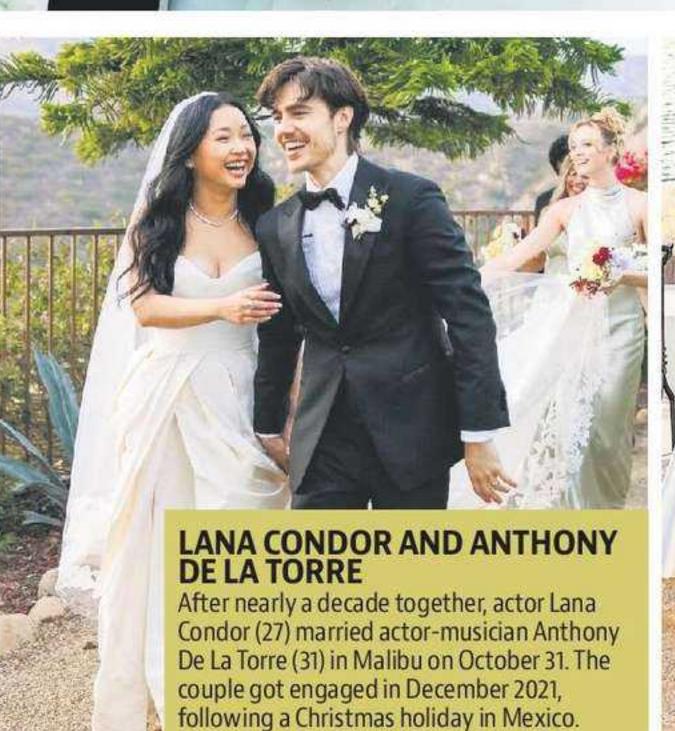
24. Jackson's 4-year-old son,

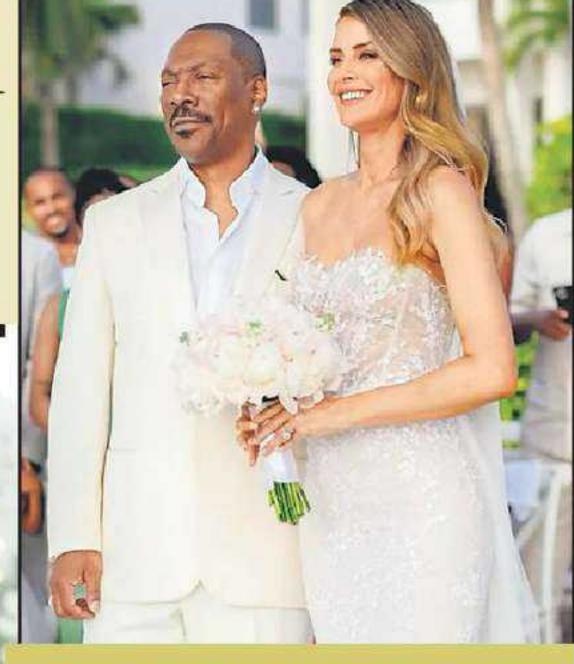
alongside the actor's friend

Andreas served as

Mike.

Westwick's best man,

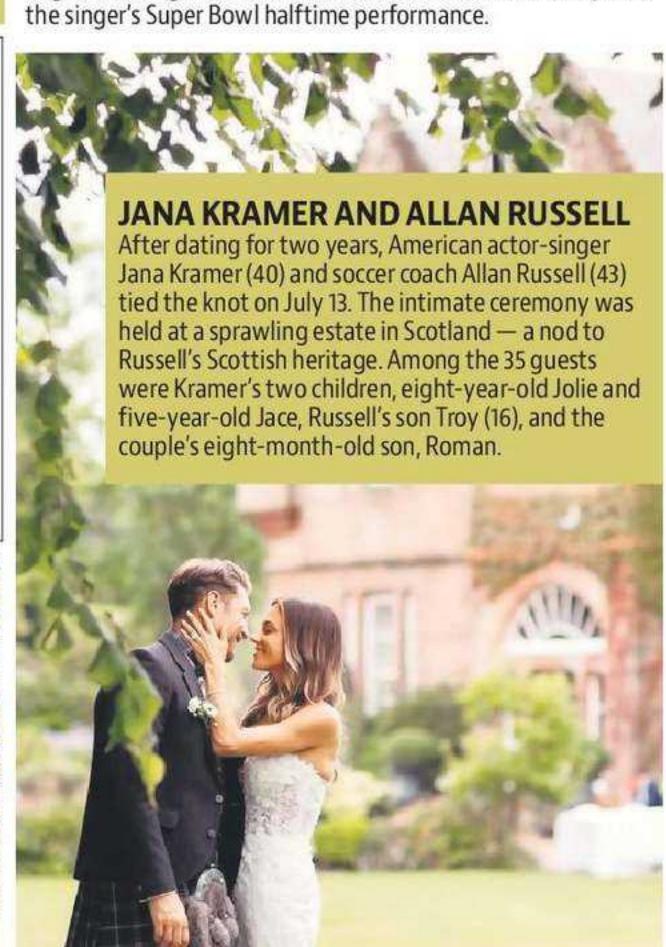




EDDIE MURPHY AND PAIGE BUTCHER Actor Eddie Murphy (63) and Australian model Paige Butcher (44) tied the knot on July 9 in Anguilla after a six year engagement. Butcher wore a lace-adorned corseted gown by Mira Zwillinger, while Murphy chose a white Brioni suit. This is Murphy's second marriage and Butcher's first.

> From opulent weddings to low-key ceremonies, 2024 was the year for all things romance in the West. Here's our ultimate recap of the celebs who tied the knot this year

Compiled by Mugdha Kapoor



USHER AND JENNIFER GOICOCHEA

R&B singer Usher (46) and long-time partner, music executive

Jennifer Goicoechea (40) got married in a low-key ceremony in

Vegas Weddings' drive-thru tunnel, The Fast Lane, shortly after

Las Vegas, US, on February 11. The couple exchanged vows at



Latvian fashion designer Ramona Agruma

(40) in Sardinia, Italy on September 28.

wedding dresses for the ceremony, but it

was Rebel's one-year-old daughter, Royce,

Both brides chose custom Pronovias

who stole the show as the flower girl.

NO RATING MOVIE REVIEW }

A live-action adaptation that lacks both style and substance



MUFASA: THE LION KING (HINDI DUB) Voice cast: Shah Rukh Khan, Aryan Khan, AbRam Khan **Direction:** Barry Jenkins

ufasa: The Lion King serves as yet another L chapter in Disney's relentless pursuit of revamping its animation classics for a modern audience, often at the expense of originality. Directed by filmmaker Barry Jenkins, this prequel to the 2019 The Lion King remake explores the origin story of Mufasa, the noble lion whose legacy shapes the Pride Lands. Despite flashes of Jenkins' signature style, the film is weighed down by its bloated narrative and the constraints of corporate filmmaking.

The movie begins in the aftermath of the reign of Simba (voiced in Hindi by Aryan Khan), with Nala (Neha Gargava) on the verge of giving birth. As Simba rushes to her side, the evercomical Timon (Shreyas Talpade) and Pumbaa (Sanjay Mishra) are tasked with watching over Kiara. Rafiki (Makrand Deshpande) uses this as a segue to narrate Mufasa's tale, setting the stage for a journey into the lion king's past. We meet young Mufasa

whose life takes a tragic turn when a devastating flood separates him from his family. Rescued by Taka (Trilok Sunderasan), the high-spirited young prince, Mufasa develops an unexpected brotherly bond with him. Before I go any further, there can be no prizes for guessing who Taka eventually ends up becoming at the end of the movie, and it doesn't qualify as a spoiler alert either.

(voiced by AbRam Khan),

The film does well in these initial stages, depicting the camaraderie between the two cubs with heartfelt moments and Jenkins' intimate direction. Close-ups and sweeping pans bring warmth to the otherwise cold liveaction visuals, especially during the playful jostling of the young lions.

However, the story begins to falter as it progresses. Mufasa grows up under the sceptical gaze of Taka's father, Obasi (Uday Sabnis), who views the orphan as an outsider. Despite this, Mufasa integrates into the pride, developing his hunting skills and showcasing a natural affinity with the wild. As the cubs mature into adult lions, Mufasa (now voiced by Shah Rukh Khan) and Taka (Meiyang Chang) face growing tensions, culminating in a series of

conflicts that strain their

relationship. The film attempts to expand the lore with the introduction of white lions, referred to as 'Others' or 'Outsiders', who challenge the Pride Lands. This subplot, however, feels too familiar, underdeveloped and overcomplicated. The introduction of Sarabi (Kamakshi Rai) and other characters like Zazu (Rajesh Kava) and a young Rafiki (Thomson Andrews) adds to the clutter without providing

much depth. While the voice cast, led by the Khan family, adds star power, it cannot compensate for the film's narrative shortcomings. Taka's transformation into the embittered Scar lacks the emotional resonance expected of such a pivotal arc, and similarly, Sarabi's character is

sadly underutilised. Despite Jenkins' valiant efforts to infuse the story with visual grace and thematic weight, Mufasa: The Lion King ultimately feels like another Disney product designed more for the expansion of the franchise than for storytelling. The grandeur of the Pride Lands is overshadowed by a lack of coherence and the feeling that it's just another cash cow for Disney.

Samarth Goyal

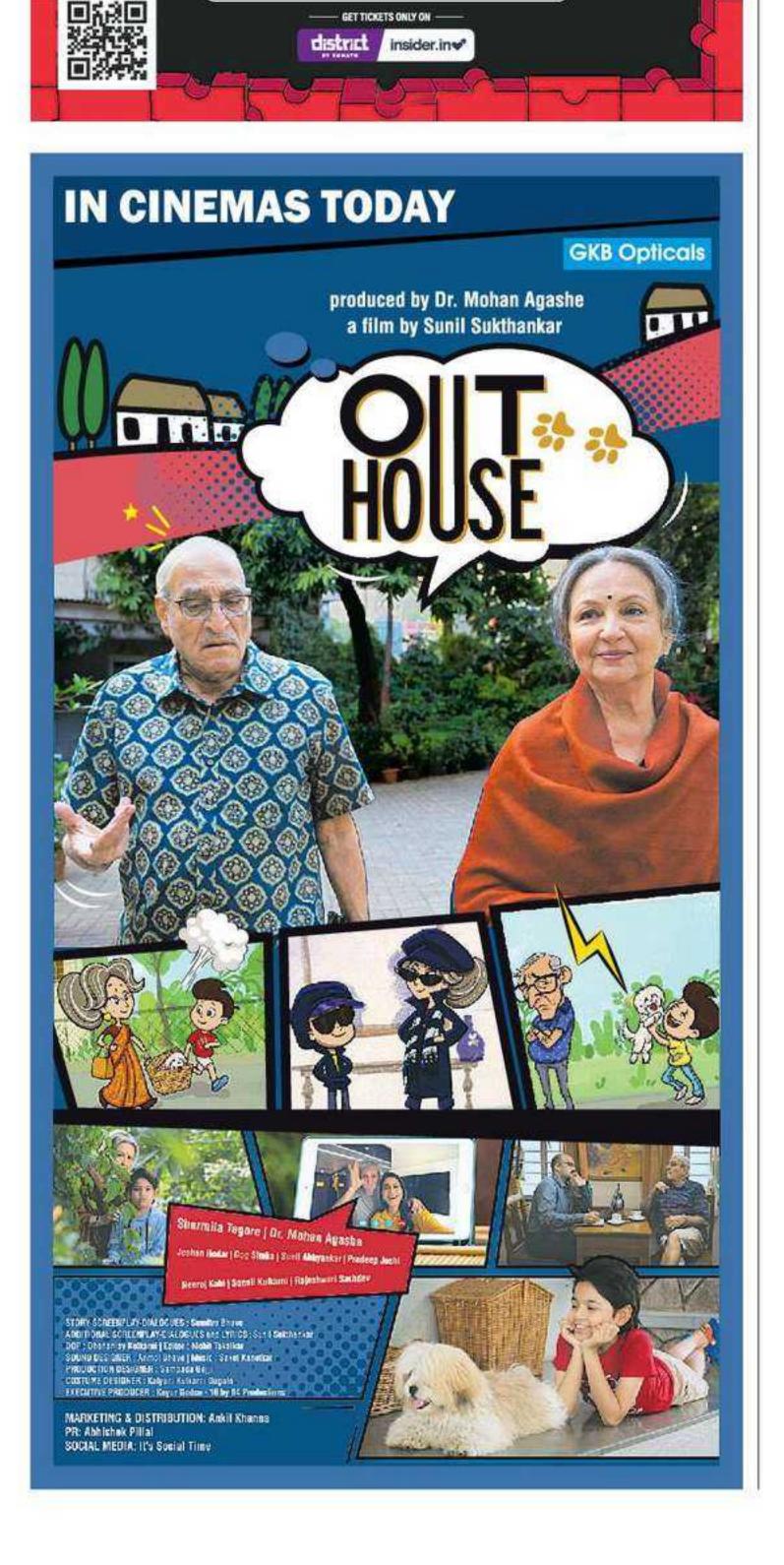


inger Taylor Swift celebrated her 35th **birthday** on December 13 in Kansas City (US) with partner, Travis Kelce. The celebration followed on the heels of the singer's record-breaking Eras Tour that ended on December 8. Interestingly, Swifties noticed that the singer's left ring finger looked

"blurred" in some pictures, sparking a theory that she "edited out" an engagement ring.

Swift and Kelce have been dating since 2023 and rumours of their engagement have been circulating since October this year.

Model Lyndsay Bell with Swift and former soccer player Brittany Mahomes



ARTS

CURIOUS

INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE

NIGHT-TIME

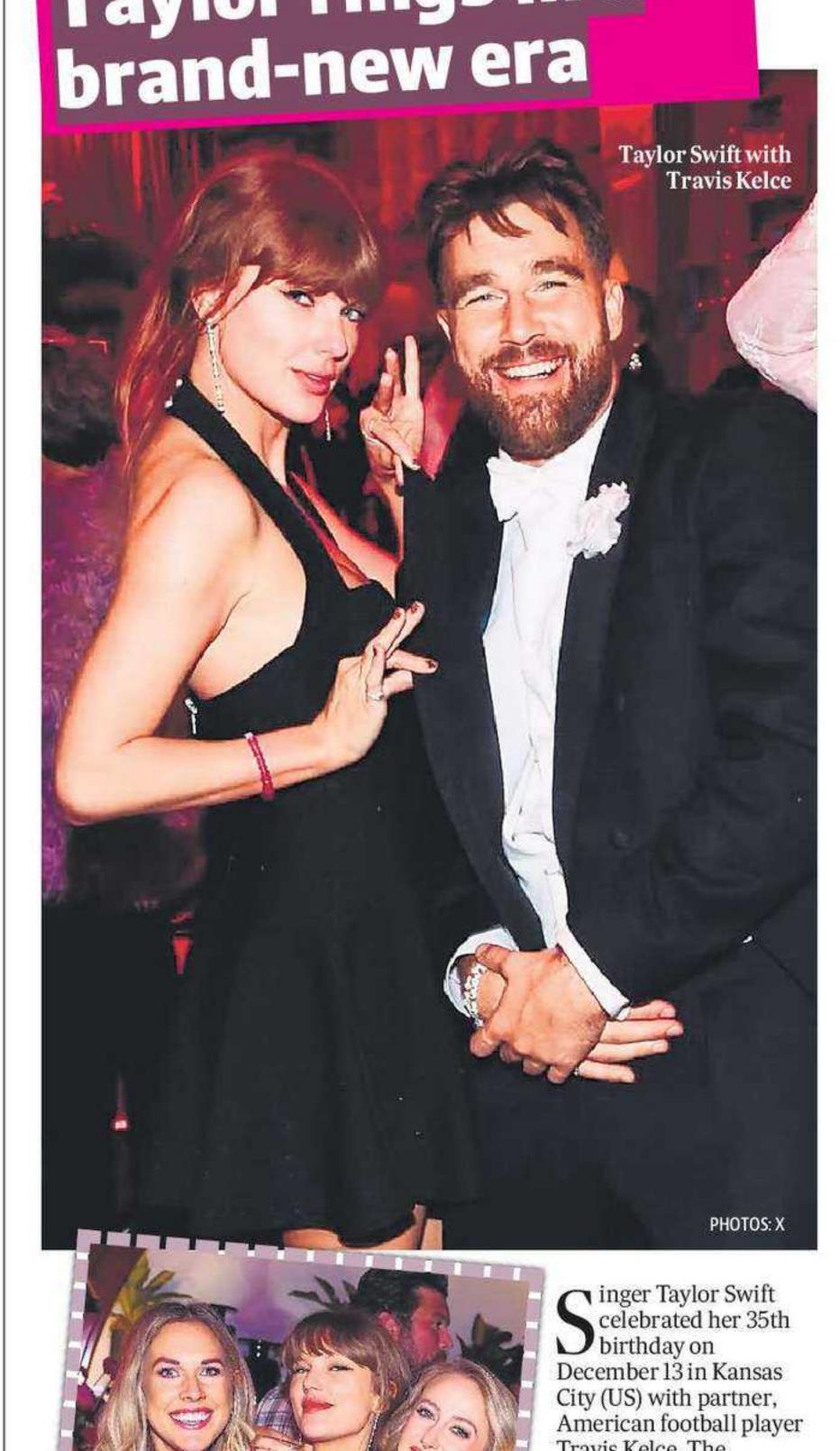
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without any rehearsal. When I would press his legs after the concert, he would give me a composition and expect it to be ready by the next morning. That ensured that I practised all night to play the right sound, with balance and tonality. I would send him recordings of all the concerts I played and he would listen to them and give me honest feedback and even dressing-down, whenever needed."

The tabla player adds that Hussain played a huge role in making her "shine in a male-dominated space". "He knew that as a girl in a male-dominated field, not coming from a musician family, it would be tough for me. Hence, he opened my mind to a thousand possibilities through his music. He was so proud when the Limca Book of Records declared me as the world's first female professional tabla player in 1991. His pride in me had nothing to do with my gender. It was just about matching up to his expectations," she ends.

tough time while charting out the final list of songs for the show, as you don't know which track to omit when it comes to Rafi sahab. SONU NIGAM, Singer

I had a really

Sonu Nigam to sing over 50 Rafi songs in 3 hours at the legend's 100th birth anniversary concert.

Soumya Vajpayee soumya.vajpayee@

hindustantimes.com

Anuradha

Pal was a

disciple of

childhood

Ustad Zakir

Hussain since

s music aficionados gear up to celebrate late legend Mohammed Rafi on his centenary birth anniversary on December 24, Sonu Nigam is all set to pay tribute to his "guru and peer Rafi sahab". Titled Sau Saal Pehle, the event, organised by NR Talent and Event Management, will see the singer pay a homage to the late veteran by singing his classics. Interestingly, the concert marks Sonu's first Mohammed Rafi show

in India. Speaking to us at the rehearsal, Sonu, who would be performing with an entourage of close to 50 live instrumentalists at Mumbai's NMACC Grand Theatre, says, "I will be singing over 50 songs in the three-hour concert, and trust me, it's no mean feat. I had a really tough time while charting out the final list of

songs for the show, as you don't know which track to omit when it comes to Rafi sahab. I really hope God and Rafi sahab bless me with the strength to do justice to this endeavour."

Interestingly, Sonu's father, veteran singer Agam Kumar Nigam, would also perform at the show. "My father introduced me to Rafi sahab's music. As a kid, I had performed with papa at so many shows, singing Rafi sahab's classics. So, it feels surreal that we would both take the stage for such a sacred occasion," says Sonu.

The event organisers call this concert "a dream endeavour" and can't wait for the day. Singer Rabbani Mustafa Khan, Organiser, Sau Saal Pehle, says, "Ever since this show got finalised, we have been working on this dream concert, day in and day out, because we realise how momentous an event and responsibility this is. As we inch closer, I really pray that we manage to pull it off with utmost justice."

A Sonu Nigam with a 50-member orchestra at

the rehearsal

Namrata Gupta Khan, Organiser, Sau Saal Pehle, adds, "I believe the concert would be any Rafi sahab fan's dream, as there's no one out there who could do justice to the legend's music as Sonu ji. I am grateful to Sonu ji for believing in us and I am 100% sure that the three hours would be

nothing short of magical." The late legend's family, including son Shahid Rafi and daughter-in-law Firdaus Rafi, have also been closely associated with putting the event together and would be in attendance at the show, among other celebs.

Ever since this show got finalised, we have been working on this dream concert, day in and day out, because we realise how momentous an event and responsibility this is. Rabbani Mustafa Khan,

Mohammed Rafi

I am grateful to Sonu ji for believing in us and I am 100% sure that the three hours would be nothing short of magical. Namrata Gupta Khan,

Organiser

#editorspickoftheweek

Gurugram concert

Screengrabs of Reels

at the show

reporting about thefts

Nearly 200 phones were stolen

at Karan Aujla's concert today,

including my brother's. A gang

was operating in the arena, and

no one from Team Innovation or

Karan's team offered any help.

We purchased tickets with our

hard-earned money to enjoy

the show, and as fans, the least

we expect is for you and your

team to look into this matter

and help us recover our

It Wasn't a Dream, It

Wasa Nightmare.

जिला गुरु

devices.

personal loss. Pal, who is the

Limca Book of Records holder for

being the world's first professional

female tabla player, trained under

friend. I met him when I was five,

saw me do that, he asked me if I

Hussain, and she is in shock. "Zakir

bhai was my guru, father, brother and

when I just started playing his tabla in

the green room at a concert. When he

wanted to play the tabla. I emphatically

said, 'Yes'. So he made me sit on his lap,

put my hands on the tabla and taught

me the basics. That's how my journey

as a tabla player started. My formal

training continued with both Abba ji

maestro and Zakir Hussain's father)

ganda-bandhan disciple," shares Pal,

She goes on to recall a "lifetime

sharing, "The way he taught me, my

conversations with him on music, the

tabla and life will always stay with me.

improvisation and spontaneity, and he

taught me to be adaptable and ready to

take up any challenge - be it playing

without learning the taal or expecting

instrumentalist or dancer with ease,

a 15-beat rhythm cycle with him

me to accompany any vocalist,

of wonderful memories with him",

Indian classical music is based on

as she talks about Hussain, who passed

and Zakir bhai, and I became their

away on December 15 in the US.

(Ustad Allarakha Khan; late tabla



It was a nightmare: Fans allege thefts at Karan Aujla's

in the caption.

India's rivers are its lifeline, and often provide some captivating views. Behold one such moment, in this photograph that shows a magical sunset at the ghat of river Ganga in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Photo by Dr Sujoy Roy

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Karan Aujla during

his December 15 concert

PHOTOS: INSTAGRAM

Times

Delhi-NCR resident, Priyal Kapoor, who attended

singer-rapper Karan Aujla's Gurugram concert on

L Sunday, has alleged that over 200 phones were

stolen at the venue. A make-up artist by profession, she

shared a video on Monday, stating, 'It wasn't a dream, it

was a nightmare,' in which a group of youngsters could

"Nearly 200 phones were stolen at Karan Aujla's

Innovation or Karan's team offered any help," she rued

In another Reel, a Canada-based Indian national,

Parth Soni, shared that he lost his kada and neck chain

at the same show. "When we went, there were so many

fights, and we also got involved in one. Two days later, I

Om-shaped locket with a diamond, were missing!... This

breaking out among concertgoers. Notably, four other

youngsters were detained for assaulting a police officer

These posts come in the wake of reports about brawls

found out that the kada and the chain, which had an

concert proved to be really expensive - I've lost

somewhere between ₹2-2.5 lakh." he claimed.

and causing a ruckus at the event.

concert today, including my brother's. A gang was

be seen filing a complaint at a police station.

operating in the arena, and no one from Team



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You may be determined to

improve fitness and health

today. You may hesitate to

make significant financial

Health maintenance won't

be challenging due to

increased awareness.

Funds needed for a large

Past investments might

bring financial returns. A

subordinate's error could

task shouldn't pose issues. You may

lead activities in a family gathering.

LOVE FOCUS: Whispering sweet

sentiments will brighten your day.

LUCKY NUMBER: 11 LUCKY COLOUR:

Opt for public transport today.

investments. Success at work is likely

in current assessments. A family

elder's attitude may feel controlling.

LOVE FOCUS: Romantic feelings

LUCKY NUMBER: 6 LUCKY COLOUR:

inspire you to plan something.

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LEO

Brown

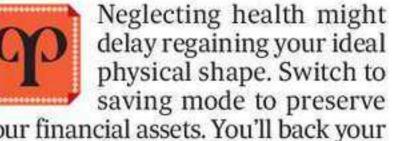
VIRGO

AUG 24-SEP 23

JUL 23-AUG 23

Organiser

ARIES MAR 21-APR 20



saving mode to preserve your financial assets. You'll back your spouse's ideas for home-related changes. Driving at night seems unsafe today, so avoid if possible. LOVE FOCUS: Romantic vibes lift as someone sparks your interest. LUCKY NUMBER: 3 LUCKY COLOUR: Red

TAURUS APR 21-MAY 20

stability Financial increases as funds start flowing in. Someone

you proud. LOVE FOCUS: Romance lingers, but you will need to set the tone.

LUCKY NUMBER: 17 LUCKY COLOUR:

might encourage you towards a healthier lifestyle. A young family member's success will make

Maroon

GEMINI MAY 21-JUN 21

Minor health issues might appear unexpectedly Overplanning today. might complicate workrelated decision-making. An essential

dreams. LOVE FOCUS: Eligible ones may feel eager for love but must wait.

LUCKY NUMBER: 5 LUCKY COLOUR: Blue

create a tricky situation. A family member's success will elevate trip could help you achieve your your reputation.

Orange

LIBRA

SEP 24-OCT 23

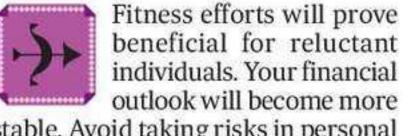
LOVE FOCUS: Meeting a special person is not impossible today.

LUCKY NUMBER: 18 LUCKY COLOUR: Saffron

SCORPIO OCT 24-NOV 22

You may feel motivated to regain a healthier lifestyle. Financial luck may bring an unexpected windfall

today. Fortune might work in your favour professionally today. A family



SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21

outlook will become more stable. Avoid taking risks in personal or professional affairs. Property acquisition could be possible. LOVE FOCUS: Promises made in love

are likely to be kept today. LUCKY NUMBER: 7 LUCKY COLOUR: Off White

CAPRICORN

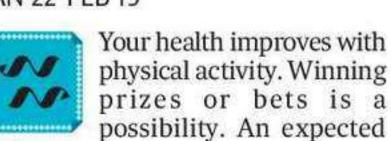
DEC 22-JAN 21

Unexpected expenses on loved ones might require your support. Personal efforts keep you active and physically fit. Things will progress smoothly at work for you. Helping family brings you much appreciation.

LOVE FOCUS: Handle a moody partner with patience today. LUCKY NUMBER: 1 LUCKY COLOUR:

Purple

AQUARIUS JAN 22-FEB 19

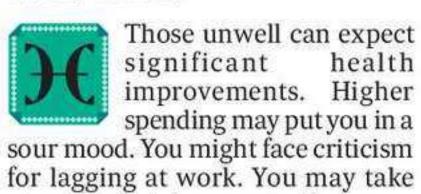


physical activity. Winning prizes or bets is a possibility. An expected deal may seem harder to secure now. Family reunion brings joy.

LOVE FOCUS: Stronger romantic bonds are built on mutual support. LUCKY NUMBER: 9 LUCKY COLOUR: Magenta

PISCES





for lagging at work. You may take steps to create harmony at home. LOVE FOCUS: Romance unfolds slowly as you take things carefully. **LUCKY NUMBER: 4 LUCKY COLOUR:**

CANCER JUN 22-JUL 22

Stay alert if you are business managing matters today. A family gathering is likely to be enjoyable. Dropping someone off

may take up a lot of time. Property acquisition proceeds smoothly. LOVE FOCUS: New romantic ideas could inspire a loving atmosphere. LUCKY NUMBER: 2 LUCKY COLOUR: Yellow Silver

member may need guidance.

LOVE FOCUS: Keep romance private to avoid any awkwardness. LUCKY NUMBER: 22 LUCKY COLOUR:

Golden



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